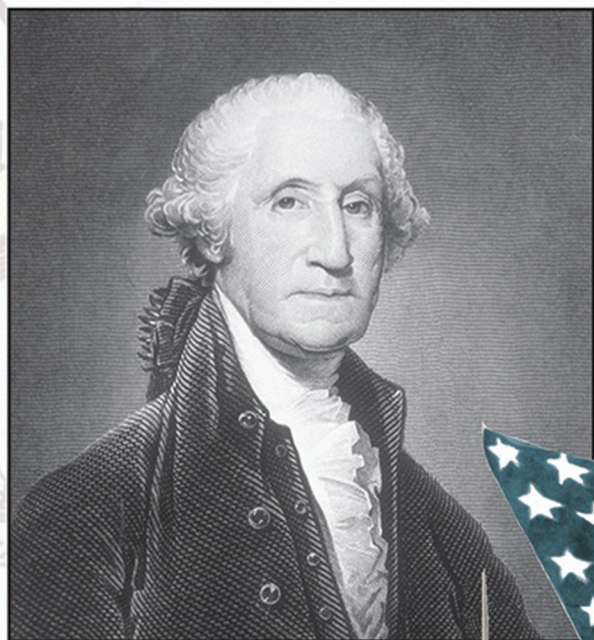


A Child's Story of America

—Second Edition—



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ABOUT THE HISTORY OF OUR COUNTRY

If any of the readers of this book should have the opportunity to ride in a train or car over the vast expanse of the United States, from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico, they would see a wonderful display of cities and towns, of factories and farms, and a great multitude of men and women actively at work. They would behold, spread out on every side, one of the busiest and happiest lands that the sun shines upon. Here and there, among the many farms, they might see a forest, here and there a wild beast, here and there an American Indian, a descendant of the first people who came to America; but these may be almost lost in the wonderful beauty of the intriguing scenery.

If our young traveler knew nothing of history he might think that it had always been this way, or that it had taken thousands of years for all those cities to be built and these great fields to be cleared and cultivated. Yet if he had been here only three hundred years ago, he would have seen a very different sight. He could not have gone over the country by airplane or railroad, for such things had never been invented. He could not have gone by highway, for there was not a modern road in the whole length and breadth of the land. Nowhere in this vast country would he have seen a large city or town; nowhere a ploughed field, a farmhouse, or a barn. Instead of great cities he would have seen only clusters of small dwellings; instead of fertile farms, only vast reaches of forest; instead of tame cattle, only wild and dangerous beasts.

Just think of it! All that we see around us is the work of about three hundred years! Great forests have fallen, great fields have been cleared and planted, great cities have risen, and myriads of men, women, and children have inhabited the wild expanse which the Indians used to roam, and all within a period not longer than three times the oldest person now living. Is this not as wonderful as the most marvelous tale of fiction? Is it not better to read the true tale of how this was done rather than certain imaginary stories?

The story of this great work is called the "History of the United States." This story you have before you in the book you now hold. You do not need to sit and dream about how the wonderful work of building our noble nation was done, for you can read it all here in language simple enough even the youngest child can understand. Here you are told how brave explorers came over the seas and found beyond the waves a land none of them had ever seen before. You are told how they settled on these shores, cut down the trees and built villages and towns, met the Indians and learned to cultivate the land, and made themselves homes in the midst of fertile fields. You are told how others came, how they spread wider and wider over the land, how log cabins grew into mansions, and villages into cities, and how at length they fought for and gained their liberty.

Read on and you will learn of more wonderful things still. The history of the past two hundred years is a story of a God-blessed land. In it you will learn of how the steamboat was first made and in time came to be seen on all our rivers and lakes; of how the locomotive was invented and railroads were built, until they are now long enough in our country to go eight times round the earth; of the marvels of the telegraph and telephone—the talking wire; of the machines that rumble and roar in a thousand factories and work away like living things, and of a multitude of computer-driven marvels which I cannot begin to speak of here. You will also learn how men kept on coming, and wars were fought, and new land was gained, and bridges were built, and canals were dug, and our people increased and spread until we became one of the greatest nations on the earth. All this and more you may learn from the pages of this book. It is written for the boys and girls of our great land, but many of their fathers and mothers may also find it pleasant and useful to read.

There are thousands of young people who do not have time to read large histories, which try to tell all that has taken place. For these people, this little history will be of great service, in showing them how, from a few half-starved settlers on a wild coast, this great nation has grown up. I need say no more, however, for the book has its own story to tell. I only lay this introduction before you as a handy stepping-stone into the history of this great nation. By its aid, you may cross the brook and wander on through the broad story which lies before you.

Michael J. McHugh
2005

Columbus, The Great Sailor ↗

If you lived in Chicago over one hundred years ago, you would have heard about a wonderful display in that city. In 1893, dozens of great white buildings rose on the shore of Lake Michigan, as beautiful as kings' palaces, and filled with the finest of goods of all kinds, which millions of people came to see.

Do you know what this was? It was a World's Fair in honor of a wonderful event that had taken place four hundred years before the fair was built.

Some of you may think that white men have always lived in this country. I hope you do not all think so, for this is not the case. A little more than five hundred years ago very few white men had ever seen this country, and few knew that there was such a place on the face of the earth.

It was in the year 1492 that a brave sailor named Christopher Columbus crossed a wide ocean and came to this new and wonderful land. Since then, people have come here by the millions, and the mighty republic of the United States has grown up with its thousands of towns and cities. In one of these, which bears the name of Chicago, the grand World's Columbian Exposition was held in honor of the discovery of America by the great navigator who came here more than five hundred years ago.

Leif Ericson and the Norsemen

This is what I have set out to tell you about. I am sure you will all be glad to know how this broad and noble land, once the home of the Indians, was discovered and made a home for settlers from throughout much of Europe. Some of you may have been told that America was actually discovered more than four hundred and fifty years before Columbus was born, and so it was. At that time some of the daring sailors from the northern countries of Europe, who made the stormy ocean their home and loved



*Part of the World's
Columbian Exposition of
1893, held in Chicago, Illinois*

the roll of the waves, had come to the frozen island of Iceland. In addition, a ship from Iceland had been driven by the winds to a land in the far west which no explorer from Europe had ever seen before. Wasn't this America?

Soon after, in the year of our Lord 1000, one of these Norsemen named Leif Ericson set sail for this new land. There he found wild grapes growing, and from them he named it Vineland. He also called it "Wineland the Good."

After him came others, and there was fighting with the Native Americans whom they called "Skrellings." In the end, the Norsemen left the country, and over the course of many years this new land was forgotten. Only lately the story has been found again in some old writings. Time, therefore, went on for nearly five hundred years more, and nothing was known in Europe about the land beyond the seas.



Young Christopher Columbus, watching the ships come into his home town port.

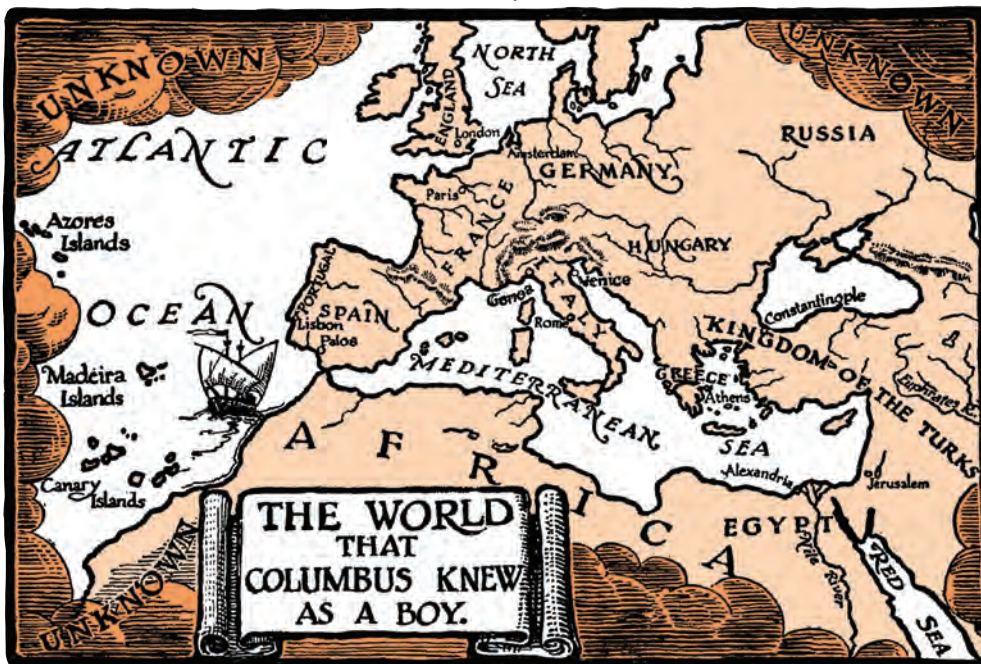
Young Christopher Columbus

Now let us go from the north to the south of Europe. Here there is a country called Italy, which runs down into the Mediterranean Sea almost in the shape of a boot. On the western shore of this nation is a famous old city named Genoa, in which many sailors have dwelt; and here, long ago, lived a man

named Columbus, a poor man, who earned his living by making wool clothing.

This poor weaver had four children, one of whom (born in 1451) he named Christopher. Almost everybody who has ever studied history knows the name of this little Italian boy, for he became one of the most famous of men. What do you think that young Christopher did when he was a boy?

The known world at the dawn of the Age of Exploration



Like many young boys, Christopher had to help his father in his shop. The great Benjamin Franklin began work by pouring melted wax into molds to make candles. In the same way, little Columbus had to comb wool for his father and very likely got as tired of wool as Franklin did of candles.

The city he lived in was full of sailors, and no doubt he talked to many of them about life on the wild waters and heard so many stories of danger and adventure that he took an interest in going to sea himself.

At any rate, we are told that he became a sailor when only fourteen years old and made long and daring voyages while he was still young. Some of those were in Portuguese ships down the coast of the wild and mysterious continent of Africa. The young Columbus went north, too; some think as far as Iceland.

Columbus spent some time on the island of Madeira, far out in the Atlantic Ocean, and there the people told him of strange things they had seen. Among them were pieces of carved wood, and barrels so long that they would hold forty gallons of wine between their joints. Moreover, the dead bodies of two men had also come ashore, whose skin was the color of bronze or copper. These things had drifted over the seas before the west winds and landed on their island shores.

These stories set Columbus thinking. He was now a man and had read many books about travel. He also had studied all that was then known of geography. For a time he lived by making maps, charts, and globes for ship captains. This was in the city of Lisbon, in Portugal, where he married and settled down and had a little boy of his own.

“I could feel His hand upon me.”

I prayed to the most merciful Lord about my heart’s great desire, and He gave me the spirit and the intelligence for the task.... It was the Lord who put into my mind (I could feel His hand upon me) to sail to the Indies. All who heard of my project rejected it with laughter, ridiculing me. There is no question that the inspiration was from the Holy Spirit, because He comforted me with rays of marvelous illumination from the Holy Scriptures ... encouraging me continually to press forward, and without ceasing for a moment they now encourage me to make haste.

Our Lord Jesus desired to perform a very obvious miracle in the voyage to the Indies, to comfort me and the whole people of God. I spent seven years in the royal court ... and in the end they concluded that it was all foolishness, so they gave it up. But since things generally came to pass that were predicted by our Savior Jesus Christ, we should also believe that this particular prophecy will come to pass. In support of this, I offer the gospel text, Matthew 24:35, in which Jesus said that all things would pass away, but not his marvelous Word. He also affirmed that it was necessary that all things be fulfilled

that were prophesied by Himself and by the prophets.

I said that I would state my reasons: I hold alone to the sacred and Holy Scriptures, and to the interpretations of prophecy given by certain devout persons.

The Holy Scripture testifies in the Old Testament by the prophets and in the New Testament by our Redeemer Jesus Christ, that this world must come to an end. The signs of when this must happen are given by Matthew, Mark, and Luke. The prophets also predicted many things about it.

Our Redeemer Jesus Christ said that before the end of the world, all things must come to pass that had been written by the prophets. Isaiah goes into great detail in describing future events and in calling all people to our holy catholic faith.... For the execution of the journey to the Indies I did not make use of intelligence, mathematics, or maps. It is simply the fulfillment of what Isaiah prophesied....

These are great and wonderful things for the earth, and the signs are that the Lord is hastening the end. The fact that the gospel must still be preached to so many lands in such a short time—this is what convinces me.

Christopher Columbus, *Book of Prophecies*

Discouraging Days

Columbus thought a great deal about the importance of taking the message of Christianity to new lands in the East. He sincerely believed that God had destined him to be the one to spread the Christian faith to people who were lost in pagan darkness. The desire that Columbus had for glory and worldly wealth was never as strong as his desire to promote the cause of Christ. Columbus wrote in his journal: "For this was the alpha and omega of the enterprise that it should be for the increase and glory of the Christian religion."

It is sad, however, to realize that few powerful leaders living during these times shared the concerns of Columbus regarding the spread of Christianity. More often than not, the kings or queens of Europe were more interested in obtaining worldly riches and fame. At this time in history, the people of Europe wanted to develop an easier way to bring silk, spices, and other riches from China and India. The businessmen in Europe were tired of traveling thousands of miles by way of overland caravans to obtain goods from the East. Christopher Columbus thought he could help by finding a way to sail west across the ocean to these far countries, just as a fly may walk around the surface of an orange and come back to where it started.

The more Columbus thought about this, the more certain he became that he was

right. He was so sure of it that he set out to try and make other people think the same way. He wanted ships with which to sail across the unknown seas to the west, but he had no money of his own to buy them.

Ah! What a task poor Columbus now had.

For years and years he wandered about among the kings and princes of Europe, but no one would believe his story and many laughed at him and mocked him.

First he tried Genoa, the city where he was born, but the people there told him he was a fool for thinking of such a voyage.

Then Columbus went to the king of Portugal. This king was a rascal and tried to cheat him. The king stole his plans from him and sent out a vessel in secret,

hoping to get the honor of the discovery for himself. The captain he sent, however, was a coward and was scared by the rolling waves. He soon came back and told the king that there was nothing to be found but water and storm. King John of Portugal was very sorry afterward that he had tried to rob Columbus of his honor.

Columbus was very angry when he heard what the king had done. He left Portugal for Spain and tried to get the king and queen of that country to let him have ships and sailors. They were at war, however, with a heathen people called the Moors and had no money to spare for risky sailing ventures.

Columbus stayed there for seven long

A Most Unworthy Sinner

I am a most unworthy sinner, but I have cried out to the Lord for grace and mercy and they have covered me completely. I have found the sweetest consolation since I made it my whole purpose to enjoy His marvelous presence. No one should fear to undertake any task in the name of our Savior, if it is just and if the intention is purely for His holy service. The working out of all things has been assigned to each person by our Lord, but it all happens according to His sovereign will, even though He gives advice. He lacks nothing that it is in the power of God to give men. O what a gracious Lord, who desires that people should perform for Him those things for which He holds Himself responsible! Day and night, moment by moment, everyone should express to Him their most devoted gratitude.

Christopher Columbus,
Book of Prophecies

years. He talked to many powerful people, but some made fun of him. "If the earth is round," they said, "and you sail west, your ships will go downhill, and they will have to sail uphill to come back. No ship that was ever made can do that. Besides, you may come to places where the waters boil with the great heat of the sun, and frightful monsters may rise out of the sea and swallow your ships and your men." Even the boys in the street started laughing at him and mocking him as a man who had lost his mind.

After many years, Columbus got tired of trying in Spain. He then traveled to France to see what the king of that country would do. He sent one of his brothers to England to see its king and ask him for aid.

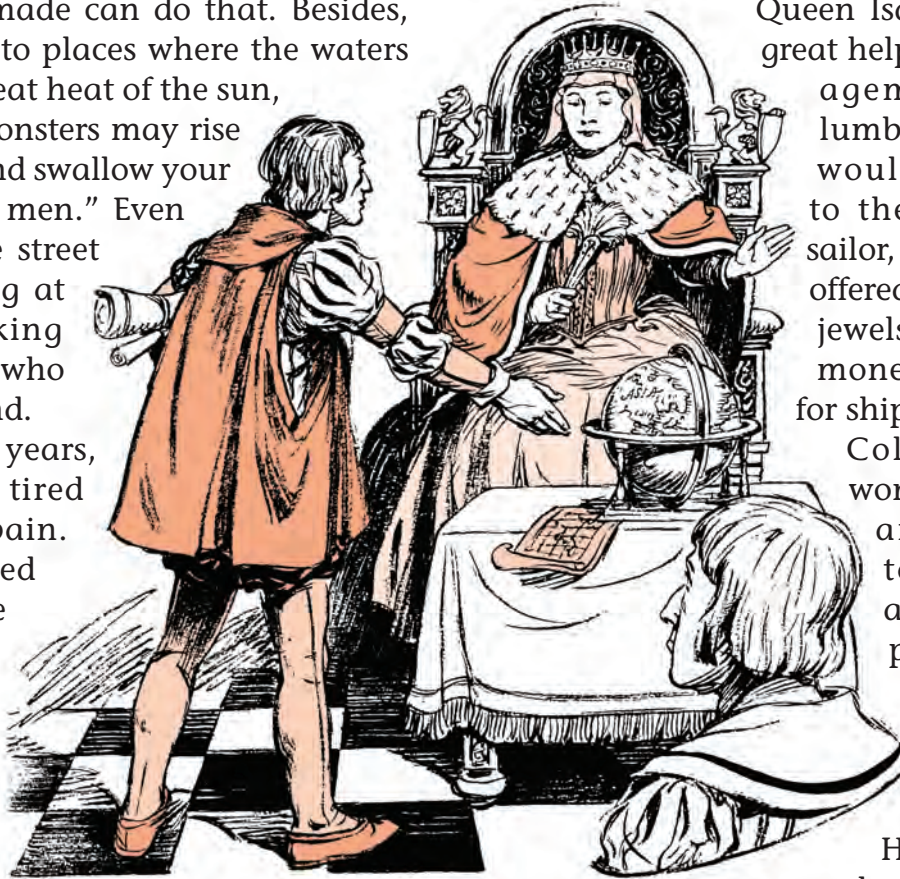
Queen Isabella Helps

He was now so poor that he had to travel along the dusty roads on foot, his little son going with him. One day, he stopped at a monastery called La Rabida to beg some bread for his son, who was very hungry.

The monks gave bread to the boy, and while he was eating it the director of the monastery came out and talked with Columbus, asking him his business. Columbus told him his story. He told it so well that the man believed in it. He asked him to stay there with his son and said he would write to Isabella, the queen of Spain, whom he

knew very well.

Columbus decided to stay, and the director wrote a letter to the queen. In the end, the wandering sailor was asked to return to the king's court in Spain.



Columbus stands before Queen Isabella's court.

Queen Isabella was of great help and encouragement to Columbus. The king would not listen to the wandering sailor, but the queen offered to pledge her jewels to raise the money he needed for ships and sailors.

Columbus had won. After years and years of toil, hunger, and disappointment, he was to have ships and sailors and supplies.

He was given a chance to prove whether it was he or the

powerful men who were the fools.

What horrible ships they gave him, though! Why, you can see far better ones regularly moving down your local rivers. Two of them did not even have decks but were like open boats. With this small fleet Columbus set sail from Palos, a little port in Spain, on the third of August 1492, on one of the most wonderful voyages in world history.

Away they went far out into the "Sea of Darkness," as the Atlantic Ocean was then called. Mile after mile, league after league, day after day, on and on they went, seeing nothing but endless waves, while the wind drove them steadily into the unknown west.

These sailors never expected to see their

wives and children again. They were frightened when they started, and every day they grew more scared. They looked with starving eyes for the bleak fogs or the frightful monsters which they had been told to expect. At one place they came upon clumps of seaweed and thought they were in shallow water and would be wrecked on banks of mud. Then the compass, in which they trusted, ceased to point due north, and they were more frightened than ever. Soon there was hardly a strong heart in the fleet except that of Columbus.

The time came when the sailors grew half mad with fear. Some of them made a plot to throw Columbus overboard and sail home again. They would tell the people there that he had fallen into the sea and been drowned.

It was a terrible thing to think of, was it not? Desperate men, however, will do dreadful things. They thought one man had better die rather than all of them. Only God's grace preserved the life of the great sea captain.

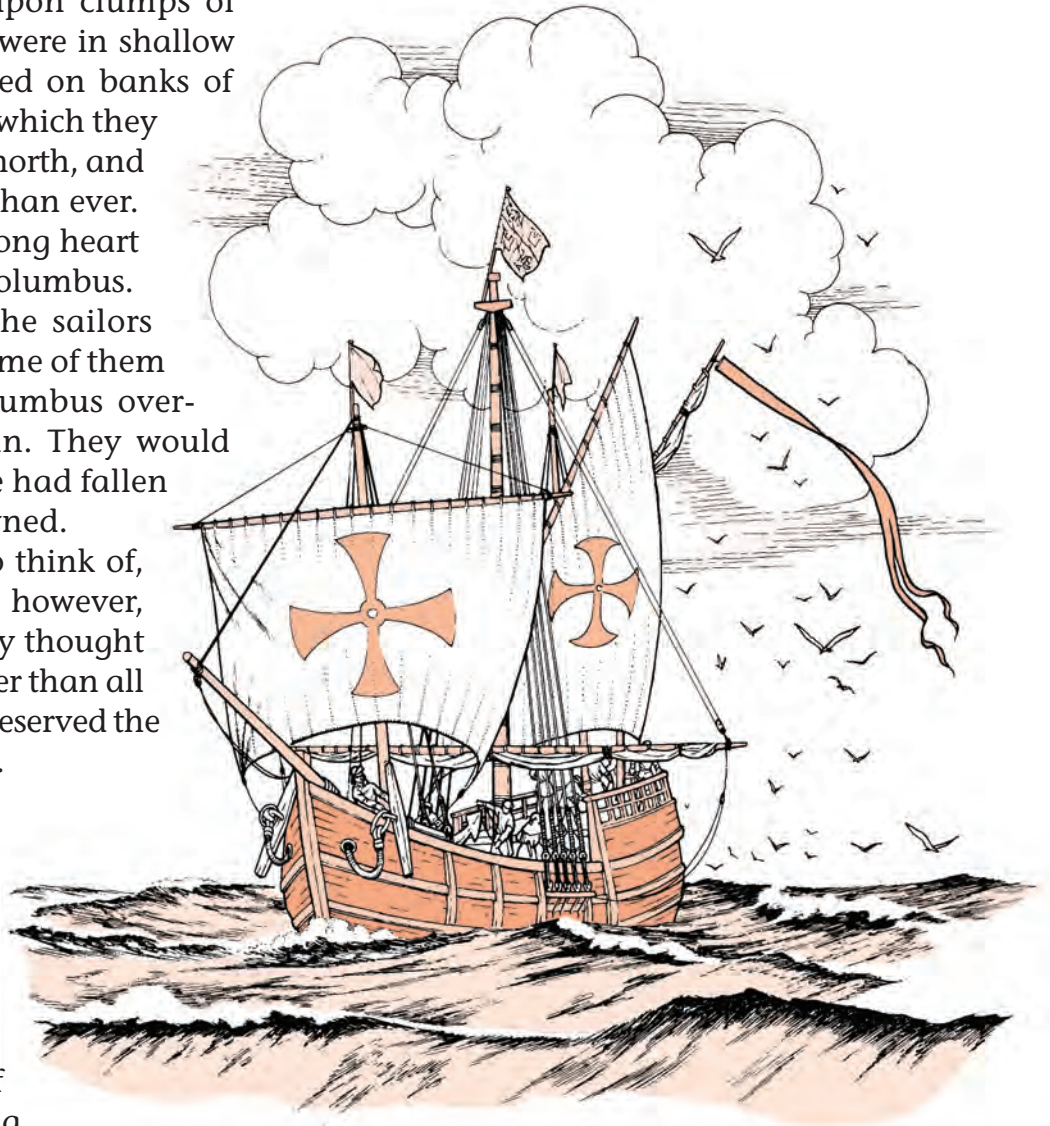
"Land! Land!"

One day a glad sailor called his shipmates and pointed over the side. A branch of a green bush was floating by with fresh berries on it. It looked as if it had just been broken off a bush. Another day, one of them picked from the water a stick which had been carved with a knife. Land birds were seen flying over the ships. Hope came back to their hearts. They were sure that land must be near.

The day of October eleventh came. When night fell dozens of men were on the lookout. Each wanted to be the first to see land. About ten o'clock that night, Columbus, who was looking out over the waves, saw a light far

off. It moved up and down like a lantern carried in a man's hand.

Hope now grew strong. Every eye looked out into the darkness. About two o'clock in the morning came the glad cry of "Land!



Land!" A gun was fired from the leading vessel. One of its sailors had seen what looked like land in the moonlight. You may be sure no one slept any more that night.

When daylight came the joyful sailors saw before them a low, green shore, on which the sunlight lay in beauty; men and women stood on it, looking in wonder at the ships, which they thought must be great white-winged birds. They had never



Columbus solves the riddle of the egg before the king's court.

seen such things before. We can hardly imagine what we would have done under similar circumstances.

When the boats from the ships came to the shore and Columbus landed, clad in shining armor and bearing the great banner of Spain, the simple natives fell to the ground on their faces. They thought a god had come from heaven to visit them.

Some of the red-skinned natives wore ornaments of gold. They were asked by signs where they had got this gold and pointed south. Soon all were on board again, the ships once more spread their sails, and swiftly they flew southward before the wind.

Day by day, as they went on, new islands appeared, some small, some large, all green and beautiful. Columbus thought this must be India, which he had set out to find, and he called the people Indians. He never knew that it was a new continent he had discovered.

The month of March of the next year came before the little fleet was able to return to Europe. Columbus sailed again into the port of Palos. The people hailed them with shouts of joy, for they had mourned their friends as dead.

The news spread fast. When Columbus entered Barcelona, Spain, where the king and queen were, bringing with him new plants, birds and animals, strange weapons, golden ornaments, and a few Native Americans, he was received as if he had been a king. He was seated beside the king; he rode by his side in the street; he was made

a grandee of Spain; all the honors of the kingdom were showered on him.

Columbus and the Egg

A dinner was given in Columbus's honor and many great men were there. The attention Columbus received made some people jealous. One of them with a sneer asked Columbus if he did not think anyone else could have discovered the Indies. In response Columbus took an egg from a dish on the table and handing it to the questioner asked him to make it stand on end.

After trying several times the man gave up. Columbus, took the egg in his hand, tapped it gently on one end against the top of the table so as to break the shell slightly so it would balance.

"Anyone could do that," said the man. "So anyone can discover the Indies after I have shown him the way," replied Columbus.

It was his day of pride and triumph. The successful explorer, however, was soon to find

out how Spain treated its heroes. Three times again he sailed to the New World, and once a rude Spanish governor sent him back to Spain with chains upon his legs. After Columbus was released, he kept the chains hanging in his home till he died and asked that they should be buried with him.

They who had once given him every honor now treated him with shameful neglect. He who had ridden beside the king and dined with the highest nobles of Spain became poor, sad, and lonely.

He died in 1506, fourteen years after his great discovery. Then Spain, which had



treated him so badly, began to honor his memory. It came too late, however, for poor Columbus, who had been allowed to die almost like a pauper, after he had made Spain the richest country in Europe.

Chapter 1 Review Questions

1. What wonderful event took place in the city of Chicago in the year 1893?
2. In what year did the sailor named Columbus cross the Atlantic Ocean and discover the New World?
3. Who do historians believe was the first explorer to visit America in the year 1000?
4. Who finally helped Columbus raise the money he needed to buy ships and sailors?
5. Why did many people think that Columbus would never be able to sail across the "Sea of Darkness" and return safely?
6. In what year did Columbus die?

The New Nation Begins to Grow 18

I think you must now have learned a great deal about the history of your country from the time Columbus crossed the Atlantic Ocean till the year 1800. You have been told about discoveries, settlements, wars, modes of life, government, and other things, but you must bear in mind that these are not the whole of American history.

The story of our country is broad and deep enough to hold many other events and issues. For instance, there are the stories of our third President Thomas Jefferson, the preachers of the Second Great Awakening, and our great inventors, to whom we owe so much. I propose in this chapter to tell you about some of these stories that took place around the beginning of the nineteenth century.

A New Leader

Thomas Jefferson was born in Virginia on April 13 in the year 1743. He had learned his ABC's in a little white schoolhouse with his cousins. He had his own little library of books, which he liked to read. Jefferson also

liked to draw plans for beautiful houses. When he married his lovely young wife, he built a house called Montecello for her on the top of a hill in Virginia. From there, he could look all around him to the mountains and the valleys.



Thomas Jefferson

When George Washington's soldiers were fighting to make America a free country, Thomas Jefferson was helping to write the Declaration of Independence. Jefferson was fighting for freedom with words instead of a gun. He was working hard and doing everything he could to help George Washington. During the later part of the war, he became governor of Virginia. Once he had to flee his home, because English soldiers marched into Virginia, and he could not run the risk of being captured by the English.

Thomas Jefferson was not around to help write the Constitution, because he was in France as America's ambassador. When he returned to the United States, he became President Washington's first secretary of state. He was responsible for our country's dealings with other nations. While in this office he had great differences with

Alexander Hamilton over the powers of the federal government. Did the Constitution give large powers to Congress and the President? Hamilton said, "Yes!" Jefferson said, "No!" From this disagreement, two political parties were formed—Hamilton's Federalist Party and Jefferson's Democratic-Republican Party. Jefferson later served as Vice-President under John Adams, the second President of the United States.

The Nation Expands

Thomas Jefferson was elected President of the United States in 1800. He went to live in the White House in Washington, D.C., although the White House was not yet finished. The national capital was a very new city at that time. The streets were knee-deep in mud when there was rain. Everywhere around the city were woods. You could ride for miles through them and not meet anyone or even see a house.

At that time, the city of New Orleans and a wide strip of land from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains belonged to France. That land was called the Louisiana Territory. President Jefferson thought that the United

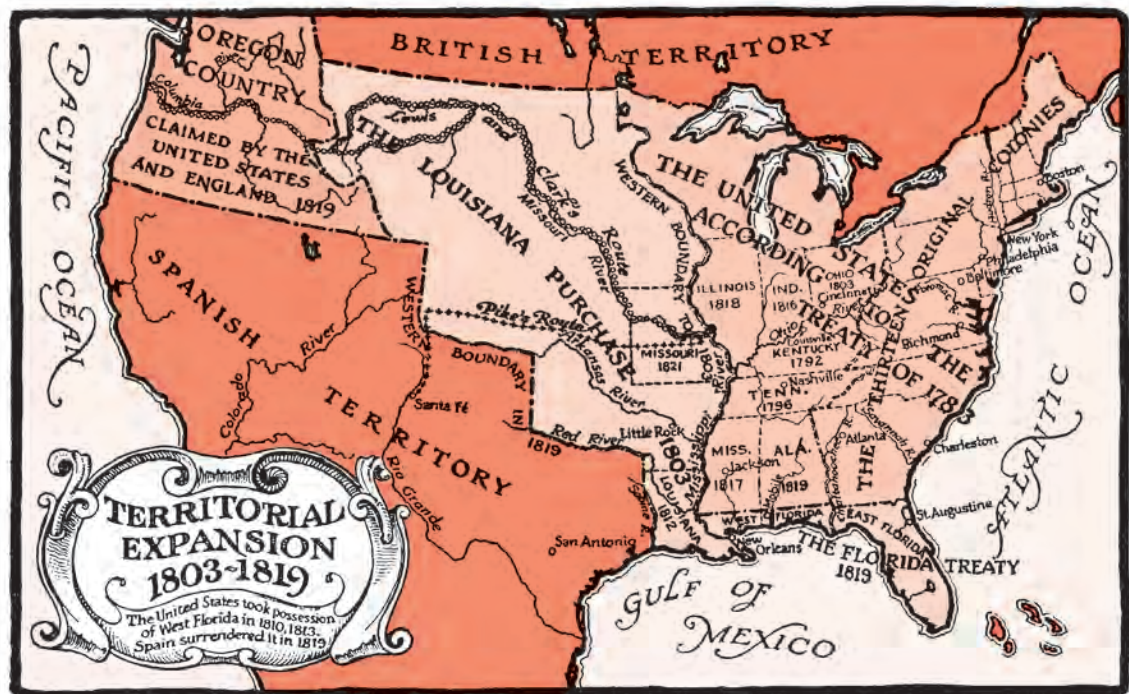
States needed some of that land. So he sent men to France to see if they could buy New Orleans. To his surprise, France sold them all the land in 1803. They paid about fifteen million dollars for it. The Louisiana Territory was later cut up into more than ten states. Some of the richest land in America lies in those states. Do you think Jefferson got a good bargain?

Do you think Americans knew much about this territory? At the time, not much was known, so President Jefferson sent an expedition led by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to examine the new land. They tried to find if there was a water route along the rivers between the Mississippi Valley and the Pacific Ocean. The Lewis and Clark expedition left St. Louis on May 14, 1804, and returned on September 23, 1806. Lewis and Clark did not find a water route to the Pacific but explored much of the new territory along the Missouri River, over the Rocky Mountains, and down the Columbia River to the Pacific Ocean.

Thomas Jefferson was elected President again in 1804, serving for a total of eight years. Then he went back home to his house

The United States almost doubled in size when it bought the Louisiana Territory from France in 1803.

The most immediate benefit of the Purchase was free navigation of the Mississippi River and use of the port of New Orleans.



on the top of the hill. He then helped to plan and build the University of Virginia. Thomas Jefferson lived a long and useful life. He died on the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1826, when he was eighty-three years old.

A New Spiritual Revival

By the end of the War for American Independence, the United States was in need of a new revival. The influence of the Bible and the gospel had begun to fade away. This was especially true in the frontier, where there were few churches and organized communities.

God did not abandon America, however. In the late 1790s, revival again began to spread throughout New England. This was the beginning of the Second Great Awakening that took place in America. The Spirit of God once again moved in the churches, and church membership began to grow while new congregations were being formed. In the theological schools in New England, there was also a revival among the students.

In 1795, Timothy Dwight, Jonathan Edwards's grandson, became the president of Yale. Many of his students were following the false teachings from France which attacked the Bible and its truth. By God's grace, Dwight

was able to restore the authority of Scripture through the preaching of the gospel. In 1802, revival swept the campus and one third of the 225 students were converted. Many of these students were sent out to preach in New England, New York, and beyond, bringing the gospel throughout the country.

Even as revival was spreading in the East, God began to work on the frontier. One of the means God used to revive the West was the camp meeting—an outdoor religious service which lasted for several days. People would come from miles around to stay at a campsite and listen to the revival preachers. The camp meeting method, pioneered by Presbyterian James McGready, was used effectively by Methodist, Baptist, and other Presbyterian preachers. It has been said that in 1811 alone, four hundred such meetings were held across the frontier.

Before this great revival, God was preparing another man to come and spread the gospel. At the age of sixteen, Francis Asbury (1745–1816) began preaching in England. In 1771, he eagerly responded to John Wesley's call for volunteers to go to America. Asbury began to travel on horseback to where the gospel had not been heard. He encouraged other Methodist preachers to do the same, telling them

Haystack Prayer Meeting

One day in 1802, while Samuel J. Mills, Jr., was plowing on his farm in Connecticut, he believed that God was calling him to preach the gospel. Four years later, he obeyed God's command by entering Williams College at Williamstown, Massachusetts. A group of like-minded men, called the Society of the Brethren, often met in a maple grove close to the college for prayer and discussion.

As Mills and five of his fellow students were heading for prayer one day, they were forced by a sudden thunderstorm to take cover in the shelter of a nearby haystack; there they began to talk about the untold millions living in spiritual darkness without the saving knowledge of Christ and His cross. They even pondered how they could accomplish the task and what that would mean to each of them personally. Mills proposed that they devote themselves to reaching the non-Christian world with the gospel. They prayed and then committed themselves to becoming America's first foreign missionaries. Hereafter, they became known as the "Haystack Group."

God answered their prayers in a way they could not have imagined. The Holy Spirit used their enthusiasm to prompt thousands to commit themselves to carrying the gospel overseas. Although Mills was never able to serve abroad, he used his gifts to help others.

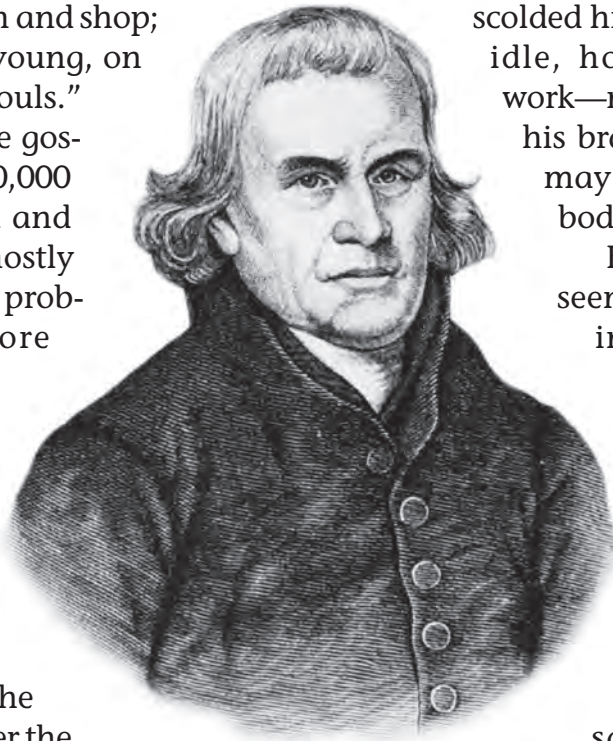
to “go into every kitchen and shop; address all, aged and young, on the salvation of their souls.”

Asbury's zeal for the gospel took him almost 300,000 miles all over America and even into Canada—mostly on horseback. He was probably known by more Americans than any other person at that time. In spite of his labors, the growth of Methodists was meager. This was due to the War of Independence and to their connections with the Church of England. After the war, God began to work through Asbury and his associates during the Second Great Awakening.

In 1787, the Methodists formed their own denomination, and from that time on the church began to grow rapidly. The greatest growth took place west of the Appalachian Mountains. In the city or in the wilderness, though, his message was the same—a call for repentance and faith. He also organized local classes, preaching circuits, and general conferences, which further helped the church to expand, especially on the frontier.

New Inventions

During this exciting time, our nation was also growing in another way. To tell you about this, I must ask you to go back with me to a kitchen in Scotland many years before 1800. On the open hearth of that kitchen a bright fire blazed. Nearby sat a thoughtful-faced boy with his eyes fixed on the tea-kettle which was boiling away over the fire, while its lid kept lifting to let the steam escape. His mother, who was hustling about, no doubt thought he was idle and may have



Francis Asbury

scolded him a little. He was far from idle, however; he was busy at work—not with his hands but with his brain. The brain, you know, may be hard at work while the body is doing nothing.

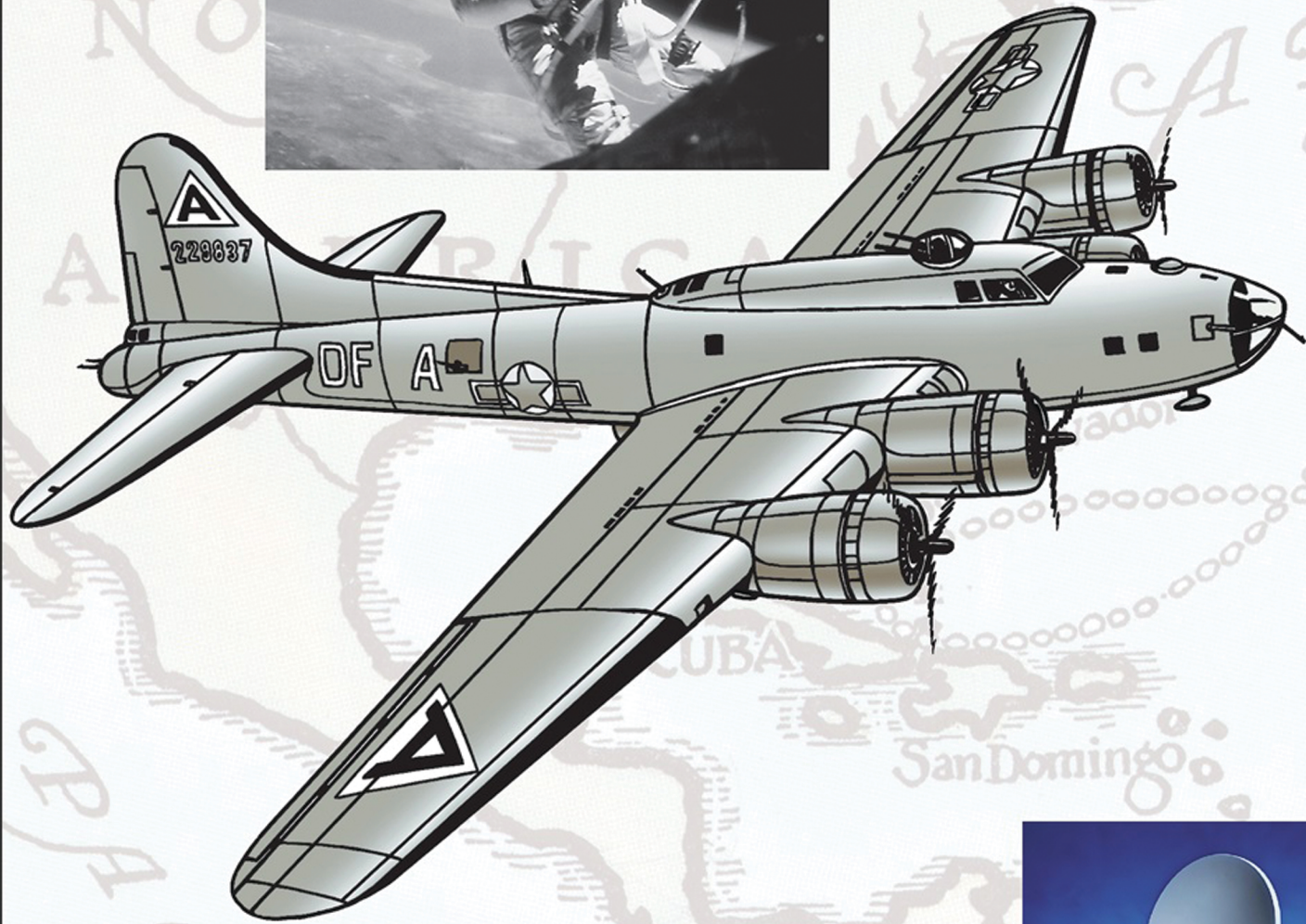
How many of you have seen the lid of a kettle of boiling water keeping up its clatter as the steam lifts it and puffs out into the air? What thought has this brought into your mind? Into the mind of little James Watt it brought one great thought, that of power.

As he looked at it, he said to himself that the steam which comes from boiling water must have a great deal of force if a little of it could keep the kettle lid clattering up and down, and he asked himself if such a power could not be put to some good use.

Our Scottish lad was not the first one to have that thought. Others had thought the same thing, and steam had been used to move a poor sort of engine. What James Watt did when he grew up, though, was to invent a much better engine than had ever been made before. It was a great day for us all when that engine was invented. Before that time, men had done most of their daily work with their hands, and you may imagine that the work was hard and slow.

The Power of Steam

The development of the steam engine opened up a new era for American inventors. I have spoken about the steam engine because it was with this that most inventors worked. They thought that if horses could drag a wagon over the ground and the wind could drive a vessel through the water, steam



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