

Explorers of Texas: Piñeda

Alonso Alvarez de Piñeda

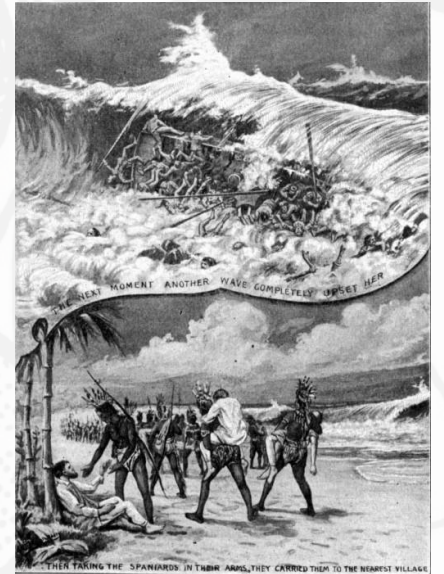
The year 1519 was very important for Alonso Alvarez de Piñeda and for Texas. Piñeda sailed along the Texas coast toward Mexico. During his journey, he created the first maps and charts of the coast. Because of Piñeda, future explorers knew where to sail to get to Texas.



Explorers of Texas: Cabeza de Vaca

Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca

One of the most amazing journeys took place in Texas. In 1529, Cabeza de Vaca crashed on Galveston Island because of a hurricane. He was captured by an Indian tribe and almost became a slave. Luckily, Cabeza de Vaca knew enough about medicine that he was able to heal many Indians. He became known among the tribe as a “medicine man.” When he made it to Mexico he told others about many wonderful cities made of gold. Who would be the first explorer to find and capture these rich cities?



Explorers of Texas: Coronado

Francisco Vásquez de Coronado

Gold! In 1540, Francisco Vásquez de Coronado was placed in charge of a great search to find the City of Gold. With 1,000 men, 1,500 horses, mules, wagons, cooks and farm animals, Coronado and his group headed north. When Coronado thought he found the City of Gold, it was only mud bricks reflecting the sun, making it look bright and shiny. The city was really an Indian village. Coronado did not give up. He kept searching and found more villages and people as he went.



Explorers of Texas: LaSalle

Rene Robert Cavalier, Sieur de LaSalle



France wanted to claim the area around the Mississippi river before the Spanish got there. So in 1684, the French King, Louis XIV, gave LaSalle ships and colonists to set sail. After a scary journey, LaSalle's group missed the Mississippi river and actually landed near Matagorda Bay, Texas. LaSalle set up Fort St. Louis in 1685. Because of LaSalle's new French settlement, Spain hurried to build more missions throughout the area, hopefully to push France off the land.