

CLASSIC LIVING BOOK

THE STORY OF THE
THIRTEEN COLONIES

Helene A. Guerber

COMPLETE AND UNABRIDGED

This edition published 2023
by Living Book Press
Copyright © Living Book Press, 2023

ISBN: 978-1-76153-164-4 (hardcover)
978-1-76153-165-1 (softcover)

First published in 1899.

This edition is based on the 1899 printing by American Book Company.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any other form or means – electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner and the publisher or as provided by Australian law.



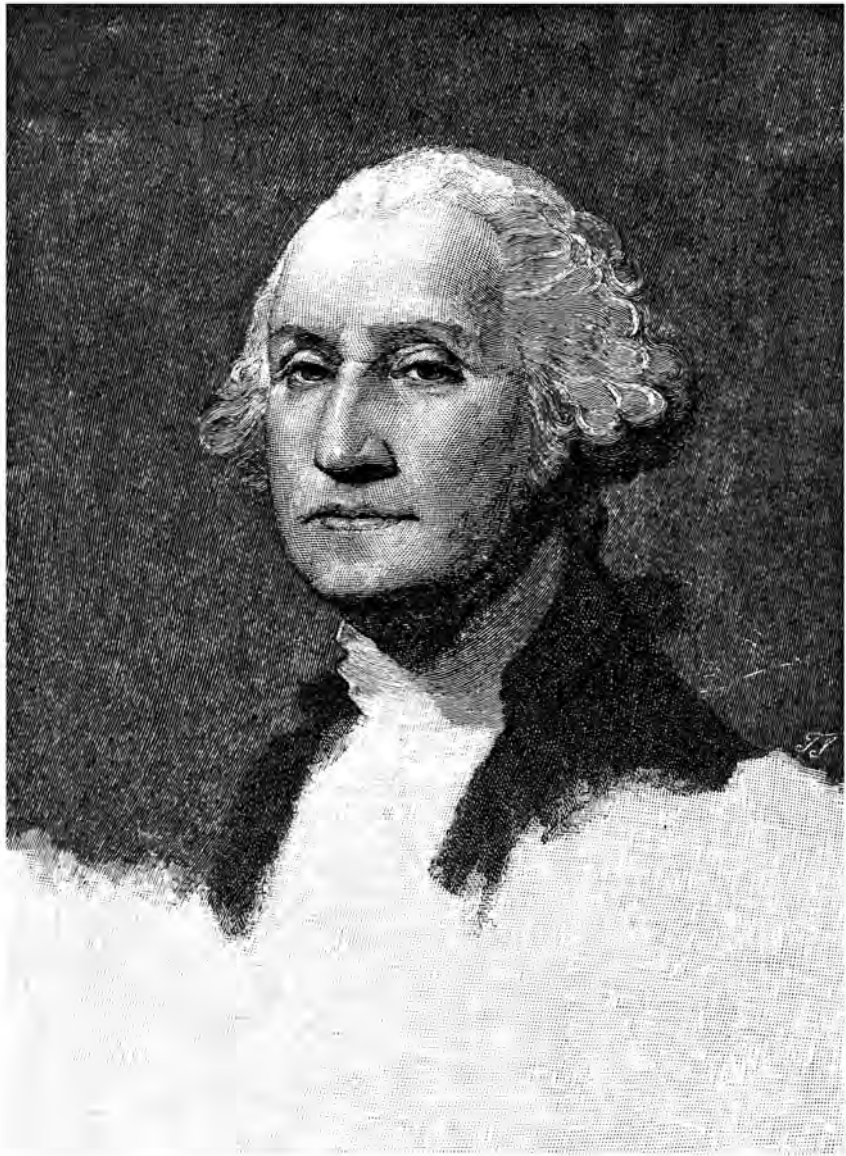
A catalogue record for this
book is available from the
National Library of Australia

The Story of the Thirteen Colonies

by

HELENE A. GUERBER





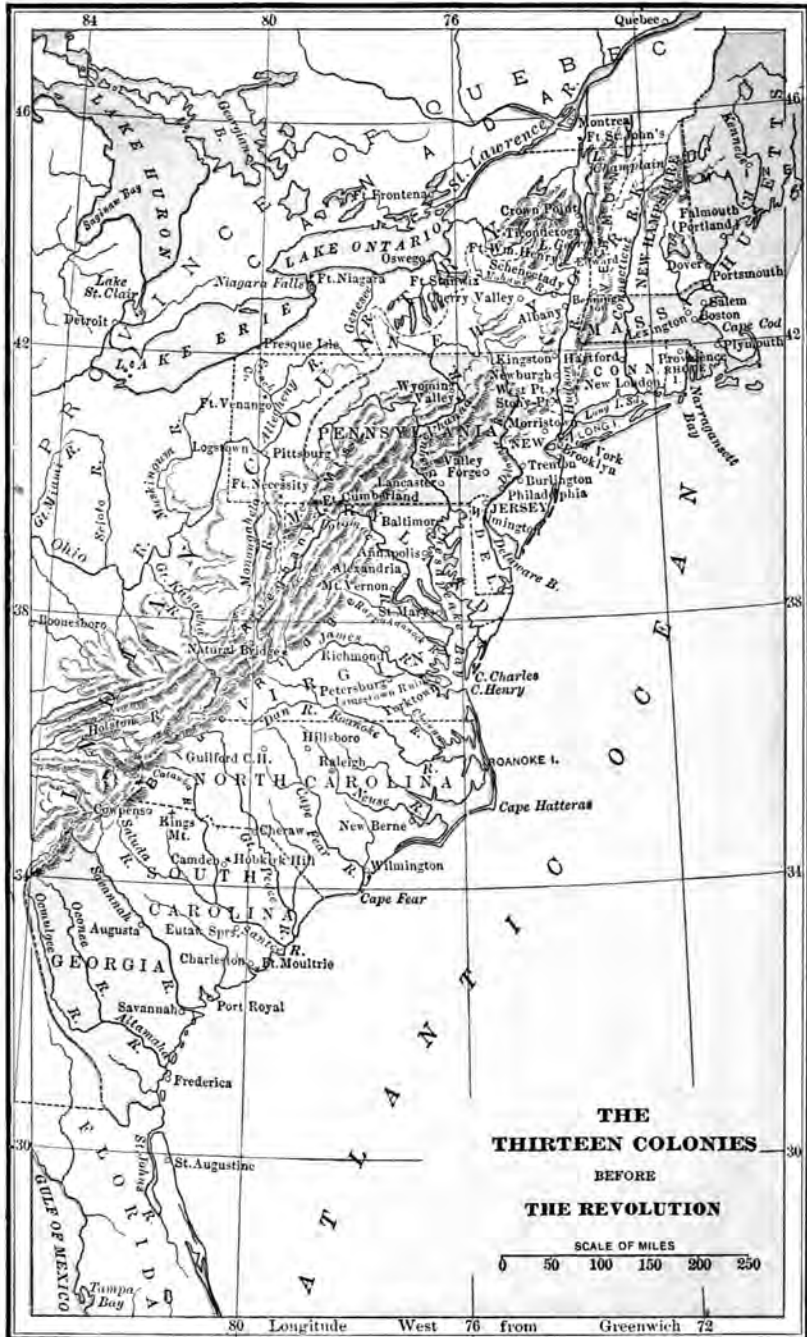
George Washington

Contents

1.	Our Country Long Ago	1
2.	The Barbarous Indians	5
3.	The Mounds	9
4.	Where the Northmen Went	12
5.	The Northmen in America	16
6.	Queer Ideas	19
7.	Prince Henry the Navigator	22
8.	Youth of Columbus	25
9.	Columbus and the Queen	28
10.	“Land! Land!”	32
11.	Columbus and the Savages	36
12.	Home Again	38
13.	Columbus Ill-Treated	41
14.	Death of Columbus	44
15.	How America Got its Name	46
16.	The Fountain of Youth	48
17.	“The Father of Waters.”	51
18.	The French in Canada	55
19.	French and Spanish Quarrels	58
20.	The Sky City	61
21.	Around the World	64
22.	Nothing but Smoke	67
23.	Smith’s Adventures	71
24.	The Jamestown Men	75
25.	Smith Wounded	78
26.	The Visit of Pocahontas to England	81
27.	Hudson and the Indians	85
28.	The <i>Mayflower</i>	88
29.	Plymouth Rock	92
30.	The First American Thanksgiving	96
31.	The Snake Skin and the Bullets	100
32.	The Beginning of Boston	104

33.	Stories of Two Ministers	107
34.	Williams and the Indians	110
35.	The Quakers	114
36.	The King-Killers	116
37.	King Philip's War	118
38.	The Beginning of New York	121
39.	Penn and the Indians	125
40.	The Catholics in Maryland	130
41.	The Old Dominion	133
42.	Bacon's Rebellion	135
43.	A Journey Inland	138
44.	The Carolina Pirates	140
45.	Charter Oak	143
46.	Salem Witches	147
47.	Down the Mississippi	150
48.	La Salle's Adventures	155
49.	Indians on the Warpath	158
50.	Two Wars with the French	162
51.	Washington's Boyhood	165
52.	Washington's Journey	169
53.	Washington's First Battle	172
54.	Stories of Franklin	173
55.	Braddock's Defeat	179
56.	Wolfe at Quebec	183
57.	How England Treated her Colonies	187
58.	The Stamp Tax	190
59.	The Anger of the Colonies	193
60.	The Boston Tea Party	196
61.	The Minutemen	200
62.	The Battle of Lexington	204
63.	Bunker Hill	208
64.	The Boston Boys	213
65.	The British Leave Boston	216
66.	Declaration of Independence	219

67.	A Lady's Way of Helping	224
68.	Christmas Eve	228
69.	The Fight at Bennington	232
70.	Burgoyne's Surrender	236
71.	The Winter at Valley Forge	240
72.	The Quaker Woman	243
73.	Putnam's Adventures	247
74.	Indian Cruelty	250
75.	Boone in Kentucky	255
76.	Famous Sea Fights	260
77.	The "Swamp Fox"	264
78.	The Poor Soldiers	268
79.	The Spy	270
80.	A Traitor's Death	275
81.	Two Unselfish Women	278
82.	The Surrender of Cornwallis	281
83.	The British Flag Hauled Down	285
84.	Washington's Farewell	289



**THE
THIRTEEN COLONIES
BEFORE
THE REVOLUTION**

SCALE OF MILES
0 50 100 150 200 250

80 Longitude West 76 from Greenwich 72



Our Country Long Ago

L earned men, who read the story of the earth in the mountains, valleys, rivers, lakes, and seas which cover its surface, tell us that America, although known as the New World, is really older than Europe. The sun has shone upon this continent and the rain has watered it for more centuries than we can count. If you study your maps carefully, you will notice lofty mountains, great lakes, and long rivers in many parts of the country; and you will see that it is beautiful and fertile almost everywhere, except in the far north, where snow covers the ground most of the year.

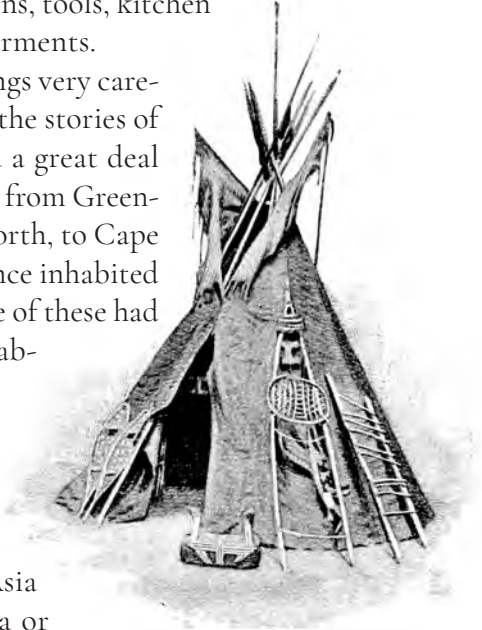


AN INDIAN

The same wise men who found out that the country is so old, dug down into the soil, examined the things they found there, questioned the Indians, and, little by little, discovered that our continent has been inhabited by many different kinds of animals and men. They found huge bones of animals which died thousands of years ago, and placed these in museums, where you can now see them. They also found the bones of some of the ancient men and women,

with some of their weapons, tools, kitchen pots, and bits of their garments.

By studying these things very carefully, and by listening to the stories of the natives, they learned a great deal about the country which, from Greenland and Alaska in the north, to Cape Horn in the south, was once inhabited by tribes of Indians. None of these had white skins like the inhabitants of Europe, black skins like the negroes in Africa, or yellow skins like the Chinamen in Asia. But as they were more like the people in Asia than like those in Africa or Europe, some men now think they may once have belonged to the same family.



A WIGWAM

Still, the men living on our continent were so unlike others that they are called red men, and form a race by themselves. Those who lived in the part of the country which is now called the United States had copper-colored skins, high cheek bones, straight, coarse black hair, small black eyes, and very wide mouths. Although they all looked somewhat alike, they were very different in their ways of living. The Indians living east of the Rocky Mountains were a little more civilized than those living west of those mountains and in the far northern parts of the continent.

The western and northern Indians are generally called savage Indians, for they lived by hunting and fishing, had no houses like ours, and were always roaming around in search of game. They were sheltered from the sun and rain by tents called wigwams. These rude dwellings were made by driving poles in the ground, in a circle as big as the wigwam was to be. When all the poles

had been set up, the tops were drawn close together and firmly tied. Over these slanting poles the Indians spread the skins of the animals they had killed, or else they wove leaves and branches between the poles to form a thick screen. The space between two of the poles was left open to serve as a door, and over this was hung a bear or buffalo skin to keep out the sun, rain, or cold.

The space inside the wigwam was generally very small; but all the family crowded in, and when it was cold or wet, a fire was lighted in the middle of the floor. The smoke then escaped through a hole purposely left in the top of the wigwam, or through the open door.

The savage Indians had learned to make baskets, which they plastered with clay inside and out, and dried in the sun until they could hold water. When they wanted to boil their meat or to warm water, the women, called squaws, heated stones in the fire, and then dropped them into the water, which was thus brought to a boil.

These Indians rowed about in canoes made of basket work, of birch bark, or even of hollow tree trunks. As they had only stone axes, they could not easily cut down trees, so they brought them to the ground by kindling a fire all around them. When the tree had fallen they built another fire farther up the trunk. A log of



MAKING A CANOE.

the right length having thus been secured, they hollowed it out by starting small fires on top of the trunk, and scraping away the charred wood, until the log formed a rude canoe.

The Indians made their birch-bark canoes by sewing long strips of bark together with plant fibers or the sinews of the animals they had killed. The basket-work canoes were covered with skins to make them water-tight.

The Barbarous Indians

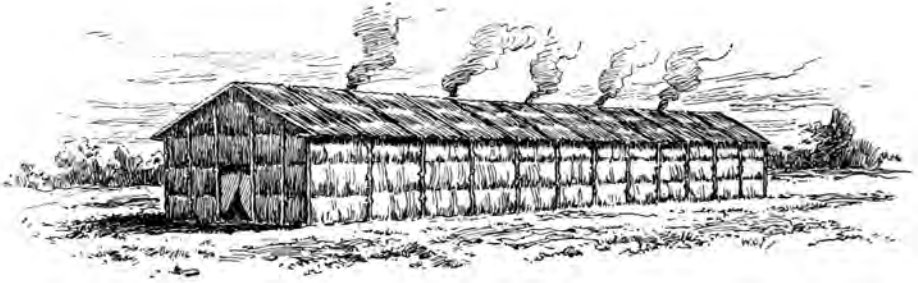
The Indians east of the Rocky Mountains knew a little more than the savage Indians, so they are called the barbarous Indians. Besides hunting and fishing, they dug up roots with stone hoes, or with shells, and planted corn, beans, pumpkins, squashes, tomatoes, tobacco, and sun-flowers. Of course they did not have neat fields and gardens, such as you see now; but they scratched a hole wherever the ground seemed good enough, dropped a few seeds into it, and covering them over, left them to grow without further care.

The barbarous Indians were not content, like the savage Indians in the West, to fling a skin around them to keep off the cold, merely fastening it with a big thorn to hold it together. So they made winter garments by sewing skins together with sinews or plant fibers. In summer they had lighter clothes, rudely woven out of cotton or plant fibers. They, too, wove baskets, made beautiful birch-bark canoes, and after fashioning pots and pans out of clay, hardened them in the fire, so that they could use them in cooking.

These Indians had tools and weapons made of finely polished stone or bone, and they liked to live in villages. Instead of wigwams, many of them built houses of wood, or basket work and clay, roofed over with strips of bark. Sometimes the roof was a very thick layer of long grass, laid on rude rafters, and held down by poles to form a kind of thatch.



INDIAN POTTERY.



A LONG HOUSE.

The houses thus built were generally very long and rather narrow, with a door at either end, and a passageway running through the center. On either side of this hall there were little rooms, each occupied by a family. At intervals along the passage the ground was hollowed out, and a clay or earthen fireplace was built, where four families cooked their meals. Above the fireplace there was a hole in the roof to serve as chimney. The rooms near the doors were generally used as storerooms for food and fuel. When several of these long houses were built together, they were often surrounded by a wooden wall, or palisade, to keep out the wild beasts and to serve as protection in time of war.

The Indians who once lived in New York and in the valley of the St. Lawrence lived in long houses, but the Missouri Indians had round houses, built of the same materials. In the round houses the fireplace was in the middle, and families lived in rooms shaped like cuts of a pie. Many of these round houses were built close together, and then surrounded by a palisade made of tree trunks. These were driven into the ground so close together that they formed a very strong fence.

Although Indians did not have family names, such as we have now, each great family, or clan, had a special sign whereby it was known, such as a bear, a turtle, or a beaver. This sign was often marked upon their bodies in bright



A PAPOOSE.

colors, and they carved and scratched it on all their belongings. From this sign the family was known as the bear, the turtle, or the beaver clan. Each clan selected a ruler, called sachem, or sagamore, whose orders all obeyed, and they also chose a chief to lead them in time of war.

The Indians had never been told about the God we love, so they worshiped the sun, moon, and stars, the lightning and thunder, the wind and rain, and said that one great spirit, called Manito,

was always watching over them. They also believed that when they died they would be carried off to a place where they could hunt and fish forever, and they called this heaven the happy hunting grounds.

Their religious ceremonies were usually performed by Indians called medicine men. These pretended to be very wise, and frightened the others by dancing and yelling wildly, and using strange words and signs. They said this would please their gods, and drive away the evil spirits of sickness, storm, or drought. The Indians were so simple that they believed all this nonsense, and they were so afraid of evil spirits that they often begged an animal's pardon for killing it. You see,

they thought the spirit of a wolf or bear might else be so angry as to torment them in their dreams!

The men spent their time hunting, fishing, and fighting, but left all the rest of the work to the women. When they moved from one place to another, the squaws had to carry all the household goods, as well as the papooses, or babies. But the men carried only their bows and arrows, hunting knives, and the hatchets called tomahawks, which they threw with great force and skill.

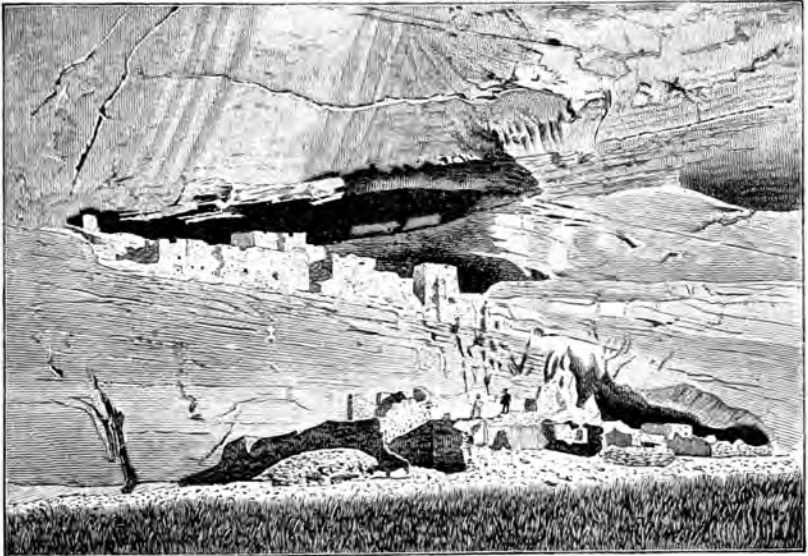
The Mounds

Besides the savage Indians of the north and west, and the barbarous Indians of the east, there were also half-civilized Indians in the south of our country. They dwelt not only in what is now New Mexico and Arizona, but were also found in Mexico, Central America, and South America, as far down the map as Chile.

The southern Indians had learned how to build canals, so as to lead the water far away from the streams into dry and barren lands. When the ground had thus been watered, or irrigated, it became very fruitful, and they could grow all the grain and vegetables they needed.

The southern Indians lived together in huge fortresses, built of sun-dried bricks, called adobe. These fortresses were large houses five or six stories high, containing ever so many little rooms, each occupied by one family. Thus one house often sheltered two or three thousand people.

Sometimes these Indians built their houses on the ledges of steep



CLIFF DWELLINGS.

rocks, or canyons. Such houses were called cliff dwellings, and many remains of these queer homes are still found in the southwestern part of our country. The Indians who lived there were gentle, and not fond of fighting, but they built fortresses and cliff dwellings to defend themselves when attacked by the savage Indians

You see, the savage Indians did not grow any grain or vegetables, but they came down from the north to steal the provisions of the southern Indians. These, therefore, carried all their supplies into the cliff houses, which they built in such a way that it was almost impossible for an enemy to get in them.

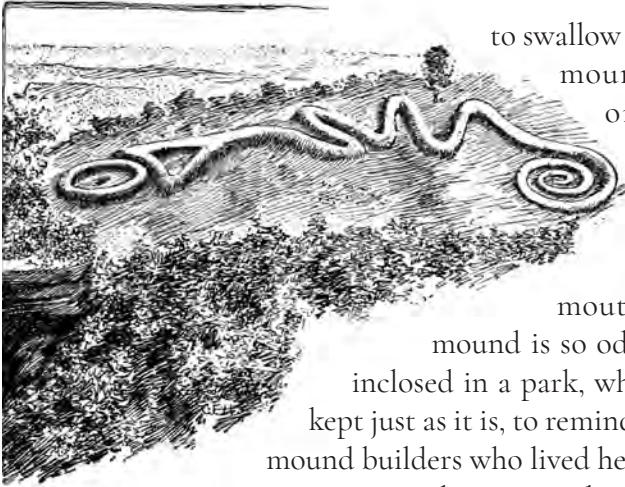
The inhabitants themselves, however, easily went in and out by means of ladders, which led from story to story, or from ledge to ledge. Their houses had no doors down near the floor, but were entered by a hole in the roof.

In each of these fortresses there was a great cistern, full of water, and so large a supply of food that the Indians could stand a long siege. In times of danger they pulled all their ladders away up out of reach, and when their enemies tried to climb the steep cliffs or straight walls, they pelted them with stones and arrows, and thus drove them away.

Wise men tell us that even before our country was occupied by the savage, barbarous, and half-civilized Indians, whose way of living has just been described, it had been inhabited by their ancestors or by an older race of men. We know they existed, because people have dug up their bones. These have been found principally inside huge earthen mounds of very queer shapes. The mounds were evidently built by those early inhabitants, who are hence known as the mound builders. Trees hundreds of years old now grow upon these mounds, which are found in most parts of the eastern Mississippi valley, especially in Ohio.

In one place you can see a big mound representing a snake one thousand feet long, his body lying in graceful curves along the ground.

This snake's mouth is wide open, and he looks as if trying



to swallow an egg-shaped mound, which is one hundred and sixty-four feet long, and hence a pretty big mouthful. As this mound is so odd, it has been inclosed in a park, where it is to be kept just as it is, to remind people of the mound builders who lived here so long ago.

No one now knows exactly why these queer mounds were made, but learned men have dug into about two thousand of them, and as they have generally found bones, stone arrowheads and axes, beads, mortars, hammers, tools for spinning and weaving, pottery, baskets, and coarse cloth, they think the mounds must have been intended principally as burying places. The beads found in them are very like those which the barbarous Indians called wampum and used as money. Indians wore these beads in strings around their necks, or wove them into belts, using beads of different colors to form very pretty patterns.



WAMPUM

Where the Northmen Went

As you have seen in the first chapters of this book, America was once a very different country from what it is to-day. Now you are going to learn how it changed, little by little, from the wild land where Indians roamed about in the huge forests covering the greater part of the country, into a civilized country.

We are told that in all the wide territory now occupied by the United States, there were, four hundred and fifty years ago, about two hundred thousand Indians. These were very few inhabitants for so big a country, for now there are many cities here which count many more citizens.

The Indians then little suspected that on the other side of the great ocean there was another country, occupied by a race of white men, who knew much more than they did, and who were soon coming to take possession of their land.

But the people in Europe, wise as they were, did not know many things which everybody knows now. That was not their fault, however, for they had been trying for several centuries to learn all they could. In the middle of the fifteenth century Europe was already an old country, where long series of kings and queens had ruled over the people. There were then in Europe cities more than two thousand years old, ancient temples and castles, and many of the beautiful Christian churches which people still admire, because none finer have ever been built.

The people in Europe had long been great travelers by land and sea, although it was not so easy to get about then as it is now. Indeed, on land they could go only in wagons, in litters, on horseback, or on foot; and on the water they used nothing but rowboats or sailboats, because no one had yet imagined that one could use steam or electricity. On the sea, even the boldest sailors did not dare venture far out of sight of land, for fear they would not be able to find their way back.

The best seamen in Europe were the Northmen, or Vikings.



A VIKING

Already in the eighth century they used to sail out of the viks, or bays, in Norway, every spring, to go in search of adventures. These Northmen, Norsemen, or Normans, little by little explored the coast of the North Sea, and of the Atlantic Ocean, and finally came to the Strait of Gibraltar. Passing through this opening, they came to the beautiful Mediterranean Sea, where they cruised about, even visiting the Greek islands and the renowned city of Constantinople.

As you will see by looking at your maps, this was a very long journey for men who had nothing but sailboats or rowboats, such as very few sailors would dare to use nowadays. But the Northmen were afraid of nothing, and when the wind blew, and the great waves tossed their little vessels up and down like cockleshells, they held tight to the rudder and steered on, singing one of their famous songs.

Sometimes, however, the tempest raged so fiercely that they were driven far out of their course. Thus, in the middle of the ninth century, one of these hardy seamen, after tossing about on the stormy seas several days, landed on an island which he had never seen before.

This new place was Iceland, and he was so pleased with his discovery that he sailed home and persuaded his family and friends to go back there with him to settle down. In a few years other Northmen came to live in Iceland, sailing across the Atlantic from time to time to visit their old homes and friends. Soon the colony grew so large that its seamen kept up a lively trade with different ports in Europe.

One of these Icelandic seamen, Gunnbiorn, on his way home, was once overtaken by a violent storm. It drove him far out of his course, and finally brought him in sight of a new land, covered with snow, which he called the White Land. When he reached home he told the Icelanders what he had seen; but no one cared then to go and see if there really was a land west of Iceland, as he had said.

About a hundred years later another man, Eric the Red, was driven out of Iceland for murder. Remembering what Gunnbiorn had said, he sailed westward, and went to settle in the new country, which he called Greenland, so as to attract other settlers. A number of them soon joined him there, and began to trade with the Eskimos, a race of Indians who lived in the coldest part of the country, where they hunted white bears and fished for cod and seals.