



White Dove of the Desert

HISTORICAL SURVEY

THE FIRST FRIARS

The first Franciscan Friars to reach the Indian tribes at the Colorado-Gila junction were Juan de la Asuncion and Pedro Nadal. The following year, in 1539, Friar Marcos de Niza passed through the Pima Indian country. Upon his recommendation an expedition headed by Coronado was sent to make a complete conquest of this territory. This expedition, however, proved a failure.

A GREAT MAN

Little was accomplished in these parts until

1692, when Father Kino, the Jesuit missionary, appeared on the scene. He journeyed as far north as the Village Bac, preaching to the Indians.

THE FIRST MISSION

After several short visits to the Pima Indians, Father Kino laid the foundations for the first mission. The site of his church was on the bank of the Santa Cruz River, one mile northeast of the present San Xavier Mission. About the year 1724 a resident Jesuit missionary completed the first mission church.

EXPULSION

In 1767 the Jesuit Fathers were expelled from all Spanish possessions. They were succeeded in *Primeria Alta* by the Franciscan Friars.

THE CITY OF TUCSON

The first Franciscan sent to take charge of San Xavier Mission was Friar Garces. He erected the first church in the city of Tucson and dedicated it to St. Joseph. A fort was built and with the cooperation of the soldiers the city was surrounded with a wall. Friar Garces is the founder of Tucson.

THE SECOND MISSION

Father Kino, S. J., we said before, laid the foundations for the first mission church. The second, a temporary structure, was erected by the Friars. The site chosen was to the rear of the present mission.

THE THIRD MISSION

The present mission, San Xavier del Bac—The White Dove of the Desert—is the third mission church.

THE ARCHITECTS

The Friars invited the famous Architects, the Guiona Brothers, to make the plans for the new church and to assist them in directing the Indians in the construction of this magnificent edifice. San Xavier del Bac is the best example we have of pure mission style.



PADRE GARCES

A PRACTICAL SUGGESTION

It was Friar Garces who advised the Indians to move from the low, unhealthy site of the first mission to the present location.

DEDICATION

The White Dove of the Desert was probably dedicated in the year 1797. This date was found engraven on the sacristy door.

DESERTED

In 1826 the Franciscans were forced to desert the Arizona Missions. It is a sad story.

Epidemics carried off nearly all of the old Mission Indians. Papagos came in their place and live near the Mission to this day.

THE RETURN OF THE FRIARS

In 1912 the Franciscan Friars were invited by Bishop Granjon of the Tucson Diocese to take over this Mission again and to look after the spiritual needs of the Papago Indians. They accepted the invitation.

The Sisters of St. Joseph (Carondolet, Mo.) have charge of the school for Indian children.

The present happy condition of the Papagos must be ascribed to the hard work and zeal of the Friars and Sisters.

OUR FUTURE

The upkeep of this wonderful mission church is dependent on the free-will offerings of the tourists and on the charity of the benefactors. There is no steady income of any kind.

We ask God, therefore, to bless our friends and the friends of this great monument of mission activity, San Xavier del Bac—The White Dove of the Desert.



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