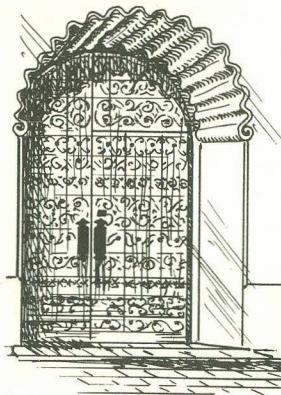


# Tumacacori

NATIONAL MONUMENT • ARIZONA





# Tumacacori NATIONAL MONUMENT

*A typical old mission church which illustrates Spanish colonial endeavor and commemorates the introduction of Christianity into what is now southern Arizona.*

**T**O HOLD the far-flung frontiers of the New Spain of 250 years ago, in South and Central America and Mexico, and to bring Christian civilization to hundreds of native tribes, Spain sent soldiers and missionary priests into the wilderness. Missions were founded among the settled tribes, and presidios (military posts) were set up on the borders of the hostile tribes. The frontier missions were both churches and centers of European culture and civilization. By such means, the outlying provinces of Spanish America were extended and secured.

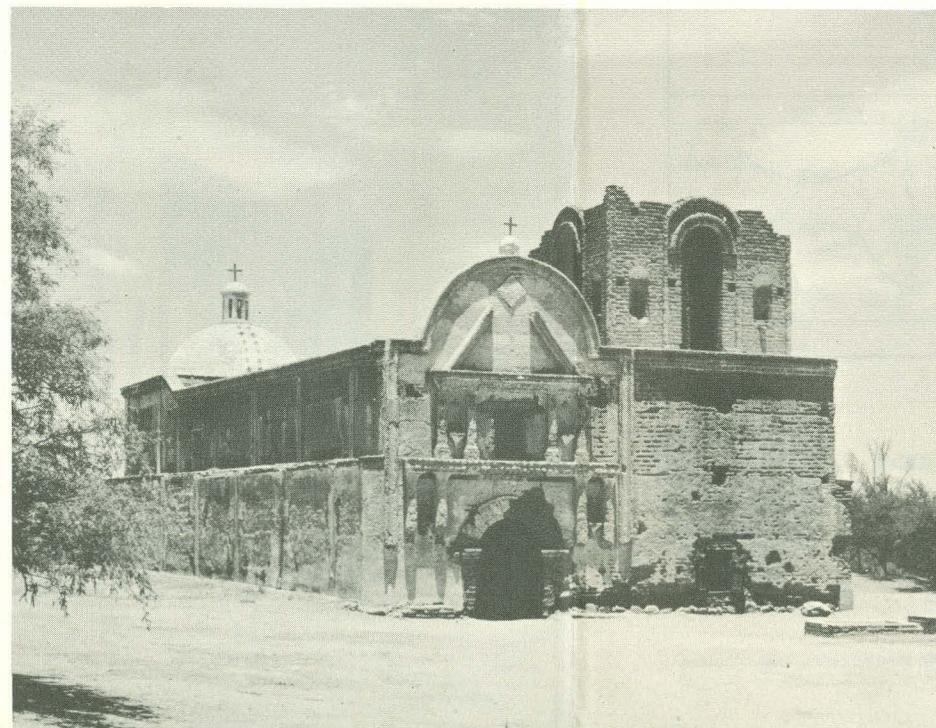
The mission of San Jose de Tumacacori was a northern outpost of a mission chain constructed by Franciscan priests in the late 1700's, in what was then the Mexican Province of Sonora. As a reminder that Spain was active on the frontier in the Southwest long before the United States became a nation, Tumacacori remains today an inspiring symbol of the faith, courage, and vigor of the early missionary priests and of the great loyalty and devotion of the Indian converts.

## Father Kino and His Work

One of the greatest missionaries was Father Eusebio Francisco Kino, a Jesuit, who introduced European culture to this region. He founded his first Sonora mission in 1687, and

explored and mapped the Upper Pima Indian country in what is now southern Arizona and northern Sonora, Mexico. Wherever he went, he spread the Christian doctrine, gained friends among the Indians, and established missions. He initiated ranching on this frontier by introducing cattle and other livestock. To such beginnings some of our thriving modern towns owe their existence.

## Mission church prior to stabilization



## Tumacacori History

Father Kino came first into what is now southern Arizona in 1691, when he visited, at the request of the inhabitants, the small Sobaipuri Indian village of San Cayetano de Tumacacori, thought to be located within a few miles of the present mission. He said Mass under a brush shelter built by the Indians for that purpose. By 1698, according to Father Kino, Tumacacori had an "earth-roofed house of adobe," fields of wheat, and herds of cattle, sheep, and goats. At every opportunity he and his successors visited Tumacacori to hold services and to encourage ranching and farming. When a missionary was assigned to Guebavi, to the southeast, Tumacacori became a *visita* of that mission, that is, a place where the missionaries went and occasionally held services. After the Pima Rebellion of 1751, the village was moved to the site where the mission now stands and was renamed San Jose de Tuma-

caci. A small mission was erected here and a presidio was established at Tubac, 3 miles north of Tumacacori.

The Jesuits were expelled from all Spanish dominions in 1767, and the following year the Franciscan Order took over the Sonora mission chain. In 1773, because of Apache Indian raids, Guebavi was abandoned and San Jose de Tumacacori became the headquarters mission of the district. Apparently, final building of the present church did not start until nearly 1800, and it was in use by 1822.

Mexico had won her independence from Spain in 1821, even before completion of the church. This change in government brought about abandonment of most of the frontier missions. The new government was unable to provide adequate military defense against hostile Indians. Mexico passed laws tending to weaken the power of the church, and mission churches were required to become parish churches. The close of the mission-building

## Diorama in the monument museum



period was further hastened when Mexico ended the Spanish custom of providing government money for mission aid.

Exactly when the last resident priest left Tumacacori is not known, although this area was under the jurisdiction of a priest as late as 1841. We do know that after the Spanish settlers, soldiers, and priests departed, frequent Apache raids made life there almost impossible. In 1844, Mexico sold the Tumacacori mission lands to a private citizen. When the devout Indians finally left Tumacacori in 1848, they carried the church furnishings with them to the mission of San Xavier, near Tucson, where some of the statues are still used.

The church, deserted, slowly began to fall into ruins. Damage by treasure hunters and thoughtless persons gradually wrought havoc with the beautiful structure, until only its massiveness preserved it from complete destruction.

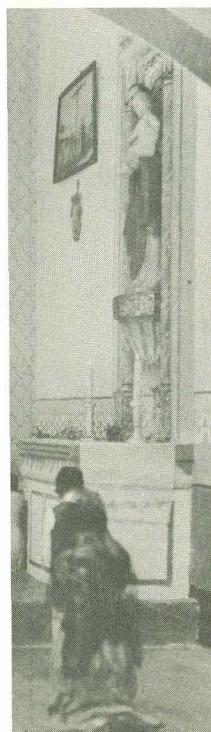
### *The Mission Buildings*

Various old descriptions and drawings of Tumacacori exist. These show the buildings to have been arranged with the long axis of the church running north and south. To the east was a closed courtyard, surrounded by arcades and rooms; here were the quarters of the priests, storerooms, workshops, granaries, and classrooms.

North of the church is the cemetery where many Christian Indians lie buried. An unfinished circular mortuary chapel dominates this area. After abandonment, the cemetery was often used as a roundup corral. Grave mounds of the mission period have long since been destroyed by weather, milling cattle, and treasure hunters. Today, the visible grave mounds are those of later Mexican-American burials.

The church still stands, although the courtyard structures long ago fell almost entirely into ruin. In 1921, some repair work was

### *The monument patio*



done to the old buildings and walls to protect them against weather; a new roof was placed over the long nave, and lesser repairs were made to other portions. Repair work since that date has been limited entirely to preserving existing original construction.

Today, you may examine in great detail the features of this stately old building, seeing the many interesting structural elements of the baroque architecture and the faded but original colors which the Indian workmen applied. The unfinished bell tower of burned brick speaks eloquently of how the last Franciscans tried in vain to complete the church.

#### The Monument

Tumacacori National Monument was established by Presidential proclamation in 1908. It no longer has connection with any religious order. The monument, containing 10 acres of land, is one of several areas in the National Park System which are connected with Spanish exploration and settlement in the Southwest. Gran Quivira National Monument, N. Mex., is the only other area in the System which deals primarily with Spanish mission history.

#### How To Reach the Monument

Tumacacori National Monument, 48 miles south of Tucson and 18 miles north of Nogales on U. S. 89, is readily accessible by oiled road throughout the year. Buslines plying between both cities pass several times daily. The nearest rail connections and commercial airport are in Tucson.

#### About Your Visit

The principal features of the area are the mission church and the museum. The monument is open daily throughout the year, from 9 a. m. to 5 p. m. The museum and church

are self-guiding. A member of the National Park Service staff is available to answer questions. The admission charge for each adult is 25 cents; children under 12 and organized school groups of 12 through 18 years are admitted free. Those who plan to visit in a group may receive special service if advance arrangements are made with the superintendent.

The museum and monument office are in a Spanish-type building adjacent to the parking area. Constructed in the Sonora mission style, it houses exhibits showing early Indian and Spanish history. Maps, dioramas, drawings, and photographs bring to life the days when Tumacacori flourished. A patio garden and fountain are part of the museum grounds.

Sales literature dealing with mission history and natural history of the region is available in the museum lobby.

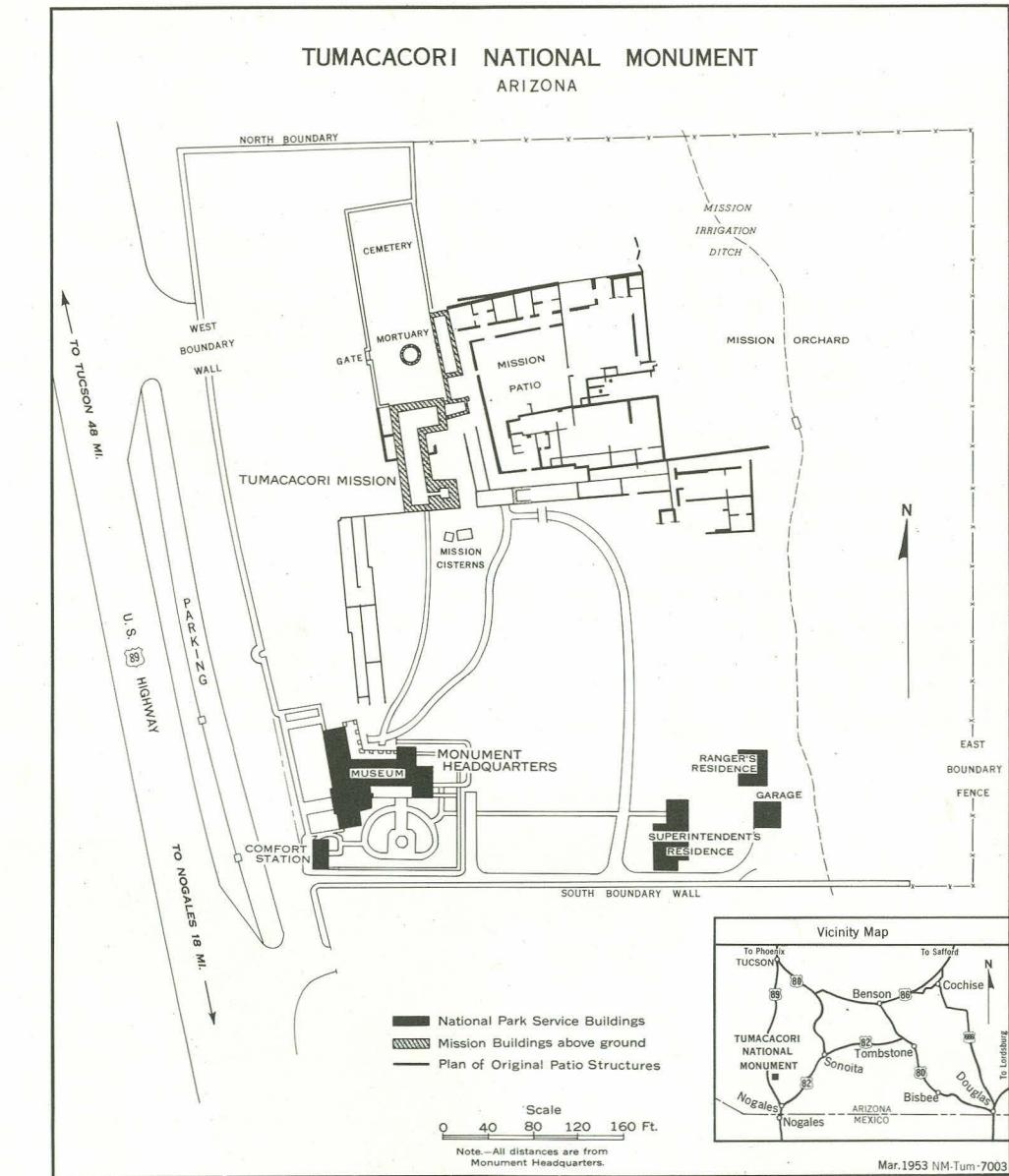
Picnic grounds are found nearby; but no campgrounds. There are cafes, but no overnight accommodations, in the immediate neighborhood. Nogales has several hotels, tourist courts, and restaurants. During the winter season of peak travel, those who desire lodging in Nogales should be there by early afternoon.

No real extremes of heat or cold normally occur here, but if you visit here in winter, you should bring warm clothing. During years of normal rainfall, local vegetation blooms in early spring and late summer; most species of cactus and yucca bloom from March through May.

#### Administration

Tumacacori National Monument is administered by the National Park Service of the United States Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is Tumacacori, Ariz., is in immediate charge.

The National Park System, of which this area is a unit, is dedicated to conserving the scenic, scientific, and historic heritage of the United States for the benefit and enjoyment of its people.



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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

Douglas McKay, Secretary

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, Conrad L. Wirth, Director

Cover: View of the mission from the south

