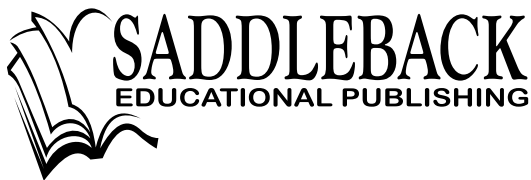
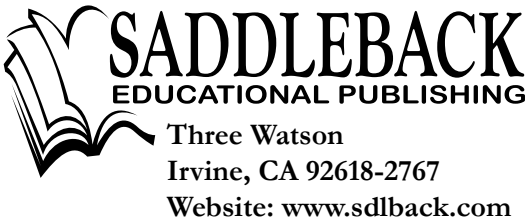


The New World

1500–1750



Saddleback's *Graphic American History*



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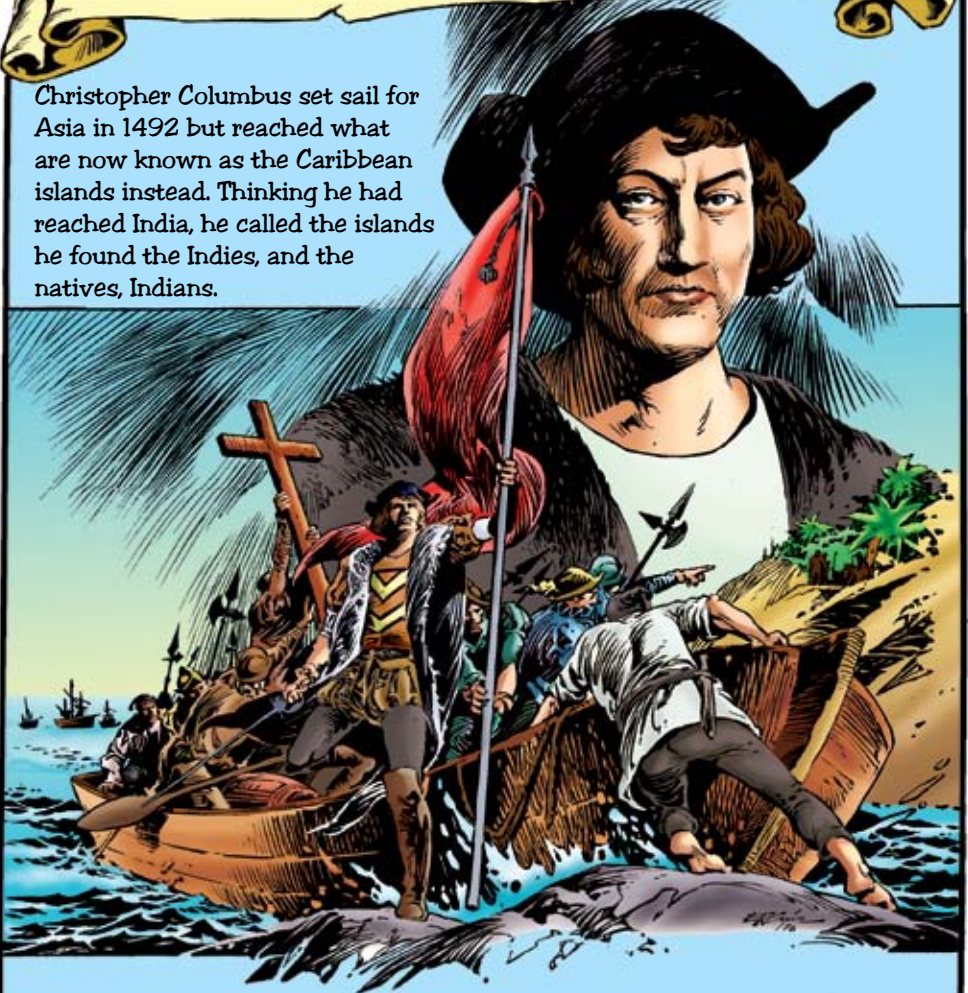
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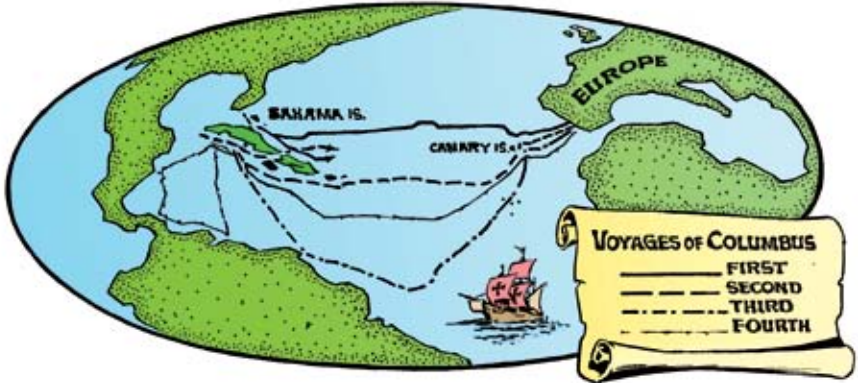
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DISCOVERING AMERICA!

Christopher Columbus set sail for Asia in 1492 but reached what are now known as the Caribbean islands instead. Thinking he had reached India, he called the islands he found the Indies, and the natives, Indians.

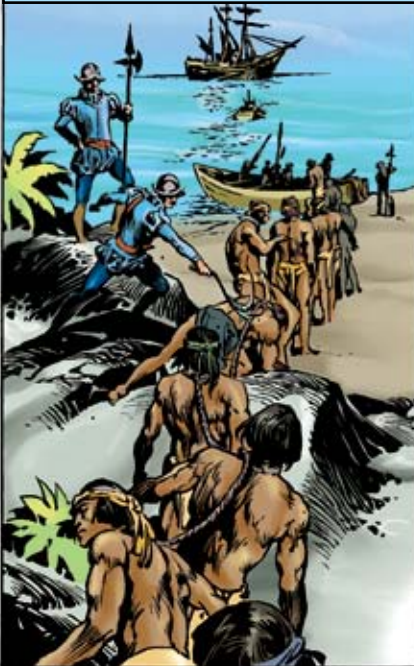


The first voyage lasted five weeks. To the fearful sailors on unknown seas, it seemed endless. Upon reaching land, Columbus stepped ashore carrying a holy banner and claimed the land for Spain, while the natives stared at their strange visitors.



On later voyages, Columbus explored the Bahamas, Cuba, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. He established the first permanent European settlement in the New World on the island of Santo Domingo, which he called *Hispaniola*. Not finding the riches he had hoped for, he divided the land and the Indians who lived on it among the Spanish settlers.

The natives who refused to work on the great sugar and cotton plantations were either killed or shipped to Spain to be sold as slaves.



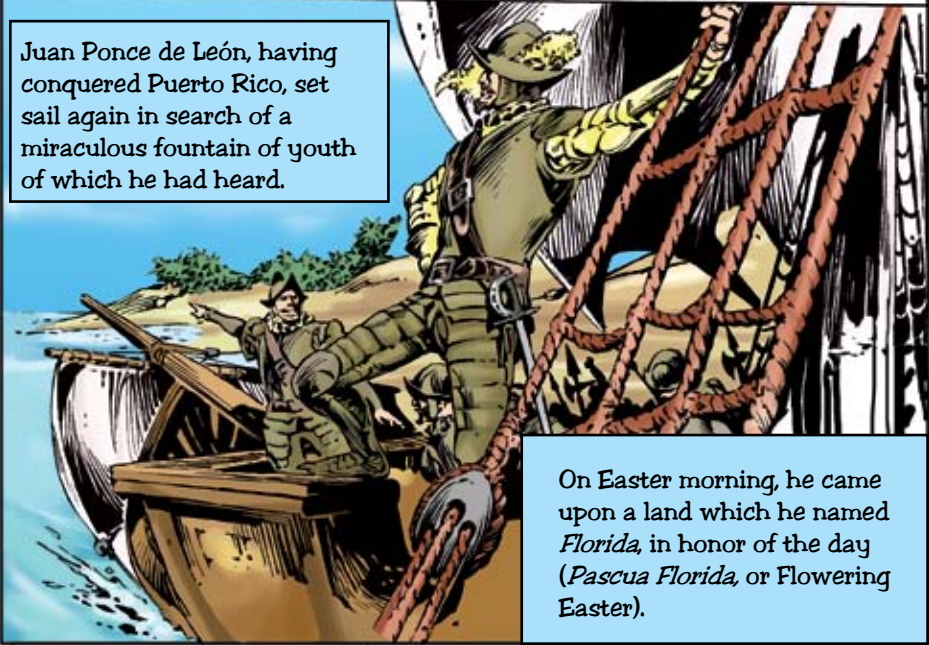
Great numbers of slaves were then imported from Africa to work the plantations.



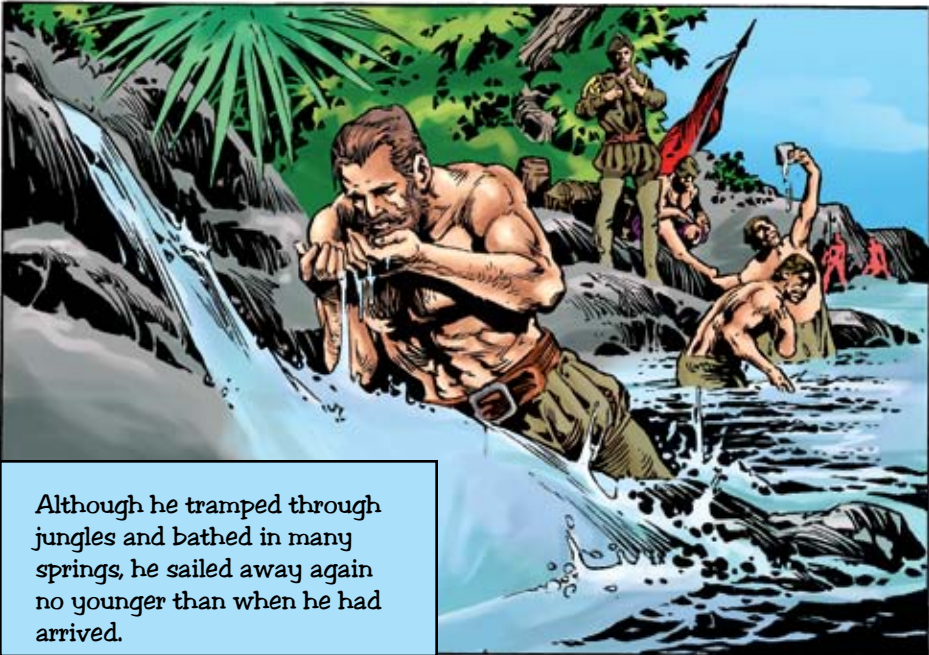
Within 50 years the 300,000 original natives of Hispaniola had been wiped out.

For 50 years after Columbus, Spain had no rivals in the New World. Spanish *conquistadores** first conquered the islands and then advanced to the mainland.

Juan Ponce de León, having conquered Puerto Rico, set sail again in search of a miraculous fountain of youth of which he had heard.



On Easter morning, he came upon a land which he named *Florida*, in honor of the day (*Pascua Florida*, or Flowering Easter).



Although he tramped through jungles and bathed in many springs, he sailed away again no younger than when he had arrived.

*Conquerors, soldiers, and explorers