

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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Traveling With Fr. Garces

A Record of Travels in Arizona and California 1775 and 1776, by Father Francisco Garces, has been published by John Howell Books, San Francisco. This famous account by an intrepid missionary-explorer has not been made available in English since 1900, when the now scarce edition of Elliot Coues was published. The forthcoming edition will be new in all respects.

It is based on a Spanish manuscript different from the one translated by Goues; it magnificently illustrated with six full-color plates and more in black and white; and it features a new map that clearly shows the route of Garces' travels, as well as a map drawn by Pedro Font with Garces' assistance, we are told in introduction.

The missionary began his remarkable journey on October 23, 1775, when Anza and his soldiers left the garrison post at Tubac, near present-day Nogales in Arizona, and proceeded north to the Gila River, then west to the mouth of the Colorado on the Gulf of California before returning to Yuma. He then moved north to the Mohave; west to San Gabriel Mission (Los Angeles); north again to a point east of Tulare Lake to the San Joaquin Valley; and south to San Miguel (Bakersfield).

From here set off for the Colorado once more and followed it to the Grand Canyon. He was the first white man to approach the Canyon from the west. Next he traveled to Oraibe, in Pueblo country, and returned to the Mohave and to Yuma before arriving finally at his mission of San Xavier del Bac, south of Tucson, on September 17, 1776. The mission of San Xavier del Bac is also known as "The Dove in the Desert", and is one of the most beautiful of all the missions I have seen.

The main purpose of Garces' 2000-mile journey was to discover what Indians were ready to receive religious instruction and to become subjects of Spain. However, he was also looking for an overland route that would link the Colorado River Country with Monterey and San Francisco, and his detailed observations make his account a landmark in the history of that wide region.

A Record of Travels in Arizona and California has been designed and printed with customary excellence by Lawton and Alfred Kennedy. It is beautifully bound in decorated cloth, with the title in gilt on the spine. There

are approximately 150 pages, size 9x13 inches, it is an extremely handsome volume. Published in an edition of 1250 copies, the price is \$7.50 by John Howell-Books, 434 Jost Street, San Francisco 2.