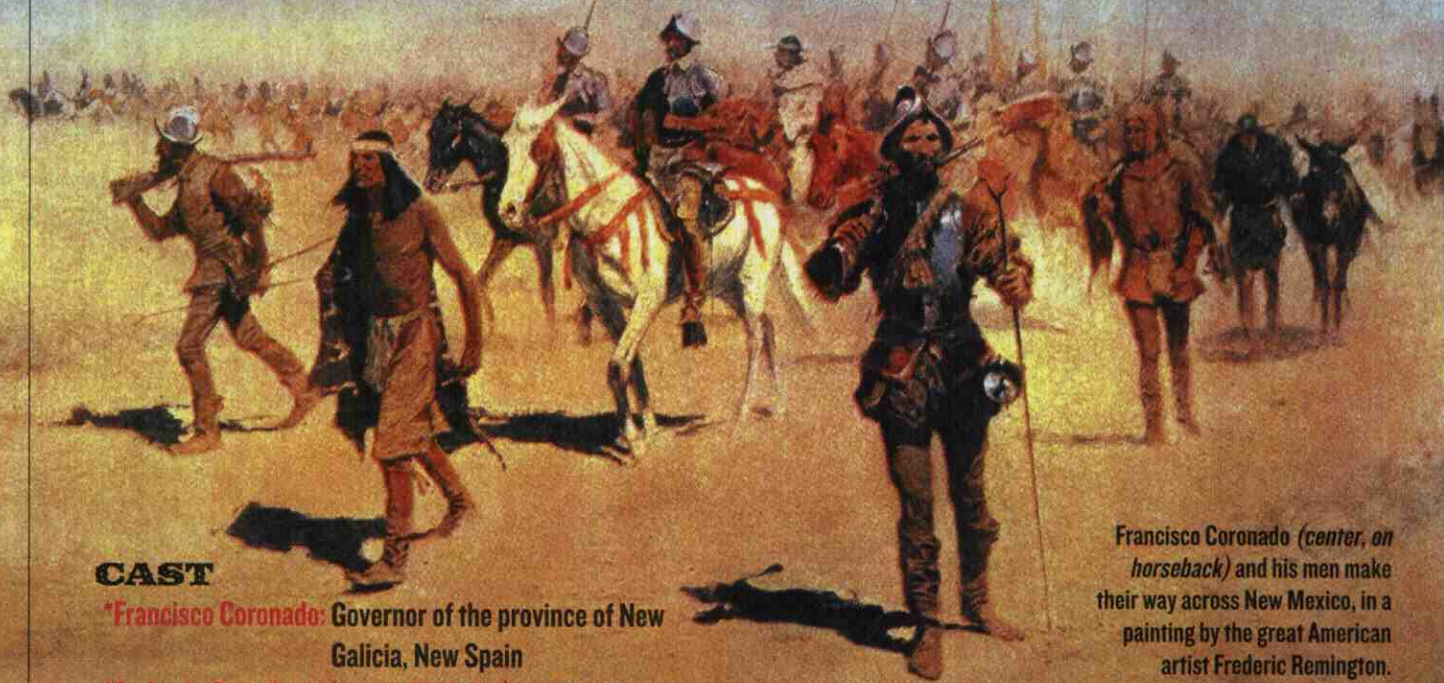


CORONADO AND THE CITIES OF GOLD

In 1540, a Spanish conquistador set out from Mexico City in search of gold. What Francisco Coronado found was a fascinating new land—the Southwest of the future United States.



Francisco Coronado (center, on horseback) and his men make their way across New Mexico, in a painting by the great American artist Frederic Remington.

CAST

- ***Francisco Coronado:** Governor of the province of New Galicia, New Spain
- ***Pedro de Castañeda** (*cas-ta-NYA-duh*): soldier historian
- Viceroy Mendoza:** Royal Governor of New Spain
- ***Whiskers:** Indian Chief of Cicuyé (*thee-koo-YAY*)
- ***The Turk:** Pawnee Indian
- Sopete** (*so-PAY-tay*): Wichita Indian

#Soldiers 1-6

#Tigua Indians 1 and 2

Narrators A-E

* Indicates major character; # indicates fictional character

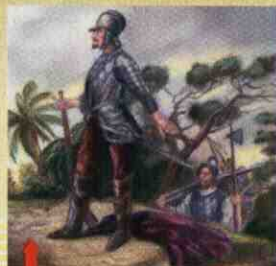
BY BRYAN BROWN

TIME LINE

Spanish Explorers in North America



1492 Italian navigator Christopher Columbus, on the first of four voyages for Spain, reaches Cuba and Hispaniola. In 1493, Pope Alexander VI grants most of the New World to Spain.



1513 Vasco Núñez de Balboa crosses Panama and is the first European to see the eastern shore of the Pacific Ocean. Ponce de Leon discovers Florida.



1519-1521 Hernando Cortés conquers the Aztec kingdom of Mexico for Spain.

INTRODUCTION

Christopher Columbus started it all. After he accidentally found the New World for Spain in 1492, other Spanish adventurers were eager to set out for the Americas. In 1521, Hernando Cortés (*kawr-TEHZ*) conquered the Aztec kingdom of Mexico, which was renamed New Spain (see map, p.17).

Most of the land to the north, however, remained mysterious to Europeans. When explorers brought back tales of the Seven Cities of Cibola (*THEE-bob-lah*), great cities of gold, ambitious men like Francisco Coronado set off in search of riches.

Words to Know

- **adobe** (*a-DOE-bee*): brick or building material of sun-dried earth and straw
- **conquistador** (*con-KEES-ta-dor*): Spanish conqueror
- **memoir** (*MEM-war*): personal account or story
- **pueblo** (*PWEH-blow*): village of stone or adobe houses stacked several stories high



1528-1536 Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, shipwrecked off the coast of Texas, treks 3,000 miles through the Southwest to New Spain, bringing word of seven golden cities.

SCENE 1

Narrator A: Most of what we know about Coronado's expedition comes from the memoir of Pedro de Casteñeda, a soldier in Coronado's army.

Casteñeda (*in his memoir*): *When we have something valuable in our hands and lose it, it causes a great pain in the heart. This happened to all of us who, in the year of Our Lord 1540, went with Francisco Coronado in search of the Seven Cities.*

Narrator A: The story begins in Mexico City, where the Viceroy of New Spain and Coronado have just heard exciting news from one of their scouts.

Mendoza: Friar Marcos has seen one of the Seven Cities of Cibola! You must seize those cities for our King.

Coronado: If the cities are as rich as they say, Your Excellency could become as famous as Cortés.

Narrator A: In February 1540, Coronado sets out with a large army to find the cities of gold. But one day, a second scout rides into camp to speak secretly with Coronado.



1539 Friar Marcos de Niza and Esteban, a slave of the Cabeza de Vaca party, are sent north from Mexico City to investigate the Seven Cities of Cibola.

1539-1542 Hernando de Soto explores the American Southeast from Florida to Louisiana. He is the first European to see the Mississippi River, where he is buried.

1540-1542 Francisco Vásquez de Coronado leads an expedition to find the Seven Cities of Cibola. His expedition is the first to find Pueblo Indians and the Grand Canyon.

Soldier 1: Have you heard the rumor? The scout says that Friar Marcos lied about the golden cities.

Soldier 2: And the natives there are ready to kill us like beasts!

Narrator A: Nonetheless, Coronado and his men continue on their march. Just before Easter...

Coronado: This army is moving too slowly. I will take 80 horsemen and ride ahead of the others.

Narrator A: The journey is dangerous. In the Sierra Madre mountain range, some horses slip from the rocks and fall to their deaths. Finally, Coronado reaches the Zuni River in present-day New Mexico. There he comes into sight of a pueblo called Hawikuh [*ah-WEE-kuh*].

Casteñeda: *The first city of Cibola [Hawikuh] was no city of gold! It was a little, crowded village, looking as if it had been crumpled all up together.*

Narrator A: Facing Zuni Indian warriors, the Spaniards storm the walls of Hawikuh. After a brief battle, the soldiers find the village empty. All the people have fled!

SCENE 2

Narrator B: Coronado sends scouting parties from Hawikuh to look for gold. His scouts become the first white men to see Hopi Indians and the Grand Canyon. Still—no gold.

Casteñeda: *Some Indians came to Hawikuh from Cicuyé, a village 200 miles east. Among them was a captain we called Whiskers, because he wore a long mustache.*

Whiskers: My people have received word of your desire to come in peace. If you visit Cicuyé, you will

be greeted as friends.

Coronado: Excellent. Captain Alvarado will go with you and prepare the way for us.

Narrator B: In Cicuyé, Whiskers gives Alvarado a Pawnee Indian slave whom the Spanish call “the Turk.” The Turk has some amazing stories to tell.

Turk: My country is north of here. We call it Quivira [*kee-VEE-rub*]. We live in great houses where the plates and cups are made of gold.

Coronado: Can you show us some of this gold?

Turk: The one you call Whiskers—he stole golden bracelets from me when he took me from my people.

Narrator B: Captain Alvarado questions Whiskers.

Whiskers: The Turk is lying. In Quivira the people live in grass huts. There is no gold there.

Narrator B: Alvarado doesn't believe Whiskers and puts him in chains. When the people of Cicuyé hear about the arrest, they rise up in anger. Alvarado retreats in a rain of arrows.

Casteñeda: *From this time on, the Indians began to doubt the word of the Spaniards.*

SCENE 3

Narrator C: The Spaniards spend a miserable winter in Tiguex [*TEE-gwaysh*], a region in the Rio Grande valley. Their relationship with the Tigua [*TEE-gwah*] Indians starts out bad and gets worse.

Tigua 1: These Spaniards drive our people out into the snow to house their soldiers.

Tigua 2: And they speak of peace, but only when they get what they want.

Narrator C: Fighting breaks out. During one battle, a Spanish captain sets stakes in the earth and burns some of the Tigua alive!

Casteñeda: *Coronado was horrified, but had no choice but to back his cap-*

Coronado (center, standing) claims a river for the Spanish King.



tain. Then we had to put down other Tigua revolts. Some of our men were hit by arrows poisoned by rattlesnakes.

Narrator C: Finally spring comes, and the army leaves for Quivira. At Cicuyé, Coronado sets Whiskers free.

Whiskers: In return, I am giving you Sopete [*so-PAY-tay*], whom I captured from the Wichita people. But you won't like what he has to say.

Sopete: I heard what the Turk told you about Quivira. It is a lie. Quivira is nothing but grass huts.

There is no gold there.

Coronado: I hope what you say is not so. I have come too far to turn back now.

Narrator C: And so the army, led by the Turk, presses on into unexplored wilderness.

SCENE 4

Narrator D: In Texas, the Spaniards meet Plains Indians and are the first white men to see buffalo.

Coronado: These huge, woolly cows

are amazing! They stretch as far as the eye can see.

Narrator D: But the trek is difficult.

Soldier 3: The plain is so flat, and there are so few landmarks, we have no idea where we are.

Soldier 4: And our drinking water is mostly mud.

Casteñeda: *Things were getting desperate. Then one day, we met some Teyas Indians. They told us that Quivira was far to the north. The Turk was leading us in the wrong direction!*

Narrator D: Coronado takes 30 of his best horsemen and, with Sopete as a guide, races north. Thirty-five days later, they finally reach Quivira, in present-day Kansas.

Coronado: It is what Whiskers and Sopete said it was—a village of grass houses. Turk, you have been lying all along!

Turk: Should I let you come here and take everything? I wanted to lead

you into the empty prairie to die.

Narrator D: Furious soldiers strangle the Turk. Coronado is utterly discouraged. He thinks that the journey has been a complete failure. But not all the soldiers agree.

Soldier 5: Look at this country. There is good soil, good water, plenty of open space. What do we have back in Spain? Nothing.

Soldier 6: Here we can bring our families, and live like wealthy landowners. This is better than gold.

Casteñeda: *Coronado led the men back to Tiguex for the winter, promising to return.*

SCENE 5

Narrator E: In December 1541, Coronado falls from his horse and is trampled. For weeks, he lingers near death. When he recovers, he insists on returning to Mexico. Many soldiers are angry.

Casteñeda: *The general lost much*

respect among the men. Many abandoned him along the way, and he reached Mexico City with fewer than 100 men.

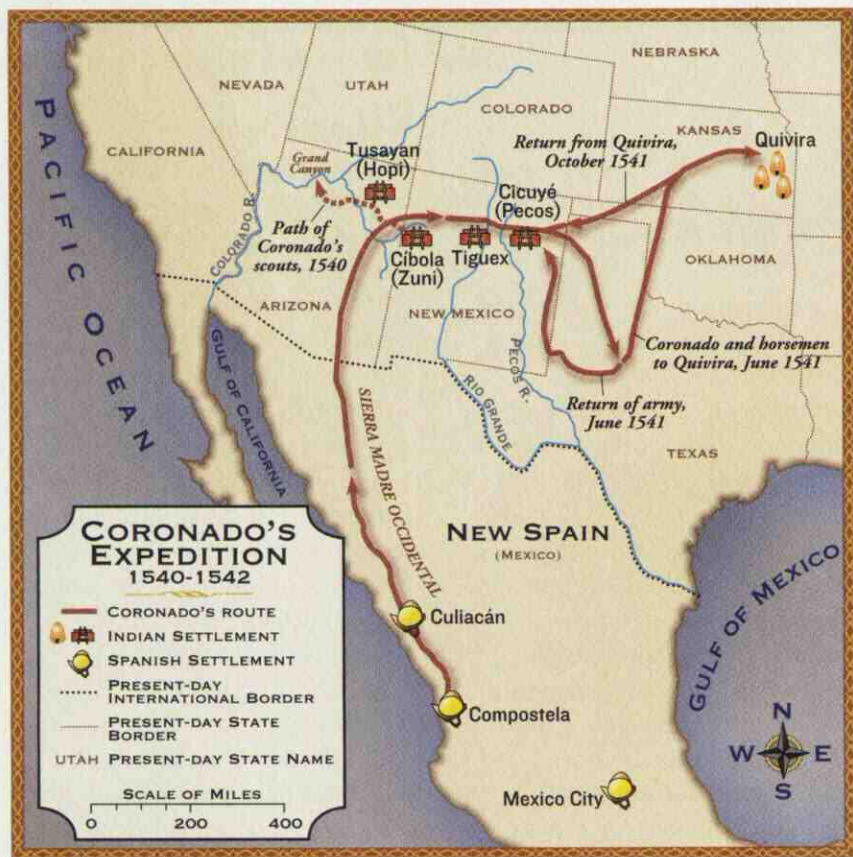
Narrator E: Coronado is eventually put on trial for misconduct. His reputation never recovers.

Casteñeda: *And the general's men? After being forced to abandon Quivira, their hearts wept for having lost it.*

AFTERWORD

Coronado's soldiers never did get back to Quivira. But as the Zuni Indian elders predicted, other white men would come. Coronado helped lift the veil of mystery on a huge area of our present-day states of Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas. But the Spanish did not hesitate to enslave or kill Indians when it suited their purpose.

Eventually, white settlers would claim most of the land, leaving the Indian tribes with tiny reservations. The Zuni were luckier than most. Today, about 10,000 Zuni live in western New Mexico. They have maintained much of their traditional religion, language, and culture. **JS**



Your Turn

Word Match

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| 1. conquistador | A. stone or adobe village |
| 2. pueblo | B. sun-dried brick |
| 3. memoir | C. conqueror |
| 4. viceroy | D. personal account |
| 5. adobe | E. royal governor |

Think About It

What was the most valuable thing the Spanish found when looking for the seven cities?