Did you know that mammoths first evolved in Africa millions of years ago? After migrating to Europe, they spread eastward into Asia. A species known as the steppe mammoth developed in Siberia and China and then spread westward into northern Europe. Over time, the famous woolly mammoth—with its hairy coat and relatively small stature, standing 9 to 11 feet at the shoulder and weighing about five tons—evolved from this creature. Meanwhile, the ancestor of another type of mammoth ventured into the Americas between one and two million years ago via a land bridge. This creature evolved to become a species specific to North America, known as the Columbian mammoth. The Columbian mammoth had short hair similar to elephants, weighed about 10 tons, and stood 13 feet at the shoulder. Adapting to their new environment, these huge, plant-eating creatures reached as far south as Central America. In some ways, the Columbian mammoth should be considered among the first explorers of the Americas!
ABOUT THE MAPS

Most of the explorers introduced in this issue traveled to lands about which people at that time knew little or nothing—remember, it was an age before accurate maps or today's precise GPS systems. So the small maps included on the following pages show present-day continents and countries with the explorers' general routes based on historians' best guesses.

ABOUT THE COVER

Imagine you are sailing across the ocean on the replica of Christopher Columbus's ship and you come across a large, unfamiliar landmass that does not appear on any of your maps. Blocks your way. What would you do? (phototrust.com, all)
We know today that the earth is round and that it consists of seven continents and five oceans. But there was a time when one part of the world did not know that the other half existed. Just slightly more than 500 years ago, European adventurers embarked on a remarkable age of discovery and exploration that changed history.

What motivated those men to take to the sea in their sailing vessels? They were driven by the desire to find a direct sea route to Asia. Spices, jewels, and silk only available in that part of the world — then called the Far East — held great value for merchants throughout Europe, and those who controlled the trade routes and served as middlemen had access to great wealth. At the time, Arabs controlled the flow of goods in the Near East in southwest Asia, while Italy's Venetians controlled the routes around the Mediterranean Sea. Because the trade routes were long and complicated, by the time the goods reached western European markets, the prices for them were staggering.

Then, in 1453, the Ottoman Turks captured Europe's largest and most prosperous city, Constantinople (renaming it Istanbul). The Venetians were forced to pay the Turks a fee so that Venetian merchant ships could sail safely in Turkish waters. This circumstance further increased the price of goods in European markets.

Thus, the rulers and mariners of the countries bordering the Atlantic Ocean were eager to find another route to Asia using an Atlantic port as a base, fed by their desire for wealth, glory, and power, and fueled by their competition with one another to be the first to make discoveries. European explorers attempted to sail completely around Africa and then eastward to reach Asia. In 1488, Portugal's Bartholomeu Dias became the first European to sail around the southern tip of Africa, but he turned around before reaching India. In 1498, Vasco da Gama of Portugal sailed around Africa and made it all the way to India.

Just six years earlier, however, in 1492, another explorer claimed that he had found a route to Asia by heading westward across the Atlantic Ocean. Christopher Columbus, sailing from Spain, believed that he had sailed to India, but the land he reached was a new, previously unknown world to the Europeans. Over the course of the next 100 years, European nations, eager to expand their empires, sent explorers to this "new" world.

In this issue, we go back in time to meet a diverse group of explorers and adventurers who were among the first to journey to the Americas and the first to set eyes on the future United States of America.

Prince Henry, also known as Henry the Navigator, was an early supporter of the expansion of Portuguese exploration and trade in the 15th century. Henry's family had led an army to capture the North African city of Ceuta in 1415, at which time Henry saw for himself the potential for wealth on that continent. Establishing himself as a patron of explorers, Henry encouraged adventurers to share their experiences. This led to a growing, centralized pool of knowledge about the best routes and new land features that made each subsequent explorer able to push a little farther into unfamiliar seas.

DID YOU KNOW?

An Age of Discoveries

by Rosalie F. Baker and Andrew Matthews
he small band of nomadic hunters hurriedly broke camp. Their leader had just returned with word of a herd of mammoths grazing beyond a line of faraway hills. Everyone in the camp—men, women, and children—carried their belongings as they set out across the rolling plains in pursuit of the mammoths. The band moved slowly eastward, following animal trails, toward the country of the rising sun. Unknowingly, these hunters were leaving Asia and entering America.

Archaeologists believe that a scene similar to this one may have happened as many as 46,000 years ago, when small groups of hunters crossed a wide land bridge between Asia and America. Before this event, the vast continents of North and South America were uninhabited by humans. After these migrations, however, the human population spread from the frozen ice sheets of North America's Alaska all the way to the tip of South America's Tierra del Fuego.

How did these first people traverse all that way? Most scientists agree that they probably walked—a distance of nearly 10,000 miles! That's not so unbelievable if you consider that their migration took several thousand years. In fact, they might not even have known they were migrating. Perhaps they moved south slowly over many generations as they followed herds of animals and looked for new sources of plant food. One scientist has used the word "drifting" to describe this movement. No matter what it is called, this movement was the first important migration in the history of the Americas.

Who were those first Americans? Where did they come from? What were their lives like? What land was it that they crossed in reaching America? What traces did they leave behind? These questions have puzzled people for centuries.

Archaeologists call those early nomadic hunting people Paleo-Indians, meaning "early Indians" or "old Indians." The Paleo-Indians are believed to be the ancestors of today's North, Central, and South American Indian groups. The Asian origins of the physical makeup of modern-day American Indians have been confirmed. Although Native Americans from different places look different, they share certain general features with the Mongoloid people of Asia: dark eyes, straight black hair, stockiness, similar traits in teeth, scant body hair, and brown skin color.

Archaeologists have concluded that the first Americans were skilled toolmakers, used fire, hunted large game such as mammoths, and moved about in pursuit of their prey. The first Paleo-Indians to reach America had no idea that they were entering a new, unexplored land. They simply were following the herds of mammoths, horses, camels, and musk oxen that they needed for survival. The animals provided meat for food, bones for tools and weapons, and hides for clothing and shelter. When the animals moved, so did the hunters, who ultimately trailed their wandering prey to an uninhabited continent.

During the Pleistocene Ice Age (which began less than two million years ago and ended about 11,000 years ago), mile-thick glaciers covered vast parts of North America, Europe, and Asia. With so much of the earth's water frozen, the level of the oceans dropped low enough to expose a 1,000-mile-wide isthmus between Asia and North America. The first humans most likely entered North America by walking across this exposed land bridge located between Siberia (part of the Russian Federation) and Alaska. Once beyond the glacier-locked lands of the Northwest, the Paleo-Indians then spread throughout the two American continents. Over the centuries, they learned to adjust to the environments in which they settled.
When the earth experienced a warming trend and the glaciers began to melt, the land bridge, called Beringia, vanished beneath the rising waters of the Bering Strait. Archaeologists have often attempted to find sites where the earliest Americans lived, but today, 56 miles of frigid water separate Alaska from Siberia. Since Beringia currently lies under water, archaeological investigation there is almost impossible.

Many archaeologists feel that the best sites might be found either on the high ground that once overlooked the grassy plains of Beringia or in the mountain passes of Alaska. At one of these sites, Onion Portage in Alaska, archaeologists found evidence of human occupation that possibly could be 15,000 years old.

Another site discovered by archaeologists in the mid-1920s in Folsom, New Mexico, showed evidence of human hunters that trapped and killed Ice Age bison. These hunters were skilled stone workers who made distinctive spear points that are easily identified even today. One of these Folsom points was found between the ribs of a slaughtered bison. Because those animals have been extinct for at least 10,000 years, the presence of the spear point proved the existence of human hunters in North America at least that long ago.

The ancestors of these hunters must have arrived in North America far earlier. But to date, no site has provided enough proof for a majority of archaeologists to agree on an exact migration date. However, new sites are being discovered and excavated, and additional knowledge is being gained all the time. One thing is certain: Those roving hunters who crossed Beringia discovered the Americas many, many centuries before the first Europeans reached the continents’ eastern shores.
Did you know that one day his descendants would tell a Saga about him. Most of what we know about the Vikings of nearly a thousand years ago has come down through these stories. Ericsson's story is usually told in two sagas, one called the "Greenlanders' Saga" (in 1982, Eric the Red and his family moved to and settled in Greenland) and the other known as "Eric the Red's Saga." Of the two, the "Greenlanders' Saga" is usually considered the more reliable. It did not begin with Ericsson at all, however, but with another Viking named Bjarni Herjolfsson, who was the first European to see America. When Herjolfsson told Eric the Red about the strange shores he had sighted when his ship was blown off course while trying to reach Greenland from Norway, Ericsson was listening. Around the year 1000, Ericson bought Herjolfsson's ship and assembled a crew of 35 men. As Eric the Red watched from shore, Ericson set sail in his open ship powered only by sails and oars and headed toward the unknown lands. They sailed for many days, retracing Herjolfsson's route in reverse. Finally, a strange shoreline loomed in the mist. Ericsson rowed toward the unknown coast. When he stepped onto the rocky shore, he became the first European to set foot on the American continent.

The strange land that Ericsson had discovered was barren and forbidding, full of glaciers and large, slaluble rocks. He named this land Helluland, meaning "Flat Stone Land." Setting sail once more, Ericson and his crew made a second fall. They named the densely forested area Markland, meaning "Forest Land" or "Wood Land." Sailing on, Ericsson discovered a third land, where he and his men set up camp for the winter. This place was the most beautiful of all, scath with a lake full of salmon, grassy meadows, and most amazing of all, grapes! Ericsson called this country Vinland, or "Wine Land."

Helluland...Markland...Vinland. What part of the Americas did Ericsson really discover? Helluland most likely was the coast of Baffin Island, an island lying between present-day Greenland and mainland Canada. Markland was probably Labrador, a Canadian peninsula just south of Baffin Island. But where was Ericsson's beautiful Vinland?

In 1960, a Norwegian scholar discovered the ruins of an ancient settlement at a fishing village called L'Anse aux Meadows on the northern tip of Newfoundland, Canada. The archaeologists found several bronze and iron relics, as well as the remains of houses, boat sheds, and cooking pits. Tests have shown the site to be nearly a thousand years old, dating back to about the time Ericsson stepped onto the American shore. Could the ruins at L'Anse aux Meadows be the remains of Ericsson's Viking main base in America? All the evidence seems to support this theory. And one thing is certain: The first known European to tread on American soil was not Christopher Columbus but a brave Viking explorer named Leif Ericsson.
Shortly after midnight on an October night in 1492, Rodrigo de Triana, the lookout on the small, square-rigged sailing ship, shouted, "Tierra!" ("Land!") The boom of a cannon signaled the sighting to the Pinta's two companion ships, the Nina and the Santa Maria. The three vessels lowered their sails to wait for daylight and the chance to investigate the landfall they had been sailing in search of since early August.

The ships were from Spain, sailing under Captain General Cristobal Colon. Not much is known about this man or the journey he made. He used different names during his lifetime—Cristoforo Colombo, Christobal Colom, and Xpooal de Colon, which is how he signed the beginning of the journal he kept of his 1492 voyage. Today we remember him as Christopher Columbus.

Columbus was a sailor most of his life, making many voyages on merchant ships first in the Mediterranean Sea and later along the Atlantic coasts of Europe and northern Africa. He also worked for a while as a cartographer in Lisbon, Portugal. He read books that told of the journeys of Marco Polo, an Italian merchant who had traveled to Asia in the 13th century, and other explorers, and discussed what was known about the lands and seas of the world at that time.

Perhaps inspired by the books on geography he had read, Columbus approached the king of Portugal in 1484 with an idea. He wished to sail in search of "islands and mainlands in the Ocean Sea" (the Atlantic Ocean). But he needed an investor to back what he called the Enterprise of the Indies. The king's advisors rejected Columbus's request for ships and money.

So Columbus traveled to Spain to try his luck there. In 1486, he obtained an audience with Queen Isabella. She was intrigued, but her advisors were not convinced of the success of Columbus's plan, so the queen told him to wait. After several years of waiting and negotiating, Queen Isabella finally agreed to finance a journey early in 1492.

Columbus was about 40 years old when his ships left the small Spanish port of Palos. It may be that, from the books he had read and the sailors he had met, he was convinced that Asia, called the Indies (for India), could be reached by sailing west. Until then, traders with these foreign lands had gone around Africa and then east, a long and difficult journey. Columbus's goal also may have been to search for fabled islands that sailors spoke of or other lands of great importance.

Columbus believed that he could carry Christianity to any lands he found, and he sailed with a command from Queen Isabella to "discover and acquire . . . Islands and Mainlands" in the Ocean Sea and to call himself "Viceroy and Governor-General" of the lands he discovered.

Whatever he considered to be his destination, Columbus knew that if he succeeded, he would achieve glory. In an era when trade with foreign lands was beginning to grow, the discovery of new lands and markets would bring wealth and fame to the person who claimed them.

After years of waiting, Christopher Columbus finally convinced the Spanish government to help finance his journey across the ocean.
After weeks of sailing on the open sea, struggling to encourage his nervous crew and quiet their fears that they would never see land again, Columbus recorded signs of land—floating branches and flocks of birds—in his journal. Then de Triana saw the moon shining on the cliffs and sandy beach of an island.

In truth, Columbus did not know exactly where he was, except in terms of the time he had traveled west from the Canary Islands off the African coast. He called his landfall the Indies and believed that he had reached the Asian mainland. It was several years before navigators realized that he had reached a group of islands off the coasts of two new continents. Columbus established his first settlement, La Navidad, on Hispaniola, a major island in the Caribbean Sea, which today is comprised of the Dominican Republic and Haiti.

The native people of Haiti, the Tainos, initially were friendly with Columbus and his crew and helped the foreigners build their settlement. Upon Columbus’s return to the island in 1502 and his discovery that the fort at La Navidad had been destroyed, he established a second settlement.

It is believed that Columbus’s first landfall was on one of the Bahaman Islands.

La Isabela, in the Dominican Republic. By 1496, Columbus abandoned La Isabela for yet another new settlement in the Dominican Republic, Santo Domingo. Columbus has been called a discoverer of new lands, but he was neither the first to discover them. The various islands of the Caribbean Sea and two large continents that he “put on the map” already were inhabited by millions of native people (see page 4). Columbus was not even the first European to reach these lands, as the Vikings had made landfall some 500 years earlier (see page 7). Columbus was, however, the first European explorer to return to the Americas—he made a total of four voyages, bringing with him fresh men and supplies to strengthen his claims. And news of his explorations convinced Europeans of the existence of new lands to the west. About 25 years after Columbus made his first journey, Spanish explorers had begun to claim lands in North, Central, and South America for the Spanish empire. Rather than as a discoverer, Columbus perhaps is best considered as someone whose actions had a historic impact when he made the people of the Americas and the people of Europe aware of one another.
ventures. On June 24, 52 days after sailing, Cabot and Portugal for his sea explorations. Henry VII gave Cabot permission to claim all newly discovered lands in return for one fifth of all profits realized from the England after failing to obtain royal support in Spain.

Five years after Christopher Columbus made his historic landfall in what he believed was India (see page 10), John Cabot and a crew of 18 men sailed from Bristol, England, in 1497. They carried with them a formal grant signed by England’s King Henry VII giving Cabot the right to “find, discover, and investigate” lands previously unknown to Christians.

Cabot was an Italian by birth who had emigrated to England after failing to obtain royal support in Spain and Portugal for his sea explorations. Henry VII gave Cabot permission to claim all newly discovered lands in return for one fifth of all profits realized from the venture. On June 24, 52 days after setting sail, Cabot dropped anchor off what many historians believe to be present-day Newfoundland, Canada.

While no official record of his voyage survives, historians believe that Cabot explored the coast and perhaps set foot on land but did not travel inland any great distance. Cabot returned to Bristol on August 6. His backers welcomed the news that Cabot had reached northeastern Asia. They thought that English mariners had only to sail farther south to gain direct access to the treasures of the Far East.

After rewarding Cabot, Henry VII then supported a second expedition. In 1498, Cabot again set out from Bristol, this time with five ships and several hundred men. One vessel returned shortly after setting sail, but nothing ever was heard or seen of the other four vessels.

We know today that the land Cabot reached was not Asia—it was the continent of North America, making Cabot the second European after Leif Ericson (see page 7) to reach it. While Cabot’s voyages did not open the much-hoped-for trade routes to Asia, they did provide valuable information for geographers, mapmakers, and mariners. In addition, his reports of waters teeming with codfish gave rise to the profitable British fishing industry off the coast of Newfoundland.

Today, a replica of John Cabot’s merchant ship, the Matthew, is anchored in the harbor of Bristol and is open to the public for boarding and short sailing trips. In 1997, the ship sailed on the same course Cabot supposedly took in 1497.

Following in Christopher Columbus’s footsteps, the first Spanish conquistadores established bases in the Caribbean Islands. From there, they came in contact with and then destroyed ancient civilizations in Mexico and South America. After discovering and seizing vast quantities of gold from the Aztecs in Mexico and the Incas in South America, it seemed to the Spanish that there also should be gold in the land to the north.

In fact, a story was going around that somewhere there was a land known as Bimini that was full of gold. It was said to be home to a magical Fountain of Youth—a spring whose waters kept people forever young. To find this land, Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de Leon led an expedition in 1513 northwest from Puerto Rico, where he had founded a Spanish settlement in 1508 and where he had been serving as the island’s governor.

Ponce de Leon never located Bimini—at least, he found neither gold nor the Fountain of Youth. He is considered to be the first European to explore Florida—naming it La Florida for its many flowers—and meet the natives who lived there. After first sailing north along Florida’s eastern shoreline, Ponce de Leon and his men then headed south around the tip of Florida to explore the western coast. They saw some Calusa Indians beckoning them to come ashore. Curious, the Spanish crew dropped anchor and sent several men in small boats to the beach.

This first encounter between Europeans and Indians of the Southeast was far from peaceful. Intrigued by the supplies the visitors carried, the Calusas immediately began carting away tools, oars, and other equipment. When Ponce de Leon’s men objected, a Calusa struck and wounded a Spaniard. A brief battle followed, during which two more sailors were injured. The outnumbered Spanish barely managed to escape back to the safety of their ship.

Ponce de Leon resolved to return. In 1521, he made a second voyage to Florida. This time, he built a small colony on the shores of the west coast of Florida along the Gulf of Mexico. The Calusas there, however, were even less welcoming than those Ponce de Leon had met in 1513. Within a few months, they attacked the colony, killed many of the Spanish—including Ponce de Leon—and drove away the rest.

It was a temporary setback for the Spanish. Having firmly established themselves in Central and South America, they looked to North America to expand their empire.
An Unusual Conquistador
by Gay Neale

Panfilo de Narvaez's decision to abandon his expedition's large vessels and head overland through Florida proved to be a fatal mistake.

No one was sure whether North America was a group of islands or a solid body of land. In 1528, Spanish leaders sent 300 men under the command of Panfilo de Narvaez to Florida to explore and establish a town there. They appointed Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca to take care of the expedition's money and supplies. Cabeza de Vaca was not a young man—he was 42 years old—and he was not very eager to go.

The first day that the Spanish went ashore on the west coast of Florida, near the present-day city of Tampa, an Indian showed them a piece of silver. He indicated that it came from farther up the coast. Immediately, the Spanish left the protected area and headed off in search of riches.

The Spanish explorers found nothing but jungle, swarms of insects, unbearable heat, and danger. By the time they reached the northern part of Florida on the Gulf coast, many of the Spanish were weak from lack of supplies and disease. A supply ship that should have met them there never showed up. They ate their horses and used the horses to make a handful of rafts. They hoped to somehow sail back to Spanish-held territory.

A great storm came up and blew the boats apart. Fewer than 100 men survived, and Narvaez was not one of them. Some of the Spanish were shipwrecked on the beach of present-day Galveston Island off the coast of Texas. The local people took them in and cared for them back to life. But stranded in an unfamiliar land and dependent on the native people for food and shelter, the Spanish men became virtual slaves to the Indians.

After several years of laboring for the natives, only four Spanish men were left alive. One of those men was Cabeza de Vaca. Another was a black slave, originally an African from Morocco, called Estebanico. (For more about Estebanico, see page 19.) Cabeza de Vaca boasted that his little hand had to escape and go south and west, where they would find the Spanish in Mexico. Cabeza de Vaca developed two talents that helped him survive. He managed to build up a supply of trade goods so that the native people would allow him to travel from one tribe to another. He and his Spanish companions also discovered that they had the ability to heal the sick. They would place their hands on sick people, blow in their faces, make the sign of the cross, and pray. This procedure almost always seemed to make a patient well.

Cabeza de Vaca never could explain their faith-healing ability, but he thanked God for it because it made them valuable to the native people and saved their lives. The four Spaniards were never given enough to eat while they were with the Indians. But they made an escape plan, deciding to wait until the time when the prickly pear cactus fruit was ripe. The Indians made a great harvest of this sugar-filled fruit, drying for later use what they did not eat. Cabeza de Vaca, Estebanico, and the two other men strengthened themselves on cactus fruit, then escaped and headed west.

Having learned sign language, Cabeza de Vaca and his companions were able to communicate with tribes that they met. They wandered from tribe to tribe for four years, going across Texas and into Mexico. They continued to heal the sick, and large crowds began to follow them. Once Cabeza de Vaca removed an arrowhead from the chest of a dying man by using a sharpened seashell, and the man lived.

As the Spaniards traveled west, they saw many new wonders, such as Gila monsters in the desert and bison, which looked to them like great shaggy cows.
In 1536, eight years after the start of his journey, Cabeza de Vaca was shown some objects of iron. He knew that Spanish blacksmiths must have made them, and he realized their journey was almost over. Shortly after that, he came across some Spaniards on the western coast of northern Mexico and Culiacan, hunting for native people to enslave. The sight of ragged, bearded men running forward in joy at first frightened the Spanish slave hunters. But once they said greetings in Spanish, the travelers were welcomed and taken back to Mexico City. The Spaniards also took captive some 600 native people who were following the Spaniards. They forced the Indians into slavery, much to Cabeza de Vaca's chagrin.

Cabeza de Vaca returned to Spain, where his remarkable story of survival spread. He published a book about his experiences in 1542. He described the people, lands, and sights that he had seen. While he had begun his journey as a member of a party of Spanish conquistadors, he is remembered today for his sympathetic observations of the native people and for his talent as a faith healer. For more about Cabeza de Vaca, see page 34.

While Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca (see page 16) returned to Spain, one of his companions, Estebanico, remained in Mexico City as Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza's slave. Like Cabeza de Vaca, Estebanico shared stories of his journeys. The Spanish in Mexico decided that to the north must be the legendary Seven Cities of Cibola. The Spanish had heard stories about golden cities filled with unbelievable wealth. Having acquired great riches after conquering the Aztec and Inca empires, the Spanish decided to find the famed seven cities. The viceroy appointed Francisco Vasquez de Coronado to lead the expedition.

Before Coronado began, however, a smaller group was sent ahead to scout. The group included a priest, Fray Marcos de Niza, with Estebanico as his guide. They set out with a small troop of soldiers and some natives in 1539. De Niza let Estebanico go on ahead with 20 men. He instructed Estebanico to send back news of the country ahead. Four days later, messengers came from Estebanico that the famed cities were only 30 days away. Estebanico had survived his adventures so far by being clever, cheerful, and dramatic. The native people loved him and gave him robes and feathers and bells to wear. They marveled at his black skin and often followed him from town to town.
and all the Seven Cities of Cibola. They, fearing that the native people would kill him, too, returned quickly to Mexico.

Back in Mexico, De Niza was a great hero. People were sure he had found the legendary rich cities. De Niza started to believe that what he had seen was not a city made of mud glowing in the evening sun but an actual city made of precious stones and gold.

The viceroys then encouraged Coronado to lead his expedition of more than 1,500 men to explore the new land.

Three hundred Spanish men on horses and on foot, with more than 1,000 natives carrying their supplies, set out in 1540. A group of friars under the leadership of De Niza also went along, plus small herds of horses, cattle, and mules.

When they reached the pueblo of Hawikuh, the shocked adventurers found a place made of mud. The sight, in the words of the historian Castaneda, who went along, was "like a dash of ice water. Such were the curses that some hurled at Fray Marcos that I pray God may protect him. It is a little, crowded village looking as if it has been crumpled up all together."

After some fighting, Coronado took charge of Hawikuh and made it his base. But his men never gave up on the belief that there existed, somewhere, a golden city. Coronado sent scouting parties out to explore. Some of them discovered the Colorado River and the Grand Canyon, with its enormous rocks and cliffs and the Hopi pueblos on their high mesas. Others went as far as Pecos, Texas. They found an Indian from the Great Plains who had been captured and brought west. They nicknamed him "the Turk" and brought him back to Coronado. The Turk told them to forget the Seven Cities of Cibola, because he knew of an even richer place, Quivira.

The Turk told such wonderful stories of this land far to the east that Coronado and his men went out to find it. They struggled over what is now Texas and Oklahoma and eventually, half starved, went as far as Wichita, Kansas, where they found only mud huts and ragged, hungry Indians. After killing the Turk for leading them so far astray, Coronado's weary band struggled back to Mexico.

Coronado had invested great sums of his own money into the expedition. He returned to Mexico almost penniless and in disgrace. Castaneda, the historian, wisely observed that instead of finding glorious wealth, those who searched found "the beginning of a good country to settle in." As Coronado later wrote to the king of Spain:

"The soil itself is the most suitable that has been found for growing all the products of Spain, for besides being rich and black, it is well watered by arroyos, springs, and rivers." And so it proved to be.

Estebanico also carried a rattle with him. It was a gourd decorated with red and white feathers and objects that made it rattle. Whenever he was near a town, he would send this rattle with messengers ahead of him. The people, having heard of him, would come out and escort him into town.

When Estebanico was several days ahead of De Niza, he came over a rise and saw the Zuni pueblo of Hawikuh in present-day New Mexico. He thought this was certainly one of the Seven Cities of Cibola. The town was large, with some three-story buildings. He sent his rattle in and prepared for a grand entrance. But the rattle was not welcome. When the Zuni came out to meet Estebanico, instead of greeting him and leading him back to their pueblo, the story is that they killed him.

De Niza hurried to catch up with Estebanico but then news came of Estebanico's death. De Niza went carefully to the rise of land where Estebanico had first seen Hawikuh. In the name of the Spanish crown, De Niza declared that he took possession of that town.

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Explorers were not the only "things" that traveled back and forth across the ocean.

In the 16th century, spices came through their largest strong ports in the Americas. The Native peoples in the southern United States, the great successors to the Aztecs and Mayas, produced many of these spices. Later, the Spanish brought them to the New World. What the Spanish called "indios" were introduced to the New World with horses from Europe. These horses were accompanied by seed and livestock that were introduced by the explorers. Gradually, the Native American peoples changed from being mainly hunters and gatherers to becoming subsistence farmers. The foremost crops they grew were corn, squash, and beans from South Asia, wheat from the Middle East and Eastern Europe, and rice from Asia. 

Sugar cane (from South Asia), wheat (from the Middle East and Eastern Europe), and rice (from Asia) came to America with the explorers. European demand for these products increased the importance of agriculture in the Americas. The food crops introduced to the Americas by the explorers changed the diet of the Native American peoples and allowed them to increase their population. The explorers brought new diseases, the most significant of which was smallpox. The indigenous peoples, who had no immunity, died in great numbers. 

The turkey, a bird native to the New World, went from being harvested by the Aztecs to becoming a common fannynard bird in Europe by the mid-1500s.

The banjo, popularly associated with African American folk music, was an instrument that originated in Africa.
In the early 1500s, Italian Amerigo Vespucci was part of an expedition that explored the east coast of South America. A German cartographer adapted Vespucci's first name to label the newly discovered continent "America." 

Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan led a Spanish expedition from 1519 to 1521 that became the first to sail from the Atlantic Ocean around the tip of South America to the Pacific Ocean, which he named for its peaceful waters. Today, the sea route at the tip of South America is called the Strait of Magellan.

While on his circumnavigation of the globe, Englishman Sir Francis Drake claimed an area on the Pacific Coast of North America for England in 1579. He named it New Albion.

Sailing for France, explorer Giovanni da Verrazano was the first European to sail along North America's Atlantic Coast—from the Carolinas to Newfoundland, Canada—in 1524. Verrazano was the first to see New York Harbor.

Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, a Portuguese explorer sailing for Spain, was the first European to sail along the coast of California in 1542. Cabrillo was the first explorer to sail into San Diego and Monterey bays, but he missed the entrance to San Francisco Bay.

After becoming the first European to visit the Hawaiian Islands in 1778, English explorer James Cook traveled and charted North America's Pacific Coast up to Alaska, contributing that information to world maps for the first time.
Hernando de Soto had earned a reputation as a skilled and ruthless conquistador while serving in Central and South America. He had been one of the commanders under the leadership of fellow Spaniard Francisco Pizarro during the fall of the Inca Empire in Peru in the early 1530s.

After accumulating great wealth and power during that conquest, De Soto returned to Spain in 1534. As a reward, King Charles V awarded him the governorship of Cuba, with a charge to lead the conquest of North America. De Soto returned to the Americas, and by May 1539 had landed on the west coast of Florida with several ships and an estimated 600 men, more than 200 horses, and about 200 pigs for food.

Over the course of its three-year expedition, De Soto’s group journeyed throughout the American Southeast, including, it is believed, parts of Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Texas, and Louisiana.

Like Juan Ponce de León (see page 15), De Soto discovered that most of the native groups were not welcoming to the explorers. His initial contact with the Timucuan and Okeechobee Indians of Florida was hostile. The native people often hid and attacked the Spanish as the soldiers made their way through native territories. Backed by well-armed troops, De Soto forced the local people to provide his men with food and shelter. He enslaved many of the natives and took leaders hostage. And, in one case, he ruthlessly burned a city to the ground after his men and the native people clashed.

De Soto traveled thousands of miles in the hope that he would discover gold or other riches. Instead, the constant skirmishes with various native people resulted in the dwindling of his supplies and men.

De Soto himself died of a fever in May 1542 as his expedition was trying to return to Spanish lands in Mexico. Hoping to keep his death a secret from the native people who had grown distrustful of the foreigners in their land, De Soto’s men weighed his body down and buried it in the Mississippi River. Nearly half the Spanish troops that accompanied De Soto died either from disease or from conflicts with Native Americans.

De Soto was the first European to visit the native people of Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi. He also is believed to be the first European to cross the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River. In the end, however, De Soto failed to bring back any gold or other riches, and his cruel and ruthless interactions with the native people made it difficult to establish any safe places for Spanish settlements.
English sea captain Henry Hudson devoted the last four years of his life to searching for a shorter and more northern trade route to Asia. At first, in 1607, he tried sailing directly over the North Pole. Then, he attempted to find a northeast passage—around the top of Norway, Lapland, and Russia—in 1608. Ice-filled waters forced him to turn around on both of those English-supported voyages.

On March 15, 1609, Hudson set out on his third major expedition, this time commanding a ship financed by Dutch merchants, the Half Moon. Hudson had strict written orders to seek only a northeast passage. But he had heard of the existence of a river that led to a great ocean in the New World. Hoping this might be the passage to Asia, Hudson decided to sail west to North America and begin searching.

Hudson became the first European to see Delaware Bay. Then he discovered today's New York Harbor. He explored the river that flowed into it. He found a rich, lush country inhabited by many native people. Eventually, near present-day Albany, New York, the river became too shallow for his large ship to continue, so Hudson turned back. He had failed again. By disobeying his orders, however, Hudson gave the Netherlands claim to a large new world. His report to the Dutch merchants also described the many furs he had obtained. This promise of countless furs for use in world trade eventually led to the Dutch settlement of New Netherland in present-day New York.

Hudson died before New Netherland was born, however. When Hudson refused to return home on his fourth voyage, his starving, freezing crew cast Hudson, his son, and seven loyal crewmen adrift in Canada's icy waters, leaving them to die in 1611. Hudson lives on in the places named for him, including the Hudson River, the Hudson Strait (the Atlantic approach for ships attempting to navigate the Northwest Passage through the Arctic), and Canada's Hudson Bay.

Jerry Miller lives in Idaho and is a frequent contributor to COBBLESTONE.
Marquette and Jolliet had to carry their canoes overland between waterways to complete their expedition.

miles through marshes and oak forests to the Wisconsin River. That river eventually led them to the Mississippi River on June 17, near what is now Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. After traveling for just one month, they had found their rumored big river.

The expedition quickly realized that the Mississippi River did not lead to the west and the Pacific Ocean. However, Marquette and Jolliet decided to continue down the Mississippi, and they became the first Europeans to explore and map much of the river and its shores. They traveled to the mouth of the Arkansas River. They reached a point that was just a little more than 400 miles from the Gulf of Mexico, but they had been warned about hostile native tribes. Some of the local people they encountered carried European trade goods, which most likely came from the Spanish. Marquette wrote, "We further considered that we exposed ourselves to the risk of losing the results of this voyage, of which we could give no information if we proceeded to fling ourselves into the hands of the Spaniards who, without doubt, would at least have detained us as captives." So they turned back.

The local native tribes had told Marquette and Jolliet about a shorter route back to the Great Lakes. Following this advice, the Frenchmen returned to the mouth of the Illinois River and then traveled the Des Plaines River to Lake Michigan. The Marquette-Jolliet expedition paddled nearly 2,500 miles in their exploration of the Mississippi River and returned with firsthand information and maps of the area, which Jolliet shared with the French governor.

Thanks to their interest in and ability to communicate with northern native tribes, Marquette and Jolliet not only confirmed rumors about a big river, but they also explored and mapped it, opening up a new area of North America for European settlement.

Rene-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, had arrived in Canada from France as a colonist in 1666, but the urge to find a route to Asia was stronger than his desire to stay settled. After making a couple of excursions on the Great Lakes and the Ohio and Illinois rivers, he led an expedition that entered the Mississippi River in February 1682. Compared with the smaller rivers he had previously traveled, the wide Mississippi, with its swift current, proved easy to navigate. Near present-day Memphis, Tennessee, La Salle's men built a fort that he named Prudhomme. Pushing on along the river from there, his talent for making friends with various native tribes continued to help keep the journey safe.

As they continued south, the explorers discovered that the Mississippi River split into three branches. La Salle entered one branch, while two other explorers each took a different route. They found that all three branches of the Mississippi emptied into the Gulf of Mexico. At long last, La Salle stood at the mouth of the Mississippi River, one of the first Europeans to traverse its full length. On April 9, 1682, La Salle raised a cross and declared, "In the name of the ... King of France ... I do now take possession of this country of Louisiana" (RIGHT). With those words, La Salle claimed nearly half the North American continent for King Louis XIV and France.

They are remembered today by the various place names in the Midwest and Quebec that bear their names: There are four towns named Marquette in four different midwestern states, as well as Joliet, Illinois; Joliet, Montana; and Joliet, Quebec, Canada.

Marquito and Jolliet paddled their canoes down the Mississippi River—but by steamboat, not canoe.
England and France, like Spain, also sent expeditions to North America, but establishing self-sufficient settlements was not easy. Spanish Lucas Vazquez de Ayllon established the first European settlement in the continental United States in 1526 at San Miguel de Guadalupe (believed to be near Sapelo Sound, Georgia). While his colony lasted only a few months, his descriptions of the region convinced other nations to attempt to colonize the southeastern United States.

A Spanish settlement near Pensacola, Florida, was established in 1559 and abandoned two years later. A French colony on the coast of South Carolina in 1562 also failed. In 1564, the French built Fort Caroline near Jacksonville, Florida, but the Spanish destroyed it a year later.

The Spanish, led by Pedro Menendez de Aviles, built St. Augustine, Florida, in 1565. Today, St. Augustine is considered the oldest permanent European settlement in the United States. Thirty-three years later, Don Juan Onate crossed the Rio Grande and claimed all the land north of that river—New Mexico—for Spain. While the Spanish focused their efforts in southern areas of the United States, France developed settlements and trading posts in Canada and along the Great Lakes.

England's attempt to establish a colony in Roanoke, Virginia, in 1587 became known as the "lost colony," because all traces of the colonists disappeared. In 1607, the English tried again to colonize North America, building a fortified village at Popham, near Phippsburg, Maine. It lasted one year. Earlier that same year, the English founded their first permanent settlement in North America at Jamestown, Virginia.

Some Native Americans were welcoming to the foreigners. Trade was one important reason for this acceptance. The Europeans brought with them metal tools, firearms, and many other objects unknown in North America. Native people were eager to trade for these new valuables.

Other tribes accepted the European settlements for political reasons. For instance, Powhatan, the leader of Virginia's Indians around Jamestown, probably could have destroyed that colony soon after it was built but decided against doing so. He hoped instead to make a military alliance with the newcomers and eventually defeat his traditional native enemies.

As time went on, however, more and more Native Americans came to see the negative side of contact with Europeans. In general, the Europeans were not interested in sharing the land in North America with the native people who had been living there. The Spanish particularly expected to expand their empires, spread their religion, control the area's resources, and drive the native people away. The Europeans' advanced weaponry gave them an enormous edge in fulfilling these desires. Even the natives' greater numbers were no match against European firepower.

Within the first century of contact with Europeans, warfare, enslavement, and disease combined to have a devastating effect on the native populations in the Americas. Decreased in number and greatly weakened, native people did not have the ability to resist the growing number of European settlements. By the mid-1660s, military expeditions and exploratory parties had given way to permanent colonies. The Europeans were here to stay.
Peter Lourie is not your typical children's book author. First of all, he's very hands-on. When he decides to write a book about the Incas of Peru, the Anasazi of the American Southwest, or the Yukon River, he found that treasure, he stumbled upon a career that has proved incredibly rewarding—not only does Lourie fill his fascinating books with adventure and discovery, he also devotes about a week every month to visiting schools and showing students firsthand how a book grows from an idea into a finished project.

Your books seem to focus on a combination of history, nature, and adventure. How do you decide what you will write about?

A good friend of mine once told me to keep a notebook. So I write down ideas as they come to me. For example, I'd always wanted to go to Tierra del Fuego. I filed the idea away and then proposed it to my publisher one day. The timing was right: It's got elements of discovery and explorers, Charles Darwin and Ferdinand Magellan, so it fit both science and history niches in the schools. That adventure became the book Tierra del Fuego: A Journey to the End of the Earth (2002).

How did you learn about Cabeza de Vaca?

When I was growing up, we had a condensed version of Cabeza de Vaca's book in our house. It intrigued me. I realized that this was a totally different kind of story. It wasn't a typical conquistador's story. Cabeza de Vaca survived an incredible journey. When I started reading more about him as an adult, I began to see that he had a unique story—he became a healer. He learned the art of healing from the native people and then healed people himself along the way.

In addition to researching and writing, Peter Lourie often takes his own photographs and includes them in his books.
Why do you think it is important for kids to know his story?

Cabaza de Vaca is not the typical conquistador, most of whom ended up having an enormous negative impact on the lives of the native people they met. Because he ended up living with the Indians and relying on them for survival, Cabaza de Vaca really got to know the people of that time. He later wrote a book that described his thoughts, observations, and experiences. That makes him a conquistador worth learning about.

If you could meet Cabaza de Vaca, what would you say to him?

I would want to know how his experience changed him. When did he decide to go from being an arrogant Spanish conquistador who came to plunder and convert Indians to being a healer? Or was he always that way? I would definitely want to know more about his healing experiences. I don't think he would have survived if he wasn't able to heal. And I wonder, what kept him alive for all those years in an unfamiliar world? How did he do it?

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I love exploring and researching. For me, researching is fun. It's like an investigation to learn, to explore, and to discover. I dive into a subject with passion. In my school visits, I walk the kids through the steps to making a book, and I tell them I do some of the same things they do—except I take a real journey, I do backup work and legwork, I interview and talk to many people. If a person loves their subject, they'll share what they know with you. I could never write books without the help of passionate people who love to share their knowledge and interests. For example, in the Cabaza de Vaca book, I flew down to Wilmington, North Carolina, to talk to Professor David La Vere, an expert on Indians of the Southern Plains and the Southeast. While some stories suggest that Cabaza de Vaca became a slave to the Indians, La Vere offered a different spin on what may have happened: The Indians nursed a near-death Cabaza de Vaca back to health. But then he became like an unwanted guest who stayed too long. He didn't contribute to the community at all—he just ate their food. So the Indians put him to work digging for roots. It was such a fascinating perspective on things.

What advice would you give regarding being open to adventure?

I came across this motto once: “Proceed as the way opens.” In life, you don’t know what is going to happen. That’s what’s so cool. So you’ve got to be open to what comes. I think it’s important to know the difference between real adventure and virtual adventure. It’s important to get out there into the real world. We think there is no more mystery. Yet there’s still so much history to discover—it’s alive. For example, while there are probably 40 major Mayan cities excavated, there are probably hundreds of other major sites still claimed by the jungle waiting to be discovered and studied.

Any helpful tips for future adventure writers out there?

Read, read, read. Write. Write. Write. Be curious. Be passionate. Get out there. I’m scared everywhere I go. I’ve gone to unstable countries that were experiencing political unrest. And the jungle can sometimes be scary. But I still go, because I am always curious. And I always glad I went.
Using only their last names, can you solve this crossword puzzle about the earliest explorers to the Americas? Answers on page 42.

**ACROSS**

2. Louis helped lead the French expedition to explore the Mississippi River.

7. Alvar Nunez spent eight years wandering through the American Southwest in an attempt to return to Spanish lands.

8. Henry was the first European to navigate up the Hudson River.

9. Almost 500 years before Christopher Columbus's arrival, Leif reached present-day Canada.

10. Hernando is believed to be the first European to cross the Mississippi River, which he did in 1541.

**DOWN**

1. Christopher's first landfall in 1492 was made on the Bahaman Islands.

3. Juan first explored Florida in 1521, looking for a city of gold called Bimini.

4. In 1521, French explorer Rene-Robert Cavelier Sieur de became the first European to travel the full length of the Mississippi River.

5. In 1521, Giovanni da became the first European to explore North America's Atlantic Coast.

6. Father Jacques was one of the leaders of the French expedition to explore the upper part of the Mississippi River in 1613.

The thing about exploration is that one never knows what will be discovered. During the age of exploration that began in the late 15th century, some adventurers became famous—or infamous—for things other than what they had expected to find.

Although English privateer Martin Frobisher's hopes of getting rich from gold were dashed and the settlements he established did not last, he became one of the first English explorers to sail along the northeast coast of North America. During three voyages beginning in 1576, Frobisher set off to find the fabled Northwest Passage, which sailors hoped would provide a faster route to Asia by allowing ships to sail over the top of the world. Frobisher brought home several tons of what he believed to be gold ore, but it turned out to be nothing but worthless iron pyrite, or "fool's gold." Frobisher landed on several islands in present-day Canada, including Baffin Island and Resolution Island, and gave his name to Frobisher Bay.

French explorer Jacques Cartier was the first European to travel inland in North America. Like other explorers of that time, he was seeking the Northwest Passage to Asia when he led a voyage in 1534 to present-day Canada, reaching the Gulf of St. Lawrence and Newfoundland. He met several groups of native people there and returned to France convinced that he had actually landed in Asia. Cartier returned in 1535, this time sailing up the St. Lawrence River to present-day Montreal, Canada. When the ship encountered rapids, Cartier was sure that these rough waters were all that stood between him and the Northwest Passage. On his third voyage, in 1541, Cartier set out to find a fabled kingdom of riches. His men collected samples of what turned out to be iron pyrite and quartz crystals. Cartier never found riches or the Northwest Passage, but he opened up the St. Lawrence River—North America's major waterway—and Canada to European settlement.
Many European explorers came over blue seas. I would have loved to have been one of these. Francisco Pizarro thought gold was nice. But the Incas' emperor had to pay a high price. There was John Cabot and Jacques Cartier. To the Orient they wanted to find a way.

Francisco Pizarro was a Spanish conquistador who came to Peru, South America, with men and horses. He kidnapped the Inca leader, Atahuallpa. The Spanish agreed to let him go for a room of gold. The Incas gave them a room filled with gold, but the Spanish did not keep their promise. They killed Atahuallpa anyway.

Henry Hudson
Henry Hudson worked for the Dutch, but he was English. The Dutch sent Hudson to find a passage to Asia. In 1610, he sailed for the English. He sailed farther north. When winter came, his ship became frozen in ice. The crew began to revolt. Hudson, his son, and seven men were set adrift in a tiny boat. Henry Hudson was a good explorer who came to a sad end.

Write to us! Draw a picture or write a poem or short essay that connects to one of the above COBBLESTONE themes on which we currently are working. All contributions must be your own, original work. Include your name and address, and a note from a parent, guardian, or teacher acknowledging the originality of your work. We will include as many as we can in the upcoming issue to which your work relates.
Send your idea of a funny caption for this photo to: Just for Fun, COBBLESTONE, 30 Grove Street, Peterborough, NH 03458, or cobblestone30@yahoo.com. Please include a letter from a parent or guardian that confirms the caption is your original work and that we have permission to publish it. And don't forget to send your name and address. If your caption appears in a future issue of COBBLESTONE, we'll send you a complimentary copy of that issue.

April Winners!

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He was an orphan and had no access to a formal education. He was African American at a time when the country was racially segregated. Despite the odds stacked against him, this month's mystery hero proved to be one remarkable American.

Born on a Maryland farm in 1866, this young boy had a difficult childhood. Both his parents died before he was 12 years old. Undeterred but willing to work, he wandered the streets of the nation's capital. The owner of a small restaurant hired him to mop floors and wash dishes. At night, our hero was permitted to sleep on the floor.

His fortune changed when he saw an ad recruiting young men to go to sea. Our hero was taken in and made a cabin boy by a ship's captain. He spent his sailor travels around the world and learned many valuable things, including how to read, understand mathematics, decipher maps, use navigational devices, and operate a ship. The lack of a formal education did not stop our hero, who was quite intelligent.

When not at sea, our hero worked as a store clerk to earn money. His life changed forever when he was 21 and employed at a fur and supplies store. The store's owner told a customer how bright our hero was. The customer was Robert E. Peary, and he hired our hero to join him in the exploration of uncharted territories that included the jungles of Nicaragua and the bitter cold of the Arctic's North Pole.

You will be astounded when you read the full story of this month's mystery hero's life. It is filled with exciting adventures and incredible danger. But it is also quite sad at times. Because of his skin color, our hero often was denied the recognition he deserved. But today, we remember him for his role in the discovery of the North Pole. Recognize him? Answer on page 48.
Books to Read

On the Texas Trail of Cabeza de Vaca


Chelsea House Publications offers a series, Explorers of New Worlds, which includes these titles: Francisco Coronado and the Exploration of the American Southwest by Hal Marcovitz; Juan Ponce de Leon and the Search for the Fountain of Youth by Daniel E. Harmon; Christopher Columbus and the Discovery of the New World by Carole S. Gallagher (New York: Chelsea House, 2000, www.infobasepublishing.com). Grades 3 to 6.

On the Web

At www.pbs.org/conquistadors/developa/devaca_flat.html, you can learn more about Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca's experiences.

Interesting facts about the Spanish conquistadors are available at www.elizabethan-era.org.uk/Spanish-conquistadors.htm. There are links to more information about specific Spanish adventurers.

From the Archives

The following Cobblestone Publishing issues offer a broader look at the Americas before and after explorers reached these shores.

Great Explorers to the West (CAL9201)
Archaeology: Digging Up History (COB8306)
Who Came to America Before Columbus? (COB8410)
The Legacy of Columbus (COB9201)
Our Own Spanish Conquest, 1528-1605 (COB8103)
Sieur de La Salle: French Explorer to the New World (COB9910)

Interested in any of these issues? Want to know more? Please call customer service at 800-821-0115 or visit our Web site at www.cobblestonepub.com.

Ethan Rates It...

The journey that made Christopher Columbus a household name was not easy. But if you're looking for a reliable first mate to help navigate the vastness of the Internet on the subject of explorers, check out www.marinersmuseum.org/education/exploration-introduction. Before you set sail, know this: The Web site includes explorers who are famous, infamous, and from various time periods, and those who did not journey only to America. Recently constructed by the Mariners Museum in Newport, Virginia, the site offers a wide range of biographies about the many titans of exploration— from John Cabot to Amerigo Vespucci. Plus, similar to some of the sites recommended in the past, this one has activities made for students. See what it was like to eat like a starving sailor, diagnose ailments, or create a compass. Enjoy the journey as you expand into new territories of knowledge! Grade 4 and up.

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1. Viking Leif Ericson was the first European to explore the Americas.
   - TRUE
   - FALSE

2. John Cabot failed to reach any land on his voyages.
   - TRUE
   - FALSE

3. Juan Ponce de Leon first explored Florida in 1513.
   - TRUE
   - FALSE

4. Hernando de Soto led an expedition that explored the American South from 1539 to 1542.
   - TRUE
   - FALSE

5. Francisco Vasquez de Coronado's Spanish expedition to discover the legendary wealthy Seven Cities of Cibola in North America was a financial success.
   - TRUE
   - FALSE

Answer to Dr. D. Mystery Hero from page 45: Matthew

A person who is "in the doldrums" is someone who is listless, inactive, or in a depressed state. This saying most likely has its roots from the actual doldrums, which is an area of the ocean around the equator where winds from the northern and southern hemispheres meet. The region is known for trapping sailing ships, because the winds are so calm and light at times that there is not enough wind power to fill a ship's sails. This situation was a particular problem for early explorers, who relied on the wind to move their sailing ships.

We hereby CLAIM this planet in the name of the Quibble Galaxy!

Uh, you can't just...

NOT SO FAST!!!
WE claim this planet!

But this is MY planet!

Well, we've got BIG PLANS for it.

This place will make a great outpost for overcrowded planets.

Now wait just a MINUTE...

Looks like the Colonels dream of discovering new worlds has turned into a NIGHTMARE.

... and get your hands OFF OF MY PIZZA!

We always knew he was a little SPEEDY OUT!