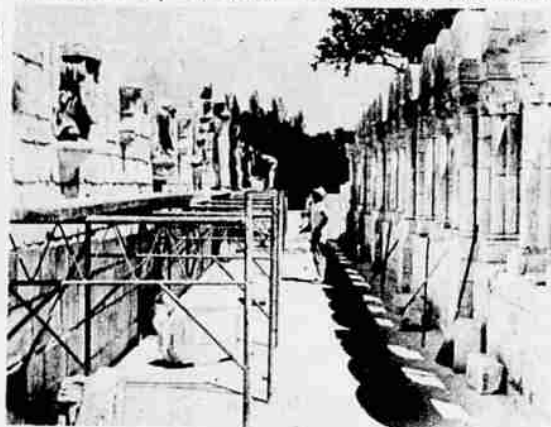


Men spent six months merely unpacking 36,000 stones from crates before reassembly could begin. Sorted stones spread over 10 acres.



Piece by piece, "world's biggest jigsaw puzzle" takes shape; stonemasons put each stone in place by tedious "test-and-fit" method.



Completed, ancient Spanish monastery is authentic segment of Europe of the Middle Ages, set down in midst of the South of twentieth-century America.



\$2,000,000 Jigsaw Puzzle

A FEW MILES from glittering Miami Beach stands the oldest building in North America—a transplanted 12th-century monastery originally built in Spain. How it got there is a story of the world's biggest and most complicated jigsaw puzzle.

The monastery was bought in the 1920s by publisher William Randolph Hearst for \$500,000. Hearst had it dismantled, intending to rebuild it on his San Simeon, Calif., estate. But he never got around to it, and the dismantled building lay in storage for 25 years.

Several years ago, two real estate men bought the building. When they shipped it to Florida, they found to their consternation that the intricate numbering system for reassembling the monastery had been all but destroyed. They unpacked 36,000 stones from 10,751 crates and ended with a 2,500-ton jigsaw puzzle strewn over 10 acres.

But they persisted. Expert stonemasons spent 19 months fitting the pieces together at a cost of \$1,500,000. Today, thousands of tourists stroll through the same halls where Cistercian monks prayed 800 years ago.

