

The Southwest Turns Back Its Clock Four Centuries to Honor the Exploits Of Coronado, Spanish Conquistadore

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON
(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

IN THIS year of invasions of peace-loving countries, of blitzkriegs and conquests, it is somewhat ironical that one section of the United States, the only major power not yet directly involved in the second World war, should be celebrating with pageants and other ceremonies the invasion of American soil by armed forces from Europe. True, that invasion took place 400 years ago—two and a half centuries before there was a United States—and the country which these European invaders set out to conquer was occupied by nomadic tribes of savages who were far from being a peace-loving people.

It is also somewhat ironical that the leader of the invaders, who is being honored this year as a great explorer, was regarded as a failure by the powers who sent him forth. He was Francisco Vasquez de Coronado and the 1940 Coronado Cuarto-Centennial celebration in Arizona and New Mexico recalls the beginning, in 1540, of his epic journey through the Great Southwest.

The events which it memorializes began 44 years after Columbus discovered the New World. In 1536 Cabeza de Vaca and three companions, who had followed Narvaez on his voyage of exploration to Florida, began their long, weary journey from what is now Louisiana back to Mexico City. They were the only survivors of more than 60 adventurers, who had penetrated far into what is now the United States in search of gold. From the Indians they heard tales of great cities to the north where the houses were studded with gold. Their imagination fired by these yarns, they eagerly repeated the stories when they finally reached Mexico City.

In 1539 the Spanish viceroy in Mexico sent Friar Marcos de Niza to check on the reports which De Vaca had heard. His guide was the Negro, Estevan, who had been with De Vaca through all his wanderings and Estevan, who pushed on ahead of De Niza, sent back glowing reports of the great cities which lay ahead and their treasures. Friar Marcos pushed on to see for himself these great cities.

From a hilltop in what is now New Mexico he looked down upon adobe-walled cities gleaming in the sunlight and his imagination soon transformed these into the reality of the legendary golden Seven Cities of Cibola. Without bothering to investigate further, the friar hastened back to Mexico and his story stirred the gold lust of the Spaniards anew. Several of the leaders in New Spain fought for the honor of leading an expedition to conquer this new territory and recover the treasures of the Seven Cities of Cibola but Francisco Vasquez de Coronado was finally chosen as the lucky commander for the venture.

Spanish arms had completed the conquest of Mexico and the flower of Spanish chivalry rallied to Coronado's banners. On February 23, 1540, his army, composed of 250 horsemen, most of them members of the nobility, 200 foot soldiers and 1,000 Indians—grooms and servants of the Spanish cavaliers—moved out of Compostela to march north. They were accompanied by great herds of cattle, sheep, goats and pigs for food and their camp supplies, munitions and other provisions were loaded on the backs of a thousand horses and mules in their pack trains.

Coronado's expedition entered what is now the United States at the southern end of the Huachuca mountains in the region of Montezuma pass and Yaqui springs in Arizona. But his huge force with its pack trains and herds of animals proved cumbersome and delayed the explorer's march unduly, so with a force of picked troops Coronado moved on ahead, north and east, into what is now New Mexico.

The Spanish leader soon learned that he was doomed to disappointment. For instead of finding the Seven Cities of Cibola with their golden streets and their jewel-studded houses, he found only the seven villages of the Zuni Indians in western New Mexico. While they were imposing in size, with great houses rising five stories high and built of adobe, stone and wood, there was no gold whatsoever in them. Pushing eastward, Coronado came to the largest city in what was to become the United States. It was the pueblo of Pecos, which had 500 warriors who boasted that they had never been defeated.

But awed by the glitter and



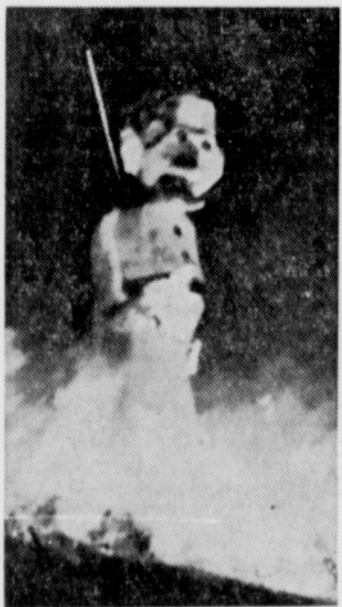
Don Diego de Vargas, played by an actor in the Santa Fe Fiesta, kneels in the Plaza of Santa Fe to give thanks for the reconquering of New Mexico. (Santa Fe railway photo.)

mystery of the Spanish arms, the warriors of Pecos decided not to try to resist the invaders. Instead they welcomed Coronado into their town with drums and pipes of peace and gifts of turquoise and native-woven cloth. But again there was no gold or other treasure to reward the white men for their long journey. Later the Indians of Pecos began to regret their hospitality to the strangers, so one of them, nicknamed the Turk, was persuaded to lure these gold-hungry white men away to the northeast by promising to show them the Gran Quivera, a city of silver and gold.

On to Gran Quivera.

Instead of starting directly for the Gran Quivera, Coronado seems to have marched south and eastward to investigate other Indian pueblos. He next turned east and pushed on into what is now the state of Texas where he marched for weeks over arid deserts and trackless prairies, constantly harassed by hostile Indians who were more dangerous foes than the peaceful inhabitants of the pueblos.

After circling around in the Staked Plain region of the future Lone Star state, he turned north to seek the Gran Quivera and



As night falls on the first day of the Santa Fe fiesta, the giant effigy of "Zozobra, or Dull Care," is burned as the climax of the fireworks display. (Santa Fe railway photo.)

near the present site of Wichita, Kan., found—not the treasure houses of gold which the Turk had promised but a land where the only human habitations were skin tipis and grass lodges. It is believed that Coronado got as far east as the Palo Duro canyon in the Texas Panhandle and during his wanderings he was the first white man to cross such rivers as the Canadian, the Red, the Cimarron and the Arkansas.

Disappointed again in his search for cities of gold, Coronado started back toward Mexico. His return journey took him through southwestern Kansas, across the "panhandle" of Oklahoma, thence westward across northern New Mexico to the Seven Cities of Cibola (the Zuni towns) again, and on westward through northern Arizona. The first white man to see the wonders of the Grand canyon were members of a detachment of Coronado's army who gazed in awe upon that vast emptiness.

Retreat to Mexico.

For two winters Coronado made his headquarters at Tiguex, an

Indian pueblo located near the present town of Bernalillo, N. M. Returning there in the fall of 1541 from his vain quest for the Gran Quivera, he found his main army disgruntled and homesick for Mexico. In the spring of 1542 he suffered a severe injury and while he was on his sickbed, his captains signed a petition to return to Mexico. They finally obtained his reluctant consent and soon afterwards the indomitable leader set out on the return journey over the route he had traversed with such high hopes two years earlier.

Although Coronado's expedition was, in the eyes of his contemporaries, a sad failure because he had not brought back the gold and other treasure that was expected of him, history has written his expedition down as one of the greatest land explorations of all time. Moreover, it gave Spain a claim to a vast new territory in the New World and established in the Southwest a civilization, many traces of which still survive after the passage of four centuries.

Half a century after Coronado's expedition, another led by Don Juan Onate came into the valley of the Rio Grande and, establishing settlements all along the river, he set up his first capital at San Gabriel, six miles north of Espanola at the mouth of the Chama river. Some time between 1606 and 1610, Don Pedro de Peralta, the third governor of Spanish New Mexico, established the city of Santa Fe and this ancient city, which has been the seat of government of province, territory and state under old Spain, Mexico and the United States, is the scene of one of the most important events of "Coronado year," although it has been observed every year for two centuries.

It is the Santa Fe Fiesta, one of the oldest continuously observed celebrations held in the United States. It commemorates the reconquest in 1692 by Don Diego de Vargas of the vast territory which had been lost to the Spanish authorities in the great Pueblo revolt of 1680. Held on August 31, September 1 and 2, the first day of the fiesta is given over to gaiety with the populace and visitors in Spanish costumes, native orchestras playing in the Plaza and dancing by the Indians from the pueblos near by. In the evening there is a picturesque ceremony, the burning of a giant effigy of "Zozobra, or Dull Care," and the crowning of the fiesta queen.

Sunday morning is devoted to time-honored services in the ancient cathedral and in the afternoon the colorful pageant of the re-entry of De Vargas and his armored conquerors into the capital is held in the Plaza. That night there is a candle-light procession to the Cross of the Martyrs overlooking the city. On Monday the children hold their costume and pet show in the Plaza, and in the afternoon there is more pageantry through the streets of the city and the climax of the fiesta comes that night with native dances and songs on the balconies of La Fonda, the leading Santa Fe hotel, dancing in the streets and finally El Baile de Los Conquistadores (the Ball of the Conquerors) at La Fonda.

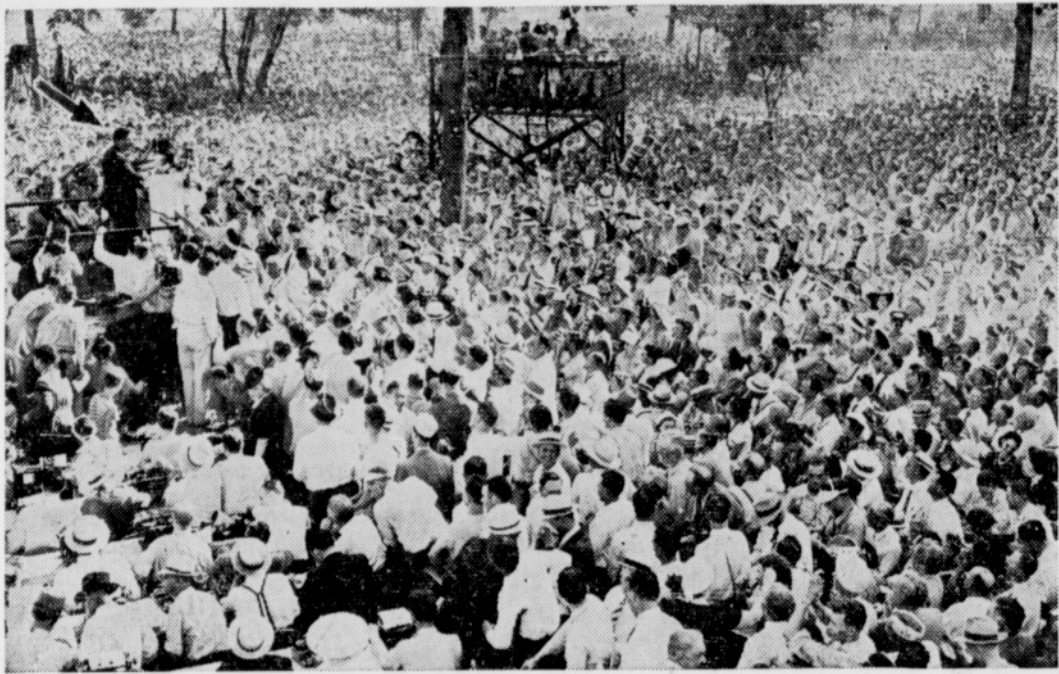
Thus for three days, Santa Fe, the capital of New Mexico, turns the clock back two and a half centuries just as the whole Southwest has been turning its thoughts back all this "Coronado year" to the days of that great explorer and his mail-clad conquistadores.

Newly Formed 'Green Guards of America'



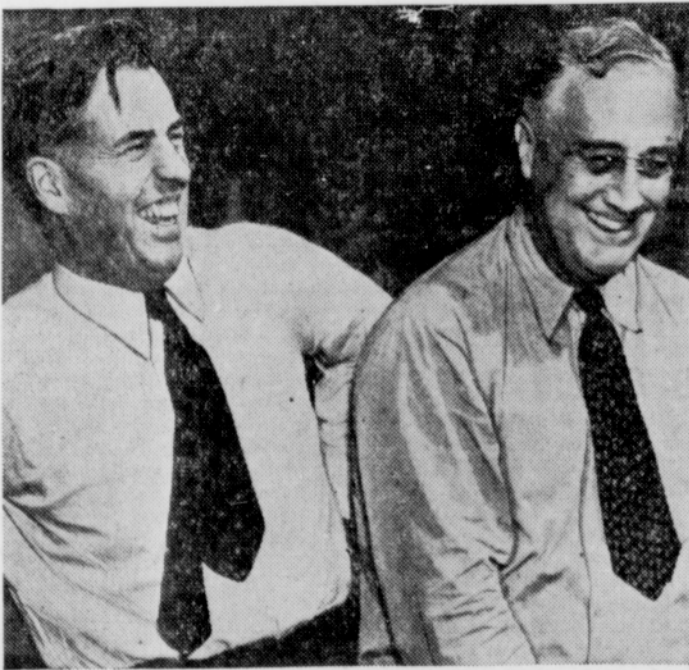
If the "blitz" strikes this country the women of Washington will be prepared to do their bit in the way of defense. Several hundred have already been enrolled in Camp No. 1 of the "Green Guards of America," an organization which will take up first aid and ambulance corps duties in time of war—duties for which they have started training. Members of the newly formed "Guards" are shown here in their dark green uniforms and over-seas caps.

175,000 Hear Willkie's Acceptance Speech



Wendell L. Willkie, Elwood, Indiana's most famous son, (indicated by arrow) comes home to accept the Republican presidential nomination. A crowd estimated at more than 175,000 heard his speech of acceptance at the notification ceremonies in Callaway park. Formal notification of his nomination was made by National Chairman Joseph Martin of Massachusetts.

Running Mates in Shirt Sleeves



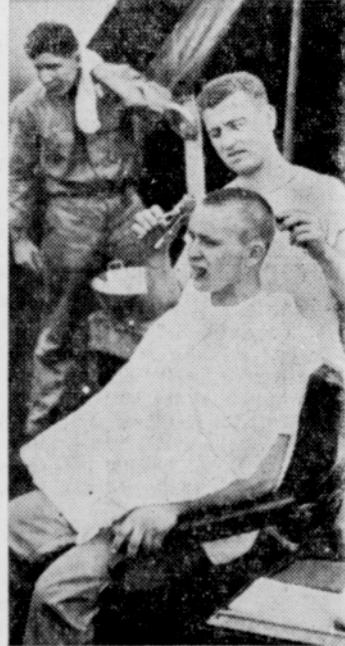
A picture of informality, President Roosevelt and Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace, Democratic vice presidential nominee, greeting women Democratic party workers assembled at Mrs. Roosevelt's Val-Kill cottage in Hyde Park, N. Y. The President drove over from the family home to introduce Wallace as his 1940 running mate.

Paints Call to Arms for Uncle Sam



Maj. Thomas B. Woodburn at Governors island, New York, with his latest poster for the U. S. army, completed with the collaboration of his wife, Margaret (shown) also a well known artist. The poster is entitled "Defend Your Country."

'Blitzkrieg Bob'



Private William Hanyak of the Eleventh Infantry, takes time out from the "Battle of the St. Lawrence Valley," at Ogdensburg, N. Y., to have his crowning glory pruned. Hanyak hails from Philadelphia.

This Is 'The Nuts'



Dressed for sultry weather, seven-month-old Carole Russell of Miami cools off on the inside with coconut milk direct from the shell. A large nipple does the trick.

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Barbara Bell Pattern No. 1892-B is designed for sizes 14, 16, 18, 20; 40 and 42. Corresponding bust measurements 32, 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42. Size 16 (34) requires 2 3/4 yards of 39-inch material without nap for built-up shoulders; 2 1/4 yards for strap style; 1 1/2 yards of shirred lace. Send order to:

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In the love of a brave and faithful man there is always a strain of maternal tenderness; he gives out again those beams of protecting fondness which were shed on him as he lay on his mother's knee.—George Eliot.

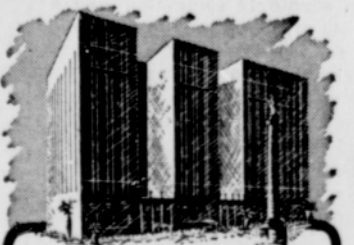
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