

CHAPTER I

THE FOUNDING

The history of the United States begins with the arrival of the first European settlers in the late 15th century. The Pilgrims, who sought religious freedom, established the Plymouth colony in 1620. The Virginia Company, seeking economic gain, founded Jamestown in 1607. The Spanish, French, and Dutch also established colonies in North America.

The American Revolution (1775-1783) was a war for independence from Great Britain. The Continental Congress, meeting in Philadelphia, declared independence on September 3, 1776. The war ended with the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1783, which recognized the United States as a sovereign nation. The Constitution was drafted in 1787 and ratified in 1788, establishing the framework of the federal government.