

P U B L I S H E R ' S P R E F A C E .



THIS edition of Nothing New Press' reprint of *The Story of the Thirteen Colonies* has seen the following changes from the original text:

In introducing the native inhabitants of North America, the American Indians, some of Guerber's comments were colored by the commonly held views of her day. I have changed her use of "white skins" to "Europeans," "black skins" or "negroes" to "Africans," and "red skins" to "Indians."

In chapter I, "Our Country Long Ago," she refers to the Indians living west and north of the Rocky Mountains as "savage Indians," based on their nomadic lifestyle, which was very unlike settled European civilization. Where she termed the western and northern Indians as "savages," I have changed that to simply "western and northern Indians." In other places in the text, she refers to the Indians simply as "savages." I have changed her use of "savages" to either "natives" or "Indians," depending on the context.

Chapter II was originally titled "The Barbarous Indians." She refers to the Indians living east of the Rocky Mountains as the "barbarous Indians," because they maintained a more settled lifestyle than the western and northern Indians. For Guerber, "barbarous" was a step up from "savage." Where she termed the eastern Indians as "barbarous," I have changed that to simply "eastern Indians."

Now it is true that many, many tribes of the American Indians practiced traditions which we all consider savage and barbarous. Prisoners were routinely tortured in the most cruel and horrible of ways, cannibalism was practiced under some circumstances, civilian non-combatants, such as women and children, were not spared as targets in warfare, and so on. But I hesitated to label a whole people as "savage" or "barbarous" for the sake of some practices in some tribes, which were sometimes discarded under the influence of Christianity after the arrival of French and Spanish missions. Of course, in some tribes the ancient practices persisted, and their occurrence is not glossed over in the narrative merely for the sake of modern sensibilities.

This change was also made in Chapter II: speaking of the eastern Indians, Guerber writes, "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.” Not all American Indians practiced agriculture. But among most of those that did, more modern research has shown that the methods of agriculture which they developed were more sophisticated than Guerber indicates. The eastern Indians placed a fish in each hill of corn seed, to fertilize the plant as it grew. The “three sisters” were commonly planted together, that is, corn, pumpkins, and beans. Corn stalks served as supports for the climbing beans, and where corn and pumpkins depleted the soil, the beans’ nitrogen-fixing properties helped to restore nutrients to the soil. The southwestern Indians practiced ingenious forms of xeriscaping, dry-land agriculture, to conserve the little water they had for their crops. Enough creativity, knowledge of the crops and the climate, and ingenuity has been discovered among American Indian agricultural practices to make Guerber’s statement false. I have changed it to read, “Of course they did not have fields and gardens as the Europeans kept, such as you see now; but they had developed their own methods of raising crops, which were suited to the weather and conditions of the land.”

A last change corrects an error in the original text. In Chapter LIX: “The Anger of the Colonies,” Guerber mistakenly attributed Patrick Henry’s famous line, “Give me liberty, or give me death!” to a speech he gave in the Virginia House of Burgesses upon hearing of the passage of the Stamp Act. Henry’s most well-known speech, however, which did conclude with that famous phrase, was given in 1775, after his return to Virginia from the First Continental Congress. Those events, and the mention of Henry’s speech and its most famous lines, are recorded in Chapter LXI: “The Minutemen.” Guerber mentions both speeches in her original text, but attributes the phrase to the wrong speech, which I have corrected.

Other than these changes, Guerber’s text remains as she wrote it. I have included a timeline of dates of the events encountered in the story, as well as a list of additional books for young people which elaborate on the events here recorded, as an aid for teachers. I have also included a bibliography listing the references used to make corrections in Guerber’s text, to construct the timeline, and the historical information which follows.

Modern archaeological and historical research was unavailable to Miss Guerber in 1898, when she wrote this history. The first chapter of *The Story of the Thirteen Colo-*

nies, "Our Country Long Ago," discusses the age of the North American continent and the origin of the American Indian. In it, Miss Guerber took the view that man developed slowly, through long ages of civilization, from a savage to a rational human being. Although, as we know now, the historical record supporting this view is non-existent, it was the common one of her day.

Guerber mentions that the North American continent is older than the European continent, and that the length of its existence is past counting. In fact, the length of the existence of the North American continent, and indeed, all the land masses of the earth, has been counted, in the book of Genesis. The length of years from Adam to Noah, and Noah to Moses, David, and Jesus, has been recorded. If the Genesis account is taken as the true history of the earth, it would seem that the land masses of the earth underwent significant geological upheaval during the time of Noah's Flood, when water covered all the earth for a period of time. The science of geology has not disproved the historical occurrence of Noah's global flood, but rather the flood theory has been discarded.

In fact, the evidence that we do see, fossils on mountain tops, and large fossil graveyards, lend themselves nicely to a massive flood explanation. Fossils, especially the detailed fossils which have been recently unearthed showing leaf, feather, and skin patterns intact, had to have been buried quickly under large amounts of sediment, to prevent their immediate decay. A massive flood would provide for the large amounts of sediment necessary to bury the plants and animals deeply enough for them to fossilize rather than to decay or be scavenged.

Even famous North American land forms, such as the Grand Canyon, do not require a "countless centuries" explanation. It is true that the Grand Canyon could have formed slowly by a small amount of water eroding away at it for countless centuries. And it is also true that it could have formed more rapidly by a large amount of water eroding away at it for a shorter period of time. In fact, if a large amount of water were left on the North American continent as a result of Noah's Flood, the sudden draining of that water toward the sea would cause erosion on a massive scale, with the result of an enormous canyon not unexpected. An enormous canyon is what we do see, in fact, numerous systems of canyons throughout the North American West. The catastrophic result of massive floods following the Mt. St. Helens eruption challenged geologists' standard theories of rock and canyon formation. The existence of the Grand Canyon cannot serve as proof

that it was formed slowly over millions of years, or rapidly only thousands of years ago. But its existence does not disprove one theory in favor of the other, either.

Large dinosaur bones have been uncovered in many places in North America. But even that cannot serve as evidence that the North American continent is old beyond counting. A recent discovery of red blood cell residue in T-Rex bones seems to indicate that those bones, at least, cannot be millions of years old, since no scientist maintains that organic proteins, even remnants of organic proteins, can survive without decaying completely for anything even remotely close to that length of time.

As far as the origin of the American Indian on the American continent: Guerber mentions that “some men now think [American Indians] may once have belonged to the same family” as the Asians. Chinese tradition states that Noah (Fohi or Yao) founded Chinese civilization in 2240 BC, which was approximately 10 years after the Tower of Babel dispersion. Noah did live for 350 years after the Flood, and for approximately 250 years after Babel. Is it possible that he was the principle ancestor of the Asian peoples, as Japheth was of the Indo-Europeans, Shem of the Near and Middle Eastern peoples, and Ham of the Africans?

Lower sea levels following a global flood, with lots of water bound up in glaciers if Ice Age conditions persisted in the north, would have allowed for a land bridge to connect the Asian and North American continents around the Bering Strait. Many of the resources listed in the Bibliography go into more detail on the scientific, archaeological, historical, and cultural discoveries I have only briefly touched on here.

Throughout, it can be seen that nothing in the legendary or archaeological history of the American Indians or North American continent denies the biblical account of the creation of the world, the entrance of sin and death, the judgment of Noah’s Flood, and the rise of the peoples from his descendants after their dispersal from Babel.

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