



Invading Colombia: Spanish Accounts of the Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada Expedition of Conquest: Volume 1 (Latin American Originals)

J. Michael Francis

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In early April 1536, Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada led a military expedition from the coastal city of Santa Marta deep into the interior of what is today modern Colombia. With roughly eight hundred Spaniards and numerous native carriers and black slaves, the Jiménez expedition was larger than the combined forces under Hernando Cortés and Francisco Pizarro. Over the course of the one-year campaign, nearly three-quarters of Jiménez's men perished, most from illness and hunger. Yet, for the 179 survivors, the expedition proved to be one of the most profitable campaigns of the sixteenth century. Unfortunately, the history of the Spanish conquest of Colombia remains virtually unknown.

Through a series of firsthand primary accounts, translated into English for the first time, *Invading Colombia* reconstructs the compelling tale of the Jiménez expedition, the early stages of the Spanish conquest of Muisca territory, and the foundation of the city of Santa Fé de Bogotá. We follow the expedition from the Canary Islands to Santa Marta, up the Magdalena River, and finally into Colombia's eastern highlands. These highly engaging accounts not only challenge many current assumptions about the nature of Spanish conquests in the New World, but they also reveal a richly entertaining, yet tragic, tale that rivals the great conquest narratives of Mexico and Peru.

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