



THE CATHOLIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Diocese of Amarillo



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VOLUME THREE

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The Beginning...

Fray Juan Padilla

Fray Juan Padilla, the youngest of the group of missionaries, had a wonderful record throughout the entire Coronado expedition. He journeyed with Pedro de Tobar to Moqui in the vicinity of Grand Canyon; he returned to Zuni; he joined Hernando de Alvarado on a thousand mile trip over vast deserts; and he accompanied Coronado in his search for the mythical Quivira.

Before taking up these extensive travels and missionary labors Padilla had held important positions in his community. He had been the guardian of the Franciscans at Tulacingo and Zapotlan. He was in the full vigor of his manhood when he decided to devote the remainder of his life in the unknown northern wilderness, converting and educating the aborigines in the truths of Christianity.

This heroic soldier of Christ was as strict and exacting in his religious life as he was energetic and determined in physical daring. He frequently had occasion during the progress of the expedition to reprehend and to punish evil doers.

We can gage his stamina amid hardships and privations by the fact that he was a pedestrian on



every step of his journeys. The padre in brown Franciscan habit walked all the way from the heart of old Mexico across burning hot and dusty deserts, through long stretches of thorny mesquites and prickly cactus, climbing up rugged mountains and descending dangerous and precipitous slopes that impeded the steady march of these travelers north. No sacrifice was too great for this Apostle. He would wind his weary way to the end of the earth because he craved for the salvation of souls. This was indeed the serious purpose that urged him

to accompany Coronado on that memorable journey to Quivira.

Father Padilla retraced his steps across the vast plains to Quivira. He took with him Andres Docampo, a soldier, Lucas and Sebastian who were Donados in the Franciscan order, and a few Mexican Indian boys. This little band already wearied by much travel trudged that long distance on foot until they reached the village where Coronado had planted a large cross and here Father Juan Padilla established his mission. His influence with the savages soon prepared their minds and hearts for the Word of God and these roving children of the prairies loved him as a father. The burning zeal of Fray Juan Padilla led him to attempt the conversion of the Guas, a neighboring hostile tribe. The Quivirans had become so attached to the kind padre that they were loath to lose his religious ministrations since their enemies were about to derive the benefit. But Fray Padilla was determined to go. After about one day's travel the padre and his companions met a band of these infuriated Quiviran Indians on the warpath.

The approach of the galloping dusty horde left but little time for action. Decampo, the soldier still possessed

First Mass in Amarillo Diocese 1541

his horse. The two Donados and the Mexican Indians were fleet runners. "Flee, my children," cried Padilla, "Save yourselves, for me ye cannot help and why should all die together. Run!" There was a moment of indecision. But as the padre pleaded with them again, they seemed to read the thoughts of his heart and made good their escape. A scene was about to be enacted where one of God's heroes was to make the supreme sacrifice of his life. Fray Padilla dropped on his knees and offered his soul to his Master and as he prayed the Indians pierced him from head to foot with many arrows. Thus died the first martyr of Texas. This new triumph of Christianity was carried back to civilization by his fleeing companions. They too had many tribulations and hardships. For ten months they were compelled to live as slaves, beaten and starved almost to death. Finally after many unsuccessful attempts they escaped from the cruel servitude of these barbarians. Amid the most terrible privations and dangers they wandered foot sore and forlorn for eight long years. They zigzagged across the burning hot sands of the desert for thousands and thousands of miles and finally found their way to Tampico where they had been given up as lost or killed by the savages. They returned weary and broken in health but they had accomplished their purpose." They brought back to civilization the glorious story of the martyrdom of Padre Juan Padilla, the proto-martyr of the United States and of Texas.



Toby Vincent and Lance Garcia, who are parishioners of St. Mary's Cathedral, and heroes of the Diocesan museum, approached the Amarillo mayor and asked if the Fray Juan Padilla monument could be moved to the grounds of St. Mary's Cathedral property. The monument has been chipped away at and abused since its installment in Elwood Park in 1936. The city has given it's OK, so now begins the momentous problem of moving the 10,000 pound monument to St. Mary's property. If you would like to make a donation towards this project call St. Mary's.

BUILT TO THE GLORIOUS AND PERPETUAL MEMORY OF
 FATHER FRAY JUAN DE PADILLA, O. F. M.
 FRANCISCAN MISSIONARY.
 FIRST MARTYR FOR CHRISTIANITY IN THE
 UNITED STATES AND IN TEXAS

ACCOMPANIED THE CORONADO EXPEDITION TO PALO DURO CANYON.
 WENT WITH FRANCISCO VASQUEZ DE CORONADO
 AND HIS CHOSEN PARTY
 IN SEARCH OF LA GRAN QUIVIRA.

RETURNED SOON AND BEGAN HIS ZEALOUS LABORS FOR THE
 CIVILIZING AND CHRISTIANIZING
 OF THE WICHITA AND OTHER INDIAN NATIONS
 IN THE REGION OF THE TEXAS PANHANDLE

HIS MARTYRDOM OCCURRED IN 1544

ERECTED JOINTLY BY THE STATE OF TEXAS
 AND THE TEXAS KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
 IN 1936



Astray in the Buffalo Plains--April 23-May 26, 1541



THERE WAS AN INDIAN FROM AN UNKNOWN LAND "OF THE COUNTRY TOWARD FLORIDA," WHICH WAS WHAT THE SPANIARDS CALLED THE ENTIRE SOUTHEASTERN UNITED STATES. THE SPANIARDS CALLED THIS INDIAN "THE TURK" BECAUSE HE LOOKED LIKE ONE. THE TURK TOLD STORIES THAT HE KNEW OF A LAND WHERE THERE WERE MANY LARGE VILLAGES FULL OF GOLD AND SILVER. THESE STORIES REACHED CORONADO.

Spring had come to the pueblo country, and at last Coronado's army was on the march to the fabulous land of Quivira.

Not a single man wished to be left behind, although a few of the captains suggested that it might be wise to send a small scouting party to verify the Indian stories before setting the whole force into the field and abandoning the well provisioned villages between the Rio Grande and the Pecos. But the men were stirred by gold-hunger and the zealous parchments of the friars. Everyone wished to be off at once for the east.

Coronado himself had the most compelling reasons for putting the stories of The Turk to the test. So much hoped for, so little yet to show for his labors except battered head pieces and arrow scars! So great an outlay for the expedition, and thus far not a crumb of gold in recompense! The general, well knowing what his reception would be were he to return to Mexico empty-handed, was willing on the slimmest chance to risk all his powers in a final cast of fortune. The hunt for Quivira was to lead him on a far journey into the heart of the American continent.

On the twenty-third of April Coronado left Tiguex, to march to Cicuye. At the Pecos town, Captain Whiskers, [a striking young chief Coronado called "Bigotes" (Whiskers) who had been captured] who was going freely among the soldiers with only a single guard, was restored to his overjoyed compatriots. In gratitude, provisions were offered to

the army and undoubtedly were accepted, although The Turk protested that it was useless to burden the horses with supplies; they might become too weary to bring back full loads of gold and silver from Quivira!

Friendly Captain Whiskers made a present to Coronado of two other "Indians of Quivira" who were serving as slaves at Cicuye. One of these was a young fellow named Xabe, who said that there was gold and silver at this home place, although not as much as The Turk maintained there was. The third member of this corps of Quivira guards, however, differed sharply in his statements from the two Pawnees. This native, called Sopedete or Ysopedete, was of the Wichita tribe, a "painted Indian" who bore the distinctive tattoos encircling the eyes and lids which gave the Wichitas their tribal name of Kidi Kidesh, meaning "Raccoon Eyes." So Sopedete said outright that The Turk was a liar. But the Spaniards wished to believe in the gold of Quivira, and at this time Sopedete was given little credence

With these three strange guides at the general's elbow, the great army column, followed by hundreds of friendly Indians and large herds of cattle and sheep, set out from Cicuyé to skirt the mountains and reach the plains where Alvarado had previously explored. They descended the west bank of the Pecos, or Rio de Cicuyé. The river was heavily swollen by spring floods, so that the army was forced to remain in camp for four days while a strong bridge was being built across it.

It is impossible to locate with precision, four centuries later, the trail of Coronado's army for the Rio de Cicuyé to the province of Quivira. Landmarks on the vast Staked

Plains that they traversed are few; in fact the general was not far wrong when he wrote to his king afterward that there was “not a stone, not a bit of rising ground, not a tree, not a shrub, nor anything to go by.” Furthermore, the reckonings of direction in those days were clumsy. Consequently the wake of the army in 1541 on the ocean of prairie has forever vanished, even though its point of departure and ultimate landfall are known with some degree of certainty.

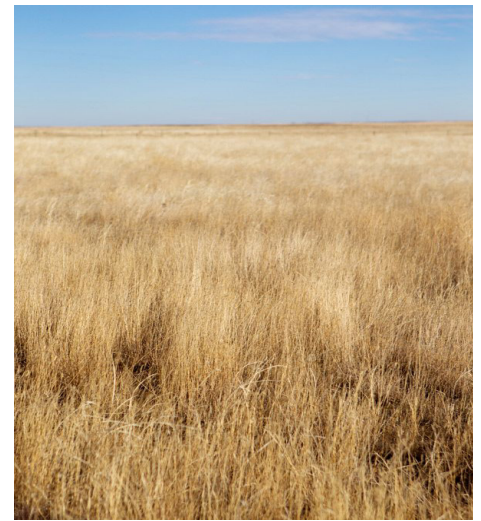
On those empty plains even the roving natives sometimes became lost; certainly it would not be surprising if Coronado’s soldiers went wide astray in their march toward an unknown haven. There was not a hillock that would measure three times the height of a man. Landmarks were confined to a few small round lakes and buffalo wallows, a few clumps of dusty cottonwoods at the bottom of an occasional deep gash in the dead earth, a few rutted bison trails radiating from the infrequent water holes. In that vacant immensity, even the army of Francisco Vazquez Coronado could be completely engulfed.

Who could believe that a thousand horses and five hundred cows and more than five thousand rams and ewes and more than fifteen hundred friendly Indians and servants, in travelling over those plains, would leave no more trace where they had passed than if nothing had been there—nothing—so that it was necessary to make piles of bones and cow dung now and then, so that the rear guard could follow the army.

Into those plains, “like the inside of a bowl, so that wherever a man stands, the sky hems him in at a bow-shot’s distance away,” ventured the army in its full strength; and there, in the wide region west of the Mississippi and south of the Missouri, the summer of 1541 was to be passed in exploration. The accounts left by these Spanish adventurers describing the prairies they crossed, and the beasts and peoples they met there, are authentic and graphic as any that have since been written.



The first boundary that Coronado crossed was merely a shafting, nebulous line of demarcation—the edge of the range of buffalo. Eight days after marching over the bridged Pecos River the army found itself surrounded by the monstrous grazing herds. These creatures were later to become of great importance to the Spaniards, who could not have survived without the meat obtained by hunting them.

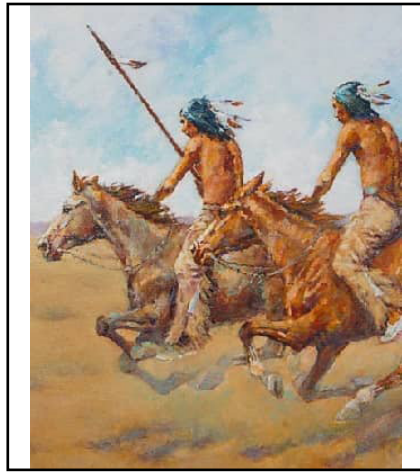


. . . At one place, in northwestern Texas, the army came upon an isolated salt lake, on the edge of which they found a pile of buffalo bones “a crossbow shot long, or a very little less, almost twice a man’s height in places, and some eighteen feet or more wide.” This was in a region where there were no inhabitants who could have heaped up the pile, and “the only explanation of this which could be suggested was that the waves which the north winds must make in the lake had piled up the bones of the cattle which had died in the lake, when the old and weak ones who went into the water were unable to get out. The remarkable thing is the number of cattle that would be required to make such a pile of bones.”





“The bulls are large and brave, although they do not attack very much; but they have wicked horns and in a fight use them well, attacking fiercely,” wrote one of the soldiers of Coronado. “They killed several of our horses and wounded many.” The ranging beasts made a tremendous impression upon all the Spaniards. At first they called the animals “cows of Cibola”; later the term was shortened to Cibolo, which is still the Spanish word for bison. Soon after Coronado’s army came among the “cows,” some of the soldiers out scouting through the ground fogs of early morning discovered marks like those that would be made by dragging lance heads on the ground. Following this strange track, they came upon a village of Querechos. These wandering Indians, together with another branch of Plains Indians called Teyas, were the sole human claimants to the broad Llano Estacado, or Staked Plains of western Texas. In truth, the very name of the great state of Texas owes its origin to the Teyas. The Coronado chroniclers gave to the world the fascinating first descriptions of these gypsies of the prairie. The Querechos and Teyas could not have existed except by preying upon the immense buffalo herds. These Indians had no fixed dwellings, but followed the bison from range to range, dragging all their possessions with them. In their mode of transportation these natives had made an advance



over those of the settled regions, for they were the only Indians except those of Peru to use beasts of burden. Teams of dogs were harnessed to a pair of long poles on which were lashed the tents and food of the nomads. The ends of one of these contraptions—the well-known travois—had made the marks on the ground which had first led the Spaniards to the Querecho camp.



. . . The Coronado army first saw the Querechos in the Llano Estacado of the Texas Panhandle ten days after crossing the bridged Rio de Cicuyé. They came upon a small band of about fifty nomads, who apparently had been forewarned by their scouts, for they showed no signs of fear at the coming of the white men. The Indians stared at the army with evident lack of curiosity, and later strolled over to parley with the strangers. The Querechos were so adept in the Indian sign language that the use of interpreters were almost unnecessary, as a few expressive gestures

could make their simple ideas quickly comprehensible. So flexible was this sign manual, originated because of the great rival differences in language that adepts could silently converse by the hours, and even tell complicated stories by this dumb show. Some of these natives were called to speak with Coronado, who hoped to get from them a confirmation of The Turk’s reports. The Querechos told the general, in their picturesque sign talk, that there was a very large river over toward where the sun came from, and that one could go along his river through an inhabited country for ninety days without a break from settlement to settlement. The first of the settlements was called Haxa and the river was more than a league wide and had many canoes on it.

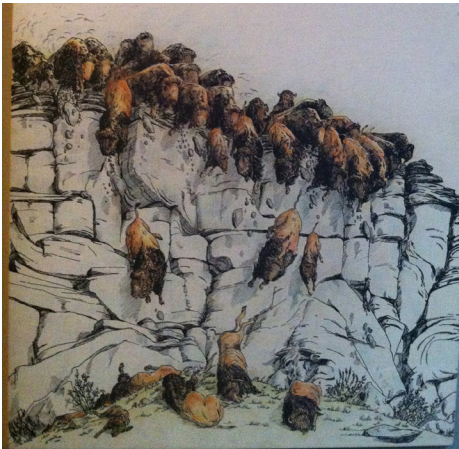
These words must have been confirmation enough to settle the general’s doubts for the moment. But the contingent of scoffers in the army was growing larger as a result of the repeated protests of So-pete, the Wichita, against the bare-faced tales of The Turk; and more than one soldier remarked that the corroboration had resulted from the fact that The Turk, who traveled with the advance guard, had been allowed to talk first to the Querechos in their own tongue.

The next day the Querechos silently struck their tents, hitched up their dogs, and departed to the westward; and Coronado’s men set out in an opposite direction, “that is, between north and east, but more toward the north.” Two days later they met incredible numbers of buffalo and more roving Querechos. These Indians confirmed the report of settlements to the east.

It was at this point that one of the Spaniards went off hunting and became lost on the boundless plain.

He was the first, but not the last, of Coronado's party to vanish into the desert of grass. Once separated from the cavalcade, a strayed soldier met a fate grim and sure; he would circle wildly until thirst and fatigue caused him to drop exhausted, soon to fall prey to the sharp-eyed vultures soaring tirelessly above.

Now The Turk was saying that Haxa was only two days ahead. Because Captain Cardenas, the army-master had just broken an arm when his horse fell with him, Coronado decided to send Diego Lopez ahead with ten men to travel lightly equipped and at full speed toward the sunrise to find the elusive place. He was then to return and bring up the army, which was advancing at a slower pace



Marching thus, some men in the van of the army at one place found themselves surrounded by an immense herd of bull buffalo, and decided to kill a number for provisions. They fell upon the animals and slew many, but the shouts and confusion created a terrifying stampede. The entire herd dashed madly ahead. The animals in advance plunged headlong into a low ravine in their path, and before they could right themselves and clamber out on the other side others crashed over the edge. In an instant the gulch was filled with wildly churning buffaloes. The remainder of the herd swept

over on the backs of the struggling beasts. The Spanish hunters failed to see their peril in time, and before they could check their wild pursuit they and their mounts tumbled into the midst of the writhing, kicking mass. The men and all but three of the horses managed to extricate themselves. The three horses, all saddled and bridled, disappeared into the bloody jumble and perished.

Expecting the return of Captain Lopez at any time, now, the general sent six men upstream along the banks of this little arroyo and a like number downstream, to look for tracks of the horses; but traces were hard to find, for the grass was so short and wiry that it straightened up again as soon as it had been trodden. The Lopez party was finally located some distance upstream by some of the Indians with the army who had gone out to look for fruit.

Lopez reported that he had found no sign of any settlement. In the more than twenty leagues that he had covered, he and his men had seen nothing but buffalo, prairie, and sky.

Coronado tried another cast ahead, this time using the troop of Captain Rodrigo Maldonado, with somewhat better success. After four days' travel Maldonado reached a settlement at the bottom of large ravine similar to the yawning gashes at Colima on the Pacific coast of Mexico. The location of the great ravines, in which the army was to pass several weeks, was most likely on one of the upper branches of the Brazos River of Texas. Maldonado sent back some of his men to guide the army to the ravines, for, although he had been making trail markers of piled stones and buffalo chips, he feared that the army might still miss the way.

The men who returned to act as guides had a curious story to tell the army. It seem, they said, that

Cabeza de Vaca and his comrades must have passed this way on the famous overland journey to Mexico, for the Indians who lived in the ravines had come out to greet the white men and had piled up all their goods, tanned hides and other things, and a tent as big as a house, as gifts to the white strangers.

Unfortunately, the Indians did not have the gentle Cabeza to deal with this time. When Coronado came up to the native encampment, he decided to divide the skins among the men of the army for seeping robes.

A guard was placed over the heap; but when the remainder of the army arrived and saw certain favored soldiers selecting the best hides for their personal use, the men were angered because the division was not being fairly made. They made a rush under the arms of the guards and grabbed pell-mell, and "in less than a quarter of an hour, nothing was left but the empty ground. Aroused by a great crying from the women and children, some of the native men joined in the scramble, in an effort to retrieve their possessions, for these "Indian givers" had innocently believed that Coronado would merely bless their treasures and return them to the owners.

The army spent several days resting in the ravine. It was lucky for them that they did so, for one afternoon a tornado came up, a terrifying tempest of wind with hailstones as large as nuts, as large as duck eggs, falling like raindrops and covering the ground two or three spans deep in some places. Had the Spaniards been encamped on the open prairie, it would have gone very much worse with them.

As it was, it was bad enough. The horses, unable to protect themselves, were in great danger, and many were sorely bruised by the

hail stones so they broke their picket ropes and dashed madly up the steep sides of the ravine, whence they were got down with great difficulty. Had this not held them back, all the horses might have been lost, which would have put the army in a bad predicament. A few of the mounts were shielded by negro servants who held bucklers and helmets over them, but all the rest were terrified, and hardly a one escaped injury from the hail stones. The soldiers' tents were damaged, armor was dented, and all the crockery of army was broken—by no means a trifling loss, for the natives of the plains had no vessels.



Painted Pawnee

After the Texas twister had passed and the camp had been set to rights, Coronado sent out another scouting party which, four days later, came across a larger settlement called Cona. This was a cluster of tepees held by the Teya tribe, who much resembled the Querechos but who were frequently unfriendly toward them. The Teyas painted or tattooed their faces, and the women decorated their eyes and chins "like the Moorish women." "These people," wrote Castaneda, "are very intelligent.

The Teya settlements extended along a canyoned stream for three day's journey, and the army was

led to a place where the river banks were almost a league wide with a little trickle of water running between. There they found groves of mulberry trees, nut trees (pecans) and a kind of rosebush. The Indians raised frijole beans, prunes, and grapes from which verjuice {Verjuice is a gently acidic ingredient that's often used in place of vinegar} was made, and they kept "fowls like those of New Spain.

It was nearing the end of May. The army had been on the road for thirty-seven days, and had made the very respectable speed of six or seven leagues a day, according to the calculating of one member of the party who had been told to count his paces during each day's march. They had therefore come some two hundred and fifty leagues, and Quivira, if the place actually existed, must still be some distance off.

Hunger was among the men. Their provisions of corn had given out, and no one knew where more might be procured. Some of the men were becoming ill from an unrelieved diet of meat, and the horses had grown bony for lack of corn. Thirst was always with them. "I was in great need of water, and often had to drink it so poor that it was more mud than water." In this desperate situation Coronado called a council on Ascension Day, May 26, to discuss with his staff and friends what should be done.

Suspicion of The Turk and his stories had been steadily growing. Some of the Teyas who had not been given a chance to talk with the rascal gave a discouraging account of what lay ahead. Quivira, they said, was a place where corn was grown by people living in thatched houses. But it lay to the north and to the east, and there was no good road thither, for the army was far south of the usual route.

Sopete, who had been asserting



Francisco Vasquez de Coronado

this all day long, now had an excellent chance to say "I told you so!" He prostrated himself before Coronado and indicated by signs that, even though they should cut off his head, he still maintained that their road should be toward the north.

The consensus of the council was that Coronado should take a small party of light-horsemen and make a dash northward to find Quivira, while the remainder of the army should retrace its steps to the Rio Grande pueblos.

When this decision was made known to the lower ranks, many a protest arose. Deep in the melancholy induced by the gloomy, sun-baked monotony of the plains, the men pictured themselves in a leaderless retreat, and begged the general not to desert them. They were willing to die in a lost march, if need be, but they must not be separated from Coronado! Others, less sentimental, feared that the advance party might gobble up all the gold and leave none for later adventurers.

All their remonstrances were useless. Coronado had made his decision, and would follow it to the end. His only concession was to promise that if his advance party found favorable signs he would send back messengers after eight days with orders to bring up the main army; with this the objectors had to be content.

The Conquest of Quivira--Summer, 1541

Thirty horsemen and half a dozen foot soldiers, the best equipped of all the army, were chosen by Coronado for his northward dash. Diego Lopez, "the alderman", was made provost of the little force; but now for the first time Francisco Vazquez Coronado in person was leading the van of an exploring force into unknown country.

His staff of guides included a group of local Teyas, The Turk (now in disgrace and draped in chains), and Sopete, the Wichita, who had been made the official trailfinder and who had been promised his freedom if he would lead them truly to Quivira. Xabe was to remain with Arellano to guide the army back to Tiguex.

The main guard was deeply dejected as they watched these riders depart. Shortly afterward they sent two horsemen posthaste to ask if Coronado might not have changed his mind about having the whole force accompany him.

In a few days Diego Lopez reappeared at the ravine camp. The soldiers' hopes soared, only to be quickly dashed when Lopez announced that he had come back merely to get more guides (which the chiefs at the settlement cheerfully supplied) because the Teyas with Coronado had all run away. Lopez reported that Coronado continued obdurate in his decision, but the army remained encamped for another fortnight, still hoping that the general might have a change of heart.

The soldiers passed the time by killing more than five hundred bull buffalo and making jerked meat for the return trip. Hides were also needed, for clothing, shoes, and harness repairs. Even as the natives found their sustenance in the wild beasts of the

plains, so now must the strayed Spaniards.

During the hunts a number of the army became lost on the prairie and did not get back for days, "wandering about the country as if they were crazy, in one direction or another, not knowing how to get back to where they started from, although this ravine extended in either direction so that they could find it." Each night the roll was called to learn who might be missing, and the men in camp built fires and shot off their guns and sounded drums and trumpets in the hope that the wanderers would be guided back safely. The men soon learned that when they became lost the wise thing to do was to go back to where the game had been killed and cast about from there in all directions for signs, or else wait until the setting sun gave a clue to the direction of the river.

After their food supply had been obtained, the army, led by Don Tristan the Arellano and guided by friendly Teyas, regretfully began the return march, with many a glance toward the north where the gilded casque of their general had vanished over the grass-rimmed horizon.

Coronado and his light-horsemen, accompanied by the indefatigable Fray Juan de Padilla, were in the meantime riding steadily north, guided by the compass needle – a bit of magnetized iron hung from a silken thread. Following along the hundredth meridian, they traveled for thirty days through the open country of northern Texas, across Oklahoma, and into south-central Kansas. They sometimes suffered from lack of water but were always able, from the buffaloes that were to be found on every side, to provide

themselves with fresh meat, which they cooked over a fire of dried dung. In the hunts, however, they lost several horses, impaled by the horns of the buffalo.

On June 29, the feast day of Saints Peter and Paul, they came to a river which they called the Rio de Pedro y Pablo. This stream they followed for thirty leagues to the northeast.

After three days' travel down the river, the troop encountered a small band of Quivira Indian hunters with their wives, engaged in killing buffalo. The startled natives, who apparently had no news of the coming of the strangers, as had the Querchos, were recalled from terrified flight by the shouts of the happy Sopete, and shortly were fraternizing with the Spanish riders and the other Indian guides. At this point The Turk, who had been kept under close guard in the rear so that the sight of him would not infuriate Sopete, was dragged forth and questioned. Because it was not apparent to all that he had lied throughout, the dejected Pawnee made full confession of his treacherous plans. The scheme he revealed was horrifying enough to Coronado, who could easily imagine how it might have brought complete disaster to the army he commanded.

The Turk admitted that he had told the Spaniards anything which he thought might excite their desire, in order to draw them out into the boundless plains, there to die of hunger and thirst. He had advised against loading the horses heavily with provisions, hoping that the Spaniards would be unable to exist without corn; he evidently had overlooked the possibility that they would be able to kill the buffalo for food. In all his contriv



ing he had been encouraged by the Pueblo people, who likewise wished that the white conquerors might be led astray to perish with their horses, or else, if they did get back to the terraced villages, to return so weakened that they would fall an easy prey to the seekers of vengeance from Tiguex and Cicuye.

The Turk had thought to slip away and travel back to his home country, but he had been closely guarded, and now he did not seem to care what happened to him. As for gold, he did not know where any was to be had. His failure to carry his murderous plan to a conclusion had made him sullen and malignant, and he was more closely watched than ever.

The Spaniards, in spite of their bitter disillusionment, were somewhat more cheerful as they pushed ahead into the comfortable country of rolling hillocks and small fertile valleys toward the Quivira villages. Although the Turk confessed himself a liar, Coronado could not forget his mention of a grey-bearded king of Quivira and his story of boats with sails. Somehow, he had gotten the notion that the ruler of the provinces of Quivira and Harahey was a white man, a Christian survivor of the wrecked Narvarez party. To this personage the general addressed a letter in round Castilian, sent forward by the obliging Sopenete, telling of the coming of their expedition, begging full information

about the country ahead, and asking eagerly what should be done to free the white castaway from his bondage among the heathen. Coronado had now reached the point of the Arkansas River where, at the town of Great Bend, the river alters its course. There he left the stream but continued his northeasterly path down the valley of the Smoky Hill River. The Spaniards found themselves among six or seven settlements strung along between the Arkansas and Kansas rivers, where then and for centuries after lived the Wichita Indians. They had reached Quivira.

The confession of The Turk had partly prepared them for disappointment, but it was a rude shock to discover that the grand houses of their dreams were small thatched-roofed cabins like beehives of grass and earth. No golden-prowed argosies cut the limpid waters of the river; no proud emperor drowsed

to the tinkle of golden bells; and the jars on the shoulders of the burdened squaws were only of dull clay. Perhaps the rich kingdom of Tatarax lay beyond?



They hurried ahead down the Kansas River. "We reached," wrote Jaramillo, who was one of the Quivira Party, "what they said was the end of Quivira, to which they took us, saying that the things there were of great importance." They were of importance to the Indians, for these river lodges, contemptible as they as they might be to the men



City of Gold

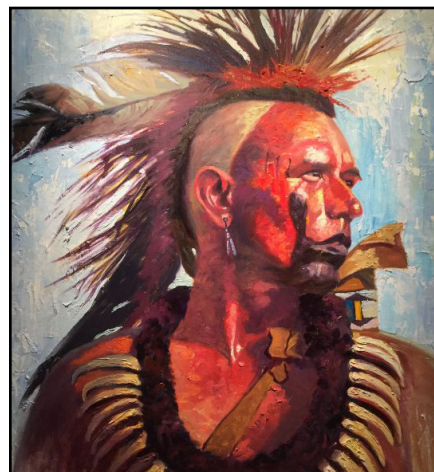
who had hardly been stirred by the sight of the high walls of Cibola and Cicuye, were the center of culture for all the Plains Indians, the homes of great medicine men and painted lordly chiefs. In Quivira food was to be found in abundance; the province had flint deposits from which keen arrowheads were made; and it served as a base from which to sally forth and hunt the buffalo.

The “end of Quivira” was most likely on the Kansas somewhere near Junction City. “Here there was a river,” continued Jaramillo, “with more water and more inhabitants than the others. Being asked if there was anything beyond, they said that there was nothing more of Quivira, but that there was Harahey, and that it was the same sort of a place, with settlements like these, and of about the same size.”

In the capital of the Wichitas, which one chronicler called Tareque, Coronado summoned the chief of the Quivira people, who came forthwith to greet him. This ruler was not, as the general had pictured him, a strayed Spaniard reigning in sultanic grandeur, but a large-bodied Plains Indian whose retinue numbered no more than two hundred naked followers armed only with bows of bois d’arc and wellmade arrows. They had “some sort of things on their heads,” possibly the ridge of plastered hair rising from their shaven pates that was the mark of some of the Wichitas and their close relatives the Pawnees. Many of the groups were, in fact, Pawnees of Arache of Harahey, and a few of these were later used to guide a party of Spaniards to their province to the north. The Wichitas of the Great Bend country were the aboriginal inhabitants of the fertile valleys of the Arkansas and Kansas rivers. No other tribe of the southern plains lived



in permanent houses or practiced agriculture before the coming of the white man. They wore ornaments of bone, seeds, pipestone, and shell, and painted their faces. From the custom of tattooing themselves on eyelids, chin, and breast by the use of cactus spines and charcoal, they were later called by the French explorers the Pani Pique, or Tattooed Pawnees. They were closely related to the Pawnees, who lived in Harahey. Both Wichita and Pawnee were of Caddoan stock, and were allied in constant warfare against the wild Apache and Comanche wanderers. Their relations with the “Guas,” the Kaw or Kansa tribe of the lower Kansas River, were equally hostile.



Tattooed Pawnee

The disappointment of Coronado over this goal of his journey is clearly evident in his letter to the king written shortly after the general returned to Tiguex. The people of Quivira, he said, were just as barbarous as those he had met elsewhere in the new lands. They were polygamous and used their wives as slaves of burden. They ate raw buffalo flesh like the Teyas and Querechos, dressed in skins, lived in houses thatched with grass, and worshiped the Sun. There were in all this country not more than twenty-five little villages, and in each the inhabitants apparently spoke a different dialect. The houses were round, and had one story like a loft under the roof, where the people slept and kept their few belongings. The straw walls reached to the ground, and attached to most houses was a sort of chapel or sentry box; these were merely grass-roofed arbors or drying frames. The natives were tall; Coronado had several of them measured and found them to be ten spans in height – about six feet eight inches! The features of the women seemed more Moorish than Indian. The country itself, which Coronado said was nine hundred and fifty leagues from México and lay in the fortieth degree of latitude, was

fertile, “the best I have ever seen for growing all the products of Spain, for besides the land itself being very fat and black and being very well watered by the rivulets and springs and rivers, I found everything they have in Spain, and nuts and very good sweet grapes and mulberries.” Other plants seen were pennyroyal, oats, melons, and wild marjoram; much flax was found, but the Indians did not know how to use it. Jaramillo also was much impressed by the agricultural possibilities of the country; the business of exporting buffalo meat alone, he believed, would bring a fortune to a good cattleman.

But Coronado had come seeking gold, and there was no gold. The chief of the country wore a copper plate around his neck, which he prized highly but which he was persuaded to turn over to Coronado for delivery to His Majesty Charles V as the sole metallic plunder of Quivira. A momentary surge of hope came when one of the Wichitas exhibited a small bit of what seemed to be gold; but this dream vanished with the rest when no place from which it might have come could be found, and Coronado finally decided that the piece had been obtained by its owner from one of the Indians in the Spanish party!

Twenty-five days were passed in exploration in several directions. Some of the scouts sent toward Harahey may have traveled as far north as the Nebraska boundary – the high-water mark of the Coronado explorations – but little of importance was found. Aside from the fertility of the soil, General Coronado considered the Kansas provinces of little value, although he carefully claimed the whole territory for the Crown, and caused to be erected a large cross on which were chiseled the words:

“Francisco Vazquez de Coronado, general of an expedition, reached here.” The devout Fray Juan de Padilla swept the place at the foot of the cross and taught the natives how to fold their hands and pray to the God of the Christians. There was a fatal power in that wooden emblem, for a year later it was to draw Fray Juan back to Quivira, and eventually cause him to give up his life as a testimony to his faith in that God.



After almost a month had been passed in fruitless search for metal, Coronado once more called a council. Although it was then only the early part of August, the horror of being caught unprepared in this land by the snows of winter, far from their companions in the army, filled every mind. It seemed to the captains that Coronado should order the return to Tiguex, where they hoped the army would be found in safety and well provided with food. At the opening of spring, they argued, the whole force could come back to consolidate their discovery of Quivira and colonize the province. This seemed wisdom to them, and Coronado nodded agreement without appearing to be too eager to retreat. The general was having a touch of homesickness. Nine hundred and fifty leagues was too far a separation from his wife, Dona Beatriz and the

comforts of the little estate at Tlapa.



Dona Beatriz

Another danger was uncovered before the Spaniards left. The Turk, feeling that he might as well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb, had been busy conspiring behind their backs with the people of the country, stirring them to rise against the thirty white men and kill them. The discovery of this plot was the last straw. That night The Turk was garroted in his sleep. It was a poor satisfaction for the repeated betrayals he had contrived, even though his fanciful tales had brought Coronado to the ultimate station of his quest, the Kansas valley that is virtually the geographical center of continental United States. This work of justice performed, and leaving the honest guide Sopete installed among his relatives according to the bargain, Coronado and his thirty men took the road back.

On the way they paused at one of the settlements to pick fruit and corn for the journey. Their guides were obtained who promised to lead them directly to the flat-roofed villages of Tiguex, for it seemed that there was a straight trail much better than the circuitous southern route by which they had come. This “good road,” which turned to the right—that is, west—after the crossing of the Arkansas below modern Fort Dodge, was an old and well-known trade route between Quiviar



“Ascension Thursday-Mass of Thanksgiving May 26, 1541”
Franciscan Father Juan Padilla—Francisco Vásquez de Coronado
Stefan Kramer

and Pueblo Land, following the Cimarron River upstream and cutting across Oklahoma. It is today better known by the historic name of the Santa Fe Trail.

The army under Arellano, provided with large stores of jerked meat, departed from their camp in the ravines of the Brazos about the middle June, in stifling heat. They started back to the pueblos over a direct route which was shown them by the friendly Teya guides, who were accustomed to travel to Cicuye to pass the winters and trade robes, hides, meat, rabbits, and salt for the products of the towns.

Their route lay almost due west, and in spite of stopping on the way to hunt more buffalo they made the return in twenty-five days, whereas the outward journey had consumed thirty-seven days. The Teyas used on this trip a means they had devised for keeping a steady course over the unmarked plains. In the morning they would note the direction of the sun's rising, from this determine the compass point that

they wished to follow, and shoot an arrow in that direction. They would then march toward the arrow, but before reaching it they would shoot another arrow ahead in the same line and so follow forward as a woodsman takes compass sights from one landmark to another.

On the way, probably in Texas just east of the New Mexico boundary, in the southern section of the Panhandle, the Spaniards came to some lakes of crystallized salt.

There were thick pieces of it on top of the water bigger than tables, as thick as four or five fingers. Two or three spans down under water there was salt in grains which tasted better than that in the floating pieces, because this was rather bitter. These lakes and a number of prairie dogs, desecrated sitting by their holes in the ground, were the only objects of note encountered on the return trip across the Llano Estacado.

The guides led them to the Pecos somewhere north of modern Roswell, thirty leagues below the locality where the bridge was built.

The way from this point was now plain; they ascended the stream, crossed the bridge, and followed the east bank up toward Cicuye.
Taken From: 1940 Panhandle-Plains Historical Review

March 17 to September 4, 2019

CONTRIBUTIONS

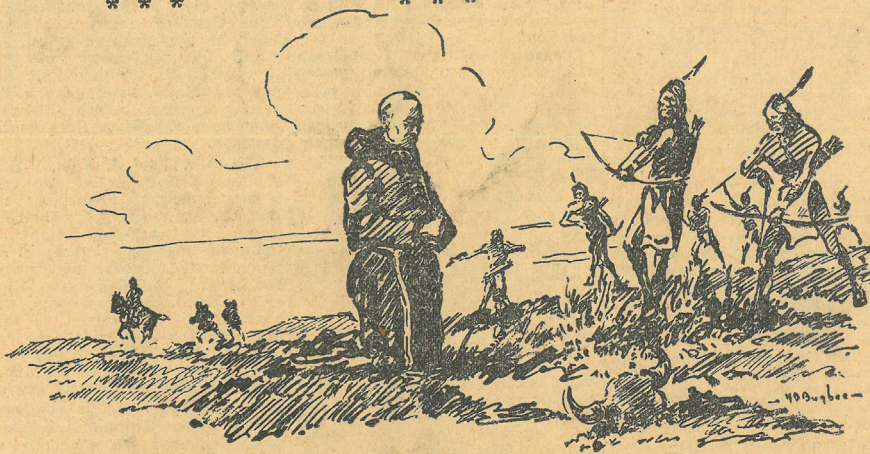
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Jim and Marge Arend	100
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Total	1815

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Sharon Moylan	20
Anna Marie Wink	25
Bishop John Yanta	25
Total	120

**Thank you for your
continued
generosity!**

A Martyr Meets Death



Pictured above is an artist's conception of the death of Frey Juan de Padilla, Franciscan missionary, who was martyred by hostile Indians in this region 400 years ago. Honoring the martyr, officials of Church and State assembled at Ellwood park, Amarillo, last Sunday to unveil a monument in his honor.

Fray Padilla Monument



Above is a picture of the Fray Juan de Padilla memorial erected in Elwood park, Amarillo, which will be dedicated by His Excellency, the Most Rev. Robert E. Lucey, at 3 o'clock Sunday, June 13. Joining in the ceremony will be the priests and faithful of the Panhandle, the city officials of Amarillo, and representatives of the Knights of Columbus. Father Padilla, a Franciscan missionary and first Christian martyr of Texas and the United States, is pictured above holding aloft the crucifix as the Indians put him to death with arrows and tomahawk. His martyrdom occurred in 1544.

The Most Rev. Bishop Robert E. Lucey, head of the church in the Diocese of Amarillo, within whose boundaries the United States' first Christian martyr, Fray Juan de Padilla, shed his blood nearly 400 years ago, Sunday dedicated the monument that will preserve Fray Padilla's memory for future generations in Amarillo. The dedication ceremony in Ellwood City park was attended by a crowd of approximately 1,000 persons, among whom were a number of modern representatives of the Franciscan order, to which Fray Padilla belonged. It was Fray Padilla who established the first mission in Quivira, the Plains country north of Amarillo, after accompanying the explorer, Coronado, into the Texas Panhandle in search of the legendary seven cities of gold. In a colorful and patriotic ceremony, the monument to his memory - sent to Amarillo by the Texas Centennial commission and the Texas Knights of Columbus - was blessed and unveiled by His Excellency, the Most Rev. Bishop Robert E. Lucey. The colorful procesion of Church dignitaries, priests, sisters, altar boys, Boy Scouts, and others wended its way from the chancery office to the place where the monument was blessed. The exploits of Coronado and Padilla were recounted in addresses by Lieut. Gov.

Walter Woodul of Houston, Dr. Carlos Castaneda, historian and author; Floyd Studer, James O. Guleke Dr. C. C. Grimes of Amarillo, and others. Members of the Franciscan order from various states came to Amarillo to participate in the ceremony. Hanson Post of the American Legion lowered the American flag as a bugler from the 42nd infantry, national guard band played taps. The band played "The Eyes of Texas Are Upon You" as the program ended. A crowd of approximately 1,000 persons witnessed the unveiling. The national guard band gave a 30 minute concert before the program opened. Mayor Ross Rogers presided. The Rev. Paul J. Foik, C.S.C., of Austin, member of the Centennial board of historians; the Rev. A. A. Boeding of Amarillo, member of the Texas Knights of Columbus historical board; F. M. Shaughnessy, pioneer member of the Knights of Columbus in Amarillo; T. E. Johnson, who was chairman of the committee that arranged the dedication program, and Senator Clint C. Small were among those introduced by Mayor Rogers in addition to the speakers. Mr. Woodul, who is chairman of the State Centennial commission, described the ceremony as one of the most impressive of any held in Texas in the past year, in which time many historical markers and monuments have been erected. "The country that does not pause to honor and revere the memory of its forefathers is like a person who forgets his parents," he said. He reviewed the work of the Centennial commission in reminding Texans of the debt they owe the founders of the republic and the men who first braved the dangers of this country. Mr. Studer said the memorial to Fray Padilla should result in a great quadri-centennial in 1940, to Coronado," the first White citizen of this region. In a prepared talk, Mr. Studer retraced in detail the Coronado expedition into the Panhandle. Dr. Castaneda's talk also was of historic nature, picturing Fray Padilla's return to the Panhandle, where he was slain by hostile Indians in 1543. "Well may Texas be proud," declared Dr. Castaneda, "to claim the rare distinction of having been the place chosen by Divine Providence for the achievement of the heroic sacrifices of the pious and fearless Fray Juan de Padilla. In a broader sense, he has left a rich heritage not only to those of his faith but to all men who feel admiration for courage, determination, and heroic virtue."

Night at the Museum Revisted



The Diocese of Amarillo was well represented on Thursday, July 25th at "A Night at the Museum". Visitors from Amarillo, Canyon, Clarendon, Fritch, Groom, Panhandle, Vega and White Deer joined in the event, not only to celebrate the history, memories and art from St. Anthony's Hospital, but also, to view artifacts dating back to the early days of Catholicism in the Texas Panhandle. Over-looking a crowd of more than one hundred people was a 6x8 foot mural painted by local artist Randy Friemel, showing Fray Juan Padilla leading Francisco Vasques de Coronado, his soldiers and some Indians into Palo Duro Canyon in search of the Seven Cities of Cibola, in the year 1541. This historical event marked the date of the first Catholic Mass celebrated in our Panhandle area. --Ann



Msgr. Kuehler



Sr. Marie Andre



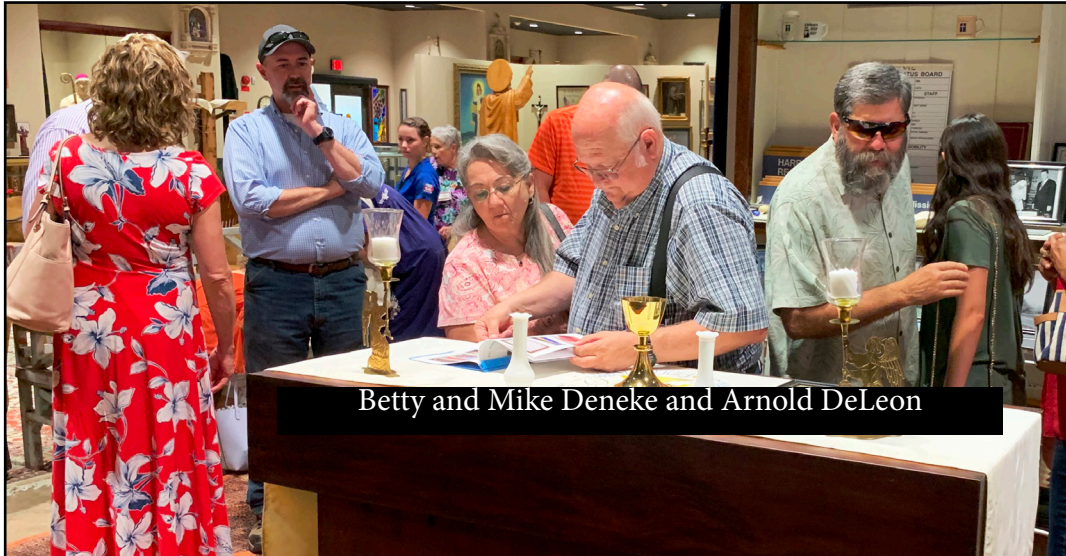
Msgr. Colwell and Beca Vincent



Darrel Glen



White Deer Ladies



Betty and Mike Deneke and Arnold DeLeon



Night at the Museum Revisted



Dave, our mascot, Kathy Reed and Doris Smith, boardmember



Fr. Sweeney, Christopher Morris, Kevin Morris and Deacon Robert Arranda



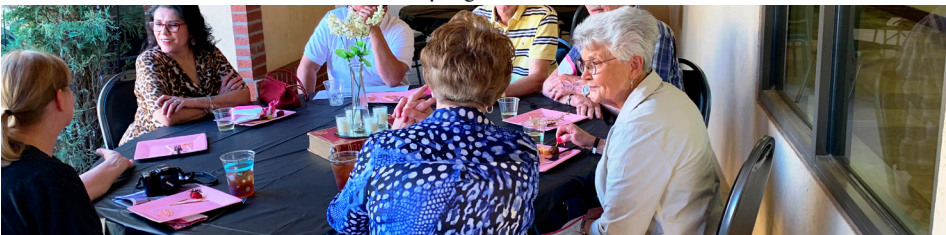
Mary Glasgow, Flo Broft and Lance Garcia



Howard Birkenfeld and Natilie Barrett, boardmember



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You may stop by daily (Monday through Friday) to view the museum, for a guided tour it is recommended that you make an appointment.. The museum is open by appointment for church and school groups. This includes evenings and weekends.

Susan: 383-2243 Ext. 120 or even better: sgarner@dioama.org

Thank you for your
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