

# IRRIGATION AND ITS MAGIC HAND

## The Desert Not Deserted

In far West Texas, and across southern New Mexico, Arizona and California, are arid areas crossed by the Old Spanish Trail, often referred to as deserts. They are not deserted. Cities of refinement reach hands across those lands, for many love the mystery and life and sunshine of the Southwest while the soils need only the magic touch of water to spring into life as fruitful as the oases of Biskra or the garden spots of Arabia.

Mountains rear their crests with friendly greeting and Nature plays her indefinable colors on their rugged sides. The sands are redeemed by the graceful mesquite, the tangled visnaga, the bayonet-shaped yucca with its bouquet of white bloom in spring, the cacti of a hundred mystic types and their delicate flowering, the ironwood blossoms, the flaming flower of the ocotillas that grow mysteriously and proudly among the rocks. Strangeness, Mystery and Vastness! It is the Dwelling Place of the Great Spirit!

Irrigation is spreading its waters and mingling them with sunshine and fertility and the sands leap to life and send green products and semi-tropical fruits to the tables of the frozen North.

In far West Texas, at Fort Stockton and Balmorhea are <sup>fields and</sup> gardens spread over the sands, watered by great springs. The Rio Grande Valley through Fort Hancock, Fabens, Yaleta and El Paso in Texas, and Mesilla and Las Cruces in New Mexico, is redeemed and enriched by the big Elephant Butte Reservoir in New Mexico one hundred and ten miles north of El Paso.

Southern New Mexico is still unredeemed but underground reservoirs reached by shallow wells underlie extended areas. Westward, at Benson in southern Arizona, Mormons are irrigating along the San Pedro River. Irrigation is around Tucson. Westward at Florence the big Coolidge Reservoir is transforming more areas of hot sands into semi-tropical gardens. The Salt River Valley at Mesa, Tempe and Phoenix with its green fields and colorful life breaks on the desert traveler like a benediction... the Roosevelt Reservoir that mothers it all seems a distant sacrament. At Yuma, on the Colorado River facing California, life again spreads its cheerful mantle over the desert waste.

In California close to Mexico, at El Centro and Holtville, the sandy bed of the ancient Salton Sea is now the Imperial Valley, blossoming with life, redeemed by the waters of the Colorado River and the industry and genius of man.

The desert is not deserted!

## The Garden of the World

Not of the West, not of the desert, but in South Texas at San Antonio's door, irrigation is changing the Cattleman's Empire into the Garden of the World. Sun, soil and water again are the Magi that are transmitting primitive wilds into Green Gold. The Magic Valley is now the prodigal Lower Rio Grande Valley of citrus orchards, winter products, and many populous cities. The Winter Garden country of the Laredo--Eagle Pass area keeps spreading its mantle of wealth. Railroads, paved highways, and seaports are extending their facilities and the varied products already noted for their fineness are finding markets over the land and over the seas.

The South Texas empire is changing! There are men who are seeing a Garden of the World!

## THE ST. AUGUSTINE CELEBRATION

April 2-3-4, 1929

The monument at St. Augustine and its dedication ceremonies fittingly climaxed the construction of this travelway from Florida through Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico and Arizona to California. St. Augustine spent \$16,000 on the old Spanish pageantry. The St. Augustine Exchange Club erected the monument. The San Diego, California Chamber of Commerce organized the motorcade to St. Augustine. The Women's Beautification Department organized the delegation from Texas. The National OST Headquarters led and coordinated the various workers from San Diego to St. Augustine that contributed to its success.

The speakers at the dedication ceremonies were: Mayor George Bassett, St. Augustine, Florida. T. J. Brooks, Tallahassee, Florida, representing the Governor, <sup>Doyle E. Carlton</sup> Sr. Don Rafael Casares Gil, representing the King of Spain. <sup>in Antonio, Texas, President</sup> Harral Ayres, <sup>Managing Director</sup> of the Old Spanish Trail. <sup>in Antonio, Texas</sup> Mrs. F. W. Sorell, National Director of Beautification. Mrs. Alex L. Adams, Pres. Women's Federation of Clubs, San Antonio, <sup>Texas</sup> Thomas C. Imeson, representing the National Exchange Clubs. <sup>in San Diego, California</sup> Elwood T. Bailey, representing the San Diego organizations.

HARRAL AYRES  
DEDICATION ADDRESS BY THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

Long before the Pilgrim Fathers settled New England, Spanish princes, adventurers and Mission Fathers were exploring and settling this Old Spanish Trail country. Names of discoverers and colonizers like Ponce de Leon, Menéndez, de Soto, de Luna, Gálvez, Ofiate, Cortés, Balboa, Coronado and Cabrillo are known over the land. In the church other names have become canonized for noble deeds. Across this land are old stone mis-

sions, old aqueducts and other ancient works of that remarkable period.

Those were days of travels by sea and up the rivers and bays, or overlaid by rambling trails. The ancient cities of St. Augustine, Pensacola, Mobile, Biloxi, New Orleans, San Antonio, El Paso, Tucson and San Diego were settled on those waterways or those trails and they became clothed with romantic history. When the automobile age came those bays and rivers were barriers to travel and those cities were strangers to one another.

A group of crusaders met in Mobile in 1915 and declared for an automobile trunk line that would open these lands of the conquistadores and the padres of past ages to the enjoyment of the American people through future ages.

The dream of 1915 is the realization of the people of today. The waterways have been bridged and the continent spanned. California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama said to Florida, we are ready now. St. Augustine, with its mantle of Spanish history resting like a spell over the old city, said come and we will give a festival that will portray the story of Ponce de León and others of the past.

This monument is not alone to mark the beginning of the Old Spanish Trail of today in its long span across the continent. It is a memorial to the men and women who have mastered the problems and made the highway possible and made our recent motorcade drive from San Diego to St. Augustine as dependable as railroad travel. It is a tribute to the Spanish people of yesterday and of today. It is a challenge now to the people to go on with this work and keep this far-southern land a joy for travelers for the years to come and a memorial to all that is good in that age of art and chivalry and adventure and of great mission works. We do not have to agree with all they did. We do not agree with all our Pilgrim Forefathers did. But we may take pride in the glories of that age and help pass on to our children memories of it, not forgetfulness of it.

We accept this monument from the people of this hospitable city in the name of the people of this land and dedicate this highway now to our people as a sacred trust to carry on to our glories and for the pleasure of all who follow us.