

Excavation Shows Holt County Was Once The Home of Many Indians

By J. B. O'Sullivan

(Continued from last week.)

There is another story of the first whites to call on the Pawnee and other Indians of the Nebraska region worth running over for the interest it adduces in our own bands of the Pawnees, the Arikara and the Skidi, both of whom must have lived a long time very close to where stand the city of O'Neill. The man heading this expedition was Francisco Vasquez Cornado and his band left the Rio Grande on April 23, 1541.

The glitter of aboriginal gold, which drew many Spaniards to Old Mexico to search and fight for wealth, flamed in the dreams of thousands according to stories handed down to us and among the hearties willing to travel great distances or undergo the rigors of life in a raw land was this man Cornado who heard tales of rich Indians and rich lands and believed much more than was good for he and his followers.

It is set down that Francisco Vasquez Cornado and his cohorts were the first group of whites to make contact with the dwellers of the Nebraska and Kansas plains, that is, in any great numbers. Cornado is said to have been a Spanish General who long wanted to feast his eyes on someone's gold, not with the design to steal it, but perhaps in hope the ignorant and wild owners might drop dead of fright or something and give him a chance to keep the gold from going to waste while friends in far-off Spain hungered.

Cornado originally came from Spain to Mexico to hunt for gold and he made no bones about it. He heard stories in Mexico about the yellow metal and always the gold was far away. The talk indicated that great distance only prevented anyone obtaining all of it they could carry. The farther away was this gold the more there was and the easier it was to get and the simpler were the owners, but Cornado did not suspect what this might mean. Had he lived today and heard such tales he undoubtedly would have went to some grindstone and re-sharpened his sword instead of wasting his time swallowing yarns spun by unscrupulous persons.

But Cornado wanted his gold. He listened to tales from one Fray Marcos, alleged to have been a monk, but the truth is there may have been a syllable missing from the monk's appellation. However, the monk claimed he had been 1,000 miles north of where he told his artistic fibs, around Arizona and beyond, and he carefully drew word-pictures of what he heard up there about the Seven cities of Cibola, in the Realm of Quivera, Hocus and Pocus, silver paved streets, houses of rock standing four stories high, gold hitching posts, gems so bright they shone in the night like street lights, turquoise porches, fine clothing, sheep, cows, wild game that would eat out of your hand, water that would guarantee good health and girls that would knock you down with their good looks or a potato masher later on when some husband found out he had signed a contract that had bitter as well as sweet promises in its ramifications.

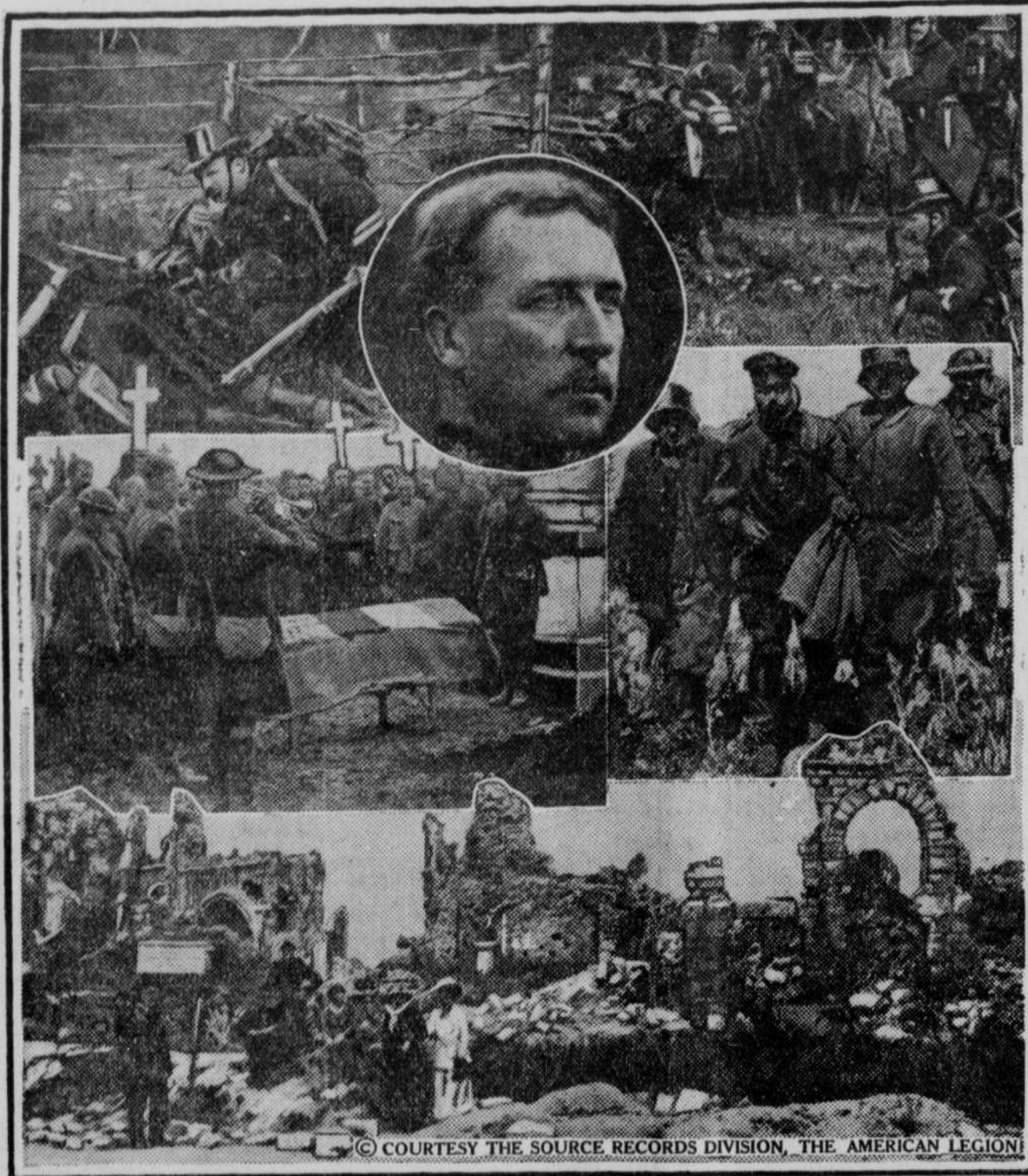
Cornado could not stand the climate of Mexico much longer. He investigated and found that nearly every Spaniard in Old Mexico had a great desire to go Nebraska and grab some of this gold. An army of recruits was drawn together and things begun to point to a start for the north. Of course, Cornado was made the general and soon there was a cavalcade comprising about 1,000 Indians, 300 mounted Spaniards, a great number of horses, cattle by hundreds on which was strapped camp equipment, and on some day in February, 1540, dust arose in Mexico and the great march to the north was on, a dream-like snake of humans and livestock crawling across unbroken stretches of prairie lands where death might lurk behind every blade of grass.

The first leg of the long journey north was a hard one; men almost died of thirst at times, desert sands, fine as flour and dry as a Scotchman's powder, were generously whisked in the faces of the men and a hot sun rained solar fire until it seemed all must perish and leave the blocks of virgin gold to lie in the hands of savages who just as soon have a few pieces of broken glass. There was much cussing of cactus, scorpions, centipedes, rattlesnakes, drouth and heat, but the lure of the elusive yellow metal buoyed the men's courage and when any complained or acted as if death would be welcome. Cornado unlimbered his tongue and painted a picture of guitars, moonlight, pretty girls and all in old Spain and the elixir revived the spirits of the men and again the serpentine gathering moved on toward the fabulous bonanza of the prairies.

One day the party arrived at villages of the Zuni and Hopi Indians somewhere in the state of Arizona.

No inkling of the disappointment that awaited farther on was received when the men noted the Indians lived in ordinary mud houses, the bricks merely baked in sunshine. Some of

AMERICAN LEGION WAR PICTURES



Top—Belgian Home Guards in Action Against Germans August, 1914. Inset—The Late King Albert of Belgium. Centre Left—Taps for an American Soldier. Centre Right—German Prisoners and Wounded Coming into the British Lines on the Somme Front. Bottom—Ruins of Ypres.

the Indians did wear a woven cloth and they had corn, beans, melons, domestic fowl and other things that caused the hope other Indians over the hills might have the miah gold and silver and rare gems.

It was also noted there was no rich Seven Cities of Cibola in sight and the men were disappointed, yet they were used to that and again hope raised and their minds at night brought them scenes and sounds of luxury and languor on the prairies where southwest summer breezes lull and encourage in the face of flat failure.

After councils of war, the men wanted to push on, much to the delight of Cornado, the general and highlight of the expedition. Cornado and his lieutenants decided to travel east some days and then determine which way to go, so they went down the valley of the Rio Grande river, across the state of Arizona.

Here and there they encountered Indian villages and it was difficult to distinguish one from the other. The people seemed to be poor, hard working, peaceful and it was found the crops were irrigated. There were more sun-baked brick houses, beans, melons, corn, cloth, pottery and the new friends were very kind, giving the travelers food and shelter and so Cornado and his crowd decided to remain there all winter.

Things went along very smoothly until some trouble arose and the soldiers decided it time to fight. The Indians did not like the way the soldiers strutted around on their territory and the soldiers did not like the way the Indians indicated who was boss in that section of the world.

One day there was a real fight and a great number of Indians met death. Some of the leading Indians were tied down and burned to death; others were made prisoners and ordered to follow their new leaders. The Spaniards claimed afterwards they did their best to show the Indians how to raise more food but the wild fellows would not listen and soon every Indian in the Rio Grande valley hated the ground the whites walked on.

Up until coming to this place the leader, Cornado, had not heard the name of the Seven Cities of Cibola. Now the place emblazoned itself more luridly since the name sounded just like that for which he searched.

It was here at this Indian village that an artist jumped up and did just what he should have done. His name was said to have been "Turk," and he was all of that.

The Turk had his wits with him and at the first opportunity he unburdened himself of one of the most enchanting yarns in all history. The man's status there was that of a slave. He seems to have been a Pawnee Indian from the prairies of Nebraska and he wanted to get home the worst way. He knew how to use his head as well as his legs. It was noted that this Pawnee wore his hair in pigtail fashion, different than those on the banks of the Rio Grande. That is why they called him a Turk.

Well, this Pawnee hauled off and told he was a Pawnee and wanted to be shuffling toward his happy home

toward the north. He said there was a most wonderful land there, north-east, and that he was doing fine there until in scouting, the Pueblo Indians out-scouted and captured him.

The Turk pictured a river that was six miles wide, fish in it as large as a horse, beautiful boats on the stream with twenty oarsmen on each side, forty in all without counting sea gulls, larger boats having nice white sails, Indian chiefs sitting around waiting for something to happen, chiefs lolling under silken canopies and gold and luxury running riot, eagles of gold on the boats, music mirth and monkey-shines of those supposed to have nothing to do save brag about their stations and side tracks in this life.

It was related that the head king of this land of ease and plenty was named Tatrax, breaker of many early jaws while trying to pronounce his name, and this man was supposed to be so situated he slept nice warm nights under huge bells of gold that tinkled sweetly in tramp breezes, and, of course, nothing was said about what went on during winters cold enough to frost the hide off a breaking plow.

The wind, this man said, always prevailed, which shows he could season his narratives with a dash of truth. Mystic music lulled the kings to sleep. He told that even the common folk of this great place used dishes that were composed of solid gold and silver; even their slop buckets were of precious metals. The Turk was just the man Cornado wanted to converse with.

Everywhere there were great jugs of gold and something in them that would make a man care no more for the gold than if it were so much potato-bug interruptor. The great King was said to do some worshipping and always humbled himself at the foot of a great cross of gold. Everything was just what Cornado specified in his desires for something to search for.

The entire command became inflamed at the tales and eagerly pressed on to reach the wonderful place so well advertised by the Pawnee, the Turk.

The Spaniards, you see, wanted to get hold of the riches as quickly as possible so no one should steal them. Any school kid can see that. So much gold lying around on the prairies of Nebraska is not safe, and that's all there is to it.

So Cornado pushed on. He left the Rio Grande on April 23, 1541. The Turk, to repay him for his information, was elevated to the station of head guide of the great expeditionary forces of the beloved land of the Spaniards, a title he was very proud of.

An Indian named Isopete was assistant guide. Isopete was a Pueblo Indian but he told the Spaniards he was sorry he was not a Spaniard although he would like to become one at the next general election or words to this effect. The party traveled about thirty-five days, but this is not on the word of the Turk nor of Isopete.

A great plain was traveled where there were millions of bison, many Indians who ate raw meat and were adepts at making a living right out on the wild prairies. Most of the Indians encountered lived in teepees and this caused Cornado to ask questions regarding the great sparkling cities of Cibola. Not one of them had ever heard of them. They said they could not tell gold from go-devils. Cornado scratched his head. It is strange he did not scratch the Turk's head—with a tomahawk. By this time he must have sensed there was something amiss in the story of the Turk.

The wily guides should have made a night-sneak at this time but they lingered just a little too long. They did change their stories some, admitting the great cities were not quite so large as first accounts and they said the truth was the dwellers of the great cities were poor instead of very rich.

(Continued next week.)

IN DISTRICT COURT

Bennitt W. Branch has filed suit in the district court against Irwin R. Ridgeway, et al., to foreclose a mort-

gage given March 23, 1922, to the Lincoln Safe Deposit company for \$1,500 on the west half southwest quarter of southwest quarter of southeast quarter of the southeast quarter of section 14, and the east half of the east half of section 25, township 31, range 11, in Holt county, Nebraska. In her petition she alleges that an extension of time was given on April 11, 1927, and shortly thereafter she purchased the notes and mortgage from the company and is now the owner and holder thereof. She alleges that all of the interest coupons were paid, except the last two and that they are past due, as well as the principal, also the taxes for the years 1931, 1932, 1933. She asks that the mortgage be foreclosed and the rights of the plaintiff be determined and that if the amount found due is not paid within a reasonable time that the land be sold.

Louis Sievers has filed suit asking for a divorce from Anna Sievers. In his petition he alleges that they were married on February 29, 1932, and that he has always conducted himself as a kind and loving husband. He accuses the defendant of being guilty of extreme cruelty, constantly nagging him and once, assisted by her son, beat him up. He asks that during the pendency of the action that the defendant be restrained and enjoined from interfering with the personal rights of plaintiff, and such other relief as may be just an equitable. On April 28 a restraining order was issued by the court restraining the defendant from interfering with the plaintiff in any way.

Nebraska News Items

A civilian conservation camp has been opened on Niobrara Island park west of Niobrara and Lieutenant Anderson, of Wichita, Kansas, is in charge. About 200 Garden City, Kansas boys are billeted there, and some came from California and Nebraska. The camp will be maintained at least six months.

A chicken egg measuring eight and one-fourth inches around the long way and six and three-quarters the short, was found by Mrs. G. H. Steinhauser at Butte.

The Couch Motor company had a truck cab extended so that either W. S. Couch or Allen Friedrich may sleep while the other is driving with loads of gasoline from Kansas. The length of the cab extension is 26

inches. To make the job complete, a radio was installed in the cab.

Grasshoppers must not be a new story to this part of the country according to old Fort Randall records recently dusted and read. Part of the story, written back in 1857, goes on to say: "Our gardens might have succeeded better only for the inadequate supply of rain, and the thousands of grasshoppers which made their appearance about the first day of August and continued throught the month and almost annihilated everything possessing verdure."

One of the most profitable cows is that on the farm of Walter Glissman, near Rosalie, Nebr. This cow in the last five years has given birth to four sets of twins. In five years she has produced nine calves.

On Nebraska road jobs are about 3,500 men at this time, and there will be spent in this work, the sum of about \$7,800,000 according to the government's program.

By hammering the dial off a safe, thieves at Allen obtained \$150 from the Farmer's Cooperative company elevator office at Allen.

Wayne is going to build a community auditorium costing \$20,000, it was decided after a delegation called on John Latenser, Omaha, emergency director for Nebraska.

The National Inventor's congress is to convene at Omaha June 5 to 9 and some of the things to be exhibited are a machine which coughs up five nickels when a quarter is dropped in a slot, a machine throwing an invisible death ray that kills birds some blocks away, devise for sending heavy voltage of electricity by wireless, instant picture making, throwing a scene on a print at one shot, a pea-shelling devise and a collarbutton eliminator. Forced leisure the last few years, one inventor said, caused more inventions. Albert G. Burns is president of the congress.

Alleging he violated a parole, Harold Pinkerman, sentenced from Boyd county to one to two years, has been returned to the custody of Nebraska.

It is alleged he shoplifted two instruments for use on radios at Chadron. The parole was issued on February by the state board. Pinkerman was sentenced on conviction for breaking and entering.

THE spender never succeeds in anything he undertakes and never fails to place the blame for his lack of success upon others.

THE O'NEILL NATIONAL BANK

Capital, Surplus and Undivided Profits, \$125,000.00

This bank carries no indebtedness of officers or stockholders.

A SENSATION!
New WHITE ROSE
Knock Proof -- Regular Price
Gasoline at its Best!



MELLOR MOTOR COMPANY
Phone 16
O'Neill, Nebr.