

# From the Colonial Period to World War II: A Historical Exploration

The history of the United States is a complex and fascinating one, spanning over two centuries and filled with many important events and developments. This article will explore the period from the colonial period to World War II, providing a brief overview of some of the key events and themes that shaped this era.



## U.S. History Through Children's Literature: From the Colonial Period to World War II by Jill Eileen Smith

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## The Colonial Period (1607-1783)

The colonial period began with the establishment of the first permanent English settlement in North America at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607. Over the next century and a half, thirteen colonies were established along the Atlantic coast. These colonies were largely self-governing, but they were still subject to the authority of the British Crown.

The colonial period was a time of great economic growth and expansion. The colonists developed a plantation economy based on the cultivation of tobacco, rice, and cotton. They also established a thriving maritime trade with Europe and the Caribbean. However, the colonial period was also marked by conflict, both with Native Americans and with the British government.

### **Key Events of the Colonial Period**

- 1607: Founding of Jamestown, Virginia
- 1620: Founding of Plymouth Colony by the Pilgrims
- 1754-1763: French and Indian War
- 1775-1783: American Revolutionary War

### **The Early Republic (1783-1861)**

The American Revolutionary War ended in 1783 with the signing of the Treaty of Paris. This treaty recognized the independence of the United States and established the new nation's boundaries. The early republic was a time of great change and turmoil as the United States struggled to define its identity and its place in the world.

The early republic was also a time of great economic growth and expansion. The United States acquired vast new territories in the west, and its population grew rapidly. The country also developed a thriving industrial economy, becoming one of the world's leading manufacturing powers.

However, the early republic was also marked by conflict, both internal and external. The United States fought two wars against Great Britain, the War of 1812 and the Mexican-American War. The country also experienced a

civil war, the American Civil War, which was fought between the Northern and Southern states over the issue of slavery.

### **Key Events of the Early Republic**

- 1787: Constitutional Convention
- 1789: Adoption of the Constitution
- 1803: Louisiana Purchase
- 1812-1815: War of 1812
- 1846-1848: Mexican-American War
- 1861-1865: American Civil War

### **The Gilded Age and Progressive Era (1865-1914)**

The Gilded Age was a period of rapid economic growth and industrialization in the United States. It was also a time of great social and political change. The Gilded Age saw the rise of big business, the growth of the middle class, and the emergence of new social and political movements.

The Progressive Era was a period of reform in the United States. Progressives sought to address the social and economic problems that had emerged during the Gilded Age. They fought for laws to protect workers, promote education, and regulate big business. They also worked to expand voting rights and to make government more responsive to the needs of the people.

### **Key Events of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era**

- 1865-1877: Reconstruction

- 1876: Centennial Exposition
- 1880s-1890s: Populist Movement



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