
USA

A SYNOPTIC HISTORY
OF AMERICA'S PAST



VOLUMES ONE-TWO

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A SYNOPTIC HISTORY OF AMERICA'S PAST

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El Cajon, California

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Preface

All instructors of the American history survey course have at one time or another searched for the ideal history text. Often their search ends with a weighty volume that is a veritable encyclopedia. The style is invariably dull, and student interest soon wanes. Another choice is an outline of American history that is the skeleton text; the instructor decides that his or her lectures will put the required meat on the frame. But the end result of the course is too little meat and a lot of bone. Another choice is a book with a novel approach; the novelty, however, wears off fast, and the instructor turns again to the traditional text.

Although there is no such thing as an ideal history text for either students or faculty, there is a definite need for a book that contains more than the mere essentials of American history, keeps student interest, includes material on minorities and women, and portrays the human side of history. I wrote this book to fulfill this need. My first priority was to make it short, concise, and readable. Rising inflation plus diminished student reading levels encouraged me in that direction. Although the result is more than an outline of American history, it does not profess to be an encyclopedic study. Much effort was spent in making the writing style interesting and clear, and readers, students and instructors alike, will find that this end has been accomplished.

Throughout the emphasis is on political, economic, and social history. Recent critics note that the discussion of minority and women's history has been overdone. Still, these groups have played an important role in the history of our nation, and their contributions should be included. Hence, in this text special emphasis is placed on their involvement in American history and on certain aspects of our social and cultural development that are seldom placed in proper perspective.

Some useful features add to the book's attractiveness. Each chapter begins with a *time line* that places the important events of the chapter in a chronological framework. There is a short *biography* of each president that aids in understanding that individual as a person. Finally, each chapter ends with a short *essay* that gives insight into certain topics that are usually ignored in more traditional presentations.

Instructors who look for essential names; dates and facts, the newest interpretations, maps, illustrations, and suggested readings, will find them

included. In addition, there is a detailed index, and a teachers' guide is available to accompany the text.

In summary, this book is a short, readable history of the United States that presents the story of the American people from the pre-Columbian Indians to the present. Since it appears in both a one-volume and two-volume edition, it can be used in schools with either the semester or quarter systems.

I am grateful to the members of the Community College Social Science Association who offered their opinions and suggestions during the writing of this book. Special thanks go to Wayne Anderson, his staff, and reviewers, for helping to guide the finished product. The input of my students at Grossmont College was invaluable in writing a book that would meet their needs. Finally, much deserved appreciation goes to my wife, Julie, for her support and to Robbie, Brian, and Monica for their welcome and even unwelcomed help in the hallowed space of my home office. And a quiet thank you must go to the newest Baydo, Colleen.

It is my hope that this book will find a place in many history classrooms across the country and make a genuine contribution to the study of America's history as a nation.

El Cajon, California

Gerald Baydo

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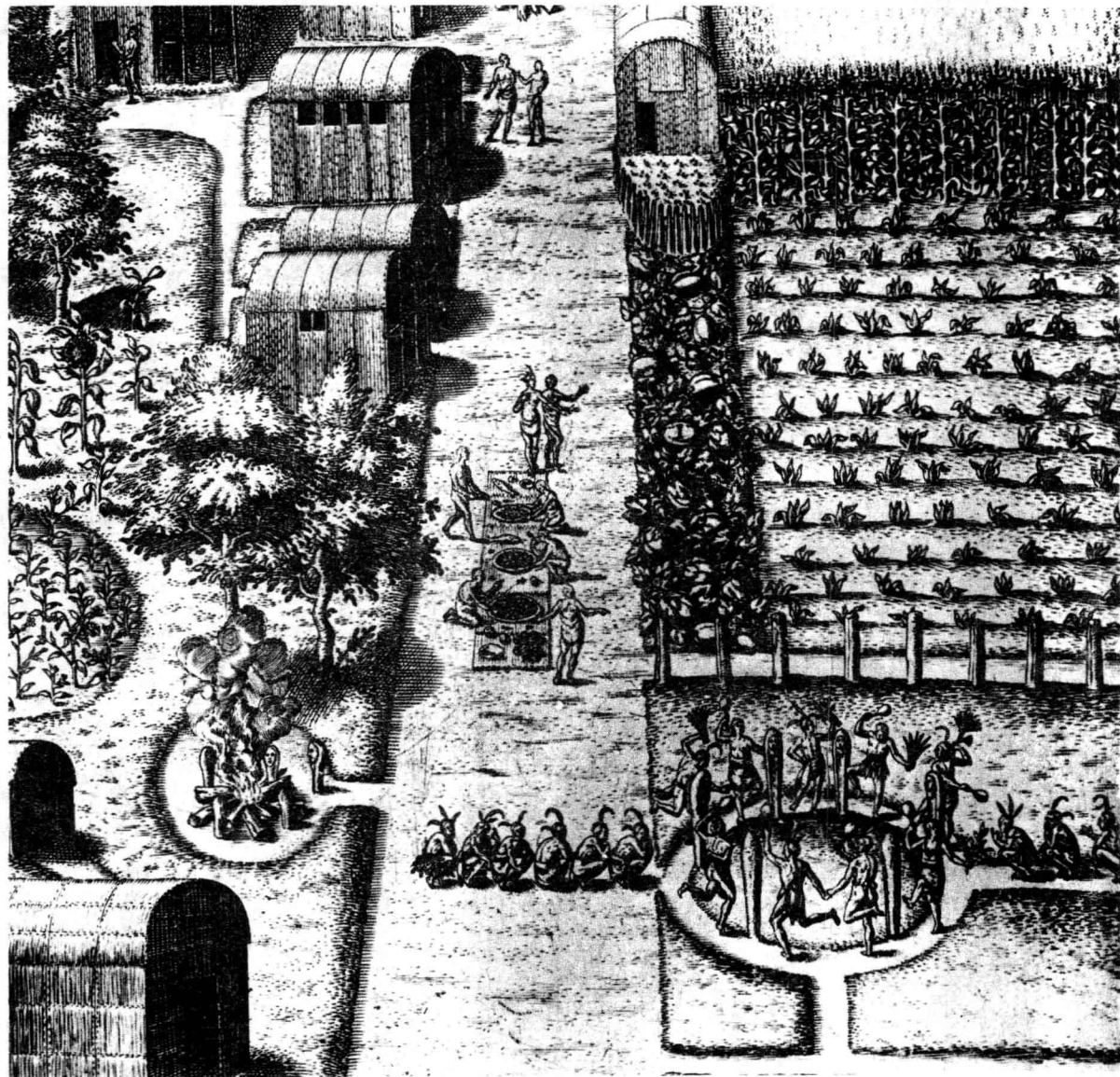
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CHAPTER 1

North America: The Indian, The European



Time Line

7-10,000 B.C.	Migration of Native Americans to North America	1776	Declaration of Independence
A.D. 1000	Leif Ericson's exploration of eastern North America	1789-1797	Presidency of George Washington
1492	Christopher Columbus lands on San Salvador in the West Indies	1812-1815	War of 1812
1492	Christopher Columbus lands on San Salvador in the West Indies	1816-1824	Era of Good Feelings
1513	Ponce De Leon "discovers" Florida	1846-1848	Mexican War
1534-1541	Jacques Cartier explores eastern Canada	1861-1865	Civil War
1540-1542	Francisco Coronado explores Southwest	1865-1877	Reconstruction
1607	First permanent English settlement at Jamestown	1877-1900	Industrialization and urbanization
1620	Pilgrims establish Plymouth Colony	1900-1916	Progressive Era
1630	Puritans found Noble Experiment at Massachusetts Bay	1917-1918	World War I
1637	Pequot War	1930s	Depression and New Deal
1675-1676	King Philip's War	1941-1945	World War II
1682	William Penn founds Quaker colony of Pennsylvania	1945-1960	Post-war politics
1732	James Oglethorpe establishes the debtors' colony of Georgia	1950-1953	Korean War
?		1950-1960	Civil rights movement
?-A.D. 1492	Migration and evolution of American Indian societies	1961-1973	Vietnam War
1492	Christopher Columbus lands in West Indies—beginning of European exploration	1976	Bicentennial celebration
1607-1732	Establishment of 13 English colonies		
1775-1783	American Revolution		

In 1492 Christopher Columbus sailed the ocean blue, no more courageous a sailor was there than he. With a tear running down his cheek, Little George Washington confessed that he had chopped down the cherry tree. After Abe Lincoln returned home through the snow, he discovered that he had been given too much money, so he charged out into the storm again to return the ill-gotten gain to the shopkeeper. The Battle of Wounded Knee in 1890 ended the resistance of the American Indian and brought an era of peace to the West. Here is the stuff that American history is made of, or is it?

For many Americans, American history is an innocuous story of heroes and heroic deeds that took place a long time ago. This tale is filled with an abundance of names, facts, and dates, but it happened in the past and has little influence today on our modern technological society. Columbus is no Neil Armstrong. George Washington and Abraham Lincoln are not as human as Jimmy Carter. The American Indian is a vanishing American.

But wait. There is much more to it than that. American history can have relevance to the present. Some writers even believe that the present is only a direct reflection of the past. American history should not be a tale told about hollow men, but about real human beings who came from Asia, Europe, and Africa and settled a vast land. It is the recreation of the evolution of a nation from its early days to its bustling present. The tale contained happiness and woe, bloodshed and conquest, greedy men and altruistic men, presidents and farmers. The story that will unfold in these pages is the story of a people who came together from the far reaches of the globe, forged a nation, mixed progress with goodness, and became one of the strongest powers in the world. Some obvious mythology and legend will appear here, too, but mythology is not bad as long as it is recognized as mythology.

One important element that frequently is forgotten is the stage on which the tale or play unfolds. This particular stage called North America is a vast continent with a wide variety of climates and terrains. As with most plays, the physical stage does much to help guide the direction of the cast.

Geography of North America

It is with North America that American history begins. Here was a land replete with natural resources—a virgin paradise. This paradise, however, was not uniform in climate or terrain, so a brief sketch of the continental United States is in order. The major geographic sections of the country include the Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Plain, Appalachian Highlands, Central Lowlands, Great

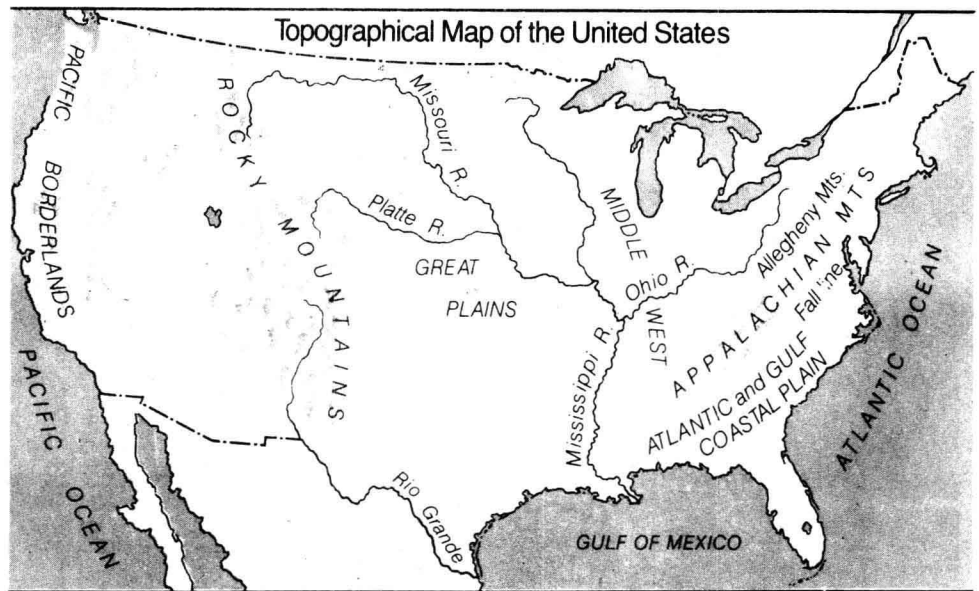
Plains, Rockies, and Pacific Borderlands. Although each of these land regions has a great deal of uniformity, the geographic variety of the continental United States appears endless.

The Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Plain, or East Coast, is the lowland bordering the Atlantic seaboard of the United States from Maine in the north to Florida in the south. This plain is extremely narrow in the north but broad in the south. Relatively short rivers and excellent deep water bays are also characteristic of this region. In the past, the narrow plain in the north accentuated the stony soil and short growing seasons. It was natural for early residents to turn to other productive pursuits such as commerce, industry, and fishing. The continental shelf—a broad, submerged plain off the northern coast—held one of the world's richest fishing grounds. In the south the broad coastal plain and fertile soil lent itself to a plantation economy. While drainage problems from the level terrain and thin soil, which was exhausted quickly, caused numerous headaches, still large farms with their dependence on a single cash crop prospered.

On the western edge of this area is the fall line where falls or rapids were created by the seaward rivers. Many early industrial cities such as Raleigh and Richmond were established near the waterpower the falls provided. Many other important cities grew up as ports along some of the excellent bays. By the time of the American Revolution nine out of every ten Americans lived along this coastal plain. Here was England's frontier in North America and the eventual foundation for an American nation.

The Appalachian Highlands run in a southwesterly direction from New England to central Georgia and include the Piedmont region east of the fall line and two mountain chains—the Appalachians and Alleghenies. Here is found a region dotted by valleys with fertile soil and possessing rich beds of coal and deposits of petroleum. Industrial cities such as Pittsburgh sprang up within the area. The Appalachian and Allegheny mountain chains traverse the length of the highlands, and the obstacle these chains presented to travel delayed migration westward by concentrating early settlers on the Atlantic plain. Eventually the colonial settlers found three trails—the Wilderness Road, the Pennsylvania Road, and the National Road—that gave them access into the Trans-Appalachian area and the Central Lowlands.

The Central Lowlands was the great interior valley of North America, known today as the Middle West. It includes an expanse of land from the Appalachian Highlands on the east to the Rocky Mountains in the west. Glaciers during the Ice Age left nearly level land, with rich soil and abundant rainfall, making it an excellent agricultural area and eventually the Corn Belt of America. Water, timber, and minerals combined to make it an industrial



center as well. The main artery of the region is the mighty Mississippi River that cuts through the interior and provides a water highway. This river, along with its important branches, the Ohio and Missouri, provided an easy form of transportation for the pioneers. This relatively flat area was quickly settled, but settlement slowed substantially at its western edge—the Great Plains.

Also called the Great American Desert, the Great Plains, a semiarid belt, was an area long considered unfit for cultivation and habitation. Over the years the view of the plains has changed little. But much of the area has been given over to wheat and corn, and even the arid high plains were brought under cultivation by a process called "dry farming." Life here, both animal and human, has been shaped by the lack of water. Found here also is the "dust bowl" region, where terrific wind storms literally remove the top soil overnight. This is the land of sodhouses, cowboys, and cattle drives—a land characterized by a deficiency in water.

The Rocky Mountains comprise the western border of the Great Plains and stretch from northern New Mexico through Canada into Alaska. In the same way that the Appalachian Highlands became a barrier to expansion in the east, the Rockies blocked further expansion in the west. But the Rockies



Overland travelers crossed the Great Plains and saw a formidable obstacle before them—the Rockies.

were a much more forbidding barrier, with their rugged terrain and majestic peaks which can rise more than 14,000 feet above sea level. Pioneers spent much time and effort getting through them. Today, interest in the Rockies centers on its mineral deposits and its vacation potential.

The Pacific Borderlands stretch from the Rockies to the Pacific Ocean. The region is a jumble of mountains, arid plateaus, and basins with well-

watered mountains and valleys. Between the Rocky Mountains and the Sierra Nevada and Cascade ranges, which extend the length of the Pacific Coast, a series of western plateaus and basins are found with extremes in temperature and few cities. Yet the natural landscape is panoramic, for example, the Grand Canyon, the Great Salt Lake, and Death Valley, the lowest point in the United States, 280 feet below sea level. Protected from the harsh inland environment by the Sierra Nevadas and Cascades, a series of broad coastal plains and valleys border the Pacific Coast. Here were built the important cities of the Far West. Due to its location, the Pacific Borderlands is frequently looked upon as the last frontier, as well as the land of golden opportunity. This vision of the Far West as utopia is only slowly changing.

Origins of the American Indian

It was to this land of environmental variety that the first humans came. But they were not of English origin, Spanish, or French; they were ancestors of the peoples that we today call American Indians.

Relatively little is known of the early people who were the real discoverers of America. There is, of course, little doubt that the first humans to reach America were not Norse or Italian. But how and when they got to America is one of history's puzzles that may never be solved. It is generally agreed that the first Americans came from northeast Asia and entered the New World in the general area of Alaska. Yet the oldest remains of humanity in the New World have not been found in Alaska but in California. This "La Jolla Man" resides in a museum in San Diego and has been dated to a period around 50,000 years ago. Recent archaeological finds have pushed back the date of early human life in America even further.

The most popular answer to how the ancients came to the Americas is by way of land. From 40,000 to 10,000 B.C. a land bridge existed between Asia and Alaska. It appeared when the glaciers of the last Ice Age were at their peak which caused the level of the Bering Sea to lower more than 300 feet. It was across this land bridge, which may have measured more than 1000 miles wide, that the Asian hunters traveled in search of food. One of the newer theories concerning these migrations is that the land bridge was not open during the entire 30,000 year period but only accessible to foot traffic twice: once from about 32,000 to 36,000 years ago, and again from about 13,000 to 28,000 years ago. Another problem complicating travel was that, at the time the land bridge was open, much of North America was ice-covered. It is still not certain

whether the peopling of North America stemmed from a single migration or from successive waves of immigrants over a long period, but generally it is agreed that all land travel ended between 10,000 and 9000 B.C..

The end of land travel does not mean that all migrations came to an end; there are theories about other migrations. It is plausible that a Japanese or Chinese fishing craft, or even a Polynesian outrigger canoe, may have drifted across the Pacific to the New World. Some believe that Asians continued to come by way of an island-hopping process or along the Japanese Current from the east. The Norwegian Thor Heyerdahl, in particular, has attempted to prove the migration of peoples from the Pacific and even from Egypt. His raft *Kon-Tiki* successfully sailed across the Pacific from South America to show that Indians could have reached the islands of Polynesia. His voyage of *Ra II* across the Atlantic tried to explain the numerous cultural parallels between Egypt and Central America by linking them through ancient sea travel.

Due to the imagination of man, there have been other legends or popular beliefs about these Native Americans (the name "Indians" was given them by Columbus, who believed he had reached the Indies). Some of the earlier beliefs were really no more wild than some of the most recent. In 1512 the Pope declared officially that the New World Indians were true descendents of Adam and Eve and had come originally from the Garden of Eden. The biblical interpretation of the origins of the American Indians has been an intriguing one. According to one Christian theory Indians were aboard Noah's Ark, while according to the Book of Mormon the Indians are descended from the Lamanites, who it describes as a degenerate element of the Jews that migrated to the New World prior to the Christian era. American Indians have also been linked to many other races—Egyptian, Chinese, Phoenician, Greek, Roman, Welsh, Danish, and even Trojan. Viscount Kingsborough, a nineteenth-century Irish nobleman, spent many years and a fortune trying to prove that the Mayas of Middle America had descended from one of the Lost Tribes of Israel. Other investigators have insisted that the Indians came to the Western Hemisphere via the supposedly Lost Continents of Atlantis in the Atlantic Ocean or Mu in the Pacific, making their way across from the old World safely before the continents sank beneath the oceans. An even more sensational theory contends that Indians were either inhabitants of space ships who landed here or were visited themselves by travelers from beyond the earth. Such speculation will continue as long as there is mystery concerning the Indians' arrival in North America.

Present Native Americans, however, spend little time pondering their origins. Their own oral traditions indicate that they were created here as the offspring of nature.