HARLOW & BLAKE

THE UNITED STATES

FROM WILDERNESS TO WORLD POWER

☆☆☆☆ FOURTH EDITION

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From Wilderness to World Power

FOURTH EDITION

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Preface to the Fourth Edition

MY RELATIONSHIP to this text began with the third edition when at Dr. Harlow's request I undertook the revision of his book—a task that he himself would have performed with his usual thoroughness, had his health permitted. Before his death in October, 1956, he had read most of my manuscript and given it his general approval. For the present edition I must take full responsibility. I have left chapters 1 through 47 substantially as Dr. Harlow wrote them; for chapters 48 and 49 I have condensed and rearranged material from an earlier edition; chapters 50 through 52 are entirely my own.

For many years a teacher, Dr. Harlow had a firm grasp on the qualities that a good one-volume text should possess. This is made clear in the following preface that he wrote for the first edition. I have tried to remain faithful to these admonitions, although I must confess that the fast pace of recent events has made the selection and interpretation of materials unusually difficult. I can only hope that my contribution reflects in some measure the affectionate memory in which I hold this fine scholar and good friend under whose department chairmanship I served for several years.

N. M. B.

Syracuse, New York
December 1963

Preface to the First Edition

THIS BOOK is designed to provide basic, essential material for the one-year college course in American history. It is full enough to include an account of the most important developments, and at the same time brief enough to allow considerable time for collateral reading. No text book is expected to be a general reference work, still less a small encyclopedia. It should be a guide to the student, something which will explain briefly what he needs to know and tell him where he can find additional information and different interpretations. The text itself should meet the first aim while the reading lists should help in meeting the second.

Probably no two teachers would agree completely on the selection of material for a text. Certainly every specialist will feel that any text gives insufficient emphasis to his particular area of study. And yet a comparison of standard texts will show considerable uniformity in selection and emphasis. The subject matter of this one, the over-all plan, the organization, and the manner of presentation have been derived from a continuous teaching experience of thirty-five years. It is hoped that the book will appeal to both teachers and students. When a student likes his text the work of the instructor is immeasurably easier.

Every general survey must come down as close to the immediate present as the mechanics of publication permit. Contemporary history however is full of peculiarly difficult problems. All the material is controversial in character, and developments which bulk large in the current news may or may not have lasting significance. For example when the final chapters of this book were being written the "cold war" between the Soviet Union and the Western powers suggested the possibility of serious trouble. But the historical pattern into which this contest will fall cannot be known for several years.

A book of this size does not provide space for many illustrations, certainly not enough to suggest the amazing variety of available pictures in this field. In selecting those which are included the guiding principle was to use something interesting and also something which has not become too common by repeated use in other texts. Also, because Americans have so often observed their public affairs with the saving grace of humor, it seemed desirable to recognize this tendency by putting in a few cartoons.

Perhaps there should be a brief personal note about my own concept of history. I have never been able to find any factors or forces in history except those which have been created by human beings. Human behavior falls into recognizable patterns, patterns which are persistent but at the same time continuously subject to change. History is the study of these patterns and changes. It is easy to talk about cause and effect—about which we know considerably less than we like to admit—and about trends, as though words and terms in themselves constitute explanations. Trends would seem to be not molds which predetermine the shape of human affairs, but simply the result of numerous decisions, made from day to day. Such decisions, repeated often enough, do create conditions which make certain policies practically inevitable. But a series of radically different decisions, which would have been possible at one time, would have made entirely different decisions equally inevitable. I have never been able to see justification for any purely mechanistic interpretation of history, such as economic determinism or any other determinism. History is selected material taken from the sum total of human behavior. If there is any one single formula which provides the key to complete understanding of this behavior, that formula has eluded all who have hunted for it.

R. V. H.

Westbrook, Connecticut
January 3, 1949

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The First English Colony

THIS volume is a summary of the history of the United States. Its purpose is to trace the growth of our nation from seemingly inauspicious and simple beginnings at scattered points along a part of the Atlantic coast to the vast country and complex social structure which we know today. Actually these beginnings were not simple. Any examination of the background would show how many different forces, each one the result of a long process of growth, combined to make America a going concern. Because this study is a summary, many of the earlier steps must be omitted. There is no space here for the explorations which first brought America to the attention of Europeans. Nor is there room for any account of the rise of the Spanish Empire, a far-flung entity already a century old when the English settled Jamestown.

Beginnings of American History

Omission of the story of Spain in America is regrettable because Spanish activity here has had important and lasting influences on the history of the United States. The danger of Spanish aggression in the South helps to explain the establishment of the colony of Georgia. During the American Revolution Spanish leaders tried to prevent the United States from occupying any part of the Mississippi valley. Subsequently Spanish activity in the South and Southwest was a source of almost continuous trouble for the new American government. When the Latin American nations became independent, their relations with the United States proved to be important in shaping American policy. And as the United States expanded, former Spanish American territory and Spanish-speaking inhabitants were brought within the jurisdiction of this country. From the latter part of the sixteenth century to the present day there has never been a time when this Spanish or Latin American influence could be ignored.

As students of the history of the United States we can never overlook the importance of the Spanish colonial empire, but the limitations of space confine us to the beginnings of the English colonies. The people whose activities constitute the history of this country were not natives. They were immigrants from Europe. These newcomers found the so-called Indians here and either used them for their own purposes, after the manner of the Spaniards in Mexico and South America, or drove them out or killed them off as the English did in what is now the United States. To be sure, the Indians contributed something, but surprisingly little, to American history. They introduced the Europeans to new agricultural products—of which the most important were beans, maize, potatoes, squash, and tobacco—to a new game bird—the wild turkey—and to the buffalo or bison of the western plains. The English language received a few additions in the form of Indian

words, and our maps still carry some Indian place names. Indian contributions to American history have been so slight that one is justified in suggesting that they might be omitted entirely without appreciably altering the main trend of development.

The Beginnings of American History in Europe and England

American history began therefore not with the Indians but with the arrival of the first Europeans. For that part of North America included in the United States, the significant part of history began with the coming of the English. As compared with the meager contributions of the Indians, the English brought a complex, well-developed civilization. Among other cultural traits they brought their language, both oral and written, and fastened it so firmly that later, non-English immigrants have never succeeded in displacing it. They brought the arts and crafts of agriculture, shipping, commerce, and primitive manufacturing. Along with these came the all-important institutions of government, judicial procedure, and law, still the bases of our democracy today. They also gave us our forms of religious worship.

English Culture

The processes by which these English institutions were established here are the real beginnings of American history, and there should be at least a mention of the origin of these institutions. English culture came from Europe, and European culture was composed of numerous elements fused together at different times into beliefs, practices, and institutional behavior. The English language is a composite product derived from at least three different tongues: Germanic, Latin, and French. English religious beliefs came from the Near East and Europe by way of the ancient Hebrews and Greeks, and they were then put into familiar form by the medieval Catholic Church and by Protestant reformers of the sixteenth century. Many of the basic principles of government and law had been contributed by the ancient Romans. The foundations of science and mathematics had been built by the Greeks and later by the Moslems. Then the British added numerous contributions of their own. From these diverse origins came the civilization which was transplanted to the new environment in America.

Even before the end of the fifteenth century Spain and Portugal had planned to divide the New World between themselves, and in doing so they gave little thought to England. Englishmen, however, showed considerable interest in the New World. In 1497 King Henry VII issued a commission to a Genoese sailor, John Cabot, for a voyage of discovery. Cabot came upon the continent of North America, thereby securing to his employer a title to nearly half the western hemisphere. For this service the frugal Tudor bestowed upon the explorer the sum of £10, the equivalent of perhaps $400 in modern purchasing power. What his self-indulgent son, Henry VIII, might have done in North America had he not been disturbed by other interests was never made known. As it was,

John Cabot

he got himself so deeply involved in theological controversy, ecclesiastical reorganization, and matrimonial troubles that the New World made little appeal to him.

But whatever may be alleged against Henry VII for his downright stinginess or against Henry VIII for his extravagances, there is no doubt that these Tudor kings laid the foundations of English prosperity and of English maritime greatness. Henry VII had been interested in shipbuilding as well as in exploration, even going so far as to offer bounties for the construction of large vessels. Moreover, he built the first dry dock in England—at Portsmouth. Henry VIII displayed an even livelier concern in English sea power. In 1545 he established the Navy Board, and he founded the training school for pilots, known as Trinity House, which is still in existence. These proceedings explain where the seamen of the next generation, the famous Elizabethan sea dogs, got their start.

English economic development during the Tudor period differed radically from that of Spain. Spanish wealth depended not on the cultivation of Spanish resources but on the systematic exploitation of the New World. Spain was receiving much and, from the economic standpoint, giving little. In the case of England, on the other hand, colonial development was preceded, in fact was really forced, by the remarkable industrial growth and commercial expansion within the nation itself.

English Industry and Trade

By the middle of Elizabeth's reign, about 1580, progress was evident in the whole range of manufacturing. Most of the older crafts were enjoying a much larger market. Builders were kept busy in supplying the demands for new dwellings. Artisans in the textile trades were trying to provide the varied and expensive fabrics which fashion required the social leaders to wear. Both men and women were equally anxious to move just ahead of rapidly changing styles and, in their efforts to beautify their persons, they called upon the lacemakers and jewelers to aid the tailors. In addition to the steadily increasing activity in the old trades, new ones were becoming more important. The discovery of the art of printing called for large numbers of skilled craftsmen: paper makers, bookbinders, press makers and type founders. Map makers and instrument makers put the new discoveries of science at the disposal of merchants and sailors.

Industrial development is partly the cause and partly the result of increasing activity on the part of the merchants, those who buy and sell what others produce. As their trade increased, the merchants began to save money. This accumulating capital made possible larger and more extensive business operations as well as the rise of a class of promoters, men who were on the lookout for new chances to make money. Both manufacturers and merchants became interested in wider markets. This wave of prosperity was also due in part to the increasing volume of money in Europe. The gold and silver which the Spaniards imported from America could not be confined within the boundaries of Spain; they had to pay it out for supplies. Merchants and nobles in other countries got some of it and used it to buy

goods. When people want to buy, any increase in the amount of money available encourages business activity. Men who made more money than they needed for direct living expenses and for amusement put their surplus to work. They invested it in manufacturing or in trade and so increased their profits.

In order to carry on the expanding trade to the best advantage, merchants formed joint-stock companies in which each member invested what he could afford and from which, when there were profits, he drew a share in proportion to his investment. These companies were given charters by the government, assuring them a monopoly of the trade with some specific part of the world. The oldest of these companies, the Merchants Adventurers, had been organized for the purpose of handling the sale of English woolen cloth in the Netherlands. By the time of Queen Elizabeth, the Merchants Adventurers were taking an active part in a general export trade. Englishmen went abroad, not only to sell British products but to buy goods for the English markets. Other companies were organized to trade with the Baltic States, Russia, Turkey, Morocco, Africa, and the Far East. The profits of these companies averaged not 6 or 10 percent but from 100 to 400 percent or even more. In 1622, one shipment of goods from India which cost £386,000 sold in England for £1,915,000.

Anglo-Spanish Rivalry

During part of the sixteenth century, English progress continued without bringing on any conflict with the rapidly growing Spanish Empire. But sooner or later the lines of development of these two nations were bound to cross, particularly so if the British should presume to encroach upon Spanish trade or Spanish colonial possessions. In addition to rivalry over imperial and economic interests, a growing contest over religion might put an end to English peace. Spain was still a Catholic country, and the Spanish King, Philip II, regarded himself as the great lay champion of his faith. He had been the husband of Elizabeth's predecessor, Mary Tudor, so he had some interest in England. He was prepared to overthrow Protestantism, if he could, wherever it prevailed, and England seemed to demand special efforts on his part. No Spaniard could forget the treatment which Catherine of Aragon had received at the hands of Henry VIII, and no Catholic could forgive the repudiation of papal authority which Elizabeth had approved. There had been cause enough to act before 1570 when Elizabeth was excommunicated by the Pope; after that it became a religious duty to deprive her of her throne, if not of her life. Philip therefore was ready to encourage plots against the Queen in order to give her place to the more orthodox Mary Stuart. In defending their religion, Englishmen were well aware that they were defending not only their ruler but their whole system of government. The underlying issues in the contest between England and Spain were therefore commercial interests, which involved colonies and sea power; Protestantism; and national independence.

For fully twenty years before England and Spain went to war, the feeling of each nation toward the other grew steadily more bitter, while minor con-

flicts in various parts of the world foretold the approach of the crisis. Among these early manifestations of increasing hostility were the activities of the Elizabethan seamen. These daring adventurers, of whom John Hawkins and Francis Drake were the most famous, set out deliberately to defy the power of Spain and to seek their fortunes in the trade of her Empire.

Sir John Hawkins specialized in the African slave trade, and he found his market in the forbidden area of Spanish America. In 1562 he fitted out a small expedition to buy Negro slaves in Africa for sale to Spanish planters in the West Indies. Spanish law prohibited such business; nevertheless, Hawkins disposed of his first cargo advantageously in Santo Domingo. In spite of official Spanish protests, Hawkins made repeated visits to the West Indies, clearing a profit of 60 percent or more on his investment. The planters wanted slaves, law or no law, and Hawkins was glad to risk official displeasure to help the planters and to increase his own fortune.

Francis Drake, a young relative of Hawkins, had nothing in particular to sell to the Spaniards, but he was fired by a holy hatred of their faith as well as by a deep-seated hunger for vengeance. As a youth he had been sailing in Hawkins's service when the Spaniards nearly succeeded in putting an end to both their promising careers. Beginning in 1572 and using the West Indies as a base of supplies, Drake seized Spanish ships, burned Spanish colonial towns, and actually robbed a Spanish mule train bringing gold and silver from Peru to the Atlantic coast. On the way home he captured a Spanish treasure ship. In 1577, bent on more plunder, Drake took out a fleet of five ships manned by a force of 150 men. This time he passed through the Straits of Magellan, losing all but one ship. With this single vessel he sailed north along the western coast of South America, robbing the Spaniards as he went. News traveled so slowly in those days that he could move from port to port before his next victims had any warning that he was in their part of the world. Afraid to return home by the same route because of the danger of falling into Spanish hands, he struck boldly westward across the Pacific. After an absence of two years, he reached England by way of the Far East. His cargo was worth $4,000,000.

Hawkins and Drake

The audacity of these Englishmen compels admiration even now, and it did then, everywhere but in Spain. When the Spanish ambassador complained bitterly to Queen Elizabeth, she assured him that she knew nothing of these men. But when Drake returned, the Queen herself conferred knighthood upon him, and she seems to have been well taken care of in the division of his spoils. The exploits of these enterprising seamen and the attitude of the virgin Queen toward them were not the only grievances which Philip could list in his indictment of England. When his Dutch subjects rebelled against Spanish rule, Elizabeth sent them secret encouragement and subsequently open help in money and men.

While Drake was threatening the security of the Spaniards on the sea, another famous Englishman, Sir Walter Raleigh, proposed to break down Spanish claims on land. In 1584, under authority of a charter granted by the

Queen, he sent a small exploring expedition to North America. In July 1584, Raleigh's agents entered Pamlico Sound and landed on Roanoke Island, now a part of North Carolina. These Englishmen were most enthusiastic over their discoveries. Queen Elizabeth named the country Virginia, the Land of the Virgin Queen.

Raleigh's Experiment

In the following year, 1585, Raleigh sent Captain Ralph Lane to this same region to decide upon the proper site for the colony. Then in May 1587, Raleigh sent out a real colonizing expedition, consisting of three ships and 150 colonists. This group included twenty-five women and children; the governor and leader was John White, artist and explorer. The colony was started on Roanoke Island. Toward the end of the summer White returned to England for supplies. Because of growing trouble with Spain he was unable to return until 1591. When he came the colonists had disappeared. Their cabins were still there, but these and a single word, "Croatan," carved on a tree were all that remained of the settlement. The fate of the colonists still remains a mystery. Raleigh spent £40,000 without founding a permanent settlement, but his money was not thrown away. His example inspired others to undertake the work of colonization, and, once the troubles with Spain were over, England acquired a real hold in North America.

Unsuccessful as it was, this attempt to violate the Spanish claim to North America was another goad to Philip, already infuriated over the commercial situation. Then, when Elizabeth ordered the execution of Mary Stuart, Philip decided that there was nothing left but the appeal to force. The only way that his commercial structure could be saved was to conquer England.

War with Spain

The most spectacular part of the war came in the beginning. Philip planned to overwhelm England with a single, crushing blow and to that end he organized the great Armada. He mobilized a fleet of 130 vessels, with a total force of 30,000 men. Over half of these were soldiers, and the fleet carried the necessary material for a successful war on land, including even horses, mules, and carts.

Philip underestimated the strength of his foes. He expected that his own shores at least would be safe from attack, but, even before the Armada left port, Sir Francis Drake sailed into the harbor at Cadiz, destroyed some of the Spanish ships, and captured Spanish treasure. Philip counted on an English people divided by religious controversy, but, however much they might quarrel among themselves, Protestants and Catholics stood together against the foreign danger. He counted on the superior power of both the Spanish army and the Spanish navy, but Philip's military forces never had a chance because they could not get ashore. As for the navy, English ships under the command of Lord Howard of Effingham, Sir John Hawkins, and Sir Francis Drake proved more seaworthy and were better handled than the Spanish galleons. The English guns were better and their gunners more accurate than the Spanish. Even the elements fought against

Spain. To the disturbing currents of the English Channel, never easy for any but the best of pilots, there were added unfavorable winds and severe storms. The Armada was almost annihilated. Two thirds of the ships were wrecked, and nearly three quarters of the men were killed. A few vessels straggled back to Spain by way of northern Ireland, but these had lost all effectiveness as fighting units. The English lost not a single ship and only sixty men.

The destruction of Spanish ships and men could easily have been made good, but not so the loss in pride and morale. Spanish sea power was broken. By 1591 the English had captured more than 800 Spanish ships, and five years later Lord Howard captured and plundered Cadiz itself. This succession of defeats did not mark the end of the Spanish Empire, which lasted for 200 years more, but it left the Spanish treasury bankrupt and it put a stop to Spanish expansion. Since that time the history of Spain has been one of decline.

The Anglo-Spanish war ended in 1604. Two years later a group of enterprising Englishmen formulated plans which led to the first permanent English settlement in North America. In doing so they were taking advantage of those conditions and circumstances which combined to encourage colonization. First were the financial resources of the merchants, resources which had been accumulating during a century or more of commercial prosperity. British traders were well acquainted with the record of Spanish colonial development and they looked forward to equally gratifying returns on their own investments. They were willing to risk their fortunes in the hope of making larger ones, and their help was essential. It cost money to hire ships, provide food and supplies, and pay the costs of transporting colonists and their goods to the New World. The government might have assumed the responsibility and the risk, as the Spanish authorities had done, but the English way was different. Englishmen preferred to make colonizing a matter of private enterprise and private profit. At the same time, these British capitalists counted on the government to provide military and naval protection for the colonists. Thanks to the victory over Spain, the government was in a position to meet this demand.

Factors in English Colonization

At the opening of the seventeenth century England had a large class of sufferers from a prolonged economic depression. They were interested in colonies because of the chance to make a better living. Their economic difficulties were the results of a change in the English farming system. Down to the fifteenth century the small farmers, whether owners or tenants, raised wheat, horses, cattle, and sheep, thus producing what they needed for their own families and possibly a surplus for sale. But by the sixteenth century sheep raising had largely taken the place of general farming because the large landholders found heavy profits in wool. Tenant farmers and laborers were no longer needed to till the soil, so they formed an army of the unemployed. The landowners and the woolen manufacturers who sided with them were so politically powerful that they were even allowed to take

over the common lands on which the farmers had kept their livestock, and turn these into pasture land for sheep. Since the care of sheep required little labor, this policy left thousands of farmers and farm laborers with no means of support. Sometimes the inhabitants of a whole village had to leave their homes, only to become common beggars. This process had been going on for perhaps a hundred years before Elizabeth came to the throne.

Thus while English merchants and manufacturers enjoyed unusual prosperity, the dispossessed victims of the wool growers were facing privation. Moreover, the war with Spain had made the lot of the poor even worse than before. This contest and other wars on the Continent interrupted commerce, cut down the market for English woolen cloth, and consequently spread the depression to spinners and weavers. By the end of Elizabeth's reign economic conditions had settled into what looked like a permanent depression. The most discouraging feature of this situation was the lack of hope of improvement in England. Men turned to America as a possible solution for their troubles. As early as 1574, Sir Humphrey Gilbert wrote: "We might inhabit some part of these countries [America] and settle there those needy people of our country which now trouble the commonwealth and through want here at home are enforced to commit outrageous offences whereby they are dayly consumed with the gallows." And in 1611, the Spanish minister to England wrote: "Their [referring to the English] principle reason for colonizing these parts is to give an outlet to so many idle, wretched people as they have in England, and thus prevent the dangers that might be feared of them."

Land and Religion

The unemployed Englishman needed land, and America had land in abundance. Here was a chance to exchange abject poverty for economic security. In addition to its economic advantages the ownership of land had a social and sentimental appeal. Landholders were a privileged class, the possessors of political as well as economic power. They alone could vote for members of Parliament. The country gentry dominated their tenants and neighbors. As for the nobility, their status was determined by their great estates. These considerations helped to shape the thought of many Englishmen; they knew that the acquisition of a farm in America would not make every man a lord, but it would bring tangible advantages.

Promoters of colonies and merchants, as distinguished from prospective settlers, could see other advantages in North American land, the chief of which was timber. As a growing commercial and manufacturing country England needed timber, and the domestic supply was rapidly disappearing. In those days all ships were built of wood, and they were made watertight by means of products of the forests, particularly tar and pitch. Wood was still the fuel used in smelting iron. Even the textile manufacturers needed wood for the construction of their spinning wheels and looms. Explorers in the New World all reported on the abundance of timber in North America. Here, then, was a natural resource which would amply repay a large investment in colonial enterprise.