

# OLD SPANISH TRAIL NEARLY COMPLETE ACROSS CONTINENT

By CALEB JOHNSON

By the end of 1931 it will be possible for a motorist to start from Maine and drive to San Antonio, Texas, without ever getting off a hard road. Within another two or three years the motorist can continue his journey to California, over hard roads all the way.

With all of our progress in road building, there is today not a single route across the continent which does not involve driving over hundreds of miles of roads which nobody could classify as good and which most motorists, accustomed to the paved highways of both coasts and the Great Lakes region, would classify as positively bad. But with the completion of the Old Spanish Trail we shall have a highway connecting the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans, a highway paved or hard surfaced throughout its entire length, and a transcontinental highway, moreover, which will be passable at all seasons of the year, since it is located throughout its length far to the south of the snow belt, which makes the more northerly passages impossible in winter.

It is no wonder that the United States Government is aiding liberally in the construction of this road which will give the speediest possible route for the movement of motorized military forces from one coast to the other.

From Maine to Florida the Atlantic Coastal Highway is now substantially completed, either concrete, macadam or hard sand-clay surface all the way. And when it gets to historic old St. Augustine, Florida, it strikes the beginning of the Old

Spanish Trail, connecting St. Augustine on the East with San Diego on the West.

The idea of a cross-continent highway which would follow the trade and military trails blazed by the early Spanish settlers on the Gulf and in the Southwest was first given light at a gathering at Mobile, Ala., in 1915. Nobody knows who selected the picturesque and descriptive name, nor just how the movement started. The first idea was to connect New Orleans with Miami. But the West heard about it and eagerly joined in the movement, set up a promotion headquarters in San Antonio, and projected the original plan two thousand miles farther than its original enthusiasts had dreamed of going.

And now it is nearing completion. Starting from St. Augustine, where the Spaniards have left their indelible record in the narrow streets and picturesque old fort and other buildings of this oldest of American municipalities, the Old Spanish Trail runs through Jacksonville, Tallahassee, Pensacola, Mobile, Bay Saint Louis, New Orleans, Lake Charles, Beaumont, Houston, San Antonio, Fort Stockton, El Paso, Las Cruces, Douglas, Tucson, Phoenix and so to California and San Diego. It crosses eight states, three great bays and the greatest of North American rivers. It crosses the Great Divide at its lowest point, at Bisbee, Arizona, at an altitude of 6,030 feet above sea level and descends into the Imperial Valley through El Centro, California, 51 feet below sea-level. Yet there are no grades which cannot be driven in high gear.

Two-thirds of the drainage water of the United States crosses the Old Spanish Trail, yet only two ferries are necessary; one across the Mississippi River at New Orleans, the other over Berwick Bay at Morgan City, Louisiana. All of the other watercourses which the Trail crosses have been bridged.

The Old Spanish Trail follows the line of the chain of missions and

presidios which the King of Spain ordered in 1772 to be constructed from the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of California. San Antonio was the meeting place of all the trails connecting the Spanish settlements with each other. And in San Antonio, a few weeks ago the King of Spain, through the Spanish Ambassador to the United States, presented a royal decoration to Harrah Ayers, the managing director of the Old Spanish Trail Association, in recognition of his services in preserving and perpetuating the old Spanish tradition.

Of the first 579 miles of the Trail, from St. Augustine to Bay St. Louis, all but a few miles has been paved, and that part, in Mississippi, is hard sand and gravel. Thence across Louisiana the concrete pavement is being laid the entire distance, though it will be the end of next year before this is completed. The unpaved sections are good gravel roads.

From the Texas-Louisiana line to San Antonio, 329 miles, the Trail is 96 per cent paved. Thence, 385 miles to El Paso, the gravel road is good but dusty and paving is being carried on rapidly, eventually to cover the entire stretch. From El Paso westward across New Mexico and Arizona to the California line is 712 miles, of which about half is paved, the rest gravel roadways over the desert and through the Rocky Mountains. By the end of this year it is expected that the last stretch of the 178 miles across California to the Pacific will have been paved.

This great highway, 2,714 miles long, is the largest single piece of road building which has ever been undertaken since the days when the Caesars connected all of the outlying provinces of Europe with Imperial Rome by roads, some of which have lasted to this day and are still main thoroughfares of commerce. When it is finished it will have cost upward of \$110,000,000, provided by the states, counties and municipalities, and by the United States Govern-

ment. As every other great road does, the Old Spanish Trail is opening up new vistas to settlements, to industry and to development. Until it was cut through from Jacksonville west, five years ago, few tourists to Florida ever saw the lovely rolling country of West Florida, the hills and rivers and coastline vistas that lie between Tallahassee and the beautiful city of Pensacola, which with its magnificent harbor and new rail connections northward is rapidly capturing its ancient importance as a seaport. And so, all along its route, the growing tide of motor tourists following the Old Spanish Trail is discovering and spreading the news to the rest of the world that in this South and Southwest there are op-

portunities and beauties which few had ever realized existed.

Carteret County Irish potato growers report an average price of \$4.25 a barrel for their crop this season and say they made some money. They lost heavily, however, with cucumbers and snap beans.

Dean I. J. Schaub, head of the school of agriculture at State College says that every farmer and farm woman in North Carolina has a cordial invitation to attend Farm and Home Week exercises at State College, July 29 to August 1. Over 2,000 persons were present last summer.

## SPECIAL NOTICES

FOR SALE—Frick Sawmill outfit, and Edger. Good condition and almost new. Price right. Anyone interested see D. H. Shore, Blowing Rock, N. C. 6-26-11.

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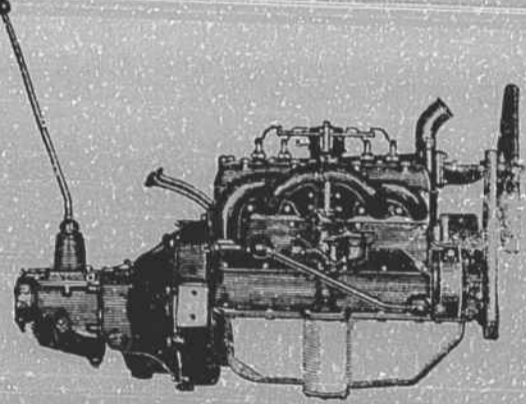
New Ford engine gives outstanding acceleration, speed and power without sacrificing reliability or economy

THE good performance of the Ford car, so apparent on every highway, is due largely to the sound mechanical design of the engine.

It has outstanding acceleration, speed and power, yet that is only part of its value to you. Greater still is the fact that it brings you all these features without sacrificing either reliability or economy.

That is the reason the Ford car has given such satisfactory service to millions of motorists all over the world and has been chosen by so many large companies that keep accurate cost figures. In every detail of construction it has been carefully planned and made for the work it has to do.

The design of the compression chamber is an important factor in the efficiency of the Ford engine. It is built to allow free passage of gases through the valves and to thoroughly mix the fuel



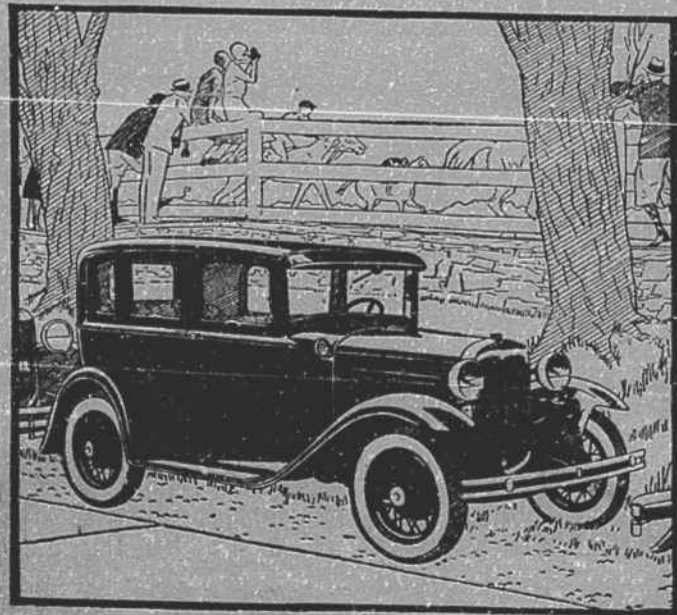
by producing turbulence within the cylinders during compression. The spark thus flashes quickly through the whole fuel charge, resulting in quieter and more effective engine performance. Other factors are the direct gravity gasoline feed, the specially designed carburetor, the new hot-spot manifold, aluminum pistons, chrome silicon alloy valves of larger diameter, statically and dynamically balanced crankshaft and flywheel, the simplicity of the electrical, cooling, lubrication, and fuel systems and accuracy in manufacturing.

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# LISTEN, FOLKS!

## There's Another Big, Old-Time Fiddlers Convention

TO BE PULLED OFF IN Boone, July 4th and 5th IN THE EVENINGS

We are expecting a large army of old-time fiddlers and dancers and a big time is awaiting you. Prizes will be given in keeping with the attendance, so tune up your old fiddle and rosin up your bow and meet us in Boone on the 4th and 5th for a big time.

The money derived from this convention will go to the Izaak Walton League of this county, for the purpose of preserving the wild life of this region. Prizes will be given to all contestants in keeping with the decision of the judges. There will be contests for fiddlers, guitar and banjo and dancers.

We are expecting some bands from other counties and states and feel confident that we will have some of the finest music that has ever been pulled off at a fiddlers convention in this county.

For further information communicate with either member of the following committee.

- W. H. GRAGG,
  - J. W. BRYAN,
  - G. H. WINKLER,
- Committee for Izaak Walton League