



For God, Gold and Glory: de Soto's Journey to the Heart of La Florida

E. H. Haines

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Between 1539 and 1543 Hernando de Soto led an army of six hundred armored men on a desperate journey of almost four thousand miles through the wilds of La Florida, what is now the southeastern United States, facing the problems of hostile natives, inadequate supplies, and the harsh elements, as they left a path of destruction in their search for gold and glory in the name of God.

During the ordeal, de Soto's private secretary, Rodrigo Ranjel, kept a daily journal. Modern historians believe that Ranjel's writings are the most accurate of those covering de Soto's travels through the Southeast, but unfortunately his journal survives only partially, embedded in a work by an early Spanish historian. E. H. Haines has given us the gripping story of de Soto's quest in a novel from Ranjel's point of view, as he would have written it years later, based on his diary. Haines has meticulously researched the time, the place, and all the extant histories to bring us a story written from inside a conquistador's command center.

This is a riveting account of the tragic expedition—a tale of adventure and survival, of undying faith, unconquerable friendship, and the dark aspects of human nature that greed and power brought to the depths of the unexplored New World.

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