

*A Merriam-Webster*



Webster's  
Guide To  
American  
History

# WEBSTER'S GUIDE TO AMERICAN HISTORY

A CHRONOLOGICAL, GEOGRAPHICAL, AND BIOGRAPHICAL  
SURVEY AND COMPENDIUM



*A Merriam-Webster*  
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*Continued after the Index—*

## PREFACE

A work of this size and scope is necessarily the product of many minds and hands. It is a pleasure to acknowledge the help of the following persons and institutions.

We are indebted to Carolyn Amundson, Martha Mackey, Cynthia Peterson, David Ross-Robertson, and Richard Thompson for their work on the design of the book, and for their ingenuity in finding, identifying, and laying out the many pictures and the other illustrative material in the volume.

We are grateful to Patty Mote, Richard O'Connor, Karen Padderud, and Celia Wittenber for assistance provided in the production process. Janet L. Warner was active in the creation of the index.

We owe a major debt of gratitude to Andrew Ross and Glila Sharp for research on the biographies. These were first written by the editors and then checked by Mrs. Sharp and Mr. Ross against all of the available reference sources. The editors hope that the biographies contain no errors, but they do not really expect that this will turn out to be so, particularly since, in a surprisingly large number of cases, the principal sources disagree even on such apparently simple matters as birth and death dates. Every effort has been made, however, to make the biographies as accurate and dependable as possible.

We are grateful to Helen Hanson for her capable work in obtaining permission to reprint various copyrighted materials. Acknowledgements for such use appear in the customary place in the volume.

We are particularly grateful to Otto Bird, Joseph Epstein, Clifton Fadiman, and John Van Doren for advice on the biographical subjects that should be included. The editors admit, however, that they did not always take that advice, and so the choice of subjects must finally be laid at their door.

We are grateful to several Chicago institutions and to their staffs—notably the Chicago Public Library, the library of McCormick Seminary, and the library of the University of Chicago—for their cooperation in allowing us to reproduce materials and in providing access to their research facilities.

Finally, we wish to point out that certain materials in this book are adapted from *The Annals of America* (20 volumes, 1969). These materials include the major portion of the chronologies as well as many maps.

# INTRODUCTION

by John William Ward

The root meaning of the word “refer,” if one refers to that basic reference book, a good dictionary, is to bear or carry something back. *Webster’s Guide to American History* is a one-volume reference book on American history. Its aim is to carry essential information back from the past and make it readily available to anyone interested in American history. The word “essential” begs a large question, of course. How great a burden can a single volume carry? The design of the *Guide* embodies the attempt to answer that important question.

*Webster’s Guide to American History* is divided into three main parts. Part I is a detailed and illustrated chronology of American history from the discovery of the new world by Columbus to the end of the 1960s. The elementary task that confronts anyone interested in the past is to know when something happened, the chronology or sequence of events. The discrete fact, however, has meaning not only in relation to other events which happened at the same time but also in relation to other events of the same kind over time. Part II is a series of maps and tables that provide in visual and tabular form a ready review of the sequence of events in a common category, ranging from the routes of the earliest explorers to popular tastes in reading. Finally, there are the individual human beings who are the bearers of the meaning of the past. Part III consists of the biographies of 1035 notable Americans. The index allows the reader to move between these three major parts.

Part I, the detailed, illustrated chronology, consists of the sequence of significant moments and events in our history from the time of the Discovery. Within a single year, events are described in the order of occurrence; where the specific day and month are known they are noted. Certain events—for example, the publication of a famous book—can be known only by year, and appear at the end of the chronology for the year of their occurrence; other events—for example, a war—extend over a number of years and when that is the case it is clearly indicated.

A special feature of Part I makes it unique among the many chronologies of American history that are in print. A glance at the pages of Part I will show that in parallel columns, alongside the chronology of events, appear quotations from the primary documents of the past that bear upon one or more of the particular events noted on the page. The quotations, each chosen for its connection with an event in American history, number about a thousand. They provide, at one level, a handy collection of great American quotations. Further, the words of contemporaries help to bring to life the reality of a bare notation in the chronology. Most important, they remind anyone who uses the chronology that the meaning of an event lies in the minds of men and women who experience it and that history is more than names and dates. The editors hope that the relevant quotations will be provocative and encourage anyone who uses the chronology to want to dig further into the sources of the American past and not to rest content with the mere facts.

Part II consists of a collection of maps and tables that provide the kind of information that can be presented best in visual and tabular form. As the Table of Contents indicates, Part II is divided into chronological and topical sections or chapters. Chapters 1 through 8 are organized around the conventional periods of American history from the “Exploration of the New World” to the period of “International Conflict 1946-1970.” Chapters 9 through 14 present statistical tables

and charts on topics from "Population" to "Natural Resources" and "The City." Chapter 15, "Additional Information," is itself a compendium of information ranging from "Presidents and Presidential Candidates" to popular songs and movies and best selling books.

It is fair to say that Part II offered the greatest challenge to the editors. What maps and what data would a modern student of American history most wish to have? The answer to that question depends finally on what questions are asked of the past. The questions will determine what is important and not important. *The Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1957*, published by the Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., the best single source on its subject, runs to 789 finely printed pages, and is itself an "abstract" of historical statistics. Similarly, C. O. Paullin's *Atlas of the Historical Geography of the United States* (Washington, 1932), the best single collection of maps, but long out of print, will suggest to a student who is lucky enough to put his hands on a copy the immense number of maps one might include in a guide to the study of the past.

The editors of *Webster's Guide*, in other words, had to pick and choose. It seemed sensible to do two things: first, provide maps for traditional historical periods; second, provide tables for the information one considers "standard," the kind of information one expects to have at hand in a basic reference work. Yet, having said that, one must also say that the potential for the imaginative inquirer is perhaps greatest in Part II. To move from the titles of popular books and songs to who was the President and what was taking place in population shifts and the productive power of the United States is to start to raise fascinating and important questions about aspects of our social history that are not immediately evident in the neat and ordered information there on the page. Again, the editors hope that *Webster's Guide* will lead the student on a quest for more knowledge and greater understanding.

Part III, Biographies, is exactly what its title says. In alphabetical order, from Francis E. Abbott to Vladimir Zworykin, biographies of 1035 notable Americans—1008 as main entries, 27 covered within the body of biographies of others—are included. Even with so large a number, considerably more than in any other single-volume reference work on American history, selectivity again was necessary. Everyone has some favorite, unsung hero from out of our past who he feels must be included among "notable" Americans, but not everyone will agree on what "notable" means. Even a work in many volumes like the *Dictionary of American Biography*, the basic biographical reference for American history, faces the problem of defining what criteria to establish for inclusion or exclusion, but the problem becomes crucial when one wishes to settle upon a thousand or so historically significant persons. The editors followed two broad criteria: first, if a person filled an important office, for example, President of the United States, he was automatically included; second, a much more relative and subjective criterion, the editors asked themselves what subjects one might, in the 1970s, wish to look up. In other words, the editors bore in mind that the importance of the past is related to the concerns of the present and tried to make their list of 1035 reflect that fact.

A special word about the Index is in order. For a reference work like *Webster's Guide*, a good index is crucial, and the editors believe the lengthy, cross-referenced Index meets the test. The Index, in one sense, ties the entire *Guide* together. It will lead the reader to all three parts of the *Guide*. For example, George Washington is not only the subject of a biographical entry, but he appears in the biographies of other Americans, is the author of some of the contemporary quotations and receives mention in others, and is included in various tables and even mentioned on some maps. The Index captures all the many allusions to Washington and makes them

readily available to the reader who wishes to pursue them all. The same is true for each and every subject and event in the *Guide*. Thus the Index should make it an eminently usable book.

There is one element in the study of the past that does not have a place in *Webster's Guide*, that is, reference to the secondary literature and the interpretation of the past by historians. The aim of the *Guide* is to provide in concise and usable form essential information about the American past in a single volume. The editors recognize that the meaning of that information becomes finally a matter of scholarly interpretation, but they do not believe that a basic reference work can or should go beyond the limits of basic information. Also, there are a number of books and pamphlets readily available for the student who wishes to explore interpretations of American history by American historians. A comprehensive and useful guide to the literature on American history since the Discovery, aimed at the general reader and the beginning student, is Oscar Handlin, et al., *Harvard Guide to American History* (Cambridge, 1955); it includes a chapter, "Aids to Historical Research," which leads to more specialized bibliographies. Under the auspices of the American Historical Association, the Service Center for Teachers of History publishes bibliographic and interpretive pamphlets on major problems and periods that maintain uniformly high standards; a list of titles is available free from the Center, and individual pamphlets may be ordered directly from the Center (400 A Street, S.E., Washington, D.C., 20003). The Library of Congress has published a classified and annotated guide that is useful for recent scholarship, *A Guide to the Study of the United States of America: Representative Books Reflecting the Development of American Life and Thought*; it may be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 20005.

Finally, the test of the worth of *Webster's Guide to American History* will lie in its use, not in what those who made it think of it. The editors, aware that the *Guide* might still be improved, are confident that it is a good and useful book. But the reader must be the final judge of that.

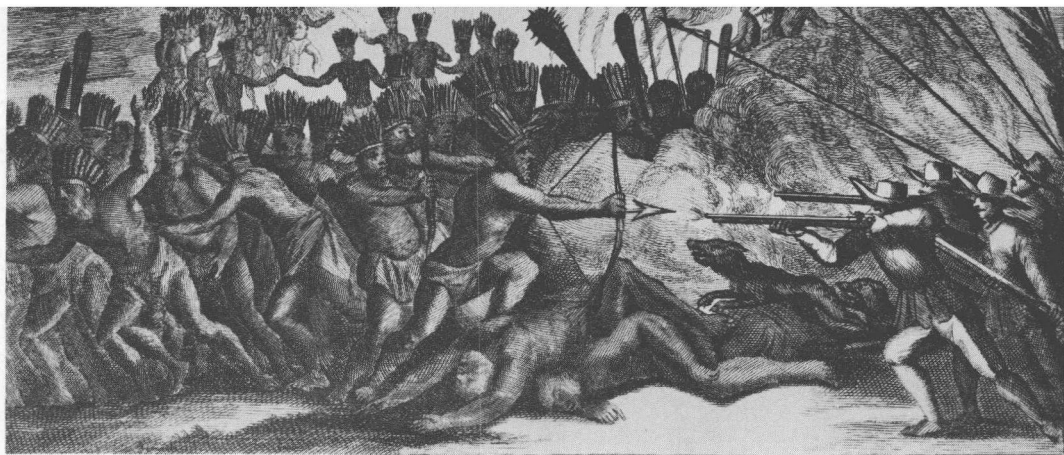
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# PART I

## Chronology



Fighting Indians in Florida, from Montanus' "New World," 1671

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS  
Letter to Sanchez, 1493

*I have decided upon writing you this letter to acquaint you with all the events which have occurred in my voyage, and the discoveries which have resulted from it. Thirty-three days after my departure from [Comera] I reached the Indian Sea, where I discovered many islands, thickly peopled, of which I took possession without resistance in the name of our most illustrious monarch, by public proclamation and with unfurled banners. To the first of these islands, which is called by the Indians Guanahani, I gave the name of the blessed Savior (San Salvador), relying upon whose protection I had reached this as well as the other islands; to each of these I also gave a name, ordering that one should be called Santa Maria de la Concepcion, another Fernandina, the third Isabella, the fourth Juana [Cuba], and so with all the rest. . . .*

*As soon as we arrived at that, which as I have said was named Juana, I proceeded along its coast a short distance westward and found it to be so large and apparently without termination that I could not suppose it to be an island, but the continental province of Cathay. . . .*

*In the meantime I had learned from some Indians whom I had seized that*

## 1492

**Oct. 12.** Christopher Columbus makes first discovery of America that leads to permanent European settlement. The Bahama Islands are sighted on the first of four voyages (1492-1504) sponsored by the Spanish Crown in search of a western route to Asia. Columbus believes various Caribbean Islands and parts of Central and South America he discovers are outlying regions of Asia, but others are convinced that a New World exists. First settlement is La Navidad on island of Santo Domingo. It is found destroyed on second voyage in 1496, when city of Santo Domingo is founded.

## 1493

**May 3-4.** Pope Alexander VI settles dispute between Spain and Portugal by allocating to Spanish monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella exclusive rights to all lands not under Christian rule west of a line drawn north and south 100 leagues west of the Azores, called the Line of Demarcation. Portuguese claims to lands east of this line are recognized as valid.

## 1494

**June 7.** Treaty of Tordesillas is signed by Spain and Portugal. Terms of treaty move Line of Demarcation westward to 370 leagues west of Cape Verde Islands, placing Brazil in Portuguese zone. Supposition is

that Portuguese had already discovered Brazil and that Spain did not know of it.

## 1496

Spanish introduce growing of sugar cane, cotton, and cattle in Santo Domingo, which proves also a source of gold, exported at a rate of \$1 million a year by 1512.

## 1497

May 2-Aug. 6. John Cabot, Venetian resident of England, explores Newfoundland coast for Henry VII in further search of Asia. In 1498, subsequent voyage by Cabot in search of Japan and the Spice Islands reaches Delaware.

## 1501

May 13. Amerigo Vespucci begins second voyage to South America. Letter by Vespucci to his former patron asserts that not Asia but a New World has been found.

## 1507

Martin Waldseemüller, mapmaker, suggests that newly found land be called America after Amerigo Vespucci.

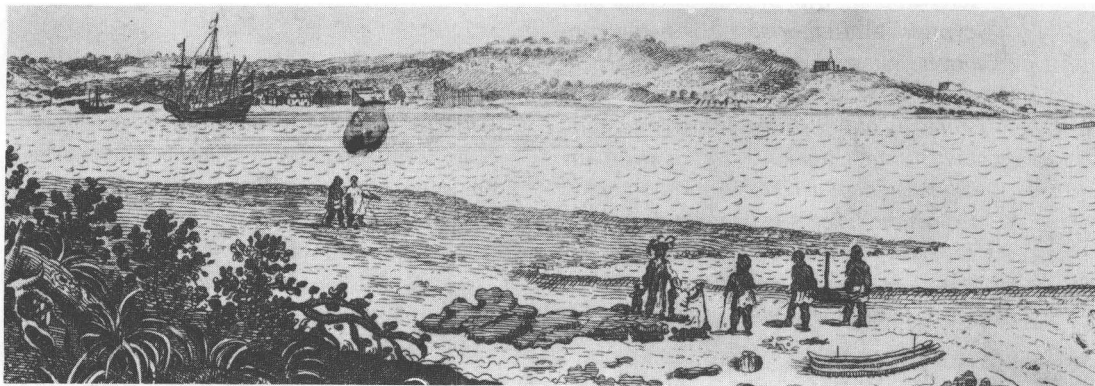
## 1508 - 1511

Spanish conquest of Caribbean Islands, including Puerto Rico, Jamaica, and Cuba.

*that country was certainly an island, and therefore I sailed toward the east, coasting to the distance of 322 miles, which brought us to the extremity of it; from this point I saw lying eastward another island, 54 miles distant from Juana, to which I gave the name of Española [Hispaniola]. I went thither and steered my course eastward as I had done at Juana, even to the distance of 564 miles along the north coast. . . .*

*Finally, to compress into few words the entire summary of my voyage and speedy return and of the advantages derivable therefrom, I promise, that with a little assistance afforded me by our most invincible sovereigns, I will procure them as much gold as they need, as great a quantity of spices, of cotton, and of mastic (which is only found in Chios), and as many men for the service of the navy as Their Majesties may require. I promise also rhubarb and other sorts of drugs, which I am persuaded the men whom I have left in the aforesaid fortress have found already and will continue to find; for I myself have tarried nowhere longer than I was compelled to do by the winds, except in the city of Navidad, while I provided for the building of the fortress and took the necessary precautions for the perfect security of the men I left there.*

View of the Spanish settlement at St. Augustine in the late 1500s





Montezuma, last Aztec emperor of Mexico

JOHN SPARKE

*Principal Navigations, etc.*, 1589

*The Floridians, when they travel, have a kind of herb dried [tobacco], which, with a cane and an earthen cup in the end, with fire, and the dried herbs put together, do suck through the cane the smoke thereof, which smoke satisfies their hunger; and therewith they live four or five days without meat or drink; and this all the Frenchmen used for this purpose. Yet do they hold opinion withal, that it causes water and phlegm to void from their stomachs.*

*The commodities of this land are more than are yet known to any man; for besides the land itself whereof there is more than any king Christian is able to inhabit, it flourishes with meadow, pasture ground, with woods of cedar and cypress, and other sorts, as better cannot be in the world. They have for apothecary herbs, trees, roots, and gum, great store, as liquid storax, turpentine, gum, myrrh, and frankincense, with many others, whereof I know not the names. Colors, both red, black, yellow, and russet, very perfect, wherewith they paint their bodies, and deer skins which they wear about them, that with water it nei-*

## 1513

**March 3.** Juan Ponce de León, sailing from Puerto Rico, explores coast of Florida.

Vasco Núñez de Balboa discovers Pacific Ocean at Panama, thus proving that Columbus was wrong in thinking he had reached Asia and confirming the opinion of Vespucci and others that lands were in the Western Hemisphere.

## 1519

**March.** Hernando Cortés leads expedition into Mexico. By August, 1521, he has crushed all resistance, established Spanish power in Central America, and secured treasure of the Aztecs.

**September.** Ferdinand Magellan, a Portuguese sailing for Spain, begins attempt to circumnavigate the globe. His ships sail down South American coast and into the Pacific through strait now named for him. Magellan is killed in Philippines, but one of his ships reaches Spain.

## 1523 - 1524

**December.** French-sponsored expedition sails to North America with Giovanni de Verrazano as pilot; explores coast from Carolina to Nova Scotia; enters New York harbor and discovers the Hudson River.

## 1527

**June 10.** Beginning of first exploration sponsored by the English Crown: the *Mary Guildford* explores the North American coast from Labrador to Florida and reaches the West Indies.

## 1534

**April 20.** Jacques Cartier begins first of

three voyages (1534-1542) during which he explores the St. Lawrence River for France. He takes back to France a cargo of worthless iron pyrites (fool's gold). All attempts to found a colony at Quebec fail until the seventeenth century.

## 1539 - 1542

May 28, 1539. Hernando de Soto, for Spain, lands in Florida, explores the interior of North America. May, 1541. De Soto reaches and crosses the Mississippi River; he travels west to Oklahoma, returns and dies at the Mississippi in 1542. During same period, Francisco Vázquez de Coronado, starting from Mexico, explores region west of the Mississippi and north of Mexico as far as Kansas. Other expeditions claim the California coast for Spain, but there are no permanent Spanish settlements until the eighteenth century.

## 1562 - 1586

Struggle between France and Spain for control of Florida and route of Spanish treasure ships. 1564. French Huguenots settle on St. Johns River at Fort Caroline. Sept. 20, 1565. Defenders of settlement massacred by Spanish forces and name is changed to San Mateo. 1565-67. Spanish found St. Augustine and other Florida settlements. 1568. Spanish occupants of San Mateo massacred by French with help of Indians. Further destruction of settlements continues to 1581, intermixed with Indian hostilities. June-July 1586. St. Augustine burned by Sir Francis Drake, English explorer and privateer.

## 1564

Beginning of permanent Spanish occupation of the Philippine Islands begins after landing of expedition led by Miguel López de Legazpi.

*ther fades away, nor alters color.*

*Gold and silver they want not; for at the Frenchmen first coming thither, they had the same offered them for little or nothing, for they received for a hatchet two pound weight of gold, because they knew not the estimation thereof. But the soldiers, being greedy of the same, did take it from them, giving them nothing for it; the which, they perceiving, that both the Frenchmen did greatly esteem it and also did rigorously deal with them, at last would not be known they had any more, neither dared they wear the same for fear of being taken away; so that saving at their first coming, they could get none of them. . . .*

*The Floridians have pieces of unicorns' horns, which they wear about their necks, whereof the Frenchmen obtained many pieces. Of those unicorns they have many, for that they do affirm it to be a beast with one horn, which coming to the river to drink, puts the same into the water before she drinks. . . .*

*Of beasts in this country, besides deer, foxes, hares, polecats, cunnies [rabbits], ownces [lynx], leopards, I am not able certainly to say; but it is thought that there are lions and tigers as well as unicorns, lions especially, if it be true that it is said of the enmity between them and the unicorns. . . . And seeing I have made mention of the beasts of this country, it shall not be from my purpose to speak also of the venomous beasts, as crocodiles, whereof there is a great abundance; adders of great bigness, whereof our men killed some of a yard and a half long. . . . On these adders the Frenchmen did feed to no little admiration of us, and affirmed the same to be a delicate meat. And [their] captain . . . saw also a serpent with three heads and four feet, of the bigness of a great spaniel, which for want of a harquebus he dared not attempt to slay.*

Reasons for Founding Colonies, London, 1607

*That realm is more complete and wealthy which either has the sufficiency to serve itself, or can find the means to export its natural commodities, than if it has occasion necessarily to import, for, consequently, it must ensue that by public consent a colony transported into a good and plentiful climate able to furnish our wants, our moneys, and wares, that now run into the hands of our adversaries or cold friends, shall pass unto our friends and natural kinsmen and from them likewise we shall receive such things as shall be most available to our necessities. This intercourse of trade may rather be called a homebred traffic than a foreign exchange. . . .*

*The want of our fresh and present supply of our discoveries has in a manner taken away the title which the law of nations gives us unto the coast first found out by our industry, forasmuch as whatsoever a man relinquishes may be claimed by the next finder as his own property. Neither is it sufficient to set foot in a country but to possess and hold it, in defense of an invading force (for want whereof) the king of Denmark intends to a northwest voyage (as it is reported). It is also reported that the French intend to inhabit Virginia, which they may safely achieve if their second voyage proves strong and there does not languish for want of sufficient and timely supplies, which cannot be had but by the means of a large contribution.*

## 1576 - 1606

Eight English expeditions search for a Northwest Passage to Asia, some reaching Hudson Bay and Baffin Bay.

## 1578 - 1583

Queen Elizabeth grants patent to Sir Humphrey Gilbert for discovery and colonization in North America. Gilbert dies during second voyage when his ship sinks on the way home.

## 1581

Spain's conquest of Portugal extends to overseas possessions when Spain under Philip II claims dominion over entire non-European world.

## 1585 - 1590

July 27, 1585. Sir Walter Raleigh, granted a renewal of the patent of his half-brother, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, attempts to found English colony on Roanoke Island in what he calls "Virginia." 1586. First settlers abandon colony. 1587. Another group, including 17 women, lands on Roanoke Island. Aug. 18. Virginia Dare born there, first English child born in North America. Governor John White goes to England for supplies, is delayed; on return in 1590 finds entire colony gone without a trace.

## 1585 - 1604

Spain's war against England and France begins long decline of Spanish Empire. Series of treaties from 1604 to 1701 forces Spanish acceptance of English and French rights in New World.

## 1598

Spanish settlement of the Southwest be-

gins in New Mexico; Santa Fe is founded in 1609.

## 1603 - 1615

1603. Samuel de Champlain of France explores St. Lawrence River on the first of eleven voyages. 1604. Port Royal, Nova Scotia, is founded. 1608. Champlain founds Quebec. Further exploration of Canada by Champlain creates a fur-trade route extending as far as Georgian Bay. French and Huron attacks on Iroquois "Five Nations" (later six) drive these powerful tribes eventually to ally themselves with the British.

## 1606

Merchants of London and Plymouth form two joint-stock companies and receive crown patents for the settlement of "Virginia." The London, or South Virginia, Company is given rights to settle an area now between Washington, D. C., and New York City; the Plymouth, or North Virginia, Company to settle New England, but neither may settle within 100 miles of the other.

## 1607 - 1610

1607. Jamestown Colony, sponsored by the London Company, established at head of James River, Virginia. 1610. This first successful English colony, held together through the efforts of Captain John Smith, is increased by 400 new settlers under Thomas West, Lord Delaware (De La Warr).

## 1608

Captain John Smith publishes *A True Relation of Occurrences in Virginia*. This and other writings by the adventurer, explorer, pioneer of the Jamestown colony are influential in promoting colonial settlement.

JOHN SMITH

Generall Historie of Virginia, 1624

*As for corn provision and contribution from the savages, we had nothing but mortal wounds, with clubs and arrows. As for our hogs, hens, goats, sheep, horses, or what lived, our commanders, officers, and savages daily consumed them; some small proportions sometimes we tasted, till all was devoured. Then swords, arms, pieces, or anything we traded with the savages, whose cruel fingers were so oft imbrued in our blood, that what by their cruelty, our governor's indiscretion, and the loss of our ships, of 500 within six months after Captain Smith's departure there remained not past 60 men, women, and children —most miserable and poor creatures. And those were preserved for the most part by roots, herbs, acorns, walnuts, berries, now and then a little fish. They that had starch in these extremities made no small use of it; yea, even the very skins of our horses.*

*Nay, so great was our famine that a savage we slew and buried, the poorer sort took him up again and ate him; and so did diverse one another boiled and stewed with roots and herbs. And one among the rest did kill his wife, powdered [salted] her, and had eaten part of her before it was known; for which he was executed, as he well deserved. Now, whether she was better roasted, boiled, or carbonadoed [broiled], I know not; but of such a dish as powdered wife I never heard.*

*This was that time, which still to this day, we called the starving time.*

ANDREW MARVELL

Bermudas, c. 1655

*Where the remote Bermudas ride  
In the ocean's bosom unespied,  
From a small boat that rowed along,  
The listening winds received this song:  
"What should we do but sing His praise,  
That led us through the watery maze,  
Unto an isle so long unknown,  
And yet far kinder than our own?  
Where He the huge sea monsters wracks,  
That lift the deep upon their backs,  
He lands us on a grassy stage,  
Safe from the storms, and prelate's rage.  
He gave us this eternal spring,  
Which here enamels everything,  
And sends the fowls to us in care,  
On daily visits through the air;  
He hangs in shades the orange bright,  
Like golden lamps in a green night,  
And does in the pomegranates close  
Jewels more rich than Ormus shows;  
He makes the figs our mouths to meet,  
And throws the melons at our feet;  
But apples plants of such a price,  
No tree could ever bear them twice;  
With cedars chosen by His hand,  
From Lebanon, He stores the land,  
And makes the hollow seas, that roar,  
Proclaim the ambergris on shore.  
He cast (of which we rather boast)  
The gospel's pearl upon our coast,  
And in these rocks for us did frame  
A temple where to sound His name.  
Oh! let our voice His praise exalt,  
Till it arrive at heaven's vault,  
Which, thence perhaps rebounding, may  
Echo beyond the Mexique Bay."  
Thus sung they, in the English boat,  
An holy and a cheerful note;  
And all the way, to guide their chime,  
With falling oars they kept the time.*

## 1609

Henry Hudson, Englishman employed by the Dutch East India Company, explores Hudson River to Albany; explorations lead to establishment of Fort Orange (Albany, 1624) and a fur-trading post on Manhattan Island (1625).

Church of England established by law in Virginia but in no other colony until 1693.

First cultivation of maize (corn) by white colonists in Virginia at insistence of Captain John Smith on the necessity for farming.

## 1612

Bermuda settled by the English, who establish themselves also on other West Indian islands; population 20,000 by 1640. Tobacco growing is introduced in Virginia around this time.

## 1613

French settlements around the Bay of Fundy are destroyed by English raiders commanded by Captain Samuel Argall.

## 1615

Four Récollect (Franciscan) friars arrive in Quebec, the beginning of French missionary activity in Canada. First Jesuits arrive in 1625.

## 1616

Captain John Smith publishes *A Description of New England* after exploring New England coast, thus establishing the name for that part of North America.

## 1618

Headrights instituted in Virginia; persons



immigrating with their families and persons paying an immigrating worker's passage are granted 50 acres of land per head for workers brought to Virginia. This arrangement becomes basis of land tenure in all southern colonies, attracting settlers uninterested in sharecropping larger Virginia grants called "hundreds." New England uses different form of settlement, by communities; groups receive land grants from the legislature; these grants are then formed into townships.

## 1619

**July-August.** General Assembly of Virginia, first colonial legislature in the New World, meets for first time; English common law is introduced into the colony.

**August.** Twenty Negroes, the first brought to America, come to Jamestown, Virginia, as indentured servants, same status as many white immigrants. Chattel slavery is not legally recognized until after 1650.

## 1619 - 1624

Struggle for control of Virginia Company. Capable but conservative merchant-governor, Sir Thomas Smith, is replaced by Sir Edwin Sandys on motion of small stockholders. Sandys' well-meant efforts to increase colony's prosperity strain its resources and lead to dissolution of the Company by James I, who revokes charter. **May 24, 1624.** Virginia becomes a Royal Colony.

## 1620

**Sept. 16.** Separatist "Pilgrims," chartered by Virginia Company to settle in Virginia, sail from Plymouth, England in *Mayflower*. Pilgrims are called Separatists because they repudiate liturgy and Episcopal organization of Church of England, practise "congrega-

JOHN PORY

Proceedings of the First Assembly of Virginia, 1619

*The most convenient place we could find to sit in was the choir of the church, where Sir George Yeardley, the governor, being set down in his accustomed place, those of the Council of Estate sat next him on both hands, except only the secretary, then appointed speaker, who sat right before him. John Twine, clerk of the General Assembly, being placed next the speaker, and Thomas Pierse, the sergeant, standing at the bar to be ready for any service the Assembly should command him. . . .*

*Prayer being ended, to the intent that as we had begun at God Almighty so we might proceed w[ith] awful and due respect toward his lieutenant, our most gracious and dread sovereign, all the burgesses were entreated to retire themselves into the body of the church; which being done, before they were fully admitted, they were called in order and by name, and so every man (none staggering at it) took the oath of supremacy, and then entered the Assembly. . . .*

*And whereas the speaker had propounded four several objects for the Assembly to consider on; namely, first the Great Charter of orders, laws, and privileges; second, which of the instructions given by the Council in England to My Lord La Warre, Captain Argall, or Sir George Yeardley might conveniently put on the habit of laws; third, what laws might issue out of the private concept of any of the burgesses or any other of the colony; and, lastly, what petitions were fit to be sent home for England.*