

THE EL PASO VALLEY

The El Paso—Santa Fe district is one of the five great centers of mission and colonization effort of the Spaniards and the second they started within the present U.S. In 1598 at El Paso del Norte (The Pass of the North) Don Juan de Oñate with his followers took possession of this northern land for "himself, King Phillip II of Spain, and God," then proceeded northward to colonize in the Santa Fe district. Santa Fe dates from 1602. For several generations the Spaniards developed their interests around Albuquerque and Santa Fe. In 1659 the Mission of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe was established at El Paso del Norte, now the church of Juarez. In 1762 the Indians rose in the Great Rebellion around Albuquerque and Santa Fe. The Spanish and Christian Indian survivors of the massacre fled to the mission at Paso del Norte, nearly 400 mi. away. With this the real history of El Paso and their interesting valley begins. The valley towns of Ysleta, Socorro and San Elizario below El Paso were slowly established, mothered by the Mission Guadalupe. They date about 1682. The industry, first fostered by the padres, the irrigation and the productiveness of the Valley led to extensive development. The drive around this old district today is an interesting education to Old Spanish Trail travelers. The towns lie on the American side near Ysleta. The El Paso Chamber of Commerce women's department issues an interesting booklet with map.

Slowly after the rebellion New Mexico was reclaimed and Santa Fe today enjoys historical distinction as the second oldest city in the U.S. El Paso on the American side came into existence after the Mexican War of 1846-47 and Texas Annexation and the old Paso del Norte became Juarez. The old trail from Mexico City to Santa Fe (the Camino Real or King's Highway) is in this section a part of the Old Spanish Trail of today. It is believed Cabeza de Vaca and his three companions traveled thru the Pass in 1536. These were the only survivors of the ill-fated De Narvez expedition that landed in proud array at Tampa Bay. Like those who followed, the Indians rose against their way around to the Tallahassee country. At St. Mark's Bay, south of Tallahassee, they gladly escaped the country in crudely constructed boats and tried to reach Mexico. Storms and the great current in the gulf of the Mississippi river beset them; De Narvez was drowned, the survivors were wrecked on the Texas shore and soon only De Vaca and three others survived Indian pursuit and hardships. For six years they were slaves to improvident Indians, then escaped across Texas. Central Texas Indians thought De Vaca a god and swarms followed him. In western Mexico he reached his Spanish compatriots. This strange pilgrimage is believed to have gone thru this pass in the mountains. De Vaca's story is one of the epics of history.

YSLETA. The name is Spanish for little island. Settled by the Spaniards after the great Indian Rebellion in New Mexico in 1680. Its people are mostly of Spanish or Mexican descent. The old mine, narrow streets and adobe homes are distinctly foreign. The old valley, old towns and old irrigation lie around here; the Rio Grande lies close. The Old Spanish Trail here is the "Valley Road" of El Paso; its old shade trees, irrigating canals, truck gardens and country homes are a refreshing picture.

***EL PASO.** El Paso del Norte, the Pass of the North. Gateway to Mexico and the Southwest, keypoint to an empire. Manufacturing and distributing center. In heart of rich irrigated, farming, cattle and mining districts. Ft. Bliss, one of the most important military and air bases in the United States, is located at El Paso.

The pass thru the mountains extends from the city some three miles north to the big smelter. The Old Spanish Trail from El Paso follows the Rio Grande northward to Las Cruces, 42 mi.

The approach to El Paso for 60 mi. from the east is thru an irrigated section, some of it established in Spanish times, where cotton, alfalfa, winter vegetables, dairying and fruits are produced. Canals carry the water from Elephant Butte reservoir of the U. S. Reclamation Service located up the Rio Grande in New Mexico 110 mi. north of El Paso—largest artificial lake in North America. This reservoir covers 40,000 A. and impounds water to irrigate 200,000 A. in the Palomas, Rincon, upper and lower Mesilla.

EL PASO—Continued.

El Paso and Juarez valleys. Elephant Butte dam is 306 ft. high, 1,074 long. Lake is 45 mi. long with 206 mi. of shore line. (See page 47.)

Hotels—PASO DEL NORTE, refined, well-liked and El Paso's largest hotel; auto club headquarters in lobby, road information. **SHELDON,** moderate, well located, cafeteria, tourist bureau. **HUSSMANN,** new, fine hotel.

Camp Grande is one of the best auto camps in the U.S., all kinds of accommodations, attentions and comforts.

CIUDAD JUAREZ across the Rio Grande, pop. 15,000, is the largest Mexican city on the border in population, exports and imports. Characteristically Mexican it is visited and enjoyed by more travelers than any border city. The Chamber of Commerce or your hotel will give tourist passports or information.

Int.—El Paso Automobile Club (AAA) at Paso del Norte Hotel. Also Camp Grande. Also Sheldon Hotel Tourist Bureau. Time changes here; reset your watch.

TEXAS-NEW MEXICO STATE LINE

Anthony, N. M.

NEW MEXICO—192 MILES

Road Conditions

Pavement El Paso to Las Cruces, then Federal Aid gravel across the State. Old trail west from Mesilla Park now replaced with new road thru Las Cruces to Deming. Maintenance across New Mexico is good.

Description of Country

Up the Rio Grande Valley to Las Cruces are irrigated districts of the Elephant Butte reservoir; Las Cruces is a commercial center for these sections and a nice little city. Most of the section westward from Las Cruces is sandy desert relieved at times by mountain peaks. Some irrigation, not much. Some stock raising. Silver and copper are mined. Deming and Lordsburg are busy little cities. Travel conveniences are along the way. The drinking water is soft and good.

Old History

The Spanish trail of ancient days and the overland trail of pioneer and stage coach days crossed about as the highway of today runs. Spanish works were confined to the Rio Grande Valley, El Paso to Santa Fe. Their next important seat of effort was the Santa Cruz Valley in northern Mexico and thru Nogales to Tucson.

ANTHONY. The business section in Texas; the P. O. and many residences in New Mexico. This is a section of the Camino Real (King's Highway) from Mexico City to Santa Fe and one of the oldest roads in the U.S. Groups of the crude adobe and peasant houses of the Mexican laborers are seen along the way. Everything is characteristic of simple outdoor life. Numerous garages and service stations along the way.

MESILLA PARK. Supported by the A. & M. College. Two country hotels. Free camp space.

***LAS CRUCES.** The highway turns westward thru Las Cruces by new gravel road to Cambray to Deming. Las Cruces means "The Crosses;" it is the commercial center of the Elephant Butte irrigation in New Mexico. Three miles west is Old Mesilla; La Mesilla of the overland trail of the California stage coach days and the subsequent settlement of California; it was the capital of the Southwest Territory when that was a vast empire of the Santa Ana County when that county was a thousand miles wide. The Spanish conquistadores and the frocked padres traveled up this Rio Grande Valley to Santa Fe and that interesting New Mexico country, made