



Warpaths: Invasions of North America

Ian K. Steele

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In 1513, only a few years before Cortes conquered the Aztec empire, Juan Ponce de Leon and three shiploads of conquistadores landed just south of what is now St. Augustine, Florida. The Spanish adventurers, however, were quickly driven away by the Timucua people; further landings were similarly defeated by the extraordinary archers of the Calusa, who ultimately took the lives of Hernandez de Cordoba and Ponce de Leon himself. Clearly, the European experience in North America would be a far cry from their swift victories over the Aztecs and Incas.

A panoramic history of the numerous European invasions of North America, this book paints a dramatic new portrait of the centuries of warfare that shook the continent. From the defeat of Ponce de Leon in 1513 to a negotiated peace with the British in 1765, Steele's fascinating account destroys the old image of technologically advanced Europeans overrunning primitive savages, and reveals how Amerindians rose to the challenge of each successive invasion with martial and diplomatic skill. In war after war, the Amerindians and Europeans battled in a precarious balance, adapting each other's technology and tactics and seeking each other out as allies and supply sources for food and weapons. Steele follows the experience of the Spanish at San Agustín, the English at Jamestown and Plymouth, the French at Québec, and the Dutch at Albany, revealing the vast range of Amerindian strategies for coping with the invaders.

The conflicts that erupted with the European arrival have long been distorted by myth and self-congratulatory folklore. *Warpaths* offers students of American history and Native American studies a startling new look at this pivotal era, combining social, cultural, and military history to provide a more nuanced portrait of the violence that gave birth to modern North America.

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