

**PRIMARY HISTORY OF THE  
UNITED STATES: MADE  
EASY AND INTERESTING  
FOR BEGINNERS**

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Primary History of the United States: Made Easy and Interesting for Beginners by G. P. Quackenbos

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**G. P. QUACKENBOS**

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BY

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## PREFACE.

FIRST books, on any subject, should be simple and attractive. The beginner should never be discouraged by words that he does not understand, or sentences of great length and complicated structure. He should find his text-book interesting, and be won to study by the pleasant trains of thought it suggests and charms of style and story. He will otherwise be apt to conceive a dislike to the subject treated, and may feel the ill effects of a bad beginning throughout his whole subsequent course of study.

These principles have been kept in view during the preparation of the present volume. The author has here endeavored to present the history of our country so clearly that it may be studied with profit at a very early age. In the belief that simplicity is quite different from poerility, a clear style, a natural arrangement, and short sentences have been aimed at, rather than childish expressions. Leading events are presented, but without any repulsive array of minute details, dates, or figures.

We all know the fondness of the young for stories; truthful anecdotes have therefore been interspersed throughout. To please the eye, as well as awaken thought, numerous engravings, designed with strict regard to historic truth, have been introduced. The form of a continuous narrative has been adopted as preferable for reading purposes, but questions bringing out the leading facts are presented at the end of each lesson, which may be used by the learner in preparing himself and by the teacher at recitation.

It is hoped that this book will be found comprehensive and thorough, as well as easy and interesting. The wants of Primary Schools have been particularly consulted in its preparation. Used independently, it is believed that it will give a fair and correct idea of our country's history; when a more extended course is desired, it may with advantage be followed by the author's "Illustrated School History of the United States".

New York, August 1, 1880

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## PRIMARY HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES.



The Western Continent.

The Eastern Continent.

### LESSON I.

#### FOUR HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

1. The Earth is round, like a ball. It contains two large divisions of land, called Continents. One lies in the east, and is called the Eastern Continent. The other lies in the west, and is called the Western Continent. These two continents are separated on one side by the broad Atlantic Ocean, and on the other by the Pacific, which is still broader. The map given above shows these continents and oceans.

2. The United States, in which we live, is part of North America, and lies in the Western Continent. Europe, Asia, and Africa, form the Eastern Continent. Those who want to go from one con-

continent to the other, have to sail many miles, across either the Atlantic or the Pacific.

3. Now, our gallant sailors think nothing of making such a voyage. But there was a time when even the bravest were afraid to venture far out upon the Ocean. Their vessels were not so large or so well shaped as ours; and they feared, if they went too far away from land, they would never find the way back.

4. Four hundred years ago, men did not know so much about the Earth as they do now. They thought that it was flat, instead of round. They knew nothing of the Western Continent. They were afraid of the broad ocean. They supposed that those who kept sailing west would either reach the end of the Earth and fall off, or meet with dreadful gales and whirlpools. Some thought that the unknown waters to the west were filled with frightful monsters, and that it was wicked to try to sail there. So they left the Atlantic mostly unexplored. The farthest land that was known towards the west was the islands called the A-zores', about 800 miles west of Portugal.

5. Four hundred years ago, the land we inhabit looked very different from what it now does. There were no great cities in it then; no large farms, with fields of waving grain; no comfortable houses, with smoke curling up from their chimney-tops; no horses or cattle in the meadows; no fences, no bridges, no roads; no steamboats or sailing-vessels on the rivers; no white men, to give life to the whole.

6. In place of these, there were giant trees, thick woods, and rolling prairies. Deer, bears, and wolves abounded. There were fair streams, but no signs of life on them except the busy beaver. Here and there was a rude hut, covered with bark or skins; and dark, half-naked figures stole through the tangled brush-wood.

7. And what has so changed the appearance of the country?—Its discovery by Europeans. They found it a fruitful and pleasant land. They came over to it in great numbers. They cut down the woods, laid out farms, tilled the soil, and built villages and cities. They made the wilderness blossom like the rose.

8. But the Western Continent might have remained unknown to Europeans till this day, had it not been for the genius of one man. That great man, the discoverer of America, was Christopher Columbus.

QUESTIONS.—1. What is the shape of the Earth? What does it contain? What are the two continents called? How are they separated? Point to them on the Map.—2. Where does the United States lie? What countries form the Eastern Continent? How can a person go from one continent to the other?—3. In old times, what did people think of a voyage across the ocean?—4. What did people think about the shape of the Earth, four hundred years ago? What did they think would happen to those who kept sailing west? What was the farthest land known towards the west?—5. What are found in this country now, that were not here four hundred years ago?—6. Describe this country, as it then looked.—7. What has so changed the appearance of our country? What have European settlers done?—8. To whom is the world indebted for the discovery of America?

## LESSON II.

### CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

1. Columbus was born at Gen'oa, in Italy, a country of Europe. His parents were poor, but had him well taught. At an early age he went to sea, and visited various countries. On one occasion, the ship on which he served took fire, and he had to throw himself into the sea and swim for his life.

2. After making many voyages, Columbus became convinced that the Earth was round, and that by sailing west he would finally