

July 11, 1933

Judge Earl Scott,  
Jourdanton, Texas.

My Dear Judge

Some years ago Capt. Backus (Intelligence Dept. U.S. Army) and myself dropped in on you; we had been tracing the ancient Spanish trail from San Antonio southward. Capt. Backus, soon thereafter, was transferred to foreign parts, and that line of investigation dropped. I want now to come back again and spend time with you or someone there who is interested in such things in your region; yourself or others. If there is anyone down that way very much interested, you will know.

Such a visit may not be desirable while it is so hot. Moreover, I cannot know what may be worthwhile unless you can favor me with your advice.

I have much information we did not have that first visit. I have associates working in various directions, particularly right now down the river to Coliad, and that trails (or these trails); and the trails through Atascosa are closely associated. I can send a topographical map with Hinds (old San Miguel River basin, I understand) in the center. You may have such map. I have the topographical maps of most of the Spanish South Texas country. The real Camino Real had its gateway thru Laredo. Presidio del Rio soon died. The numerous thrilling articles about the great King's Highway across country to Presidio del Rio are child's stuff. San Miguel River....San Miguelitos....the river basin with plenty of fish, good water, etc., and 400 paces long, seems to have been an important. Morfi (Dec. 1777) describes it. Solis (Aug. 1768) tells of it. Santa Anna apparently came up that way. There are indications that fix it on the ancient trail and on the later San Antonio-Laredo road.

The first trail was across from San Miguel to about Pleasanton (near which was El Atascosa, the San Jose mission ranch), then across to somewhere near the place now shown as San Agustín Mission (N.E. of Pleasanton), then north thru Espada mission ranch, and across the Medina (east of Lescaya) then to Espada and San Antonio. A San Antonio-Laredo road apparently was that way for a time, then a later San Antonio-Laredo road entered San Antonio over the present Somerset road.

I don't know that this sketched-outline is wholly correct, but we have maps, data, and are piecing things together slowly, and if possible to clear up information down your way it will be mighty helpful, and I am sure, mighty interesting.

Sincerely,

President, Old Spanish Trail.

GUTTER HOTEL.