

Volume I

The Brief American Pageant

F O U R T H E D I T I O N



**DAVID M. KENNEDY
THOMAS A. BAILEY
MEL PIEHL**

Volume 1

*The Brief
American Pageant*

A History of the Republic

F O U R T H E D I T I O N

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Preface

The American Pageant has long enjoyed a deserved reputation as one of the most accessible, popular, and effective textbooks in the field of American history. Thomas A. Bailey gave to the book a distinctive personality that mirrored his vast learning and the sparkling classroom style that he had cultivated during his nearly four decades of teaching at Stanford University. Every page of the text expresses the charm of his inventive prose, his passion for clarity, his disdain for clutter, and his mastery of the narrative form.

The Brief American Pageant, Fourth Edition, seeks to preserve the outstanding attributes of the parent text in a format suitable for one-semester courses in American history, as well as for courses that rely heavily on readings in primary sources or specialized monographs. Like the longer Tenth Edition from which it is drawn, it preserves the basic features that have made *The American Pageant* unique, while incorporating the rich new scholarship in social, economic, cultural, and intellectual history that has appeared in the last generation. This edition of the text continues to reflect the new historical emphasis on the experience of people—including women, the poor, blacks, Hispanics, and certain religious groups—who until recently were often neglected by historians. It is also shaped by the belief that the main drama and the urgent interest of American history reside in the public arena in which these and other groups contend and cooperate with one another. Public affairs, in short, form the spine of the text's account of American history.

That spine, however, is firmly connected to the full body of social, economic, and intellectual history

that makes up the organic whole of the American past. This new edition draws out the ways in which political developments have been shaped by ideas, religious beliefs, social conditions, and economic and technological change, as well as by events in areas of the world outside the United States. It contains new or substantially revised discussions of the pre-Columbian era, Native American history, environmental history, the nature and political consequences of slavery, the role of religion in American life, urbanization and immigration in the late nineteenth century, the emergence of a consumer economy in the twentieth century, women's history, and the beginnings and the end of the Cold War. The last chapters also present substantial accounts of the major developments of the last several decades: the civil rights movement, the feminist revolution, the resurgence of immigration, the Vietnam War, Watergate, the "Reagan Revolution," the Persian Gulf War, and the election of the first "baby-boomer" president.

The "Makers of America" essays focus on the diverse ethnic and racial groups that compose our strikingly pluralistic society. They provide fascinating portraits of the lives of immigrant peoples before they arrived on American soil or, in the case of Native Americans, before contact with European and African civilizations. They also discuss the fates of those peoples over time as members of American society.

To assist students in reviewing the material, we also have maintained the chronologies that end each chapter. In addition, most of the "Varying Viewpoints" essays have been substantially revised to

reflect recent scholarship and better to stimulate classroom discussion. The end-of-chapter bibliographies have been thoroughly updated; the statistical profile of the American people in the Appendix has been brought up to date; and new, improved maps and illustrations have been inserted.

A revised *Instructor's Resource Guide* is also available with this edition, featuring summaries of chapter themes; chapter outlines; suggestions and resources for lectures; and character sketches. It also includes suggestions for using the "Makers of America" and "Varying Viewpoints" features of *The Brief American Pageant*, as well as identification, multiple choice, and essay questions for the instructor's use. In addition, the student *Guidebook* assists students by focusing their attention on the central themes and major historical developments of each chapter, while presenting a variety of exercises, a glossary of key

social science terms, and numerous study review questions designed to reinforce comprehension of the text.

This *Brief American Pageant*, Fourth Edition, presents the subject of American history in an engaging and lively way, without distorting the sober reality of the past. Brevity, Shakespeare noted, is the soul of wit. Though condensed, this edition seeks to preserve the bright personality that has led generations of students to discover in *The American Pageant* what Thomas A. Bailey so exuberantly taught—that the pages of history need not be dull. We hope that readers of this book will enjoy learning from it and that they will come to savor the pleasures and rewards of historical study.

D. M. K.
M. P.

Contents

CHAPTER 1

New World Beginnings, 33,000 B.C.—A.D. 1769 1

The geology of the New World • Native Americans before Columbus • European exploration and Columbus's voyages • The ecological consequences of Columbus's discovery • Spain's American empire
MAKERS OF AMERICA: The Spanish *Conquistadores* 12

CHAPTER 2

The Planting of English America, 1500–1733 17

England in the age of expansion • The Jamestown colony • The growth of Virginia and Maryland • England in the Caribbean • The Carolinas and Georgia
MAKERS OF AMERICA: The Iroquois 24

CHAPTER 3

Settling the Northern Colonies, 1619–1700 29

The Puritan faith • The Puritan commonwealth of Massachusetts Bay Colony, 1630 • The expansion of New England • New England unification efforts • New Netherland becomes New York • Pennsylvania and the Middle Colonies
MAKERS OF AMERICA: The English 32

CHAPTER 4

American Life in the Seventeenth Century, 1607–1692 43

Life and labor in the Chesapeake tobacco region • Indentured servitude • Slavery and African-American culture • New England families and towns • The changing New England way of life
MAKERS OF AMERICA: From African to African-American 48

CHAPTER 5

Colonial Society on the Eve of Revolution, 1700–1775 55

Population growth and ethnic diversity • Colonial social structure • The Atlantic economy • The "Great Awakening" of the 1730s • Education and culture • Political patterns
MAKERS OF AMERICA: The Scots-Irish 58

CHAPTER 6

The Duel for North America, 1608–1763 69

New France • Anglo-French colonial rivalries • The French and Indian War, 1754–1763 • The consequences of war
MAKERS OF AMERICA: The French 74

CHAPTER 7

*The Road to Revolution,
1763–1775* 79

The merits and menace of mercantilism • The Stamp Act crisis, 1765 • The Townshend Acts, 1767 • The Boston Tea Party, 1773 • The “Intolerable Acts” and the Continental Congress, 1774 • Lexington, Concord, and the gathering clouds of war, 1775

CHAPTER 8

*America Secedes from the
Empire, 1775–1783* 93

Early skirmishes, 1775 • The Declaration of Independence, 1776 • Patriots and Loyalists • The fighting fronts • The French alliance, 1778 • Yorktown, 1781 • The Peace of Paris, 1783

CHAPTER 9

*The Confederation and
the Constitution,
1776–1790* 107

Political and economic changes • The Articles of Confederation, 1781–1788 • The Constitutional Convention, 1787 • Ratifying the Constitution, 1787–1790

CHAPTER 10

*Launching the New Ship of
State, 1789–1800* 123

Washington and the new government • The Bill of Rights, 1791 • Hamilton’s economic policies • The emergence of political parties • The impact of the French Revolution • Jay’s Treaty, 1794 • President Adams keeps the peace • Federalists versus Republicans

CHAPTER 11

*The Triumph of Jeffersonian
Democracy, 1800–1809* 139

The “Revolution of 1800” • The Jefferson presidency • John Marshall and the Supreme Court • The Louisiana Purchase, 1803 • The Embargo, 1807–1809

CHAPTER 12

*James Madison and the Second
War for Independence,
1809–1815* 153

Napoleon manipulates Madison • War Hawks and the West • The invasion of Canada, 1812 • New Orleans and the Treaty of Ghent, 1814–1815 • Effects of the war

CHAPTER 13

*The Postwar Upsurge of
Nationalism, 1815–1824* 163

The tariff of 1816 • James Monroe and the Era of Good Feelings • The Panic of 1819 • The Missouri Compromise, 1820 • The Supreme Court under John Marshall • Canada and Florida • The Monroe Doctrine, 1823

CHAPTER 14

*The Rise of Jacksonian
Democracy, 1824–1830* 177

The “New Democracy” • The “corrupt bargain” of 1824 • President John Quincy Adams, 1825–1829 • The “Tariff of Abominations,” 1828 • The triumph of Andrew Jackson, 1828 • The spoils system • The Webster-Hayne debate, 1830

CHAPTER 15

Jacksonian Democracy at Flood Tide, 1830–1840 191

The South Carolina nullification crisis, 1832 • Jackson's war on the Bank of the United States • Indian removal and the Texas Revolution, 1835–1836 • The emergence of the Whig Party, 1836 • President Van Buren and the depression of 1837 • William Henry Harrison's "log cabin" campaign, 1840 • The establishment of the two-party system
 MAKERS OF AMERICA: Mexican or Texican? 198

CHAPTER 16

Forging the National Economy, 1790–1860 207

Westward migration and population growth • Irish and German immigrants • Nativism and assimilation • The coming of the factory system • The market economy and the family • The transportation revolution • The continental market economy • Overseas trade and communication
 MAKERS OF AMERICA: The Irish 210
 MAKERS OF AMERICA: The Germans 212

CHAPTER 17

The Ferment of Reform and Culture, 1790–1860 229

Women's roles and women's rights • Religious revival and reform • Educational advances • Temperance • Utopian experiments • A national literature

CHAPTER 18

The South and the Slavery Controversy, 1793–1860 245

The economy of the Cotton Kingdom • Poor whites and free blacks • The slave system and the slaves • The abolitionist crusade • Southern and northern responses to abolitionism

CHAPTER 19

Manifest Destiny and Its Legacy, 1841–1848 257

"Tyler Too" becomes President, 1841 • The annexation of Texas, 1845 • Oregon and California • The Manifest Destiny election of 1844 • War with Mexico, 1846–1848
 MAKERS OF AMERICA: The Californios 266

CHAPTER 20

Renewing the Sectional Struggle, 1848–1854 271

The political parties and slavery • The Compromise of 1850 • President Pierce and expansionism, 1853–1857 • Senator Douglas and the Kansas-Nebraska Act, 1854

CHAPTER 21

Drifting Toward Disunion, 1854–1861 283

Uncle Tom's Cabin, 1852 • The contest for Kansas • The election of James Buchanan, 1856 • The *Dred Scott* Case, 1857 • The Lincoln-Douglas Debates, 1858 • John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, 1859 • Lincoln and Republican victory, 1860 • The lower South secedes, 1860–1861

CHAPTER 22

Girding for War: The North and the South, 1861–1865 295

The attack on Fort Sumter, April 1861 • The crucial border states • The balance of forces • The diplomatic front • Lincoln and civil liberties • Confederate and Union armies • The economic impact of the war • The fate of the South

CHAPTER 23

The Furnace of Civil War, 1861–1865 307

The Battle of Bull Run, July 1861 • The Peninsula campaign, 1862 • The Union wages total war • The Battle of Antietam and the Emancipation Proclamation, 1862–1863 • Black soldiers • Gettysburg and Vicksburg, 1863 • Politics in wartime • Appomattox, 1865 • The assassination of Lincoln, 1865 • The legacy of war

CHAPTER 24

The Ordeal of Reconstruction, 1865–1877 323

The defeated South • The freed slaves • President Andrew Johnson's Reconstruction policies • Congressional Reconstruction, 1867–1877 • "Black Reconstruction" and the Ku Klux Klan • The impeachment of Andrew Johnson • The legacy of Reconstruction

Appendix

Declaration of Independence iii
 Constitution of the United States of America vi
 An American Profile: The United States and Its People xxv
 Growth of U.S. Population and Area xxv
 Characteristics of the U.S. Population xxvi
 Changing Lifestyles in the Twentieth Century xxvi
 Characteristics of the U.S. Labor Force xxvii
 Leading Economic Sectors xxvii
 Per-Capita Disposable Personal Income in Constant (1982) Dollars, 1929–1990 xxviii
 Comparative Tax Burdens xxviii
 Value of Imports by Place of Origin xxviii
 Value of U.S. Exports by Destination xxix
 Principal Exports, 1900–1990 xxix
 U.S. Foreign Trade, Ratio of Raw Materials to Manufactured Goods xxx
 Value of Exports and Imports and Status of the Balance of Trade xxx
 Tariff Levies on Dutiable Imports, 1821–1990 xxxi
 Gross National Product in Current and Constant (1982) Dollars, 1900–1990 xxxi
 Presidential Elections xxxii
 Presidents and Elected Vice-Presidents xxxv
 Ratification of the Constitution and Admission of States to the Union xxxvii
 Estimates of Total Costs and Number of Battle Deaths of Major U.S. Wars xxxvii

Index xli

Maps, Graphs, and Tables

- The United States Today xiv–xv
The First Discoverers of America 3
North American Indian Tribes at the Time of
European Colonization 5
Trade Routes with the East 8
Principal Spanish Explorations and Conquests 11
Early Maryland and Virginia 22
Early Carolina and Georgia Settlements 25
Seventeenth-Century New England
Settlements 34
Early Settlements in the Middle Colonies 41
Main Sources of African Slaves, c. 1500 to
c. 1800 45
Immigrant Groups in 1775 56
Estimated Population Elements, 1790 57
The Colonial Social Pyramid, 1775 57
Colonial Trade Patterns, c. 1770 61
Events of 1755–1760 73
North America Before 1754 75
North America After 1763 75
Quebec Before and After 1774 87
Revolution in the North, 1775–1776 95
New York and New Jersey, 1776–1777 98
New York–Pennsylvania Theater, 1777–1778 99
War in the South, 1780–1781 101
Western Land, Cessions to the United States,
1782–1802 110
Surveying the Old Northwest 112
Strengthening the Central Government 116
The Struggle over Ratification 117
Evolution of the Cabinet 124
American Posts Held by the British After
1783 130
Presidential Election of 1800 141
Exploring the Louisiana Purchase and
the West 146
The Three U.S. Thrusts of 1812 156
Campaigns of 1813 156
The Missouri Compromise and Slavery,
1820–1821 168
The West and Northwest, 1819–1824 172
Presidential Election of 1824 180
Presidential Election of 1828 182
The Removal of the Southern Tribes
to the West 195
The Texas Revolution, 1835–1836 196
Westward Movement of the Center of Population,
1790–1990 208
Irish and German Immigration by Decade 211
Railroads in Operation in 1850 224
Railroads in Operation in 1860 224
The Mormon World 232
Southern Cotton Production, 1860 246
Slaveowning Families, 1850 247
Distribution of Slaves, 1860 248
The Oregon Controversy 260
Texas, 1845–1846 264
Major Campaigns of the Mexican War 265
Compromise of 1850 274
Slavery After the Compromise of 1850 275
Gadsden Purchase, 1853 279
Presidential Election of 1860 291
Southern Opposition to Secession, 1860–1861 292
Seceding States 296
Main Thrusts, 1861–1865 308
The Battle of Gettysburg 313

The Mississippi River and Tennessee, 1862-1863	315	Military Reconstruction, 1867	331
Sherman's March, 1864-1865	316	Presidential Electoral Vote by Party	331
Presidential Election of 1864	318	Persons in United States Lynched (by race), 1882-1970	332
Principal Reconstruction Proposals and Plans	328		

New World Beginnings, 33,000 B.C.—A.D. 1769

*I have come to believe that this is a mighty continent which was hitherto unknown. . . .
Your Highnesses have an Other World here.*

Christopher Columbus, 1498

Planetary Perspectives

About six thousand years ago—only a minute ago geologically—recorded history began among certain peoples of the ancient Middle East. Just five hundred years ago the first Europeans stumbled on the American continents. This dramatic achievement opened breathtaking new vistas and forever altered the future of both the Old World and the New.

Of the numerous new republics that eventually appeared in the Americas, the most influential has been the United States. Born a pygmy, it grew to be a giant whose liberal democratic ideals, robust economy, and achievements in science, technology, and the arts shaped lives in every corner of the planet.

The American Republic was favored by nature and history from the outset. This rare opportunity for a great social and political experiment may never come again, for few fertile and relatively uninhabited areas are left in our increasingly crowded world.

Despite its marvelous development, the United States will one day reach its peak, like Greece and Rome. Its glory eventually will fade, as did theirs. But whatever uncertainties the future may hold, the past at least is secure and richly repays examination.

The Shaping of North America

Planet earth took its present form slowly. Some 225 million years ago, a single supercontinent contained all the world's dry land. Then enormous chunks of terrain began to drift away from this colossal continent, opening the Atlantic and Indian oceans, narrowing the Pacific Ocean, and forming the great masses of Eurasia, Australia, Antarctica, and the Americas.

Continued shifting and folding of the earth's crust thrust up mountain ranges. The Appalachians were probably formed even before continental separation, perhaps 350 million years ago. The majestic

A Rocky Mountain Lake Near Aspen, Colorado *The geologically young Rockies form the rugged “backbone” of the North American continent.*



ranges of western North America—the Rockies, the Sierra Nevada, the Cascades, and the Coast Range—arose much more recently, geologically speaking, some 135 million to 25 million years ago.

By about 10 million years ago, nature had sculpted the basic geological shape of North America (see map following the table of contents). The continent was anchored in its northeastern corner by the massive Canadian Shield—a zone undergirded by ancient rock, probably the first part of what became the North American landmass to have emerged above sea level. A narrow eastern coastal plain, or “tidewater,” region, creased by many valleys, sloped gently upward to the timeworn ridges of the Appalachians. These ancient mountains slanted away on their western side into the huge mid-continental basin that rolled downward to the Mississippi valley bottom and then rose relentlessly to the towering peaks of the Rockies. From the Rocky Mountain crest—the “roof of America”—the land fell off jaggedly into the intermountain Great Basin, bounded by the Rockies in the east and the Sierra and Cascade ranges in the west. The valleys of the

Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers and the Willamette-Puget Sound trough seamed the interiors of present-day California, Oregon, and Washington. The land at last met the foaming Pacific, where the Coast Range rose steeply from the sea.

Beginning about 2 million years ago, the Great Ice Age spread glaciers across much of northern Europe, Asia, and the Americas. In North America, thick ice sheets crept as far southward as a line stretching from Pennsylvania through the Ohio country and the Dakotas to the Pacific Northwest.

When the glaciers finally retreated, about 10,000 years ago, they left the North American landscape transformed and much as we know it today. The grinding and flushing action of the moving and melting ice pitted the rocky surface of the Canadian Shield with thousands of shallow depressions into which the melting glaciers flowed to form lakes. The same glacial action scooped out and filled the Great Lakes. When the Great Lakes eventually found an outlet to the Atlantic Ocean through the St. Lawrence River, they left the Missouri-Mississippi-Ohio river system to drain the enormous mid-conti-

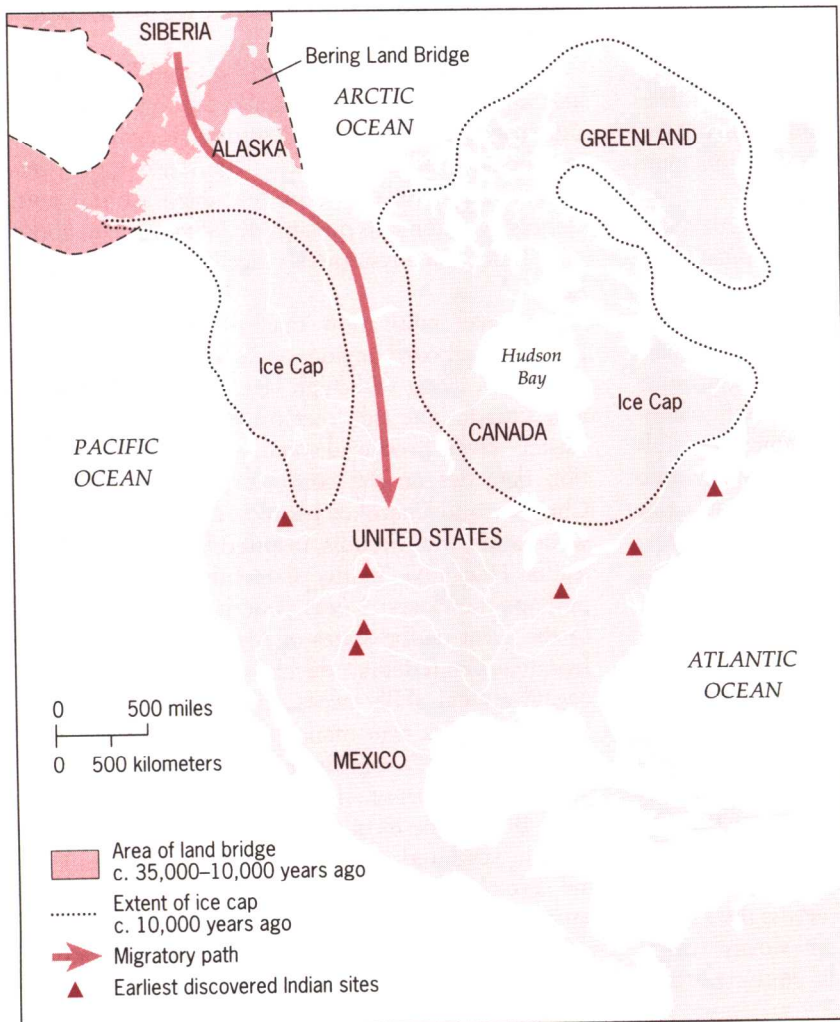
mental basin between the Appalachians and the Rockies.

In the west, water from the melting glaciers filled sprawling Lake Bonneville, covering much of present-day Utah, Nevada, and Idaho. Eventually deprived of both inflow and drainage as the glaciers retreated, the giant lake became a shrinking inland sea. Bonneville grew increasingly saline and slowly evaporated, leaving an arid, mineral-rich desert, with only the Great Salt Lake as a relic of its former vastness. Today Lake Bonneville's ancient beaches are

visible on mountainsides up to 1,000 feet above the dry floor of the Great Basin.

The First Discoverers of America

Besides shaping geological history, the Great Ice Age also accounted for the origins of North America's human history. Some 35,000 years ago, the congealing glaciers lowered the world's sea levels, exposing a land bridge between Eurasia and North America across the present-day Bering Strait. Across that



bridge ventured small bands of hunters—the first “discoverers” of America and the ancestors of the Native Americans. They continued to trek across the Eurasian isthmus for some 250 centuries, slowly peopling the American continents.

As the Ice Age ended and the glaciers melted, the sea level rose again, inundating the land bridge about 10,000 years ago. Nature thus barred the door to further immigration for many thousands of years, and this part of the human family developed its separate existence on the American continents.

Time did not stand still for these original Americans. Roaming slowly through the voiceless vastness of the awesome wilderness, they eventually reached the far tip of South America, some 15,000 miles from Siberia. By the time the Europeans arrived in 1492, perhaps 100 million persons inhabited the two American continents. Over the centuries they split into numerous tribes, with more than 2,000 separate languages and many diverse religions, cultures, and ways of life.

Incas in Peru, Mayans in Central America, and Aztecs in Mexico shaped stunningly sophisticated civilizations. Their advanced agricultural practices, based primarily on the cultivation of maize, which is Indian corn, fed large populations—perhaps as many as 25 million in Mexico alone. Though lacking such technologies as the wheel, these peoples built elaborate cities and carried on far-flung commerce. Talented mathematicians, they made strikingly accurate astronomical observations. The Aztecs also sought the favor of their gods by offering human sacrifices, sometimes cutting the hearts out of the chests of living victims.

The Earliest Americans

Agriculture accounted for the size and sophistication of the Native American civilizations in Mexico and South America. About 5000 B.C., hunter-gatherers in highland Mexico developed a wild grass into the staple of corn, which became the foundation of the large-scale, centralized Aztec and Incan nation-states. As cultivation of corn spread across the Americas from the Mexican heartland, it slowly transformed nomadic hunting bands into settled, agricultural villagers.

Corn planting reached the American Southwest by about 1200 B.C. and powerfully molded the Pueblo culture that developed there. The Pueblo peoples in the Rio Grande Valley constructed intricate irrigation systems to water their cornfields, and they built villages of terraced, multistoried buildings. Corn cultivation reached other parts of North America considerably later, and the timing of its arrival explains the relative rates of development of different Native American peoples. North and east of the Pueblos, elaborately developed “societies” in the modern sense of the word scarcely existed. The lack of dense concentrations of population or complex nation-states was among the reasons for the relative ease of the European conquest of the native North Americans.

The Mound Builders of the Ohio River Valley and the Mississippian culture of the lower Midwest did sustain some large agricultural settlements during the first millennium A.D. The Mississippian settlement at Cahokia, near present-day East St. Louis, Illinois, was home to perhaps 40,000 people in about A.D. 1100, but mysteriously declined two centuries later.

Maize cultivation reached the southeastern Atlantic seaboard region of North America about A.D. 1000, along with high-yielding strains of beans and squash. The rich diet provided by these three “sister” crops produced some of the highest population densities on the continent among the Creek, Choctaw, and Cherokee peoples. In the northeastern woodlands, the Iroquois, inspired by their legendary leader Hiawatha, in the sixteenth century created perhaps the closest North American approximation to the great nation-states of Mexico and Peru. The Iroquois Confederacy developed the political and organizational skills necessary to sustain a robust military alliance that menaced its neighbors, Native American and European alike, for well over a century (see “Makers of America,” pp. 24–25).

But for the most part, native North Americans lived in scattered and impermanent settlements on the eve of the Europeans’ arrival. They often encamped along rivers in the spring and then dispersed in small family bands for the winter’s hunting. In more settled agricultural groups, women tended the crops while men hunted, fished, gathered fuel,

and cleared fields for planting. This pattern of life frequently conferred substantial authority on women, and many Native Americans, including the Iroquois, developed matrilinear cultures in which power and possessions passed down the female side of the family.

Unlike the Europeans, who would soon arrive with the presumption that humans had dominion over the earth and the technologies to assert that dominion, Native Americans had neither the desire nor the means to manipulate nature aggressively. They revered the physical world and endowed nature with spiritual properties. Yet they did sometimes ignite massive forest fires, deliberately torching trees to create better hunting habitats, especially for deer. This practice accounted for the open, parklike appearance of the eastern woodlands that so amazed early European explorers.

But in a broad sense the Native Americans did not lay heavy hands on the continent because they were so few in number. In the fateful year 1492,

probably no more than 10 million Native Americans paddled through the whispering primeval forests and paddled across the sparkling virgin waters of North America. They were blissfully unaware that the isolation of the Americas was about to end forever, as both the land and the native peoples alike felt the full shock of the European “discovery.”

Indirect Discoverers of the New World

Europeans were equally unaware of the existence of the Americas. Blond-bearded Norse seafarers from Scandinavia had visited and briefly settled in northeastern North America, probably in Newfoundland, about A.D. 1000. But no strong nation-state, yearning to expand, supported these venturesome seafarers. Their flimsy settlements consequently were soon abandoned, and their discovery was forgotten, except in Scandinavian saga and song.

For several centuries thereafter, other restless Europeans, with the growing power of ambitious

The New World as Paradise

This sixteenth-century engraving by the Flemish artist Theodore de Bry illustrates the Indian method of hunting by setting fires to drive wild game into bow range.

