



Photouring Florida

By HAMPTON DUNN



SUGAR MILL OR MISSION RUINS, IT'S INTERESTING

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NEW SMYRNA BEACH --- A mile or so off U.S. 1 here is an interesting stone structure preserved by the State as a historic memorial.

Sometimes it is referred to as the ruins of the "Mission of Atocuimi." It is said to have been built by the Spaniards in the 1600s for the Jororo Indians. The mission was burned a few years later and when the British came along it was used as a sugar mill. In the 1830s a sugar mill was started here for the Depeyster and Cruger firm. The Indians put the torch to it during their war with the white man.

A brochure issued by the State Parks explains: "Mrs. Jeannette Thurber Connor and her husband, Washington E. Connor, thoughtfully and reverently purchased the site of the Cruger and Depeyster ruins in 1893 and deeded it to the Florida State Historical Society in 1928. They believed the ruins to be the remains of an old Spanish mission, converted into a sugar mill. This error is understandable as the well-formed arches could well grace a church, a chapel or a mission."

Part of the history of the mission is that in 1696 the Indians rebelled against an order of Fray Luis Sanchez, a priest, who forbade their observance of certain tribal customs. The priest and two of his Indian converts were slain and the church ornaments were stolen.

The sugar mill ruins which remain today are of native coquina rock. One of th the iron kettles is still around and the "walking beam" of the engine remains.

