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PREFACE

The *Dictionary of American History* has been the leading reference work in United States history for more than six decades. This third edition builds on the original, edited by James Truslow Adams (six volumes, 1940), the 1976 revision in eight volumes, and the two-volume supplement edited by Robert H. Ferrell and Joan Hoff in 1996. As promised in 1940, the *Dictionary* is committed to making the voluminous record of the past readily available in one convenient source, where the interested reader can locate the facts, events, trends, or policies of American history. Once again, we have contributions from a wide array of authorities, representing varied professions, occupations, and regions.

For this edition, we have been especially mindful that as new generations of Americans examine their history, the priorities, importance, and interpretations of this history evolve. History changes—and it does not. The facts historians choose to emphasize, and the manner in which they render certain events, mirror the way society views itself and its past. Those who study U.S. history will find that these volumes retain the original edition’s thorough coverage of political, military, and economic developments. But the scope of the historical profession’s interest has significantly expanded during the past quarter century, as historians increasingly have emphasized social, cultural, personal, and demographic considerations—all of which contribute to our ever-expanding knowledge of the American experience.

Diversity always has been a major theme of American history. But in recent years, American historical writing has reflected a heightened search for inclusiveness to better acknowledge and comprehend that diversity. The *Dictionary* originally focused on political and military history, reflecting the discipline’s chief concerns at the time. But today we talk about “political culture,” not just politics. Political history is not just about compiling electoral results or noting the passage of laws or programs. The social, cultural, and economic forces that propel political agendas are very much within its scope. The new *Dictionary of American History* therefore devotes proper attention to the roles of women, blacks, Indians, and various ethnic groups and socioeconomic classes. We recognize that we cannot discuss slavery, the struggle for civil rights, or poverty without noting the agency of blacks themselves, as instigators of change. And we cannot discuss industrialization and labor in America without considering the women—New England mill girls, immigrant workers in the needle trades, “career girl” clerks—whose actions and experiences are vital to understanding these processes.

This new edition significantly expands the *Dictionary* to over three million words, roughly 20 percent more than the previous edition. Bibliographies have been greatly increased and brought up to date. For the first time, the *Dictionary* is illustrated. This edition features more than 1,200 photographs and 252 maps. Cross-referencing has been greatly enhanced by the use of both internal highlighting (MANIFEST DESTINY) and copious *see also* references. The cross-references also direct the reader to an entirely new resource: the whole of volume 9 is a major archive of primary source documents and original period maps. This collection will enable the student to advance beyond narrative

summary to the sine qua non of historical research: examination of the original materials. Finally, the index volume is now supplemented by a guide to historical writing, with pedagogical examples drawn from the *Dictionary* itself, as well as a section correlating hundreds of entries to widely adopted American history textbooks.

In one respect, however, the contents have been simplified. The total number of articles has been reduced. When the editors first convened in November 1996, they faced the question that confronts all encyclopedists—whether to lump subjects together for the sake of comparative analysis or atomize them for easy look-up. Previous editions had tended in the latter direction. There were 6,425 separate entries in the second edition, supplemented by 757 more in 1996. The editors felt that readers would be better served by a degree of consolidation. The present edition contains 4,434 entries. Instead of detailing dozens of separate colonial explorations, for example, the subject is treated in five major essays on explorations and expeditions (British, Dutch, French, Russian, and Spanish). The related topic of U.S.-sponsored expeditions is treated in this same complex of articles. This editorial change is one of degree. No one suggested omitting de Soto or Coronado or Lewis and Clark. Individual entries on those major expeditions remain. But many others no longer claim their own subject headings. Instead they are treated contextually and comparatively in the essays noted above. Of course, readers in search of specific details can still access them in the full-length index of the present set and in the several forthcoming electronic versions of the *Dictionary*.

Because the original *Dictionary of American History* is itself a valuable cross-section of American historiography, Scribners has preserved the old material in digital form (presently available as *Scribner's American History and Culture on CD-ROM* and as a prime component of the Gale Group's *History Resource Center*, a massive online compilation of history reference materials accessible via major public and research libraries). We have deleted old entries and added new ones. Nearly 2,500 of the old *Dictionary* entries, mostly brief, have been consigned to the archives: Adams Express Company; Battle of Adobe Walls; Anti-Horse Thief Association; *Bank of the U.S. v. Planter's Bank of Georgia*; Camp Butler; Immunity Bath; Fort Mifflin; Old Fuss and Feathers; Raisin River Massacre; Society of Colonial Wars; Visible Admixture Law; and Zoar Society, to name a few. These writings, primarily from 1940, will remain available as a fascinating tool for those who study the profession of history.

To consolidate the *Dictionary's* wealth of material and bring it up to date, the editors decided on a four-part approach. In the making of the present edition, each article was classified as retained, revised, replaced, or brand new.

- *Retained* (1,785 articles). Where the original material was judged sound and the original contributor particularly distinguished (Allan Nevins on Standard Oil, Perry Ellis on the Antinomian Controversy, or even General John J. Pershing on American Expeditionary Forces), the core of the old entry has been retained. A team based at the University of Wisconsin under the direction of Andrew Rieser was assigned to check the old material for accuracy in the light of new scholarship and to bring the bibliographies up to date. These articles are generally signed by the original authors, with the reviser's initials following (*Allan Nevins / A. R.*).
- *Revised* (448 articles). Some articles were deemed to be essentially valid but in need of significant addition or change of emphasis. All such articles were assigned to contemporary scholars, who were given a flexible mandate to revise to a greater or lesser degree. Many different judgments were rendered by the contemporary scholarly community. Some experts decided to retain the bulk of the old material and supply only a silent emendation. More often the rewriting was extensive and appears over a joint signature or that of the new author alone.
- *Replaced* (1,360 articles). For the entries judged unsatisfactory in the light of present knowledge, entirely new scholarly treatments have been commissioned.

- *New* (841 articles). Events like the contested presidential election of 2000 and the 9/11 attacks obviously demanded articles of their own. Likewise such concepts as African American Studies, Creationism, Sexual Orientation, and Zionism are treated here for the first time.

While radically refashioning the contents of the *Dictionary*, the editors did adhere to one of its original distinguishing traits. Unlike other U.S. history compendiums, the *Dictionary* does not include biographies. This decision stems from the work's origin as a complement to Scribner's *Dictionary of American Biography* (1927–1995). Today the *Dictionary of American Biography*, supplemented by the newer *Scribner Encyclopedia of American Lives* and many other biographical reference works, remains a prime source for the lives of famous Americans. We found that by omitting the standard short lives, the *Dictionary of American History* would have room for far more substantial treatments of other subjects. Of course, countless individuals who have influenced American life can still be traced in the *Dictionary's* index.

The cumulative result of the editors' work is the most thorough reworking in the history of historical reference books. "Sandusky" has been archived, while "San Diego," now one of the nation's ten largest cities, has been substantially expanded. We also have shifted our emphasis. In 1940, the *Dictionary* had an entry on Archangel, a Russian port, occupied and used by Allied Expeditionary Forces who went to the Soviet Union to contain the Bolshevik Revolution. But the old *Dictionary* had no essay on the larger scope of the Russian intervention in 1918, and obviously, if students need to know about that intervention, it is unlikely that they would simply search for a piece on Archangel. The new edition includes an entry on the intervention and a larger one on the whole course of Russian-American relations.

Time obviously adds to the body of facts. But altered circumstances force us to change emphasis or focus, and our interpretations of events and historical processes are constantly evolving. Consider:

The South. For more than 350 years, the South represented a major component of American colonial and national history. The region played a large role in the settlement and development of the nation, but the central historical concern was riveted on its economic system of slavery, and the political and social implications of the "peculiar institution." That system, of course, resulted in the Civil War, an event of transcendent importance in American history. The impact of the war—whether in the events of Reconstruction, the continued subjugation of the large African American minority, or the region's semicolonial status in the American economic system—offered standard fare for historical narrative until well past the midpoint of the twentieth century. But the South's "Lost Cause" eventually became just that, and the history of the South in the past forty to fifty years has become something substantially different. The civil rights movement eventually liberated white and black people alike, as President Jimmy Carter famously said. The entrenched power of the region's congressmen provided a substantial flow of federal money for military and economic spending in the region. The area's resistance to unionization made it a magnet for the migration of northern industry. Technological change, such as air conditioning, substantially contributed to making the area habitable and attracting new population from the northern and mid-western parts of the country.

Today, "the South" is a vastly different place, with a drastically altered political, economic, and social standing within the American nation. All these considerations can be found in the new volumes, under such varied headings as the South, Civil Rights Laws, Discrimination, Right-to-Work Laws, and Air Conditioning. And yet we have retained (and revised) the historical description of the slave economy and the social system it sustained (Plantation System; Slave Trade; Slavery), for such institutions remain essential to understanding the historical and evolving nature of the South, and indeed of the nation as a whole.

The West. The 1940s perception of the American West also was vastly different from today's. The image of the "Wild West," romanticized and exaggerated in such popular works as *The Virginian* and *Stagecoach*, now has been replaced by one of a vibrant economy, a leader in technological development, and an innovator of unique lifestyles. Again, we must examine a major population shift, migrations of peoples and industries, the growth of new cities, and the role of vast outlays of federal money. Yet such key concepts of more traditional American historiography as transportation, public lands, and mining still must be addressed in order to understand the region's history. Furthermore, the role of water—and the lack of it—remains essential for interpreting the development of what essentially remains the "Great American Desert."

African American life today is vastly different than it was sixty years ago, when segregation, by law in the South and by informal custom elsewhere, retained a firm grip on American life. World War II and its aftermath brought important changes, fueled in part by population exchange and migration. In the decades since, African American history and its relationship to the history of the nation as a whole have changed greatly as well. In 1940, the "Negro" generally was discussed in a passive sense; now we examine African American life and culture for their dynamic contributions to American life. Today, diversity, race, and ethnicity are celebrated as integral components of American culture, not ignored or swept aside. In this edition of the *Dictionary of American History*, the student will find a broad range of topics illustrating the experience and cultural life of a group that now constitutes approximately 13 percent of the population. These topics include African American Religions and Sects, and African American Studies. Elsewhere there are integrated treatments of the black experience in higher education, literature, the military, and the polling place (Suffrage). Readers may also consult such topics as Black Cavalry in the West, Black Nationalism, Black Panthers, Black Power, the Civil Rights Movement, the Harlem Renaissance, Race Relations, and many others.

The World Trade Center, of course, was not included in the 1940 or 1976 editions. But in this revision, we include it as representative and symbolic of U.S. pre-eminence in world economic affairs. In the past decade, the Trade Center has become, too, a symbol of American vulnerability to a new threat of terrorism. Both the bombing of 1993 and the events of 11 September 2001 are treated in the new work.

Producing the *Dictionary of American History* has been a cooperative effort. Charles Scribner's Sons sponsored the project from its outset in the 1930s. The inevitable corporate changes have not altered its commitment. Publisher Karen Day inaugurated this revision in 1996. She and Frank Menchaca, her successor, consistently offered the necessary leadership and material support. Managing Editor John Fitzpatrick and Associate Editor Anna Grojec provided the direction and daily attention to keep things going. Their fine staff of assistants and copy editors has been superb. Valued and respected friends and colleagues contributed mightily to the completion of this task. Lizabeth Cohen, Pauline Maier, and Louis Masur participated in the formulation and conception of the volumes. Andrew Rieser directed a team of enthusiastic, hardworking graduate students in updating many hundreds of entries. Frederick Hoxie provided his unrivaled knowledge of Native American history and completely revamped the editorial content for that area. Last but hardly least, Associate Editors Michael Bernstein, Hasia Diner, David Hollinger, and Graham Hodges supplied the bulk of editorial direction and substantive criticism of the work, supplemented by the expertise of Philip Pauly in the life sciences and Rolf Achilles in the visual arts. I am grateful to all who joined me in this venture.

Stanley I. Kutler
Madison, Wis.
10 August 2002

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