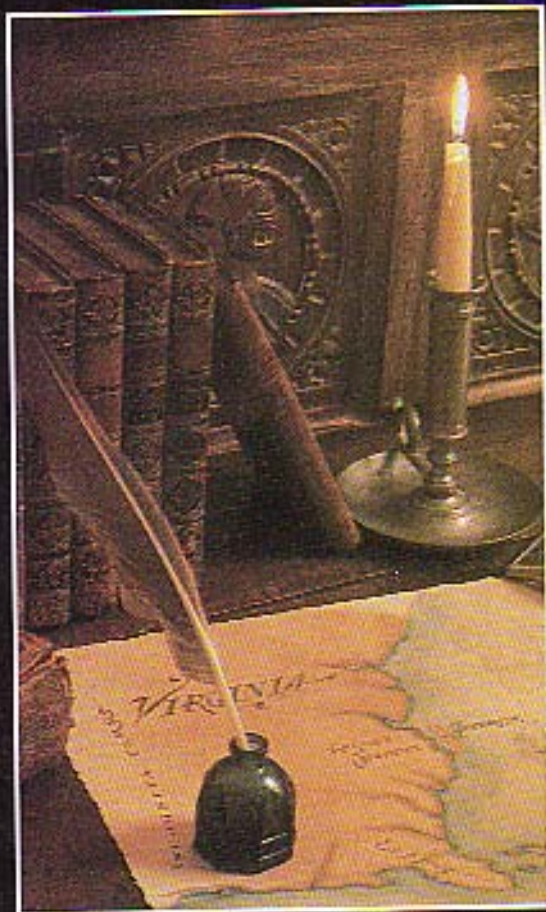


CHAPTER 1

Winds and Wilderness

“At two hours after midnight appeared the land. . . .”

Christopher Columbus, October 12, 1492
Captain's Log entry



- I. Discovery and Rediscovery
 - A. Sugar and Spice
 - B. Here I Stand
- II. In the Wilderness
 - A. The Spanish Century
 - B. The English Foothold
 - C. Nova Britannia

Chapter 1

Despite the advanced nature of a number of the Indian tribes in central and South America, they were no match for the military superiority of the Europeans. Cortés's experiences in Mexico were indicative of the clash of cultures that would lead to European dominance in that hemisphere. At the Battle of Tlaxcala (tlah SKAHL uh) on his way to meet Montezuma, Cortés's army of four hundred was outnumbered an estimated one hundred to one; yet they were able to fight to a draw. The Tlaxcalans, equipped with spears and obsidian-bladed clubs, faced soldiers armed with muskets and artillery. Some of the Spanish soldiers were mounted on an animal never seen by these Indians before—horses.

Far more devastating to the native populations than firearms were the white man's diseases, to which the Indians had little immunity. Smallpox, measles, typhus, and other contagions devastated their numbers. The Indian population dropped from an estimated fifty million at the beginning of the sixteenth century to only four million in the seventeenth century. In the islands of the West Indies, the destruction of whole Indian populations by disease created a labor shortage for the Spanish that would be forcefully remedied with the arrival of more newcomers—African slaves.

Spain did not confine its New World interests to Mexico and South America. A number of conquistadores explored the vast hinterland of North America (southeastern, southwestern, and Gulf Coast regions) hoping to repeat Cortés's get-rich-quick conquest. **Francisco de Coronado**, for example, commanded an expedition that left Mexico in 1540 to explore what would later be the southwestern United States. Greedily believing the Indians' tall tales about the Seven Cities of Cibola, a fabulous land of gold and jewels, Coronado's search led him through Arizona, New Mexico, eastward through Texas, and on to Kansas. That any of Coronado's expedition survived the four-thousand-mile trek in the extreme temperatures of the Southwest is a tribute to their courage and Coronado's leadership. His expedition did not find gold, but one of its parties did discover and explore the Grand Canyon.

Spaniards also made a number of attempts to settle the southeastern United States, the region they called La Florida ("the flowered [land]"). **Ponce de León** was the first to explore the Florida peninsula in 1513. In 1539 **Hernando De Soto**, a veteran of the Spanish conquest of the Inca Indians in Peru, landed at Tampa Bay where he began a meandering trek through La Florida. De Soto's journey took him as far north as Charlotte, North Carolina; then, traveling through the Deep South, he eventually discovered the Mississippi River.

In the decades to follow, Spanish settlements and outposts were built along the coast of Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, Virginia's Chesapeake Bay, and as far west as Tennessee's Great Smoky Mountains. However, disease, hunger, and hostile Indians prevented Spain from becoming firmly established in North America.

Through their efforts at exploration and settlement, the Spanish claimed much of what is now the United States. Spanish rule was not beneficial to the new land, though; the Spanish preferred *exploiting* the land to *developing* it. The New World to Spain was little more than a treasure chest to be looted, not a resource to be cultivated. Also the government that Spain brought to the New World was harsh and tyrannical. The Catholic religion that the Spanish brought with them reinforced rather than reduced these authoritarian tendencies.

By the late sixteenth century it had become clear, though, that it was easier for Spain to claim territory than to keep it. The shiploads of bullion that Spain was siphoning out of the New World heightened French, English, and Dutch envy of Spain and their interest in America. In addition, the Spanish King **Philip II** (ruled 1556-1598), an ardent Catholic, was bent on crushing the Protestant menace in western Europe—and he was not altogether unsuccessful. Subsidized by Mexican gold and Peruvian silver, Philip's army was the largest, best-equipped in Europe, and thousands of Protestants were killed in its bloody wake. Bitterness over Catholic Spain's military threat made Spanish New World outposts a tempting target for Protestant sea captains such as the French Jean Ribault and England's **Francis Drake**.

The determined Raleigh financed a second group to Roanoke Island in 1587 under the command of John White, a veteran of the first expedition. White's group numbered 117, and for the first time included women and children, among them White's daughter Elenor and her husband Ananias Dare. Elenor gave birth to a daughter shortly after arriving to the New World—the first English child born in America—and appropriately named her Virginia.

Unfortunately, the colonists arrived too late in the summer to plant crops. With the prospect of a lean winter, they urged White to return to England for supplies. After he reached England, however, the war with Spain delayed his return until 1590. Mysteriously, when Governor White returned the little town of "Raleigh" was empty. The fate of the "**Lost Colony**" has never been determined, but it is likely the colonists were captured and killed by Indians. When Queen Elizabeth died in 1603, no trace of her colonizing efforts remained in the hostile wilderness that bore her name.

Raleigh's was the last individual effort by an Englishman to establish a colony. Later attempts were made by companies of individuals who shared the expenses of founding a colony, with the understanding that profits would also be proportionately shared. **Joint-stock companies**, whose investors shared profits without sharing liabilities, provided a means whereby enterprises could obtain large monetary resources and still remain free from the government control that accompanied government-sponsored projects. These companies provided a vehicle through which individuals could work together to establish new institutions in a new land.

On April 10, 1606, King James I granted two companies, the **London Company** and the **Plymouth Company**, a charter for colonizing "Virginia," a coastal region of two million square miles stretching from the Carolinas to Maine. The London Company was to colonize the land between the northern latitudes of thirty-four and forty-one degrees; the Plymouth Company, between the latitudes of thirty-eight and forty-five degrees. If either started settlements in the overlapping territory, the settlements were to be at least one hundred miles

apart. The Royal Council, consisting of thirteen men appointed by the king, was to govern the companies and determine colonial policies.

Both companies, optimistic about potential riches, hurried to establish colonies. The Plymouth Company deposited forty-four men on the rocky coast of Maine in the summer of 1607, at a settlement they called St. George. After only one bitter winter, those who survived returned to England. The Plymouth Company made no further attempts at colonization and was dismantled in 1609.

The London Company (later renamed the Virginia Company) sent 104 men to America in December 1606. After a rough ocean passage, they reached the Chesapeake Bay in May 1607, where they found a wide inlet which they cautiously entered and went ashore. The Englishmen named both the river and their little fort after their monarch. **Jamestown** became the first permanent English settlement in the New World.

The first years were bitter ones for the colony. Malaria, typhoid fever, and dysentery took a devastating toll. By the end of the first winter, half the colonists had been shoveled into the hostile land.

Indians of the Powhatan Confederacy also complicated the settlers' existence. At first, relations between the two peoples were friendly enough, but as the colonists began to clear more land, the Indian chief Wahunsonacock, or, as the Virginians called him, **Powhatan**, (POW uh TAN) ordered war parties against the colony. Not until 1614, with the marriage of his daughter **Pocahontas** (POH kuh HAHN tus) to the Englishman John Rolfe, did a shaky peace come to the area.

Typhoid was not the only fever to wreak havoc among the colonial ranks; gold fever consumed much of the settlers' time and resources. As a result, planting and hunting were neglected—even scorned by some. This threatened the colony with starvation. Captain **John Smith** enforced the kind of discipline necessary, however, for the survival of Jamestown. Smith improved relations with Powhatan's men, who taught the settlers how to grow maize and melons, and he enforced the Biblical principle of II Thessalonians 3:10 upon the community: "If any would not work, neither should he eat."

Chapter Review

Terms

Marco Polo
 Bartolomeu Dias
 Vasco da Gama
 Christopher Columbus
 discovery of the New World (1492)
 Amerigo Vespucci
 John Cabot
 Ferdinand Magellan
 Martin Luther
 Protestant Reformation
 priesthood of all believers
 Hernando Cortés
conquistador
 Montezuma
 Francisco de Coronado
 Ponce de León
 Hernando de Soto
 Philip II
 Francis Drake
 Elizabeth I
 Sea Dogs
 Spanish Armada (1588)
 Walter Raleigh
 Roanoke Island
 "Lost Colony"
 joint-stock companies
 London Company
 Plymouth Company
 founding of Jamestown (1607)
 Powhatan
 Pocahontas
 John Smith
 "starving time"
 New France

Content Questions

- Name the country for which each of the following explorers sailed and note his greatest accomplishment as an explorer.
 - Vasco da Gama
 - Christopher Columbus
 - John Cabot
 - Ferdinand Magellan
 - Ponce de León
 - Hernando de Soto
- List three reasons for the lack of religious tolerance in Europe during the Reformation, even among Protestants.
- Give at least two reasons for the Sea Dogs' raids on Spanish shipping.
- To what two companies did King James of England give charters to settle the New World? Which was more successful?
- List at least three ways in which English settlements in the New World differed from those of the French and the Spanish.

Application Questions

- In what ways did the teachings of Martin Luther contribute to the growth of freedom?
- How do you think the defeat of the Spanish Armada (1588) influenced the future development of North America?