

CAMINO REAL

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connect a provincial Governor at Nacogdoches with the Governor of the State of Coahuila. It also passes in Burleson County by the corner stone of Stephen F. Austin 5 mile survey.

Traffic over the Road.

In the earlier days it is probable that this road was only used by Indians for the purpose of inter-tribal barter, for migrations to hunting fields or for purposes of war, and, as before the coming of the white man the Indian had no pack animals, it is likely that for a long period of time, probably covering centuries, the "Camino Real" was only used as a foot path.

With the coming of the Spaniards, it is likely that it came into use as a pack trail, and it is an actual fact that although

the mesquite tree is not indigenous much farther east than Bastrop County in Texas, yet, clumps of mesquite trees are found all along the old San Antonio Road, even in to Louisiana. These bear testimony to the fact that the Spaniards utilized to a large extent the mesquite beans as feed for their pack mules, and when they left those sections of the state where mesquite flourished they piled onto their pack animals sacks filled with mesquite beans to serve as food on the way to Louisiana, and probably each cluster of mesquite trees marks the site of some old camping ground.

With the coming of the American settlers, the Camino Real came into general use as an ox wagon road, and for 40 years or more this was the prevailing method of transporting goods into Texas. Later came the mule wagons, and now there are sections of this old road which are improved as modern up-to-

date auto roads. Indeed if the old fathers who built the missions of San Jose', Concepcion and La Espada would awake and stand in the door of their respective churches, they probably would be astonished beyond measure, instead of pack animals to which they were accustomed, to see high powered automobiles go whizzing by.

Professor of English Interested in "Old Spanish Trail"

Prof. S. M. Byrd of the Department of English, State Normal College, Natchitoches, Louisiana, has written a letter to Texas Highway Bulletin editor relating some of the pleasure of a trip made over a section of the "Old Spanish Trail" route.

The letter in part is given for the information contained relative to the route which is of general interest not only in Texas but in other States as well.

Speaking of the trip Prof. Byrd says: "Recently I had the pleasure of going over some of this road. From Robeline, Louisiana, to the Trinity river it is the same now, apparently, as in earlier days; that is, the present highway (No. 21 in Texas) is practically on the track or beside the old road. After crossing the Trinity, the Camino Real turns to the right, leaves the highway which runs through Midway to Madisonville and Bryan, and goes a number of miles north of that highway. It seems to go upon the county line between Madison and Leon and between Brazos and Robertson; through Hennessey, Normangee, three miles south of Wheelock, through Bentley, cross the Brazos at the railway bridge at Stone City, and be joined by the present Bryan-Caldwell highway three miles beyond the Brazos. Leaving Caldwell it does not stay with the railway and that highway, but runs somewhat north of Deanneville, through Old Dime Box (not the new Dime Box on the railway), through Lincoln, Manheim, Paige, along present highway a short distance west of Paige and then turns off to Bastrop. I did not go to Bastrop or follow it from there to Reedville and New Braunfels and Bracken. It runs a dozen miles or so to the north of Giddings, missing that town and Bryan and Madisonville entirely. It was night when I drove over the part from the Trinity river to Normangee and I am not sure I was on the right road part of the time."

Prof. Byrd plans, according to his letter, other trips over the old route, and is anxious to read all the literature that he can get dealing with the historic old road. The editor of Texas Highway Bulletin on a recent trip through the Catalina Ranch, and Winter Garden section in Dimmitt county, saw a marker designating the route as being a section of the old trail.

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