

**THE KING'S HIGHWAY: A  
ROMANCE OF THE  
FRANCISCAN ORDER  
IN ALTA CALIFORNIA**

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The King's Highway: A Romance of the Franciscan Order in Alta California by Madeline Deaderick Willard

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**MADLINE DEADERICK WILLARD**

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# The King's Highway

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A Romance of  
The Franciscan Order  
in Alta California

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By MADELINE DEADERICK WILLARD

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Photo by H. E. Roberts

The Ruined Church of Juan Capistrano To day

## The King's Highway

### CHAPTER I

#### The Coming of Don Miguel

**O**N a yellow autumn day in the year of Our Lord 1806, Don Miguel first came to San Juan Capistrano, and the miracle of his coming was so great that for years it rivalled in popularity the stories of the saints and the outlaws. For where there is not only a miracle, but a mystery also, the thing is not forgotten soon. And so it was with Don Miguel, for the story of his coming reads like a page from some old romance.

September was always a glorious month in Alta California, and in the year 1806, the saints had not decreed otherwise. Over sleepy San Juan valley drifted a faint, gold mist that blended the kaleidoscopic colors of tawny hills, blue sea-water and green meadows into a delicious maze like the tones in a cathedral window. Across the green floor of the upper valley mottled sycamores trailed like slim, gray snakes, the yellow glory of their fallen leaves below them. Farther down