The Pope Family’s Grand Tour

Episode 4, El Escorial and Toledo, Spain, 1888

ANSWER KEY:

BONUS MARKS

Answer to the Bonus question from Episode 3:

Train Travel

The longest straight section of train track runs across the Nullarbor Plain in southern Australia. The plain is the largest piece of limestone in the world, and the vegetation primarily comprises short, hardy plants, such as saltbush and bluebush, that can tolerate the hot, dry conditions.

The world’s longest 18-hole golf course, the Nullarbor Links, stretches 850 miles across the plains, with each hole located in a different town or roadhouse along the Eyre Highway.

The name Nullarbor derives from the Latin words “nullus” (nothing) and “arbor” (tree). You may be familiar with the word “arbor” from “Arbor Day” - a special day set aside around the world to raise awareness of trees, and the significant role they play in our environment.
And now for the Prize for answering the Bonus Question from Episode 3:

The Golden Spike for the U.S. Transcontinental Railroad was struck on 10 May 1869. Utah Opera commissioned a 14-minute opera, *No Ladies in the Lady’s Book*, to help celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Golden Spike. This piece introduces us to some of the unsung women who contributed to the development of the railroad, whether as inventors, innovators, or employees. In August 1869, Godey’s Lady’s Book, the most popular ladies’ magazine of the day, published an article claiming "no women" had helped build the U.S. Transcontinental Railroad. *No Ladies in the Lady’s Book* opens with Louis Godey preparing his article for publication. He is soon visited by many of the women he is writing out of the record book. The ladies quickly set him straight.

https://youtu.be/ThWkkKl8zeM

El Escorial

The Regia Laurentina library at El Escorial, completed in 1592, today contains some forty-five thousand volumes, from the 5th century up to today, and a collection of over five thousand manuscripts arranged in order of numerical importance in the following languages: Arabic, Latin, Spanish, Greek, Italian, Hebrew, Catalan, French, Chinese, Persian, Portuguese, Turkish, Armenian and Nahuatl.

Nahuatl is the language used by the Aztecs; many dialects of this language are still in use in Mexico.

Amongst the examples of knowledge and learning that Philip II gathered at El Escorial is a collection of globes and armillary spheres. The King enjoyed spending time studying these instruments, in the company of astronomers, geographers, and cartographers.
The invention of the armillary sphere is credited to Eratosthenes around 255 BCE. The name for the sphere is derived from armilla, the Greek for a bracelet, reflecting the five rings that circle the globe in the device. This is a mathematical instrument, intended to demonstrate the movement of the celestial sphere about the Earth.

Eratosthenes (276 BCE - 194 BCE) was a scientific writer, astronomer, poet and librarian at the Library of Alexandria. Amongst other accomplishments, he is credited with:

- being the first person to calculate the circumference of the Earth
- calculating the tilt of the Earth’s axis
- establishing the requirement for a leap year every four years
- developing a simple algorithm for finding prime numbers
- creating the first global projection map - incorporating longitude lines.

Despite (or perhaps, because of) all of these accomplishments, some of Eratosthenes’ critics referred to him as Beta (the second letter of the Greek alphabet) saying that he always came second in all of his endeavors. I would beg to argue!
Growing on the grounds of the Casita del Principe are several mature examples of Sequoia sempervirens, the Giant Sequoia or Coast Redwood, frequently associated with towering forests along the California coastline. This species of sequoia was introduced to Spain after an expedition to the west coast of North America by the botanist Tadeas Haenke in 1791. Haenke was a member of the Malaspina expedition that explored much of the Pacific basin over a five-year period at the end of the 18th century. Haenke collected over 15,000 specimens, and his name is associated with over 240 different plant taxonomies.

Toledo

The patroness of the sword factory in Toledo is Saint Barbara, the patron saint of thunder, lightning, cannons, explosives, and artillery. As well as being the patron saint of firefighters, she is regarded as a protector of those who work with munitions and explosives. This connection with explosives led the French navy to adopt the name “Sainte-Barbe” to the reinforced storeroom on a warship where gunpowder and ammunition were stored.

Hannibal Barca (247 - 183 BCE) was the famous Carthaginian general whose use of Toledo steel helped to defeat Roman forces, armed with inferior blades made of bronze.

Marzipan is the confection, made from a combination of ground almonds and sugar that some people claim was invented by the nuns of the Convent of San Clemente in Toledo in 1212. Depending on the country you’re in(!), there are many different towns and cultures claiming the first invention of this delicious product. There is even a case for claiming that the Ancient Greeks made sweets from almonds and honey on the island of Samos back in the time of Pericles (495 - 429 BCE).
One intriguing source for the word ‘marzipan’ comes from the time when the Arabs were in control of Toledo, and referred to the product as ‘mawthaban,’ meaning ‘seated king’ for, before they were baked, the pieces of marzipan were stamped with a coin that showed a king seated on his throne.

Bonus Marks

Answer to the Bonus Questions from Episode 3:

Although Spanish, also known as Castilian, is the official language of Spain, there are many different languages that have official “regional” status in the country:

- Castilian Spanish (official nationwide) 74%
- Catalan [official in Catalonia, the Balearic Islands, and the Valencian Community (where it is known as Valencian)] 17%
- Galician (official in Galicia) 7%
- Basque (official in the Basque Country and in the Basque-speaking area of Navarre) 2%
- Aranese (official in the northwest corner of Catalonia (Vall d’Aran) along with Catalan <5,000 speakers)

Aragonese, Aranese Asturian, Basque, Calo, Catalan, Galician, and Valencian are recognized as regional languages under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.
Bonus Question for Episode 4:

Hannibal’s father was another famous Carthaginian general who spent time in part of the territory that we now recognize as Spain.

- Who was Hannibal’s father?
- The language spoken in Carthage is known as Punic. Can you find out what the Punic surname “Barca” means?
- Which city in Spain is named after Hannibal’s father?

Sources:
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Armillary Sphere and Eratosthenes
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Toledo

Bonus Marks