

El Camino Real (King's Highway) was aptly named

El Camino Real — the King's Highway! That's what it was all about in 1776.

The West Coast developed during that period mainly through a network of missions each about a day's ride from the next. This chain proved to be Spain's last stronghold in the New World.

Eusebio Francisco Kino, the priest who first envisioned these missions, also dreamed of a road that would link Mexico and Monterey. Wealthy Spanish patrons made large contributions to a "Pious Fund," which provided adequate financial support to construct the Jesuit missions and the connecting road. But this support was short-lived, and the Jesuit missions in Baja were handed over to Franciscan padres, led by Junipero Serra.

Expensive military establishments were also founded to guard against Russian and English invasion. The religious zeal of the Franciscans caused a conflict between the military and the padres. Attempts to convert the natives often presented problems, and these efforts were sometimes hampered even further by the soldiers, who were known to rape women and shoot anyone who tried to stop them.

After many complaints by Serra regarding the soldiers' behavior, something was finally done — Spanish colonists and brides for the soldiers were sent north, in hopes of settling them down.

At Serra's headquarters in Carmel, he made plans for future missions and received news from those already established. Serra, nicknamed the "Gray Ox" because of his unending travels between the missions, never tired

of his work. When he died in 1784, Fermín Francisco de Lasuen continued the work and in 18 years of service founded nine more missions, bringing the chain to its height.

The road that connected the missions, stringing mainly along a coastal route, began as a well-defined Indian foot path. The first white men to walk over it were Portola and his men.

Padres imported the necessary implements to build the missions along the road, which in some places remained no more than a trail. The money and land used to build the highway belonged to the King of Spain, and it was the route on which the king's messengers traveled. Thus, the name "The King's Highway."

The governor at Monterey sent mail and reports to the viceroy at Mexico City. Strong, slight, carefully chosen men rode day after

day with little rest down the long trail to Loreto in Lower California, where a ship waited. It carried a sack of mail from the Viceroy in Mexico City for the missions and presidios. After the exchange of mail, the king's messenger jumped on a fresh horse and galloped off with the mail sack from the ship.

As the number of missions increased and pueblos grew larger, more and more travel occurred on El Camino Real. Men on horseback could travel about 30 miles a day. Travelers sometimes camped at night, sleeping out-of-doors. But more than likely they tried to reach one of the missions where one or two rooms were reserved for guests. After a good supper and a comfortable rest — all for free — they continued their journey the next morning.

In addition to the main highway, other trails developed. A hoofbeaten path in the East Bay meandered through shoulder-high mustard fields and among oak groves to easy crossings of arroyos at Alameda, San Leandro and San Lorenzo creeks. That part of the King's Highway led from Mission Santa Clara across the mudflats to the Higuera adobe, on to Warm Springs, Mission San Jose, Vallejo's Mill, to the ranchos of Soto, Castro, and Estudillo, and then to the Perilla Ranch stretching from East Oakland to El Cerrito. Another trail led north from San Francisco Bay to Fort Ross.

This Bicentennial year, El Camino Real continues to be a busy thoroughfare. It was through the growth and development of this road and the missions that California became one of the most prosperous areas in the United States.

In 1776, San Francisco was born

The year 1776 was not only important for the United States, it marked the beginning of San Francisco.

The founding of San Francisco can be called the work of Juan de Anza and Viceroy Bucarelli y Ursula, even though Lt. Moraga and Fa-

thera Palou and Cambon actually led the settlers to the site.

For Alta California to be occupied, a practical land route had to be found. For this purpose Viceroy Bucarelli selected Captain de Anza, whose father and

grandfather had both served the King as frontier captains on the rim of civilization. Juan's father had been famous for a "flying company," the fastest fighting men of their time.

In January 1774, de Anza blazed a trail from Sonora to California through the lower Colorado basin with expert soldiers from his own "flying company." From there they continued on to Monterey and San Francisco Bay. De Anza had now found a way to California by land, a 2,000-mile trip on horseback.

De Anza, now a colonel, returned to Mexico promising adventurers a bright future in a new golden land. In October 1775 decked in a colorful cape and plumed hat, he led a party of 240 people, 140 pack mules, 340 horses and more than 300 beef cattle. After traveling 130 days over craggy hills and deserts, they arrived at San Gabriel Mission.

Finally reaching Monterey and settling his people, de Anza and a small party hurried up the peninsula through forests of redwood trees and oaks. At the narrow entrance of the bay they found an excellent spot for a presidio. From this rocky point one could see ships at sea long before they reached the narrows. In the distance they saw small barren islands.

Having chosen the site for San Francisco's beginnings, de Anza started back, traveling around the southern

arm of the bay. On March 30 he camped on the banks of the Guadalupe River near present-day Agnew. The next day he came into Alameda County, crossed the creek at Niles, which map-makers later called Mission Boulevard, and spent the night near San Lorenzo Creek at the base of the Hayward hills. From there he continued on to Antioch. Returning to Monterey, he cut across the Livermore and San Antonio valleys, through the narrow pass at Coyote Canyon and marshy Gilroy Valley.

De Anza had hoped to conduct the colonists personally to San Francisco, but bitter resentments prevented it. In mid-April he turned the settlers over to the command of Moraga, who led them on a 10-day journey up the peninsula.

On June 27, 1776, just a week before the Declaration of Independence was signed, Moraga halted along the lagoon that de Anza called Arroyo de los Dolores, which was selected as the site for the mission because of fine water, good pasturage, and abundance of fuel. This would be the base from which to build the presidio at Fort Point, also chosen by de Anza.

While a pack train returned to Monterey for more provisions, Moraga and his men moved from Dolores to Fort Point, here they constructed tule huts while erecting their more permanent homes.

Work continued at the presidio. "A square measuring 92 varas each Ay was marked out for it, with divisions for church, royal offices, warehouses, guard house, and houses for the soldier settlers, a map of the plan being formed and drawn by the first pilot."

By the middle of September the soldiers had a village of log houses with flat roof; the commander had a log residence and office, and the warehouse of the same materials was finished.

Soon the mission took form. The formal dedication of the presidio was Sept. 17.

San Francisco, the northwestern outpost of Spain's great empire, was at last on the map. Those early frontiersmen established a nucleus of civilization on the land by the Golden Gate that is the monument today.

The way it was

May 10
The New York Provincial Congress requires all males between 16 and 50 who left the city after June 1, 1775, to return immediately with arms and accoutrements.

May 11
Benjamin Franklin, beset by illness and pessimistic over American prospects in Canada, decides to return home from Montreal, accompanied by John Carroll.

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...A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE!

It was 1885 when the first Navlet Nursery and Seedstore was opened by an emigrant Frenchman, Charles C. Navlet, in the small country town of San Jose. The modest beginning mushroomed, and by 1923, nurseries and seedstores were in nearby Sunnyvale, San Francisco and Oakland. A nephew, Arthur E. Navlet, concentrated his efforts in the Oakland store, expanding the fame and reputation of Navlet's Oakland as a nursery, seedstore and florist into cities of mid-western United States by mail-order catalogue.

In 1957, Arthur Navlet, wishing to retire and devote his time to travel, interested a young nurseryman, veteran of WWII service, to carry on and perpetuate the name of NAVLET'S. True to tradition, a Navlet Nursery was opened in 1951 in Contra Costa Co., known as NAVLET'S CONCORD; in 1966 NAVLET'S DANVILLE was opened and in 1973 NAVLET'S FREMONT. These nurseries dot the surrounding areas of the home office and original store in Oakland, under the guidance of Bert A. Bertolero, President of the corporation, and according to the horoscope, more Navlet nurseries will appear as time marches on.

Throughout the years, Navlet's has always maintained its reputation as a seedstore; which only a very few years ago, seemed ridiculous. Why grow your own vegetables, when you could buy so much more advantageously at the super mart? However, life is a cycle, and the day has come that growing your own vegetables is again "the thing" because of the high cost of living. Navlet's is the only concern in the Bay Area that packages seed under its own label. Seed packaging is done twice a year at the Oakland store in very early Spring and Fall, with intermittent packaging throughout the year on specialties; thereby insuring the best in flower and vegetable seed in varieties best suited for the soils and climate of Alameda and Contra Costa County.

Tight inventory control is maintained at all Navlet nurseries, so that nursery stock rolls over at least five times per year. To our customers, this means getting the best. Nursery stock does not become potbound or degenerate, and all nursery items have a four month guarantee to grow. Mr. Lloyd Reeves, general manager, does all the nursery buying.

Navlet's is also proud of the fact that it has on its payroll, probably the largest number of California Certified Nurserymen, 31 to be exact. To inform you as to the qualifications for a California Certified Nurseryman, it is necessary to pass a 4 hour written examination given by the State office of the California Nurseryman's Association. It consists of four parts: a questionnaire on technical information; landscaping; identification of 150 shrubs and trees and a comprehensive questionnaire on insecticides, herbicides and fungicides. These CCN personnel are well equipped to give you accurate information on any of your gardening problems.

As you travel, the 17, 24, and 680 freeways to the Navlet nurseries, you find as managers Mr. H. Scott, better known as Scotty at the Oakland store, with a degree in entomology. Sonny Jones is at the Concord nursery; a camellia specialist, and 30 years experience in the nursery business; Tud Giantvalley is at Danville, with many years experience in park and nursery business. The Fremont Nursery, has a second generation Bertolero, Buzz Bertolero, as manager with a degree in horticulture from Cal Poly. Each manager has a qualified and well-trained crew that work with him in order to serve the Navlet customers in better gardening.

From left to right: Lita Gates, Mary Ann Silva, Buzz Bertolero, Dave White, Jim Bentkowski, Cindy Brown, Mike Halle, Nova Thompson, Roy Milligan, Cathy Murphy, Ron Wallace and Alvin...

Jim Bentkowski, one of the many Navlet's experts, helps a customer choose the right plant for her need.

On the left (front to rear): Rosellen Perona, Linda Peterson, Jerry Perez and Scott Robertson. On the right: Tud Giantvalley, Carl Gartung, Ruth Tosh, Eddie Morgan and Ron Galman.