



Laboring in the Fields of the Lord: Spanish Missions and Southeastern Indians

JERALD T. MILANICH

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The missions of Spanish Florida are one of American history's best kept secrets. Between 1565 and 1763, more than 150 missions with names like San Francisco and San Antonio dotted the landscape from south Florida to the Chesapeake Bay. Drawing on archaeological and historical research, much conducted in the last 25 years, Milanich offers a vivid description of these missions and the Apalachee, Guale, and Timucua Indians who lived and labored in them. First published in 1999 by Smithsonian Institution Press, *Laboring in the Fields of the Lord* contends the missions were an integral part of Spain's La Florida colony, turning a potentially hostile population into an essential labor force. Indian workers grew, harvested, ground, and transported corn that helped to feed the colony. Indians also provided labor for construction projects, including the imposing stone Castillo de San Marcos that still dominates St. Augustine today. Missions were essential to the goal of colonialism. Together, conquistadors, missionaries, and entrepreneurs went hand-in-hand to conquer the people of the Americas. Though long abandoned and destroyed, the missions are an important part of our country's heritage. This reprint edition includes a new, updated preface by the author.

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