

the Lone Star State, crossing the plains and canyon districts of the one-time great American Desert, threading its way over the snow-capped peaks of the Rocky Mountains, leaping like a living thing from the rough western slopes of this mountain range, bounding through the fertile and picturesque valleys of California, halting only when it meets the defying waves of the "Sunset Sea", is the oldest, most historic, enchanting, romantic highway that crosses the American continent.

The Old Spanish Trail, destined to be one of the nation's greatest arteries of trade and travel, is lined with shrines, rich in the lore and learning of a thrilling past. Adjacent to, and along this ancient road, traveled, in 1492, Cabeza de Vaca and his ^{three} companions, the first white men to cross the continent.

It leads through historic regions whose early history begins with the discovery of the Western World by Columbus, and follows the territory made famous by the explorations of La Salle, De Soto, Coronado, and Ponce de Leon. Some of these explorers struggled to find ^{cities} ~~mines~~ of gold, others mountains of silver, and still others the "Fountain of Youth". Following their golden dreams and silver phantoms, they blazed out new trails over and along the territory through which this highway runs, vainly seeking, like Sir Galahad of classic lore, that which they did not realize lay beneath their feet, wholly unconscious of the fact that they had found their Eldorado and reached the fabled land of their dreams.

Along with these seekers of fortune and worldly glory, came, to teach the blessings of work and worship, those pathfinders of civilization, who established the historic Missions which dot the course of the Old Spanish Trail, and which now constitute the most lasting monuments to the heroic struggles and hardships of the