



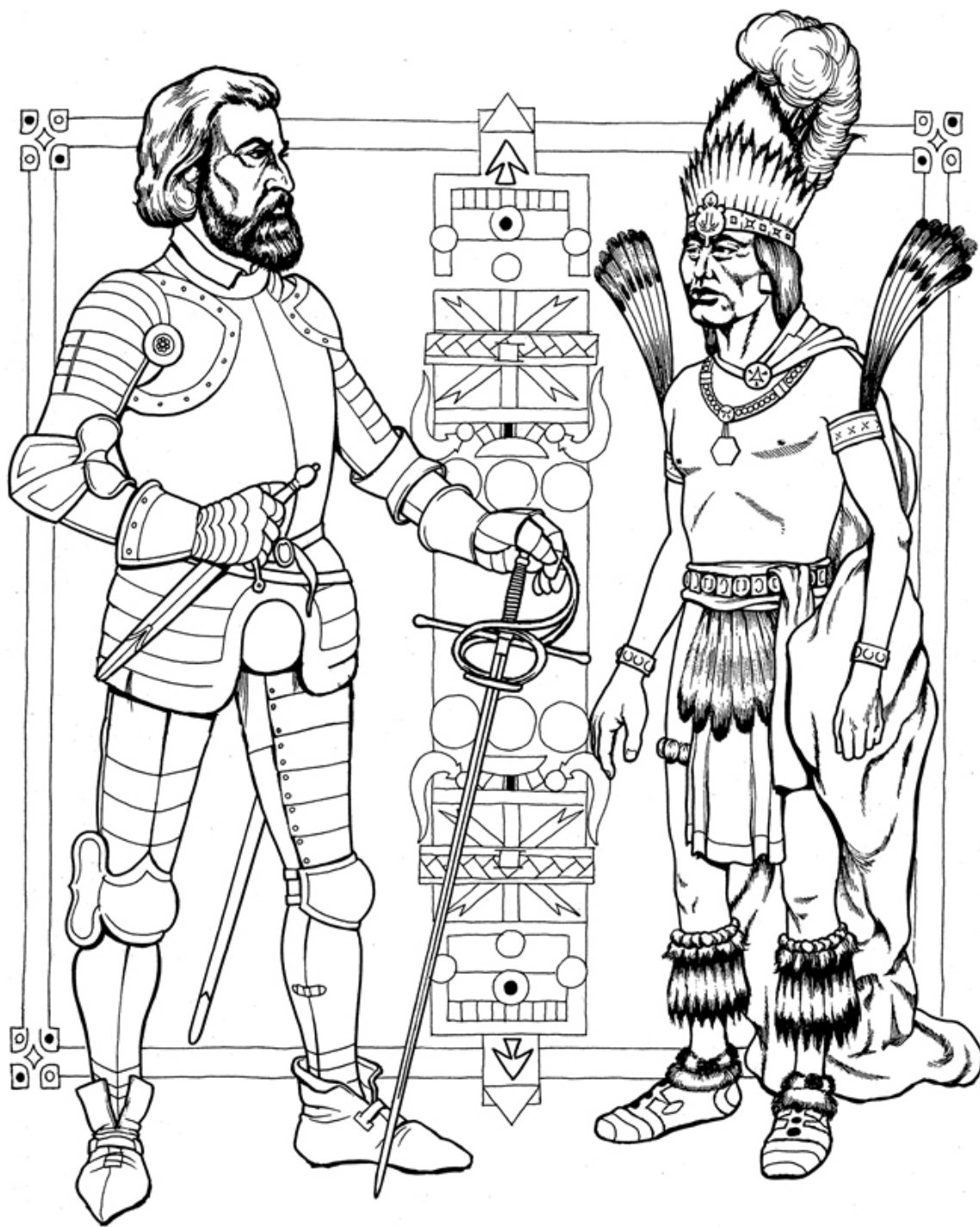
The Vikings in Vinland (ca. 1000)

The first European presence in North America for which there is reliable evidence occurred in 986. A Viking ship from Greenland, which was discovered and colonized a few years earlier, was blown off course, and the new land was accidentally discovered. Around 1000, a Greenland Viking named Leif Erikson landed on what might have been Labrador or Newfoundland in present-day Canada. He called the place Vinland because of all the wild grapes. His brother Thorvald established a colony there. He and his crew spent 2 years exploring the coast and fighting against Native Americans, who eventually forced the Vikings to abandon Vinland and return to Greenland. Unsuccessful attempts at settlement continued, perhaps as late as 1020.



Fernandes Explores the Coast of Greenland (1499)

After learning about Cabot's voyages, the king of Portugal sponsored several expeditions into northern waters. João Fernandes explored the coast of Greenland, which had long been abandoned by the Vikings. Perhaps disappointed by the king's sponsorship of a rival explorer, Fernandes later sailed for England. He was probably lost on an English expedition in 1502.



Cortés and Montezuma (1519)

Hernán Cortés, who came from Cuba with a few hundred soldiers, conquered Mexico and overthrew the Aztec empire led by Montezuma. Aided psychologically by a Native American legend that suggested Cortés was an ancient Mexican god who returned to Earth—and physically by steel weapons, armor, and 16 horses—the Spanish won over many Aztecs as allies. The Aztec emperor was taken prisoner by Cortés and stoned to death by his own people. In 1521, the Aztec capital fell to Cortés. The Spanish controlled Mexico, which they named New Spain.



De Soto's Exploration of the Southeastern United States (1539–43)

In 1539, Hernando de Soto organized a well-armed expedition of 600 Spaniards and landed on the east coast of Florida, searching for the mythical Seven Cities of Gold that, according to legend, were somewhere in the interior. For 4 years, de Soto and his men fought Native Americans and fever, searching through Florida, Georgia, and North and South Carolina. They went over the Appalachian Mountains into Tennessee and traveled through Alabama before crossing the Mississippi River and marching through Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. De Soto died of fever along the way in 1542, and the survivors of his expedition reached Mexico in 1543 after terrible hardships. Only 311 men—about half of the original force—arrived in Mexico.



New Sweden (1643)

Peter Minuit, the Dutch navigator who purchased Manhattan from Native Americans and founded New Amsterdam in 1626, brought the first group of Swedish and Finnish settlers to North America in 1638. They explored Delaware Bay and founded their first colony in present-day Wilmington, Delaware, naming it Fort Christina in honor of the young queen-elect of Sweden. Johan Printz, the third governor of the colony of New Sweden, is shown arriving in 1643. He served for 10 years and 6 months.



Pike Maps Territory in Colorado (1806)

In 1806, Zebulon Pike of the US Army led an expedition to find the source of the Red and Arkansas rivers. He traveled through Colorado, where he discovered the peak that is named for him, and continued west into Spanish territory in New Mexico. Pike was arrested by Spanish authorities in January 1807 and not released until the following summer. He was killed in Canada during the War of 1812.
