



TUMACÁCORI

OVERVIEW



MISSIONS OF TUMACÁCORI NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK

San Jose de Tumacacori Mission site, Tumacacori, AZ.

Calabazas Mission site, Rio Rico, AZ.

Guevavi Mission site, Nogales, AZ.

Jeremy M. Moss

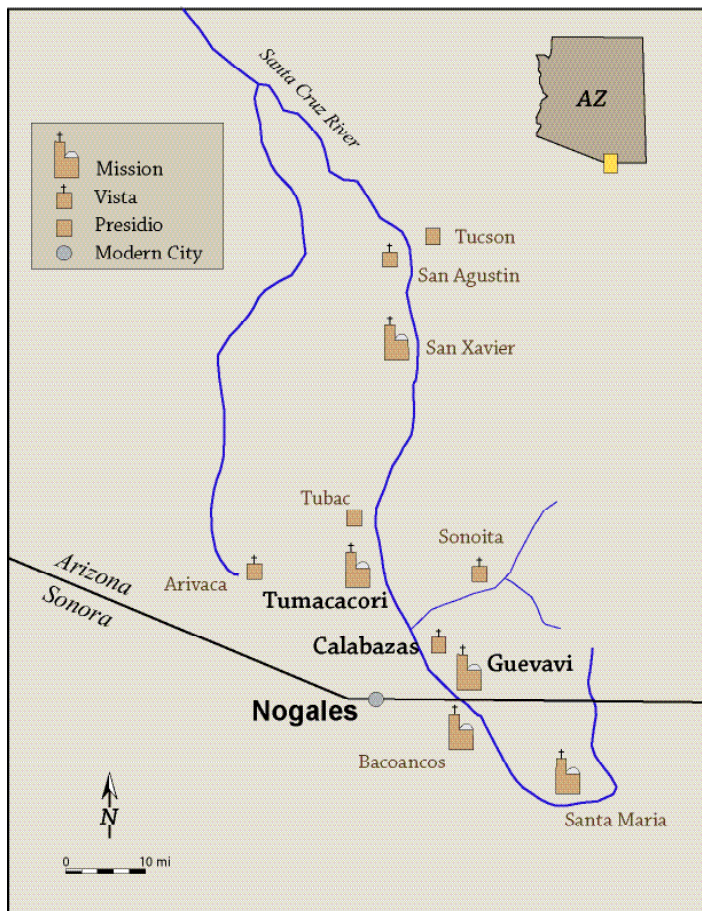
Tumacacori NHP is located in the fertile Santa Cruz River valley, which stretches from northern Mexico into southern Arizona. The park, located 48 miles south of Tucson, Arizona and 12 miles north of the U.S./Mexico border, lies in an area that has been occupied for at least 12,000 years. There are over 4,000 archaeological sites in the Santa Cruz watershed. Archaeological sites within the Santa Cruz River Valley include prehistoric sites, historic Pima-Papago

and Apache sites, Spanish Colonial sites, and Anglo ranching and mining sites.

Tumacacori NHP is comprised of three Spanish mission sites, Calabazas, Guevavi and Tumacacori. At each site Spanish Colonial mission churches and their associated ruins are protected, preserved and interpreted by the National Park Service. Calabazas is located 9 miles south of Tumacacori, while Guevavi is located 3 miles south of Calabazas near Nogales, Arizona. Tumacacori NHP has great significance as one of the oldest outposts of European civilization in the United States. Tumacacori, Calabazas and Guevavi were economically and religiously connected settlements.

In 1691, Father Eusebio Kino arrived in what was to become southern Arizona to begin establishing mission settlements. The first Spanish missions in the Southwest were operated by the Jesuit Order of the Roman Catholic Church. The goals of the Spanish mission system were to create a self-sufficient community, convert local Indians to the Catholic religion, and generate revenue for Spain.

The Spanish Colonial system divided missions into two classes, the cabecera or head mission where priests lived, and visitas where a priest would visit but did not usually reside. Cabeceras typically had churches, but at visitas churches were only built if there was extra time and money. Both types of missions were established at Indian villages. The mission grounds were an institutionalized landscape with a highly defined spatial pattern that divided and separated land for religious use, priest quarters, spe-



Missions of the Santa Cruz River Valley, including the three missions of Tumacacori N.H.P.



Overview - Missions Of Tumacácori N.H.P.

cialized work areas, Christianized Indian quarters, mission agricultural/live-stock lands, orchards and irrigation ditches (acequias).

The mission Indian population was mostly local O'odham Indians. Of the distinct O'odham groups identified by the Spanish most mission Indians were Sobaipuri, Papagos, and other Pimas. The Sobaipuri were Upper Piman Indians that lived along the Santa Cruz and San Pedro rivers. Some Sobaipuri's were relocated from the San Pedro Valley to the Santa Cruz Valley by the Spanish in the 18th century. As a distinct group the Sobaipuri are difficult to trace archaeologically. The Papago are linguistically related to the Pimans and historically there are few differences between the two groups. Native settlements consisted of large villages of mud and brush houses and numerous smaller scattered villages and extended family habitations. One of the unfortunate results of Spanish colonization was the 50-60% reduction of native populations due to infectious diseases such as small pox and measles. Disease often spread in waves ahead of the Spaniards, decimating native villages before Spaniards arrived.

Indian knowledge of the Jesuits preceded Father Kino's arrival by decades. In January 1691 a delegation from an Indian village requested that Father Kino visit the village of Tumacacori. The Spanish re-named this Indian village San Cayetano de Tumacacori. The village was located on the east side of the Santa Cruz River, opposite the present site of San Jose de Tumacacori. Unfortunately, the original site of San Cayetano de Tumacacori has not been located. It is difficult to identify the site archaeologically since there were many villages in the area during the time of Kino's arrival. Many archaeologists claim to know the location of the original site of San Cayetano de Tumacacori, but today the site remains elusive and difficult to identify.

Small adobe mission churches and adobe residences for priests were constructed at Tumacacori, Guevavi and Calabasas. Before the 20th century, adobe was the most common construction material in the western United States. Adobe is essentially mud mixed with sand and sometimes straw. Before the Spanish arrived, structures were built by adding handfuls of mud until walls were formed. The Spanish introduced wooden frames for making sun dried mud bricks, called adobes. Besides adobe frames, the Spanish also introduced new agricultural products, live-stock, and the Catholic religion. Local inhabitants previously relied on corn, beans, squash, wild plant gathering,

and hunting. With the addition of wheat, fruit trees, and livestock, the subsistence strategies and general life ways of native peoples changed, resulting in the unique mix of Native American and Spanish cultures seen today.

San Jose de Tumacacori Mission site, Tumacacori, AZ.

In November, 1751 the Pima Indians of southern Arizona revolted against Spanish oppression. Luis Oacpicagigua, a Spanish appointed captain general of the Pima, led a group of Pima Indians against the Spanish. Sixty-four years of Jesuit and Spanish presence had fundamentally changed native social, political, and religious organization, and had instituted a growing dependence on introduced non-native goods.

The Pima Revolt of 1751 is a landmark event in the history of Spanish-Indian relations in southern Arizona. It resulted in the consolidation of both Indian and Spanish populations. The Tumacacori Indian population was moved to the west side of the river to the present location of park headquarters and a presidio, or military post was established at Tubac, just four miles north of Tumacacori. With the establishment of the new Tumacacori the settlements' patron saint was changed and the site renamed San Jose de Tumacacori.

By 1757 a small adobe church measuring 60' by 20' was built at Tumacacori. The foundations of this church were



Mission San Jose de Tumacacori

Tumacacori N.H.P.

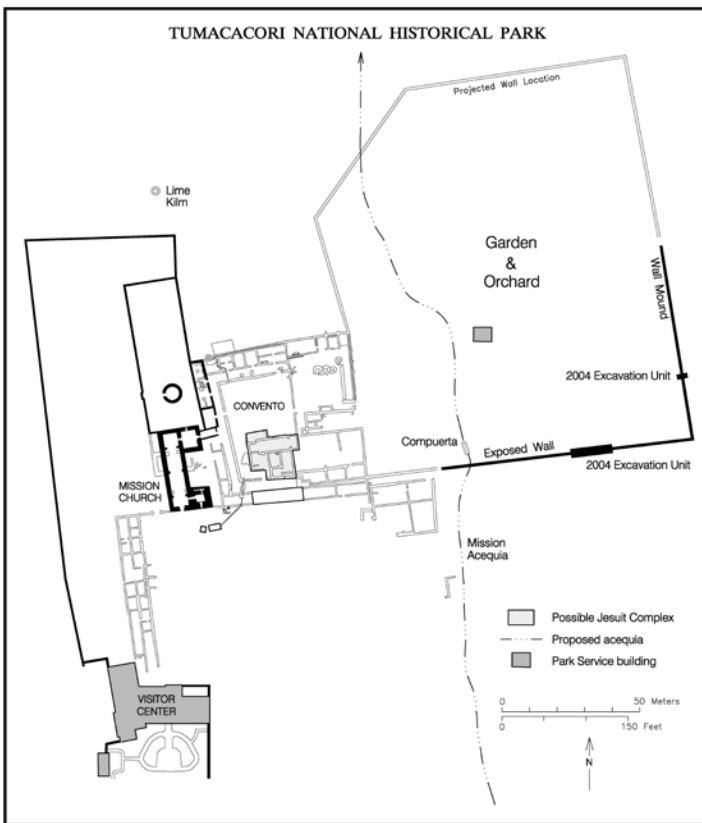


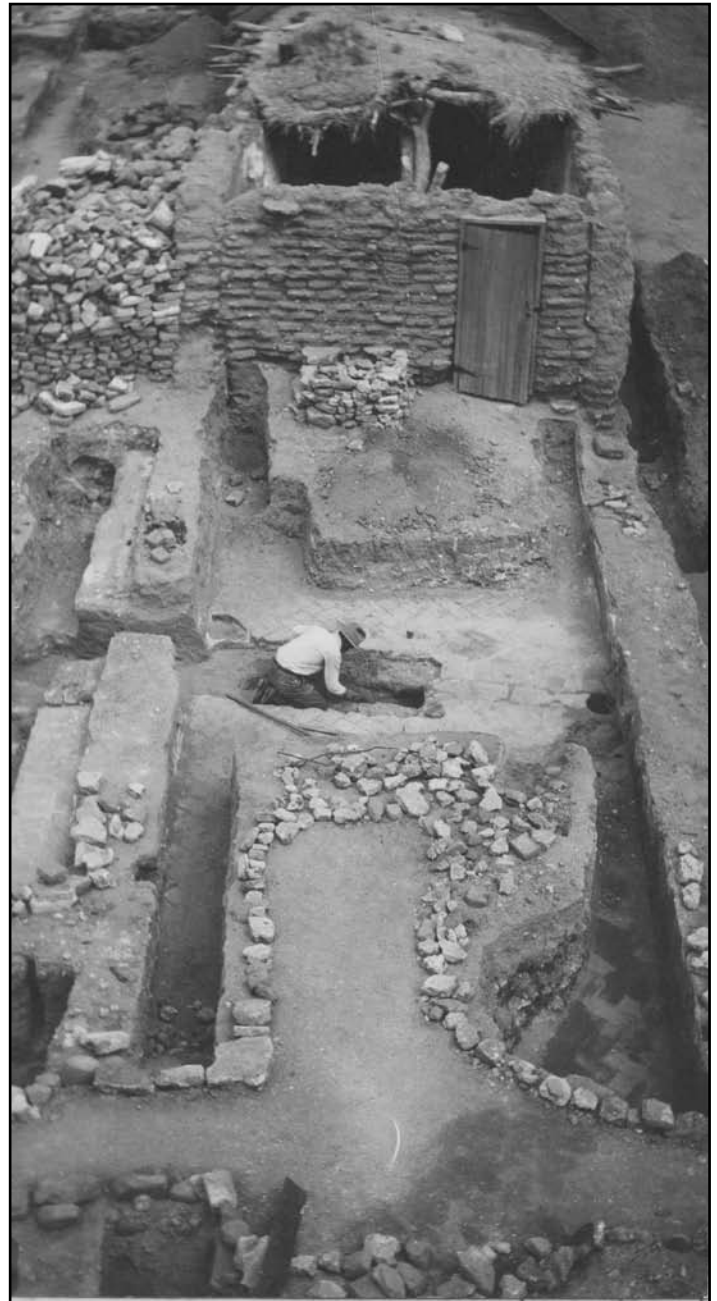
Figure 1: Archaeological Map of San Jose de Tumacacori

discovered in 1934 when NPS archaeologist Paul Beaubien excavated at Tumacacori (Figure 1). All foundations were made of large river cobbles while the walls were adobe bricks covered with lime plaster. In 1767 the Jesuit Order was expelled from the New World by the King of Spain due to accusations of greed and corruption, and the Jesuits' growing influence and weighty demands. The Franciscan Order took over in 1773, and Tumacacori was designated a cabecera, or main mission.

Tumacacori reached its architectural and religious zenith between the 1780's and 1828. Construction of the large Franciscan church began sometime between 1799 and 1802. The church was designed by architects from Spain, but the newly converted Pima and Papago Indians were the builders of the mission churches. The church was dedicated in 1822, but the two-story bell tower was never completed and construction continued intermittently until the last padres departed in 1841. Construction took so long due to a lack of funds and difficulties keeping a large labor force at the mission.

Paul Beaubien's excavations are the most extensive archaeological investigations at Tumacacori (1934-1935). After

Beaubien, small scale excavations were carried out periodically mostly associated with stabilization/preservation efforts and exposing features for interpretation. Beaubien's excavations revealed construction sequences of the Franciscan church, the priest quarters (convento), the room blocks housing newly converted Indians, and various domestic features. Beaubien's goal was to uncover all wall outlines and features outside of the Franciscan church so they could be mapped. Therefore, he only collected rare artifacts and did not screen the fill removed from rooms. Most of the rooms Beaubien excavated had previously been disturbed by treasure hunters looking for rumored Spanish gold and



Beaubien excavating in the convento in 1935.

Overview - Missions Of Tumacácori N.H.P.

silver. Treasure hunting has resulted in severe damage to the archaeological integrity of missions in the southwest.

There were two separate architectural elements associated with the mission church: the priest quarters with their associated work areas and the quarters for newly converted Indians (see Figure 1). The Franciscan convento, located near the east side of the church, formed a square and had a central plaza. Convento rooms were connected through a series of hallways that may have had arched columns. Work areas in the convento consisted of a bakery, a grain milling room, and three large metal smelting ovens called vasos. An open drain led from two square cisterns in front of the church through the convento, possibly continuing to the mission orchard. The function of the drain and cisterns is debated, but the drain was probably part of an open sewage system, similar to those used in ancient Rome. Just to the north of the convento are the remains of a lime kiln used to heat limestone that was processed into lime plaster. The plaster was used as a protective cover over the adobe brick walls.

The Indian quarters were less uniform and ornamental than the rooms in the convento. They were rectangular room blocks that extended to the south from the front of the church. There was a square enclosing wall that created a large open space or plaza where activities took place in front of the church.

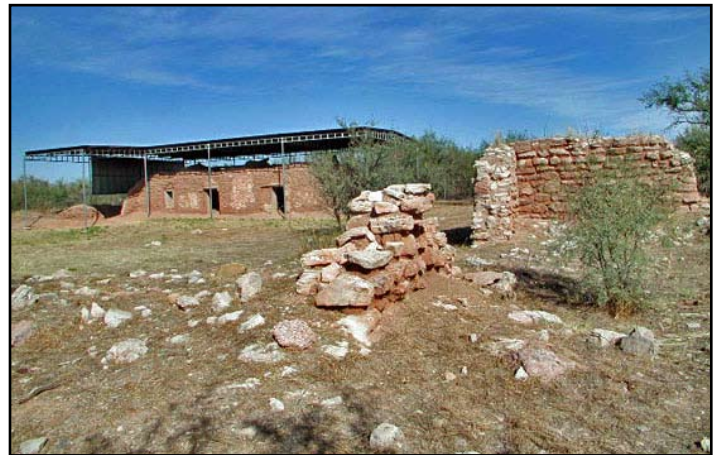
Beaubien's excavations also revealed that the church design had been altered during construction. Originally the church was to be cruciform. Beaubien uncovered the wall foundations for the east and west wings that were to form the cross shape. Due to a lack of funds the church design was modified into one long corridor, or nave, that lead to the sacristy and main altar. The sacristy has painted plasters that are highly iconographic and rarely preserved.

Throughout the life of the mission Apache attacks were a constant threat. The Apaches were one of the main factors influencing the longevity of missions in southern Arizona. San Jose de Tumacacori was abandoned during the harsh winter of 1848. No priests had visited in seven years and there was no military to protect the Indian population from Apache raiding. As the last Pima and Papago Indians fled Tumacacori some of the church's statues and religious items were collected and taken to San Xavier del Bac for safe keeping. Some of these religious objects can be seen

in the park visitor center.

Calabazas Mission site, Rio Rico, Arizona.

The complex archeological remains of Calabazas attest to its long diverse cultural history. Sometime during the 1750's the Jesuit Order founded Calabazas at the Indian village of Toacuquita. Calabazas was a visita of Guevavi and a church was completed in 1756. The following years brought turmoil in the form of disease epidemics and intense Apache raiding. By 1773 a small Franciscan church was completed and a cemetery established. Four years later the church and associated houses were burned by Apaches. The site was abandoned in 1786, and reoccupied in 1807, when the Jesuit adobe church was repaired by local Pimans under the supervision of Franciscan priests. The site served as the headquarters of a large cattle ranch serving the cabecera of San Jose de Tumacacori until 1830, when it was once again attacked and burned during an Apache raid. Calabazas was reoccupied as the hacienda of the Governor of Sonora in 1844. Later, the site served as the headquarters for two early United States Army posts in the 1850's and 1860's.



Ruins of San Cayetano de Calabazas.

The remains of Calabazas consist of eroded portions of the church measuring 60' X 13'. The remains of the adobe church are surrounded by a square stone wall foundation. No definite remains of the cemetery or of the Piman village have been located; however, small stone foundations found in a 1979 archaeological survey may be the remains of the Piman village. The adobe church was modified and reused in the 1850's and a block of adobe and masonry rooms was constructed, forming a square that incorporates the old church. The ruins of the adobe church stand 7 to 10' in height and are presently preserved by a metal shelter.

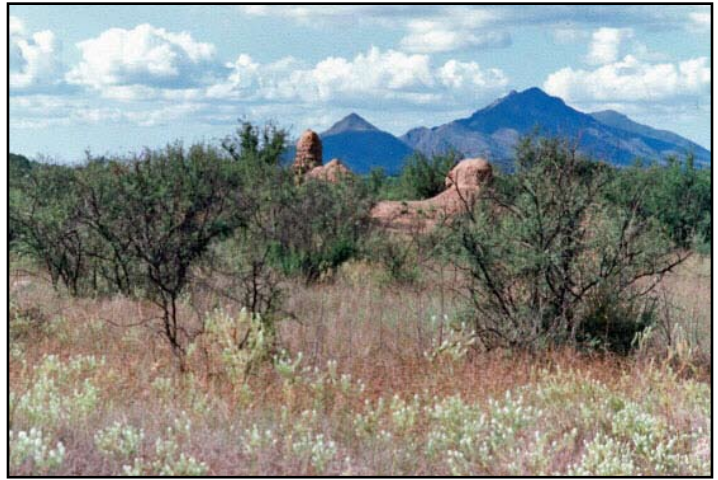
Guevavi Mission site, Nogales, Arizona.

Guevavi is significant because it is one of a few pure Jesuit sites with no later Franciscan intrusions or disturbances. Father Kino designated Guevavi a cabecera in 1701 with Tumacacori as one of its visitas. At that time a small church was built. A larger adobe church was constructed by 1751. The church measures 80'X 20'. A circular tower 20' in diameter is attached to the southeast corner of the church, probably as a watch tower. Excavations in 1992 show the church interior was plastered and stained red along the bottom of walls. This same red stain was found in rooms at Tumacacori that date to the Jesuit Period (1691-1767). Attached to the Guevavi mission church was convento rooms, forming a square with a central plaza, or open space. Guevavi became a visita of Tumacacori prior to 1770, and was completely abandoned by 1775. By 1926 nothing was left of Guevavi except a few fragments of walls and eroded trash mounds. Both Guevavi and Calabazas were difficult locations to defend from Apache attacks. They were both isolated from the military fort at Tubac, Arizona, and were constantly threatened.

Today small portions of the adobe mission church are preserved and Guevavi is considered one of the oldest remnants of the Jesuit Order in the United States. Guevavi is surrounded by sites dating from the Late Archaic period (2000 B.C. – A. D. 200) to historic times. Habitation sites dating to the late 19th and early 20th century are most common, suggesting that the area surrounding the Guevavi mission was a major focus of occupation during this time.

Public Outreach and Interpretation at Tumacacori NHP

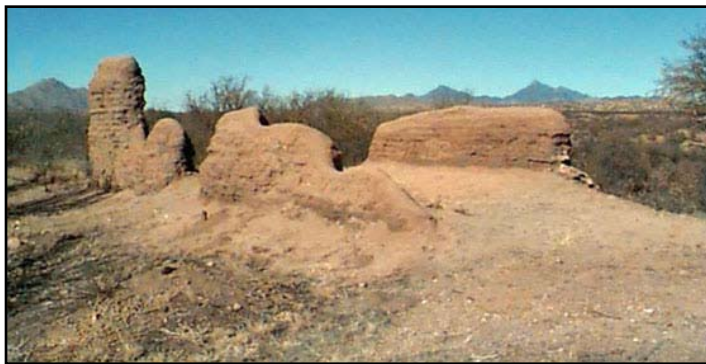
One of the goals of the park is to extend a message of preservation through environmental and cultural education. The park has school programs that are conducted at the park as well as programs brought to local and regional



Ruins of Los Santos Ángeles de Guevavi

schools. Staff members also give lectures at local community events. The visitor center has a small museum with interpretive exhibits and a trail leads visitors through the mission church, convento and cemetery of San Jose de Tumacacori. In addition, the Juan Bautista de Anza Historic Trail starts near the visitor center and extends along the Santa Cruz River for 4 miles to the Tubac Presidio State Park. It also leads south to the town of Rio Rico, Arizona.

Throughout the year the park hosts cultural events that celebrate local traditions and provide educational opportunities to the public. The park hosts an annual fiesta that brings together local musicians, folk-dancers, poets, scholars and food/craft vendors. The event takes place during the first weekend of December. It is a celebration of the unique cultural diversity of the region that provides an excellent opportunity to educate the public about aspects of Mexican American and Native American cultures. In addition, every Christmas Eve the mission church is donned with luminarias, which are candle lanterns. Luminarias are placed on the exterior and in the interior of the church, creating a luminous glowing church (Plate 2). This event is a local tradition that is practiced throughout the Southwestern U.S. By special use permits church masses and weddings are held in the main mission church.



Ruins of Los Santos Ángeles de Guevavi

The main mission church of San Jose de Tumacacori can be visited from 8am-5pm everyday of the year except Thanksgiving and Christmas. Guevavi and Calabazas are not open to the public. Tours of the sites are conducted during different times of the year. Interested parties should contact the park visitor center at (520)398-2341. Living history tours and lecture tours are conducted daily. The best time to visit the park is in the winter months.

Overview - Missions Of Tumacácori N.H.P.

References

Beaubien, Paul. Excavations at Tumacacori, 1934. Southwest Monuments Special Report No. 15. Tumacacori, AZ: National Park Service, 1937.

Burton, Jeffery F. Remnants of Adobe and Stone: The Surface Archeology of the Guevavi and Calabazas Units, Tumacacori National Historical Park, Arizona. Tucson, AZ: Western Archeological and Conservation Center, National Park Service, Publications in Anthropology 59, 1992.

Burton, Jeffery F. San Miguel de Guevavi: The Archeology of an Eighteenth

Century Jesuit Mission on the Rim of Christendom. Tucson, AZ: Western

Archeological and Conservation Center, National Park Service, Publications in Anthropology 57, 1992.



NPS Photo

Dobyns, Henry F. The Pima-Maricopa. New York and Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1989.

Horton, Tonia W. Tumacacori National Historical Park Cultural Landscape Documentation Study. Unpublished manuscript. On file at Tumacacori NHP, 1998.

Kessell, John L. Mission of Sorrows: Jesuit Guevavi and the Pimas, 1691-1767. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1970.

Kessell, John L. Franciscan Tumacacori 1767-1848: A Documentary History. San Francisco: National Park Service, Western Regional Office, 1972.

Matson, Daniel S. and Bernard L. Fontana. Before Rebellion: Letters and Reports of Jacobo Sedelmayer, S.J. Tucson: Arizona Historical Society, 1996.

Shenk, Lynette O. San Jose de Tumacacori: An Archaeological Synthesis and Research Design. Tucson, AZ: Arizona State Museum, University of Arizona, 1976.

Further Readings

Kessell, John L. Spain in the Southwest: A Narrative History of Colonial New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and California. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002.

Fontana, Bernard L., James E. Officer, and Mardith Schuetz-Miller, ed. The Pimeria Alta: Missions and More. Tucson, AZ: Southwest Mission Research Center, Arizona State Museum, University of Arizona, 1996.

Ortiz, Alfonzo, ed. Handbook of North American Indians: Southwest, Volume 10. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1983.

Rothman, Hal. America's National Monuments: The Politics of Preservation. 2nd edition. University Press of Kansas, 1989.

Underhill, Ruth M. The Papago and Pima Indians of Arizona. 2nd edition. Palmer Lake, CO: Filter Press, 2000.

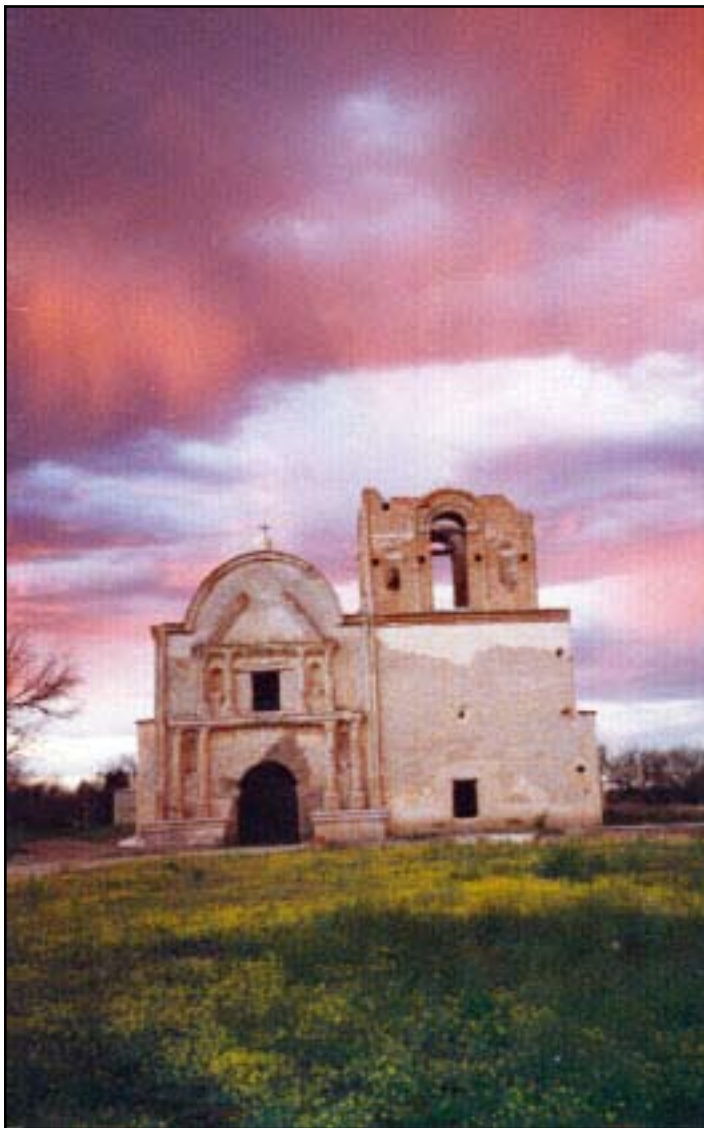


Photo Credit: Clar Speck