

1940

Cuarto Centennial

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Recommended Citation

Blessing, Edith. "Cuarto Centennial." *New Mexico Quarterly* 10, 4 (1940). <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmq/vol10/iss4/10>

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By EDITH BLESSING

The red and yellow line at Compostela
After delays (for politics and greed)
Moved northward.

"We have sold our little farms, our little lands,
For the riches we will find at Cibola."

The friars' trail they paced
(Blood of the Lamb)
The murdered Estevan
(His jaundiced lust).

The streets and walls of distant Quivira
Were priceless gold and jewels.
The streets and walls of Quivira passed by
Were dust and stone and sand.

"Have we passed the mines of Fray Marcos?"
(What does a friar know of gold in the ground?)
"Where are the cities and the treasure of de Vaca?"
(Quite secure in his crumbling mind).

Turco has deceived us . . . strange boomerang

We are coming from the east now,
Wisely from the east now.

Yellow is the falling gold of the poplars.

Wise men carried gold and incense,
Myrrh (with wine to dull the pain?).

Red is the blood of the ebbing leader,
Yellow is defeat. Yellow is fear.