

CHAPTER 2

The Invasion and Settlement of North America

1550–1700

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ESTABLISHING COLONIES IN THE DISTANT LAND OF NORTH AMERICA was not for the faint of heart. First came a long voyage in small ships over stormy, dangerous waters. Then the migrants, weakened by weeks of travel, spoiled food, and shipboard diseases, faced the challenges of life in an alien land inhabited by potentially hostile Indian peoples. “We neither fear them or trust them,” declared Puritan settler Francis Higginson, but rely for protection on “our musketeers.” Although the risks were great and the rewards uncertain, tens of thousands of Europeans crossed the Atlantic during the seventeenth century, driven by poverty and persecution at home or drawn by the lures of the New World: land, gold, and—as another Puritan migrant put it—the hope of “propagating the Gospel to these poor barbarous people.”

Carolina Indians Fishing, 1585

The artist John White was one of the English settlers in Sir Walter Raleigh's ill-fated colony on Roanoke Island, and his watercolors provide a rich visual record of Native American life. Here the Indians who resided near present-day Albemarle Sound in North Carolina are harvesting a protein-rich diet of fish from its shallow waters.

Trustees of the British Museum.

For Native Americans, the European invasion was nothing short of catastrophic. “Our fathers had plenty of deer and skins, . . . and our coves were full of fish and fowl,” the Narragansett chief Miantonomi warned the neighboring Montauk people in 1642, “but these English having gotten our land . . . their cows and horses eat the grass, and their hogs spoil our clam banks, and we shall all be starved.” Whether they came as settlers or missionaries or fur traders, the white-skinned

people spread havoc, bringing new diseases and religions and threatening Indian peoples with the loss of their cultures, lands, and lives. The stakes of the contest were enormous and demanded united resistance. “We [are] all Indians,” Miantonomi continued, and must “say brother to one another, . . . otherwise we shall all be gone shortly.” The first century of cultural contact foretold the course of North American history: the advance of the European invaders and the dispossession of the Indian peoples.

Imperial Conflicts and Rival Colonial Models

In Mesoamerica the Spanish colonial regime forced the Indians to convert to Catholicism and to work digging gold and farming large estates. But in the sparsely populated Indian lands north of the Rio Grande, other Europeans founded different types of colonies (Table 2.1). In the fur-trading empires created by the French and the Dutch, the native peoples retained their lands and political autonomy, while in the English colonies the rapidly multiplying settlers expelled the resident Indians, who were pushed ever farther to the west. Despite the differing goals of these colonial regimes—the exploitation of native labor by the Spanish, the trading of furs by the French and the Dutch, the creation of farming communities by

the English—nearly everywhere the Indian peoples eventually rose in revolt.

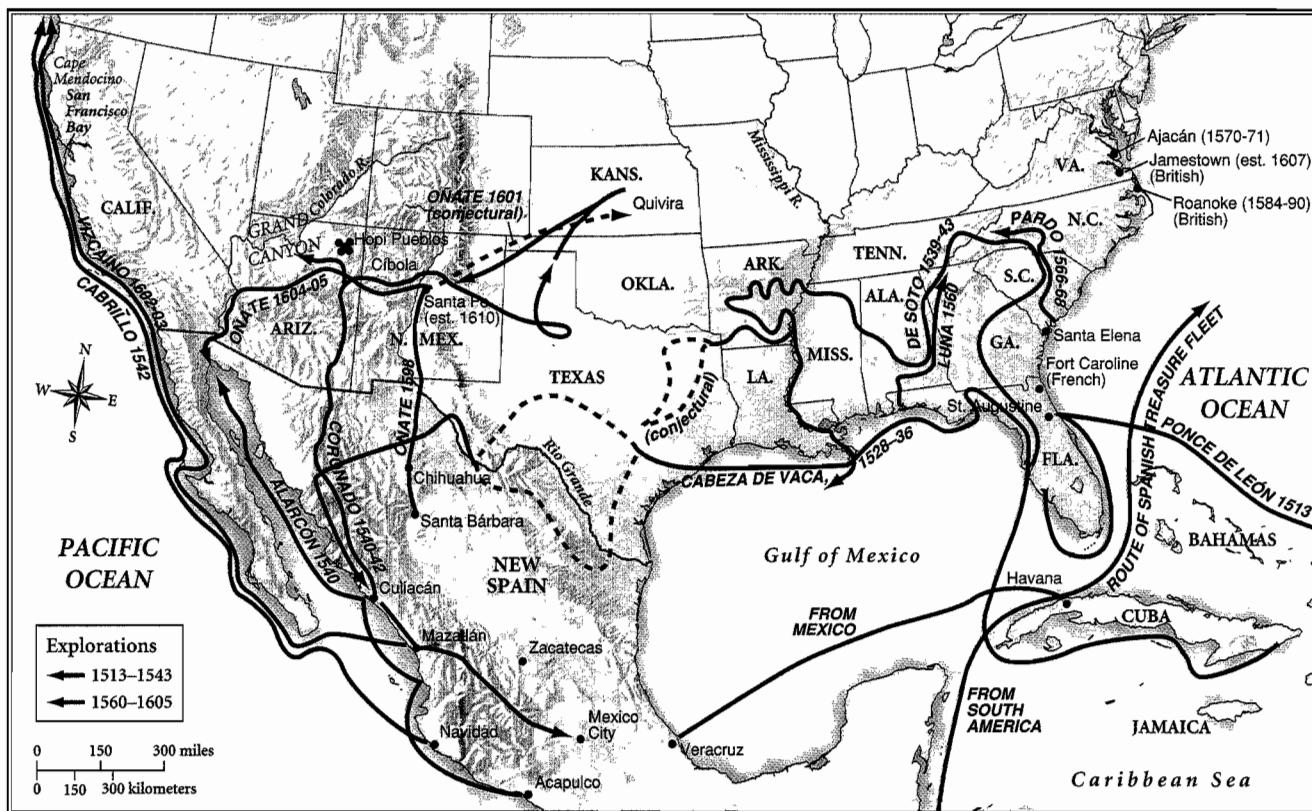
New Spain: Colonization and Conversion

In their ceaseless quest for gold, Spanish adventurers became the first Europeans to explore the southern and western United States. In the 1540s Francisco Vásquez de Coronado searched in vain for Cíbola, the fabled seven golden cities said to lie north of present-day Albuquerque. Continuing his search, Coronado dispatched expeditions that discovered the Grand Canyon in Arizona, the Pueblo peoples of New Mexico, and the grasslands of central Kansas. Simultaneously, Hernán de Soto and a force of 600 adventurers cut a bloody swath across the densely populated Southeast, doing battle with the Apalachees of northern Florida and the Coosas of northern Alabama but finding no gold and few other riches (Map 2.1).

By the 1560s few Spanish officials still dreamed of finding rich Indian empires north of Mexico. Now their main goal was to prevent other European nations from establishing settlements. Roving English “sea dogs” were already plundering Spanish possessions in the Caribbean, and French corsairs were attacking Spanish treasure ships, halving the Spanish crown’s revenue. Equally ominously, French Protestants began to settle in Florida, long claimed by Spain. In response King Philip II ordered that the Frenchmen in Florida be “cast . . . out by the best

TABLE 2.1 European Colonies in North America before 1660

	Date	First Settlement	Type	Religion	Chief Export or Economic Activity
New France	1608	Quebec	Royal	Catholic	Furs
New Netherland	1613	New Amsterdam	Corporate	Dutch Reformed	Furs
New Sweden	1628	Fort Christina	Corporate	Lutheran	Furs; farming
English Colonies					
Virginia	1607	Jamestown	Corporate (Merchant)	Anglican	Tobacco
Plymouth	1620	Plymouth	Corporate (Religious)	Separatist-Puritan	Mixed farming; livestock
Massachusetts Bay	1630	Boston	Corporate (Religious)	Puritan	Mixed farming
Maryland	1634	St. Mary's	Proprietary	Catholic	Tobacco; grain
Connecticut	1635	Hartford	Corporate (Religious)	Puritan	Mixed farming; livestock
Rhode Island	1636	Providence	Corporate (Religious)	Separatist-Puritan	Mixed farming; livestock



MAP 2.1 New Spain Looks North, 1513–1610

The quest for gold drew Spanish adventurers first to Florida and then deep into the present-day United States. When the wide-ranging expeditions of Hernán de Soto and Francisco Vásquez de Coronado failed to find gold or flourishing Indian civilizations, authorities in New Spain confined northern settlements to St. Augustine in Florida (to protect the treasure fleet) and Santa Fe in the upper Rio Grande Valley.

For more help analyzing this map, see the **ONLINE STUDY GUIDE** at bedfordstmartins.com/henretta.

means,” and Spanish troops massacred 300 members of the “evil Lutheran sect.”

To safeguard Florida, in 1565 Spain established a fort at St. Augustine, the first permanent European settlement in the future United States (see American Lives, “Luis de Velasco/Opechancanough/Massatamohtnock: A Case of Possible Multiple Identities,” p. 42). It also founded a dozen other military outposts and religious missions, one as far north as Chesapeake Bay, but these were soon destroyed by Indian attacks. Spain also confronted a new threat from the Atlantic. In 1586 the English sea captain Sir Francis Drake sacked the important port city of Cartagena (in present-day Colombia) and nearly wiped out St. Augustine.

Franciscan Missions. Military setbacks at the hands of Native Americans prompted the Spanish crown to adopt a new policy toward the Indian peoples. The Comprehensive Orders for New Discoveries, issued in 1573, placed the “pacification” of new lands primarily in

the hands of missionaries, not conquistadors. Franciscan friars promptly established missions in the Pueblo world visited by Coronado two generations before, naming the area Nuevo México (Map 2.1). The friars built their missions and churches near existing Indian pueblos and farming villages and often learned Indian languages. Protected by Spanish soldiers, the robed and sandaled Franciscans smashed the religious idols of the Native Americans and, to win their allegiance to the Christian God, dazzled them with rich vestments, gold crosses, and silver chalices.

For the Franciscans, religious conversion and cultural assimilation went hand in hand. They introduced the European practice of having men instead of women grow most of the crops and encouraged the Indians to talk, cook, dress, and walk like Spaniards. The friars’ rule was hardly benevolent. Sexual sinners and spirit worshipers were whipped, and monks generally ignored Spanish laws intended to protect the native peoples from coerced labor. This neglect allowed privileged Spanish landowners

Luis de Velasco/ Opechancanough/ Massatamohtnock: A Case of Possible Multiple Identities

Long before the Chesapeake Bay took its present name, it was known as the Bahía de Santa María (the Bay of Saint Mary), claimed by Spain and part of the giant colony of Florida that stretched from present-day Texas to Newfoundland. And long before the first English adventurers set foot in the colony they called Virginia, Spanish Jesuits established a mission there (in 1571) at Ajacán; they came to convert the local Algonquian inhabitants—the Powhatan people—to the Catholic faith.

For eighty years, from the 1560s to the 1640s, this land would be contested ground, as Spanish conquistadors, English adventurers, and native chiefs vied with one another for control of the land and its people. Strong but not conclusive evidence suggests that the life of one man spanned this eighty-year struggle and shaped its course. The Spanish knew him as Don Luis de Velasco, a young Indian cacique (chief) who had lived in Spain for a time and had apparently become a pious convert to the Catholic faith. A generation later the English probably encountered the same man as Opechancanough, a local chief, “the King of the Pamaunches” (Pamunkeys), and an astute negotiator who seemed to favor interracial peace. Finally, when Opechancanough succeeded his elder brother as the Powhatan, or main chief, in 1621, he assumed a new name, Massatamohtnock, and a new role: a diplomat-warrior who led two Indian uprisings.

Spanish Catholic convert, pacific leader and diplomat, zealous Native American patriot: Was this a case of several individuals or was there only one man? If so, what accounts for his multiple identities? A confused response to contradictory cultural pressures? Simple deception?



John Smith and Chief Opechancanough

The powerful Indian chief Opechancanough towers over the English adventurer John Smith in this engraving of their confrontation in 1609 over English access to Indian supplies of food. Library of Congress.

This puzzle has its origins in 1561, when two vessels commanded by the Spanish mariner and adventurer Pedro Menéndez de Avilés sailed into the Bahía de Santa María. Like other conquistadors Menéndez came looking for gold and plunder, but he also sought good harbors for naval garrisons to protect Spanish treasure ships from pirates. Menéndez went away without riches but bearing the youthful son of a local chief, an Indian “of fine presence and bearing,” whom he promised to take to Europe “that the King of Spain, his lord, might see him.” King Philip II was equally impressed by the imposing young cacique, who stood more than six feet tall. He granted the young Indian an allowance and had

Dominican friars teach him the Spanish language and the principles of the Catholic faith.

Three years later the young man was in Mexico, where he acquired a new patron, Don Luis de Velasco, the viceroy of New Spain, who became his godfather and gave the Indian his own name. Eager to return to his people, in 1566 the Indian Don Luis accompanied an expedition to the Bahía de Santa María that was blown off course, and he found himself once again in Spain. Under Jesuit instruction, a contemporary chronicler noted, "he was made ready and they gave him the holy sacraments of the altar and Confirmation." For his part, the Indian Don Luis convinced the Jesuit father Juan Baptista de Segura of his "plan and determination . . . of converting his parents, relatives, and countrymen to the faith of Jesus Christ, and baptizing them and making them Christians as he was."

Thus it was that the young Christianized Indian and eight Jesuit missionaries landed in 1571 in Ajacán, five miles from the later site of Jamestown. Once restored to the land of his childhood, Don Luis readopted its customs, taking a number of wives. Publicly chastised for adultery by Father Segura, he took refuge in his native village. When three missionaries came to fetch him, Don Luis had them killed with a "shower of arrows"; then, according to one account, he murdered Father Segura and the rest of the Jesuits by his own hand. The massacre brought quick retribution. In 1572 Menéndez personally led a punitive expedition that killed dozens of Indians, but his former protégé escaped his wrath.

At this point the historical record becomes cloudy, but there is strong circumstantial evidence that the young cacique, Don Luis, now took the name Opechancanough and became chief of the Pamunkeys. Both chiefs are described in the records as imposing in size, much taller than most Indians and most Europeans. And there is a chronological fit between their lives. When Don Luis returned to America in 1571, he was about twenty-five years old; in 1621, when Opechancanough succeeded Powhatan as chief, he was an elderly man. Finally, there is the translation of Opechancanough's name: "He whose soul is white"—perhaps a reference to his life as a Christian Indian or his remorse about Father Segura's fate.

As Spanish dreams of an eastern North American empire faded in the face of fierce Native American resistance, England dispatched its own adventurers to search for gold and promote "the Christian religion to such People as yet live in Darkness." Opechancanough first confronted the new invaders in December 1607, when he captured Captain John Smith but spared his life. Two

years later, after Smith grabbed Opechancanough "by the long lock of his head; and with my pistol at his breast . . . made him fill our bark with twenty tuns of corn," the chief did not seek revenge. Instead, for the next decade, the Pamunkeys' leader pursued a complicated diplomatic strategy: he "stood aloof" from the English and "would not be drawn to any Treaty." In particular, he strongly resisted proposals to take Indian children from their parents so that they might be "brought upp in Christianytie." At the same time, Opechancanough promoted interracial peace by accepting the marriage of his niece Pocahontas to John Rolfe and by arranging a treaty between the English and a Chesapeake tribe. The chief's allegiance may have been divided between two worlds: Algonquian and European. An Indian in culture and outlook, he was also a person whose soul was "white."

Then, in 1621, this man assumed a new identity, taking the name Massatamohtnock. And he took up a new cause. The number of English migrants had greatly increased, leading many Algonquians to believe that the English would soon take up "all their lands and would drive them out the country." To prevent this, the aging Massatamohtnock played a double game. While assuring Governor Wyatt of Virginia that "the Skye should sooner falle than Peace be broken, on his parte," he secretly mobilized the Pamunkeys and more than two dozen other Indian peoples. In 1622 these tribes launched a surprise attack that took the lives of 347 English men, women, and children. Urging the chief of the Potomacks to continue the onslaught, Massatamohtnock declared his goal: "before the end of two Moons there should not be an Englishman in all their Countries."

Finally defeated in the late 1620s when the English systematically burned Indian cornfields, the old chief reappeared in 1644, orchestrating another surprise assault that took the lives of "near five hundred Christians." Now a hundred years old, "so decrepit that he was not able to walk alone but was carried about by his men," Massatamohtnock was captured by the English and taken to Jamestown. There, an English official reported, an angry soldier "basely shot him through the back . . . of which wound he died."

The absence of Algonquian sources makes it unlikely that we will ever know the complete history or the real motives of this remarkable man. But the violent treatment Don Luis meted out to Father Segura and the uprisings Massatamohtnock instigated in 1622 and 1644 suggest that ultimately he defined himself as an Indian patriot, a resolute enemy of the European invaders and their Christian religion.



Conversion in New Mexico

Franciscan friars introduced Catholicism to the Indian peoples north of the Rio Grande, assisted by nuns of various religious orders. This 1631 engraving shows one of those nuns, María de Jesús de Agreda, preaching to a nomadic people (los chichimecos) in New Mexico.

Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas at Austin.

(*encomenderos*) who lived near the missions to collect tribute from the native population, both in goods and in forced labor. The Franciscan missions also depended on Indian workers, who grew the crops and carried them to market, often on their backs. Most Native Americans tolerated the Franciscans out of fear of military reprisals or in hopes of learning their spiritual secrets. But when Christian prayers failed to prevent European diseases, extended droughts, and Apache raids from devastating their communities, many Indians returned to their ancestral religions and began to blame Spanish rule for their ills. Thus, the chief and people of Hawikuh refused to become “wet-heads” (as Indians called baptized Christians) “because with the water of baptism they would have to die.”

Indian Revolts. In 1598 the already tense relations between Indians and Spaniards deteriorated when Juan de Oñate led an expedition of 500 Spanish soldiers and settlers into New Mexico to establish a fort and a trading

villa. Oñate’s men seized corn and clothing from the Pueblo peoples and murdered or raped those who resisted. When Indians of the Acoma pueblo killed 11 soldiers, the remaining troops destroyed the pueblo, killing 500 men and 300 women and children. Faced by now-hostile Indian peoples, most of the settlers withdrew. In 1610 the Spanish returned, founding the town of Santa Fe and reestablishing the system of missions and forced labor.

By 1680 nearly a hundred years of European diseases, forced tribute, and raids by Navajos and Apaches threatened many pueblos in New Mexico with extinction. Their population, which had once numbered 60,000, had declined to a mere 17,000. In desperation the Indian shaman (priest) Popé led the peoples of two dozen pueblos in a carefully coordinated rebellion, killing over 400 Spaniards and forcing the remaining 2,000 colonists to flee three hundred miles down the Rio Grande to El Paso. Repudiating Christianity, the Pueblo peoples desecrated churches and tortured and killed twenty-one missionaries. Reconquered a decade later, the Indians rebelled again in 1696, only to be subdued. Exhausted by war but having won the right to practice their own religion and avoid forced labor, the Pueblo peoples accepted their dependent position, joining with the Spanish to defend their lands against attacks by nomadic Indians.

Spain had managed to maintain its northern empire but had largely failed to achieve its goals of religious conversion and cultural assimilation. Taken aback by the military costs of expansion, Spanish officials decided not to undertake the settlement of the distant region of California, delaying until 1769 the permanent European occupation of that area. For the time being, Florida and New Mexico stood as the defensive outposts of Spain’s American empire.

New France: Furs and Souls

Far to the northeast the French likewise tried to convert the native peoples to Catholicism. In the 1530s Jacques Cartier had claimed the lands bordered by the Gulf of St. Lawrence for France, but the first permanent French settlement came only in 1608, when Samuel de Champlain founded Quebec. Despite a series of brutal famines in northwestern France and the availability of attractive leaseholds in the fertile St. Lawrence Valley, few peasants migrated to America. Government policy was partly to blame. France’s Catholic monarchs wanted an ample supply of military recruits at home. They also barred Huguenots (French Protestants) from settling in Quebec, fearing they would not be loyal to the crown. Moreover, the French peasantry held strong legal rights to their village lands and feared the short growing seasons and long bitter winters in Quebec. As one official remarked in 1684, Canada was “regarded as a country at the end of the world,” a virtual sentence of “civil death.” Of the 27,000 French men and women who migrated to Quebec, nearly

Samuel de Champlain

Going to War with the Hurons

Best known as the founder of Quebec, Samuel de Champlain was primarily a soldier and an adventurer. After fighting in the French religious wars, Champlain joined the Company of New France, determined to create a French empire in North America. In 1603 he traveled down the St. Lawrence River as far as Quebec, lived for three years in the company's failed settlement in Maine, and in 1608 returned to Quebec. To ensure French access to western fur trade, the following year Champlain joined the Hurons in a raid against the Iroquois, which he later described in a book of his American adventures.

Pursuing our route, I met some two or three hundred savages, who were encamped in huts near a little island called St. Eloi. . . . We made a reconnaissance, and found that they were tribes of savages called Ochasteguins [Hurons] and Algonquins, on their way to Quebec to assist us in exploring the territory of the Iroquois, with whom they are in deadly hostility. . . . [We joined with them and] went to the mouth of the River of the Iroquois [the Richelieu River, where it joins the St. Lawrence], where we stayed two days, refreshing ourselves with good venison, birds, and fish, which the savages gave us.

In all their encampments, they have their Pilotois, or Ostemoy, a class of persons who play the part of soothsayers, in whom these people have faith. One of these builds a cabin, surrounds it with small pieces of wood and covers it with his robe: after it is built, he places himself inside, so as not to be seen at all, when he seizes and shakes one of the posts of his cabin, muttering some words between his teeth, by which he says he invokes the devil, who appears to him in the form of a stone, and tells them whether they will meet their enemies and kill many

of them. . . . They frequently told me that the shaking of the cabin, which I saw, proceeded from the devil, who made it move, and not the man inside, although I could see the contrary. . . . They told me also that I should see fire come out from the top, which I did not see at all.

Now, as we began to approach within two or three days' journey of the abode of our enemies, we advanced only at night. . . . By day, they withdraw into the interior of the woods, where they rest, without straying off, neither making any noise, even for the sake of cooking, so as not to be noticed in case their enemies should by accident pass by. They make no fire, except in smoking, which amounts to almost nothing. They eat baked Indian meal, which they soak in water, when it becomes a kind of porridge. . . .

In order to ascertain what was to be the result of their undertaking, they often asked me if I had had a dream, and seen their enemies, to which I replied in the negative. . . . [Then one night] while sleeping, I dreamed that I saw our enemies, the Iroquois, drowning near a mountain, within sight. When I expressed a wish to help them, our allies, the savages, told me we must let them all die. . . . This, upon being related [to our allies], gave them so much confidence that they did not doubt any longer that good was to happen to them. . . .

[After our victory over the Iroquois] they took one of the prisoners, to whom they made a harangue, enumerating the cruelties which he and his men had already practiced toward them without any mercy, and that, in like manner, he ought to make up his mind to receive as much. They commanded him to sing, if he had courage, which he did; but it was a very sad song.

Meanwhile, our men kindled a fire; and, when it was well burning, they brand, and burned this poor creature gradually, so as to make him suffer greater torment. Sometimes they stopped, and threw water on his back. Then they tore out his nails, and applied fire to the extremities of his fingers and private member. Afterwards, they flayed the top of his head, and had a kind of gum poured all hot upon it. . . .

Source: Samuel de Champlain, *Voyages of Samuel de Champlain, 1604–1618*, ed. W. L. Grant (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907), 79–86.

two-thirds eventually returned to their homeland. In 1698 the European population of New France was only 15,200, compared with 100,000 settlers in the English colonies.

Rather than developing as a settler colony, New France instead became a vast fur-trading enterprise, and French explorers traveled deep into the continent to seek

new suppliers. In return for French support against the Five Nations of the Iroquois, the Huron Indians (who lived just to the north of the Great Lakes) allowed Champlain and his fur traders into their territory (see Voices from Abroad, "Samuel de Champlain: Going to War with the Hurons," above). By 1673 another French explorer,

Jacques Marquette, reached the Mississippi River in present-day Wisconsin and traveled as far south as Arkansas. Seeking fortune as well as fame, in 1681 Robert de La Salle traveled down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico, completing exploration of the majestic river. As a French priest noted with disgust, La Salle's expedition hoped "to buy all the Furs and Skins of the remotest Savages, who, as they thought, did not know their Value; and so enrich themselves in one single voyage." To honor Louis XIV, the Sun King, La Salle named the region he explored Louisiana; soon it included the small but thriving port of New Orleans on the Gulf of Mexico.

Despite their small numbers, French traders had a disastrous impact on Native Americans living near the Great Lakes. By introducing European diseases, they unwittingly triggered epidemics that killed 25 to 90 percent of the residents of many Indian villages, including those of their Huron allies. Moreover, by providing a market for deerskins and beaver pelts, the French set in motion a devastating series of Indian wars. Beginning in the 1640s, the New York Iroquois seized control of the fur trade by launching aggressive expeditions against the Hurons, forcing them to migrate to the north and west.

While French traders amassed furs, French priests sought converts among both the defeated Hurons and the belligerent Iroquois. Between 1625 and 1763 hundreds of Jesuit priests lived among the Indians and, to a greater extent than the Spanish Franciscans, came to understand their values. One Jesuit reported a Huron belief that "our souls have desires which are inborn and concealed, yet are made known by means of dreams"; he then used this belief to explain the Christian doctrines of immortality and salvation to the native peoples. At first many Indians welcomed the French "Black Robes" as powerful spiritual beings with magical secrets, such as the ability to forge iron, but, as in New Mexico, skepticism grew when prayers to the Christian God did not protect them from disease and enemy attack. A Peoria chief charged that the priest's "fables are good only in his own country; we have our own [religious beliefs], which do not make us die as his do."

Unlike the Spanish Franciscans, the French Jesuits did not use Indians for forced labor and tried to keep alcoholic beverages, which wreaked havoc among Indian peoples, from becoming a bargaining item in the French fur trade. Moreover, the French Jesuits won converts by addressing Indian needs. In the 1690s young women of the Illinois people in the Mississippi River Valley embraced the cult of the Virgin Mary, using its emphasis on chastity to assert the Algonquian belief that unmarried women were "masters of their own body."

Still, the French fur-trading system brought war and cultural devastation to the Indian peoples of eastern North America. According to an oral history of the Iroquois, "Everywhere there was peril and everywhere mourning. Feuds with outer nations, feuds with brother nations,

feuds of . . . sister towns and feuds of families and of clans made every warrior a stealthy man who liked to kill."

New Netherland: Commerce

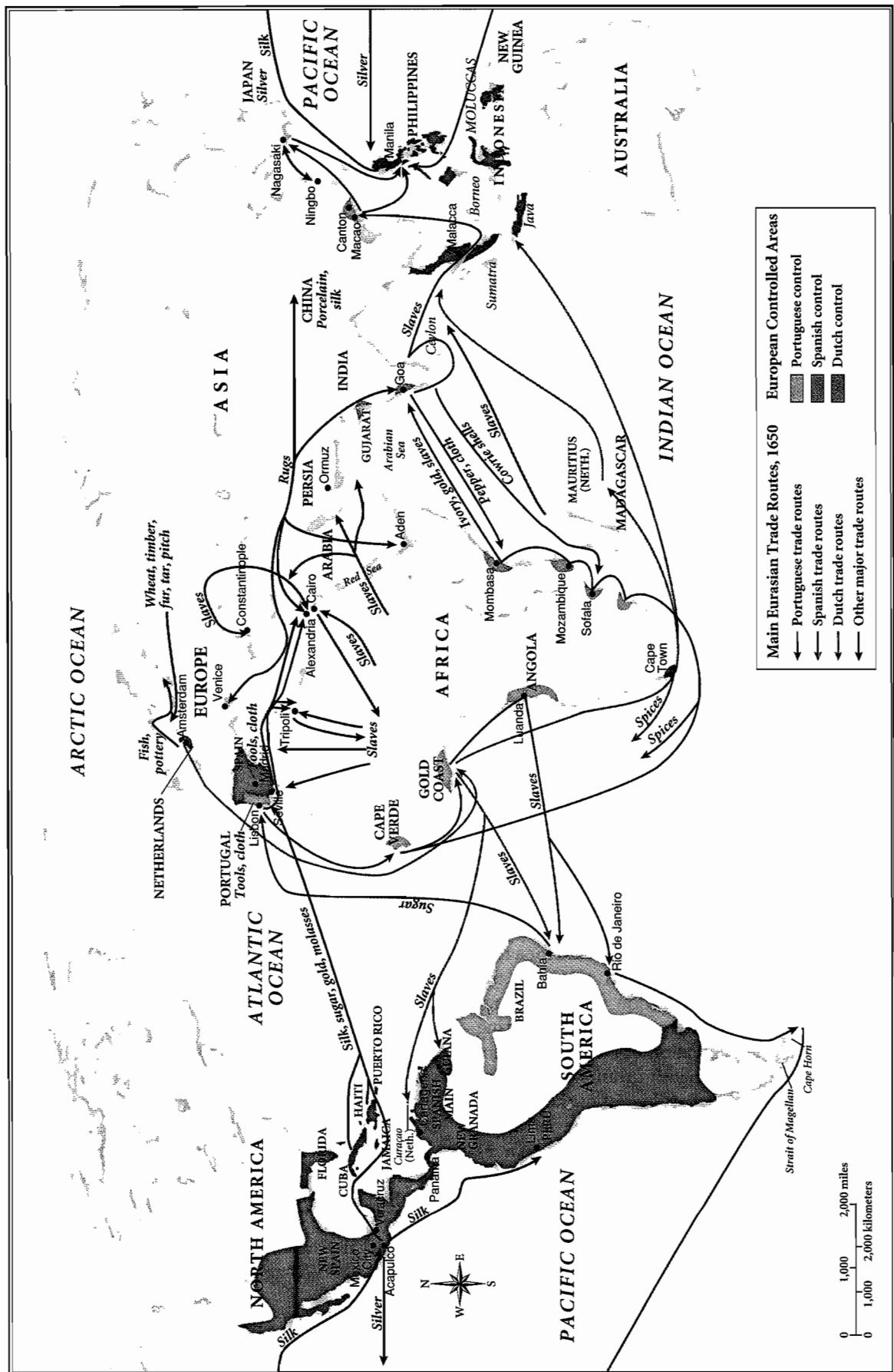
Unlike the French and Spanish, the Dutch in North America had little interest in religious conversion. Their eyes were fastened on commerce, for the Dutch Republic was the trading hub of Europe. In 1609 Henry Hudson, an Englishman employed by the Dutch East India Company, found and named the Hudson River in the area of present-day New York, and a few years later the Dutch established fur-trading posts on Manhattan Island and at Fort Orange (present-day Albany). In 1621 the Dutch government chartered the West India Company, giving it a trade monopoly in West Africa and exclusive authority to establish outposts in America. Three years later the company founded the town of New Amsterdam on Manhattan Island, the capital of New Netherland (Map 2.2).

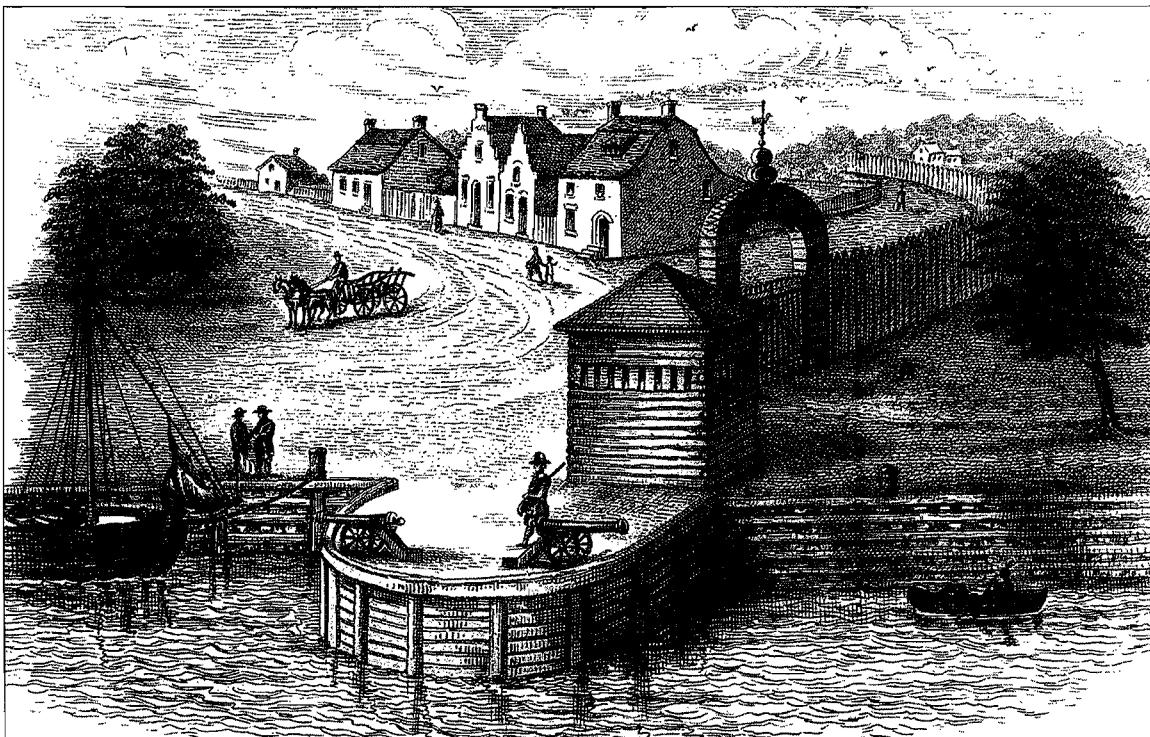
The wilderness fur-trading posts attracted few Dutch settlers, and their small size made them vulnerable to invasion by rival European nations. To encourage migration of permanent settlers, the West India Company granted huge estates along the Hudson River to wealthy Dutchmen, stipulating that each proprietor settle fifty tenants on his land within four years or lose it; by 1646 only one proprietor, Kiliaen Van Rensselaer, had succeeded. The population in Dutch North America remained small, reaching only 1,500 in 1664.

Although New Netherland failed as a settler colony, it flourished briefly as a fur-trading enterprise. In 1633 Dutch traders at Fort Orange exported thirty thousand beaver and otter pelts. Subsequently, the Dutch seized prime farming land from the Algonquian-speaking peoples and took over their trading network, in which corn and wampum from Long Island were exchanged for furs from Maine. The Algonquians responded with force. By the end of a bloody two-year war more than 200 Dutch residents and 1,000 Indians had been killed, many in brutal massacres of women, children, and elderly men. After the war the Dutch traders expanded their profitable links with the Mohawks, one of the Iroquois Nations of New York and a long-time foe of the Algonquians, exchanging guns and other manufactures

► MAP 2.2 The Eurasian Trade System and Overseas Spheres of Influence, 1650

Between 1550 and 1650 Spanish, Portuguese, and Dutch merchants took control of the maritime trade of the Southern Hemisphere, carrying goods to Europe from China, the Philippines, Indonesia, and India. They also created the South Atlantic system (see Chapter 3), transporting African slaves to European-run plantations in Brazil and the Caribbean and returning to Europe with valuable cargoes of sugar. After 1600 the Spanish and the Dutch began to settle and trade in North America as well. (To trace changes in trade and empires over time, see also Map 1.4 on p. 22 and Map 5.1 on p. 134.)





New Amsterdam, c. 1640

As the wooden palisade surrounding the town indicates, New Amsterdam was a frontier settlement, a fortlike trading post at the edge of vast lands populated by alien Indian peoples. The first settlers, remembering the architecture and waterways of Amsterdam and other Dutch cities, built houses in the Dutch style, with their gable ends facing the street (note the middle two houses), and excavated a canal across lower Manhattan Island, connecting the Hudson and East Rivers. Library of Congress.

for furs. However, the West India Company now largely ignored its crippled North American settlement, concentrating instead on the profitable importation of African slaves to its sugar plantations in Brazil.

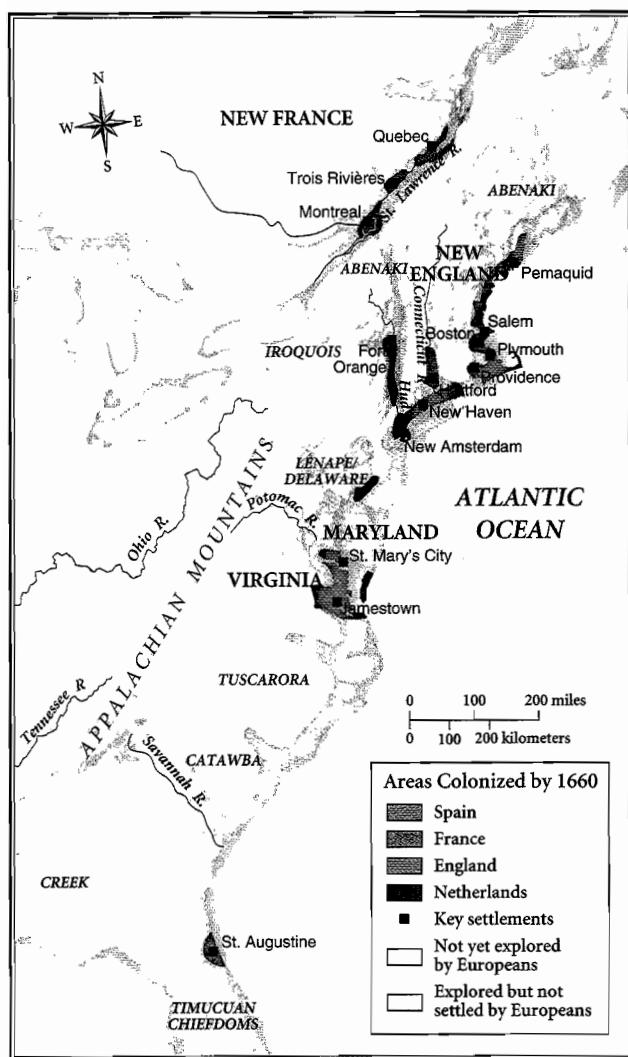
Moreover, Dutch officials in New Amsterdam ruled shortsightedly. Governor Peter Stuyvesant rejected the demands of English Puritan settlers on Long Island for a representative system of government and alienated the colony's increasingly diverse population of Dutch, English, and Swedish migrants. Consequently, in 1664, during an Anglo-Dutch war, the population of New Amsterdam offered little resistance to an English invasion and subsequently accepted English rule. For the rest of the century the renamed towns of New York and Albany remained small fur-trading centers, Dutch-English outposts in a region still dominated by Native Americans. In Albany, Mohawk remained the language of business until the 1720s.

The First English Model: Tobacco and Settlers

The first English ventures in North America, undertaken by minor nobility in the 1580s, were abject failures. Sir Humphrey Gilbert's settlement in Newfoundland

collapsed for lack of financing, and Sir Ferdinando Gorges's colony along the coast of Maine foundered because of inadequate supplies and the harsh climate. Sir Walter Raleigh's three expeditions to North Carolina likewise ended in disaster when the colony he financed at Roanoke vanished without a trace (today it is known as the "lost" colony). After these failures, merchants replaced landed gentry as the leaders of English expansion; initially, their main goal was trade rather than settlement. To provide adequate funding, the merchants formed **joint-stock companies** that sold shares to many investors and sought royal support. In 1606 the new monarch, King James I (r. 1603–1625), granted a group of ambitious London merchants the right to exploit North America from present-day North Carolina to southern New York. To honor the memory of Elizabeth I, the "Virgin Queen," the company's directors named the region Virginia. They promised to settle the land and "propagate the *Christian religion*" among the "infidels and Savages" (Map 2.3).

The Jamestown Settlement. However, trade for gold and other valuable goods remained the main goal of the Virginia Company, and the first expedition in 1607



MAP 2.3 Eastern North America in 1650

Four European nations had permanent settlements in eastern North America by 1650, but only England had substantial numbers of settlers, some 25,000 in New England and another 15,000 in the Chesapeake region. However, the European presence extended into the interior, as colonial authorities established diplomatic and commercial relations with neighboring Indian peoples and as French and Dutch fur traders carried European goods and diseases to distant tribes.

included only traders and adventurers—no settlers, ministers, or women. The company retained ownership of all the land and appointed a governor and a small council to direct the adventurers, who were its employees or “servants.” They were expected to procure their own food and ship anything of value to England—gold, exotic crops, and Indian merchandise. Some of the employees were young gentlemen with personal ties to the shareholders of the company but no experience in living off the land: a bunch of “unruly Sparks, packed off by their Friends to escape worse Destinies at home.” The rest were cynical adventurers bent on seizing gold from the Indians or turning a quick profit from trade in

English cloth and metalware. All they wanted, as one of them said, was to “dig gold, refine gold, load gold.”

Unfortunately, such traders were unprepared for the challenges of the new environment. Arriving in Virginia after a hazardous four-month voyage, the newcomers settled on a swampy peninsula on a river. They named both their new home (Jamestown) and the waterway (James River) after the king. Because the adventurers had chosen an unhealthful location with little fresh water and refused to plant crops, their fate was sealed. Of the 120 Englishmen who embarked on the expedition, only 38 were alive nine months later, and death continued to take a high toll. By 1611 the Virginia Company had sent 1,200 settlers to Jamestown, but fewer than half had survived. “Our men were destroyed with cruel diseases, as Swellings, Fluxes, Burning Fevers, and by warres,” reported one of the leaders, “but for the most part they died of mere famine.”

Native American hostility was a major threat to the survival of the settlement. Upon their arrival, the traders had been immediately confronted by the Pamunkey chief Powhatan, the leader of the Algonquian-speaking tribes of the region, some 14,000 people in all. Powhatan, whom the adventurer John Smith described as a “grave majestic man,” allowed his followers to exchange their corn for English cloth and iron hatchets but treated the English as one of the dependent peoples of his chiefdom.

As conflicts over food and land increased, Powhatan threatened war, accusing the English of coming “not to trade but to invade my people and possess my country.” In 1614 the Indian leader tried another strategy to integrate the newcomers into his chiefdom, allowing the marriage of his daughter Pocahontas to the adventurer John Rolfe. This tactic also failed, in part because Rolfe imported tobacco seeds from the West Indies and began to cultivate the crop, which was already popular in England. Tobacco quickly became the basis of economic life in Virginia, setting in motion the creation of a settler society.

New Political Institutions. To attract migrants to its increasingly valuable colony, the Virginia Company instituted a new and far-reaching set of policies. In 1617 it allowed individual settlers to own land, granting one hundred acres to every freeman in Virginia, and established a **headright** system giving every incoming head of a household a right to fifty acres of land and fifty additional acres for every servant. The following year the company issued a “greate Charter” that swept away the military-style regime of Governor Sir Thomas Dale, laying the basis for a system of representative government. The House of Burgesses, which first convened in Jamestown in 1619, had the authority to make laws and levy taxes, although the governor or the company council in England could veto its legislative acts. By 1622 these incentives of

land ownership for ordinary settlers, self-government by local leaders, and a court system based on “the lawes of the realme of England” had attracted about 4,500 new recruits. Virginia was on the verge of becoming an established colony.

However, the influx of settlers sparked all-out war with the Indians. Land-hungry farmers demanded access to land that the Native Americans had cleared and were using, alarming Opechancanough, Powhatan’s brother and successor. Mobilizing the peoples of many Chesapeake tribes, in 1622 Opechancanough launched a surprise attack, killing nearly a third of the white population and vowing to drive the rest into the ocean. The English retaliated by harvesting the Indians’ cornfields, providing food for themselves while depriving their enemies of sustenance, a strategy that gradually secured the safety of the colony.

The cost of the war was high for both sides. The Indians killed many settlers and destroyed much property, but Opechancanough’s strategy had failed; rather than ending the English invasion, the uprising accelerated it. As one English militiaman put it, “[We now felt we could] by right of Warre, and law of Nations, invade the Country, and destroy them who sought to destroy us; whereby wee shall enjoy their cultivated places . . . possessing the fruits of others’ labour.” The invaders sold captured warriors into slavery and took control of huge areas of land. By 1630 the colonists in Virginia had created a flourishing tobacco economy and a stable English-style local polity, controlled by landed gentlemen sitting as justices of the peace.

The Chesapeake Experience

The English colonies in the Chesapeake brought wealth to some people but poverty and moral degradation to many more. Settlers forcefully dispossessed Indians of their lands, and prominent families ruthlessly pursued their dreams of wealth by exploiting the labor of English indentured servants and enslaved African laborers.

Settling the Tobacco Colonies

Distressed by the Indian uprising of 1622, James I dissolved the Virginia Company, accusing its directors of mismanagement, and created a royal colony in 1624. Under the terms of the charter, the king and his ministers appointed the governor and a small advisory council. The king allowed the House of Burgesses to remain, but any legislation it enacted required ratification by his Privy Council. James also legally established the Church of England in Virginia, so that all property owners had to pay taxes to support the clergy. These institutions—a royal governor, an elected assembly, and an established

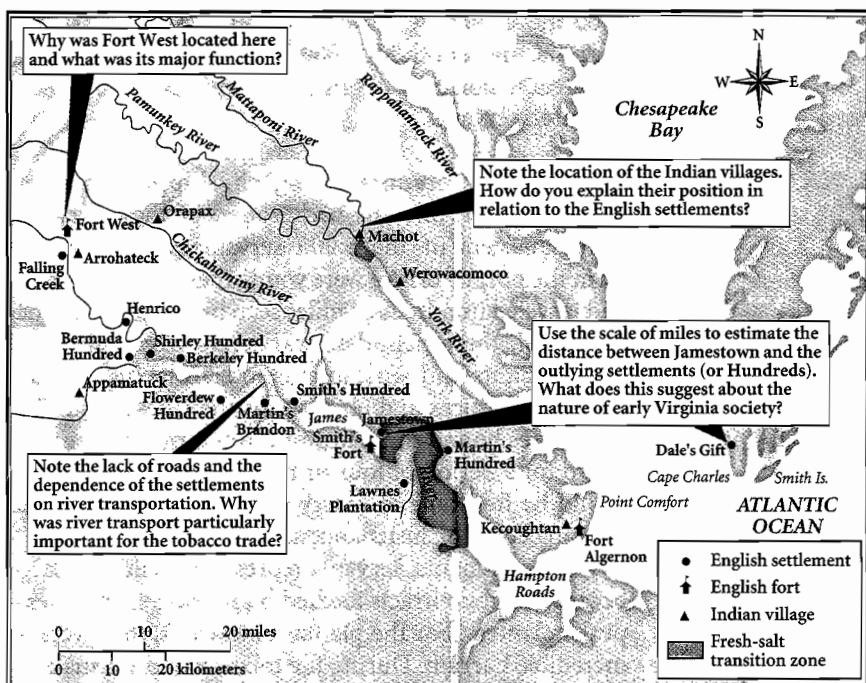
Anglican church—became the model for royal colonies throughout English America.

Catholics in Maryland. However, a second tobacco-growing settler colony, which developed in neighboring Maryland, had a different set of institutions. In 1632 King Charles I (r. 1625–1649), the successor to James I, conveyed most of the territory bordering the vast Chesapeake Bay to Cecilius Calvert, an aristocrat who carried the title Lord Baltimore. As the proprietor of Maryland (named in honor of Queen Henrietta Maria, Charles’s wife), Baltimore could sell, lease, or give this land away as he wished. He also had the authority to appoint public officials and to found churches and appoint ministers.

Baltimore wanted Maryland to become a refuge from persecution for his fellow English Catholics. He therefore devised a policy of religious toleration intended to minimize confrontations between Catholics and Protestants, instructing the governor (his brother, Leonard Calvert) to allow “no scandall nor offence to be given to any of the Protestants” and to “cause All Acts of Romane Catholicque Religion to be done as privately as may be.” In 1634, twenty gentlemen (mostly Catholics) and two hundred artisans and laborers (mostly Protestants) established St. Mary’s City, which overlooked the mouth of the Potomac River. The population grew quickly, for the Calverts carefully planned and supervised the colony’s development, hiring skilled artisans and offering ample grants of land to wealthy migrants. However, political and religious conflict constantly threatened Maryland’s stability. When Governor Leonard Calvert tried to govern without the “Advice, Assent, and Approbation” of the freemen of the colony, as the charter specified, a representative assembly elected by the freemen insisted on the right to initiate legislation, which Lord Baltimore grudgingly granted. Uprisings by Protestant settlers also endangered Maryland’s religious mission. To protect his Catholic coreligionists, who remained a minority, Lord Baltimore persuaded the assembly to enact a Toleration Act (1649) granting religious freedom to all Christians.

Tobacco and Disease. In Maryland, as in Virginia, tobacco was the basis of the economy. Indians had long used tobacco, a substance unknown in Europe before the Columbian Exchange, as a medicine and a stimulant. By the 1620s English men and women were craving tobacco and the nicotine it contained, smoking, chewing, and snorting it with abandon. Initially James I condemned the use of this “vile Weed” and warned that its “black stinking fumes” were “baleful to the nose, harmful to the brain, and dangerous to the lungs.” But the king’s attitude changed as revenues from an import tax on tobacco filled the royal treasury.

European demand for tobacco set off a forty-year economic boom in the Chesapeake, attracting thousands



MAP 2.4 River Plantations in Virginia, c. 1640

The first migrants settled in widely dispersed plantations—and different disease environments—along the James River. The growth of the tobacco economy continued this pattern as wealthy planter-merchants traded with English ship captains from their riverfront plantations. Consequently, few substantial towns or trading centers developed in the Chesapeake region.

of profit-hungry migrants. “All our riches for the present do consist in tobacco,” a planter remarked in 1630. Exports rose from about 3 million pounds in 1640 to 10 million pounds in 1660. Planters moved up the river valleys, establishing large farms (plantations) that were distant from one another but easily reached by water (Map 2.4). The scarcity of towns meant a much weaker sense of community than existed in the open-field villages of rural England.

For most of the seventeenth century life in the Chesapeake colonies remained harsh, brutish, and

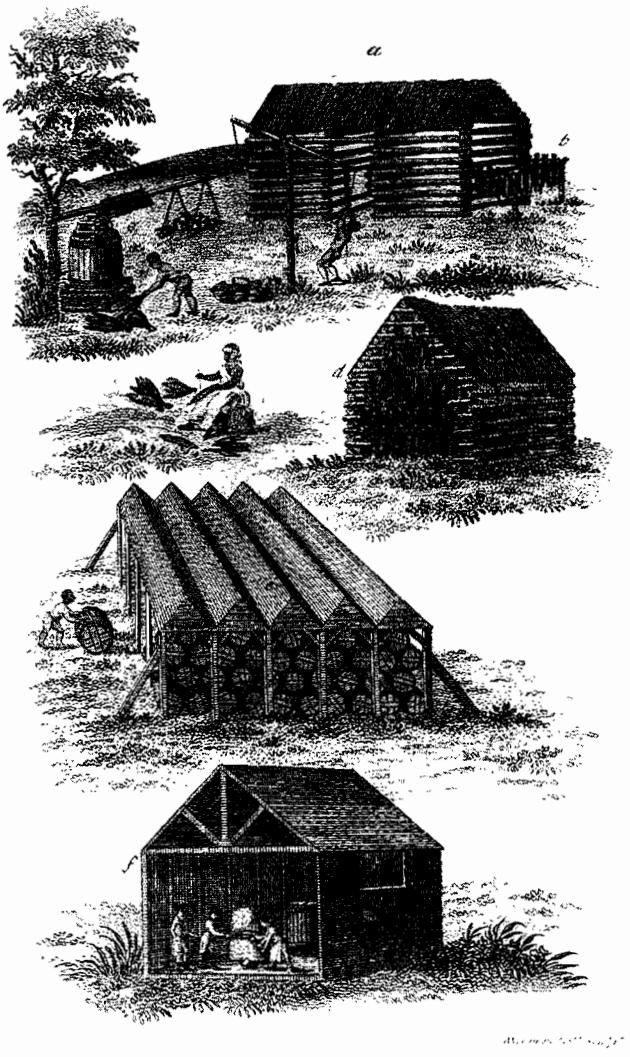
short. Most men never married because there were few women settlers, and families were often disrupted by early death. Mosquitoes as well as tobacco flourished in the mild Chesapeake climate, spreading malaria and weakening people’s resistance to other diseases (Table 2.2). Pregnant women were especially hard hit. Many died after bearing a first or second child. In Middlesex County, Virginia, more than 60 percent of children lost one or both of their parents by the time they were thirteen. Orphaned children and unmarried young men constituted a large fraction of the society,

TABLE 2.2 Environment, Disease, and Death in Virginia, 1616–1624

Zone of James River Estuary	Percentage of Colony Population in Zone	Annual Mortality in Zone	Percentage of All Deaths in Colony
Freshwater	28.5%	16.7%	16.9%
Freshwater/Saltwater Mix	49.3%	37.1%	64.6%
Saltwater	22.2%	23.3%	18.4%
Estimated Annual Mortality Rate for Virginia: 28.3%			

Early Virginia was a deadly place, with no less than 28 percent of the population dying *each and every year*, mostly from typhoid fever and dysentery (the “bloody flux”). Only a constant stream of migrants allowed slow population growth. Most settlers lived along the James River estuary, and their place of residence determined their chances of survival. The most dangerous environment was the zone of water that was fresh in the spring, when the river ran fast, and mixed fresh and salt in the summer—when the inflow of saltwater from the Atlantic Ocean trapped human and animal waste from upriver and contaminated the water and its fish, oysters, and crabs. The year-round saltwater zone was the next most deadly, because of both fecal contamination and salt poisoning from drinking “brackish” well water.

Source: Adapted from Carville V. Earle, “Environment, Disease, and Mortality in Early Virginia,” in *The Chesapeake in the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Thad W. Tate and David L. Ammerman (New York: W. W. Norton, 1979), Table 3.



The Tobacco Economy

Most poor farmers raised tobacco, for it grew just as well in small fields as on vast plantations. Large-scale operations, such as the one pictured here, used indentured servants and slaves to grow and process the crop. The workers cured the tobacco stalks by hanging them for several months in a well-ventilated shed; then they stripped the leaves and packed them tightly into large plantation-made barrels, or "hogsheads," for shipment to Europe.

Library of Congress.

For more help analyzing this image, see the ONLINE STUDY GUIDE at bedfordstmartins.com/henretta.

inhibiting population growth. Although 15,000 settlers arrived in Virginia between 1622 and 1640, the number of English settlers rose only from 2,000 to 8,000.

Masters, Servants, and Slaves

Despite the dangers, the prospect of owning land continued to lure migrants to the Chesapeake region. By

1700 more than 80,000 English settlers had moved to Virginia, and another 20,000 had arrived in Maryland, the great majority not as free men and women but as indentured servants.

Indentured Servants. English shipping registers provide insight into the background of these servants. Three-quarters of the 5,000 servants who embarked from the port of Bristol were young men, many of whom had traveled hundreds of miles searching for work. Once in Bristol, these penniless wanderers were persuaded by merchants and sea captains to sign labor contracts called **indentures** and embark for the Chesapeake. The indentures bound them to work in return for room and board for a period of four or five years, after which they would be free, able to marry and work for themselves, planting corn for sustenance and tobacco for sale.

For merchants, servants represented valuable cargo because their contracts fetched high prices from Chesapeake planters. For the plantation owners, they were an incredible bargain. During the tobacco boom a male indentured servant could produce five times his purchase price in a year. Furthermore, imported servants were counted as household members, and so planters in Virginia received fifty acres of land for each one.

Most masters ruled their servants with an iron hand, beating them for bad behavior and withholding permission to marry. If a servant ran away or became pregnant, a master went to court to increase the term of service. Female servants were especially vulnerable to abuse, from both male servants and their owners. As a Virginia law of 1692 stated, “dissolute masters have gotten their maids with child; and yet claim the benefit of their service.” Planters got rid of uncooperative servants by selling their contracts to new masters. As an Englishman remarked in disgust, in Virginia “servants were sold up and down like horses.”

For most indentured servants this ordeal did not provide the escape from poverty they had sought (see American Voices, “Richard Frethorne: Hard Times in Early Virginia,” p. 53). Half the men died before receiving their freedom, and another quarter remained poor. The remaining quarter benefited from their ordeal, acquiring property and respectability (Table 2.3). If they survived, female servants generally fared better because men in the Chesapeake had grown “very sensible of the Misfortune of Wanting Wives.” Many such servants married their masters or other well-established men. By migrating to the Chesapeake, these few—and very fortunate—men and women escaped a life of landless poverty in England.

African Laborers. The first African workers fared worse. In 1619 John Rolfe noted that “a Dutch man of warre . . . sold us twenty Negars,” but for a generation the numbers of Africans remained small. About 400 Africans lived in the Chesapeake colonies in 1649,

Richard Frethorne

Hard Times in Early Virginia

The lot of an indentured servant in Virginia was always hard, especially before 1630, when food was scarce and Indians were a constant danger. In 1623 Richard Frethorne wrote a letter to his parents begging them to buy out the remaining years of his labor contract so that he could return to England. Richard Frethorne's fate is unknown, but documentary evidence indicates that more than half of the English men and women who went to Virginia as indentured servants died during their four years of service.

Loving and kind father and mother . . . this is to let you understand that I your child am in a most heavy case by reason of the nature of the country . . . it causes much sickness, as the scurvy and the bloody flux [severe dysentery], and diverse other diseases, which make the body very poor and weak, and when we are sick there is nothing to comfort us. For since I came out of the ship, I never ate anything but peas and loblollie [gruel]. As for deer or venison I never saw any since I came into this land. There is indeed some fowl, but we are not allowed

making up 2 percent of the population, and by 1670 the proportion of blacks had reached only 5 percent. Although many Africans served their masters for life, they were not legally enslaved. English common law acknowledged indentured servitude but not chattel slavery—the ownership as property of one human being by another. Moreover, many of these early workers had labored as slaves in African seaports and had some knowledge of European traders and Atlantic commerce. By cunning calculation, hard work, or conversion to Christianity many of them escaped bondage. Some ambitious African Christian freemen even purchased slaves, bought the labor contracts of white servants, or married English women, suggesting that at this time religion and personal initiative were as important as race in determining social status. By becoming a Christian and a planter, an enterprising African could aspire to near equality with the English settlers.

to go and get it, but must work hard both early and late for a mess of water gruel and a mouthful of bread and beef.

People cry out day and night, Oh that they were in England without their limbs and would not care to lose any limb to be in England again . . . we live in fear of the enemy every hour. . . . We are in great danger, for our plantation is very weak, by reason of the dearth, and sickness of our company. . . .

I have nothing to comfort me, nor there is nothing to be gotten here but sickness and death, except that one had money to lay out in some things for profit; but I have nothing at all, no not a shirt to my back, but two rags nor no clothes, but one poor suit, nor but one pair of shoes . . . my cloak is stolen by one of my own fellows, and to his dying hours would not tell me what he did with it, but some of my fellows saw him have butter and beef out of a ship, which my cloak [no] doubt paid for. . . .

I am not half, a quarter, so strong as I was in England, and all is for want of victuals, for I do protest unto you, that I have eaten more in a day at home than [is] allowed me here for a week. . . . Good father, do not forget me, but have mercy and pity my miserable case. I know if you did but see me you would weep. . . . The answer of this letter will be life or death to me; therefore, good father, send as soon as you can. . . .

*Source: Susan M. Kingsbury, ed., *The Records of the Virginia Company of London* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1935), 4:58–60.*

This mobility came to end in the 1660s because legislatures in the Chesapeake colonies enacted laws that lowered the status of Africans. The motives for these laws are not clear. Perhaps the English-born elite grew more conscious of race as the number of Africans increased or, with the end of the tobacco boom, used race to divide workers. By 1671 the Virginia House of Burgesses had forbidden Africans to own guns or join the militia. It had also barred them—"tho baptized and enjoying their own Freedom"—from buying the labor contracts of white servants and specified that conversion to Christianity did not qualify Africans for eventual freedom. Being black was becoming a mark of inferior legal status, and slavery was becoming a permanent and hereditary condition. As an English clergyman observed around 1680, "These two words, Negro and Slave had by custom grown Homogeneous and convertible."

The Seeds of Social Revolt

By the 1660s the growing size of the Chesapeake tobacco crop triggered a collapse of the market. During the boom years of the 1620s tobacco sold for 24 pence a pound; forty years later it was fetching barely one-tenth as much. As the economic boom turned into a “bust,” long-standing social conflicts flared up in political turmoil.

Political decisions in England had a lot to do with the decline of tobacco prices. In 1651, in an effort to exclude Dutch ships and merchants from England’s overseas possessions, Parliament passed an Act of Trade and Navigation. Revised and extended in 1660 and 1663, the Navigation Acts permitted only English or colonial-owned ships to enter American ports. They also required the colonists to ship certain “enumerated articles,” including tobacco, only to England. Chesapeake planters could no longer legally trade with Dutch merchants, who paid the highest prices. Moreover, to increase royal revenues the English monarchs continually raised the import duty on tobacco, thereby increasing the price to consumers and stifling growth of the market. By the 1670s planters were getting only one penny a pound for their crop.

Nonetheless, the number of planters in Virginia and Maryland grew, and tobacco exports doubled from 20 million pounds annually in the 1670s to 41 million pounds between 1690 and 1720. Profit margins were now thin, and the Chesapeake ceased to offer upward social mobility to whites as well as to blacks. Yeomen families painstakingly raised about 10,000 tobacco plants each year but earned just enough to scrape by, and many fell into debt. Even worse off were newly freed indentured servants. Low tobacco prices made it nearly impossible for them to pay the necessary fees to claim the 50 acres of land to which they were entitled and buy

the tools and seed needed to plant it. Many former servants had to sell their labor again, signing new indentures or becoming wageworkers or tenant farmers.

Gradually the Chesapeake colonies came to be dominated by an elite of planter-landlords and merchants. Landowners prospered by dividing their ample estates and leasing small plots to the growing army of former servants. They also lent money at high interest rates to hard-pressed yeomen families. Some well-to-do planters became commercial middlemen, setting up small retail stores or charging a commission for storing the tobacco of their poorer neighbors and selling it to English merchants. In Virginia this elite accumulated nearly half the land by soliciting favors from royal governors; on average, the 215 justices of the peace in four counties owned more than 1,000 acres apiece. In Maryland well-connected Catholic planters were equally dominant; by 1720 Charles Carroll owned 47,000 acres of land, farmed by scores of tenants, indentured servants, and slaves.

As these aggressive planter-entrepreneurs confronted a growing number of young, landless laborers, social divisions intensified, reaching a breaking point in Virginia during the corrupt regime of Governor William Berkeley. Berkeley first served as governor between 1642 and 1652, winning fame in 1644 by putting down the second major Indian revolt led by Opechanough. Serving as governor again beginning in 1660, he made large land grants to himself and to members of his council, who promptly exempted their own lands from taxation and appointed friends as local justices of the peace and county judges. Berkeley suppressed dissent in the House of Burgesses by assigning land grants to friendly legislators and appointing their relatives to lucrative positions that charged fees for services, such as sheriffs, tax collectors, constables, and estate appraisers. Social and political unrest increased

TABLE 2.3 Indentured Servants in the Chesapeake Labor Force					
Decade Ending	White Population	Percent of Population in Labor Force	White Labor Force	White Servant Population	Servants as Percent of Labor Force
1640	8,000	75	6,000	1,790	29.6
1660	24,000	66	15,800	4,300	27.2
1680	55,600	58	32,300	5,500	17.0
1700	85,200	46	38,900	3,800	9.7

The population of the Chesapeake increased tenfold between 1640 and 1700, and its character changed significantly. As more women migrated to Virginia and bore children, the percentage of the population in the labor force declined dramatically. The importance of indentured servants also declined; before 1660 white servants formed about 30 percent of the labor force but by 1700 accounted for only 10 percent of the workers.

Source: Adapted from Christopher Tomlins, “Reconsidered Indentured Servitude” (unpublished paper, 2001), Table 3.

when the corrupt Burgesses changed the voting system to exclude landless freemen, who constituted half of all adult white men. Property-holding yeomen retained the vote but—distressed by tobacco prices, rising taxes, and political corruption—were no longer willing to support the rule of increasingly corrupt and power-hungry landed gentry.

Bacon's Rebellion

An Indian conflict suddenly sparked the flame of social rebellion. By 1675 the native inhabitants of Virginia were few and weak, their numbers having dwindled from 30,000 in 1607 to a mere 3,500, as compared to 38,000 Europeans and about 2,500 Africans. Although most Indians now lived along the frontier, their presence remained controversial among English settlers. Hundreds of impoverished English free-holders and aspiring tenants wanted cheap land and insisted that the natives be expelled from their treaty-guaranteed lands or simply exterminated. Wealthy planters on the seacoast, who wanted a ready supply of white labor, opposed expansion into Indian territory, as did the planter-merchants who traded with the Native Americans for furs.

Fighting broke out when a band of Virginia militiamen murdered 30 Indians. Defying orders from Governor Berkeley, a larger force of 1,000 militiamen then surrounded a fortified Susquehannock village and killed five chiefs who had come out to negotiate. The militarily strong Susquehannocks, who had recently migrated from present-day northern Pennsylvania, retaliated by raiding outlying plantations and killing 300 whites. Berkeley did not want war, which would disrupt the fur trade, and proposed a defensive military policy, asking the House of Burgesses in March 1676 to raise taxes for a series of frontier forts. Western settlers dismissed this strategy as useless, a plot by planters and merchants to impose high taxes and, in the words of one yeoman, to take “all our tobacco into their own hands.”

Nathaniel Bacon emerged as the leader of the protesters. A bold and wealthy man, he had recently arrived from England and settled on a frontier estate. Although he was only twenty-eight, Bacon commanded the respect of his neighbors because of his vigor and his English connections, which had made him a member of the governor’s council. When Berkeley refused to grant Bacon a military commission, the headstrong planter marched his frontiersmen against the Indians anyway, slaughtering some of the peaceful Doeg people and triggering a political upheaval. Condemning the frontiersmen as “rebels and mutineers,” Berkeley expelled Bacon from the council and placed him under arrest. When Bacon’s followers threatened to free their leader by force, the governor quickly changed course, agreeing to legislative elections that brought many new men into



Nathaniel Bacon

Reviled as a rebel and a traitor in his own time, Nathaniel Bacon emerged in the late nineteenth century as an American hero, a harbinger of the Patriots of 1776. This stained-glass window, possibly the creation of the famed jeweler and glassmaker Tiffany & Co. of New York, was installed in a church, endowing Bacon with a semisacred status.

The Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities.

government. The new House of Burgesses promptly enacted far-reaching political reforms that curbed the powers of the governor and the council and restored voting rights to landless freemen.

These much-needed reforms failed to end the rebellion. Bacon was bitter about Berkeley’s arbitrary actions, and the poor farmers and indentured servants in his army resented years of exploitation by arrogant justices of the peace and politically well-connected families. As one yeoman rebel put it, “A poor man who has only his labour to maintain himself and his family pays as much [in taxes] as a man who has 20,000 acres.” Backed by 400 armed men, Bacon seized control of the

colony and issued a “Manifesto and Declaration of the People,” demanding the death or removal of all Indians and an end to the rule of wealthy “parasites.” “All the power and sway is got into the hands of the rich,” Bacon proclaimed, as his army burned Jamestown to the ground and plundered the plantations of Berkeley’s allies. When Bacon died suddenly from dysentery in October 1676, the governor took his revenge, dispersing the rebel army, seizing the estates of well-to-do rebels, and hanging 23 men.

Bacon’s Rebellion was a pivotal event in the history of Virginia. Although landed planters continued to dominate the economy and polity, they curbed corruption and found public positions for politically ambitious yeomen. The planter-merchant elite appeased the lower social orders by cutting their taxes and supporting the expansion of settlement onto Indian lands. The uprising also contributed to the expansion of African slavery. To forestall another rebellion by poor whites, planters in Virginia and Maryland turned away from indentured servitude. To provide labor for their expanding plantations, they explicitly legalized slavery and imported thousands of Africans, committing their descendants to a social system based on racial exploitation.

Puritan New England

The Puritan exodus from England from 1620 to 1640 was both a worldly quest for land and a spiritual effort to preserve the “pure” Christian faith. By creating a “holy commonwealth” in America, these pious migrants hoped to promote reform within the established Church of England. By distributing land broadly, they tried to build a society of independent property-owning farm families. And by defining their mission in spiritual terms, the Puritans gave a moral dimension to American history.

The Puritan Migration

From the beginning New England differed from other European settlements. New Spain and Jamestown were populated initially by unruly male adventurers, New France and New Netherland by commercial-minded fur traders. By contrast, women and children as well as men settled Plymouth, the first permanent community in New England, and its leaders were pious Protestants—the Pilgrims.

The Pilgrims. The Pilgrims were Puritans who had left the Church of England, thus earning the name “Separatists.” When King James I embraced hierarchical religious policies in the 1610s and threatened to harry Puritans “out of the land, or else do worse,” the Pilgrims left England and settled among like-minded Dutch Calvinists in Holland. Subsequently, 35 of these exiles

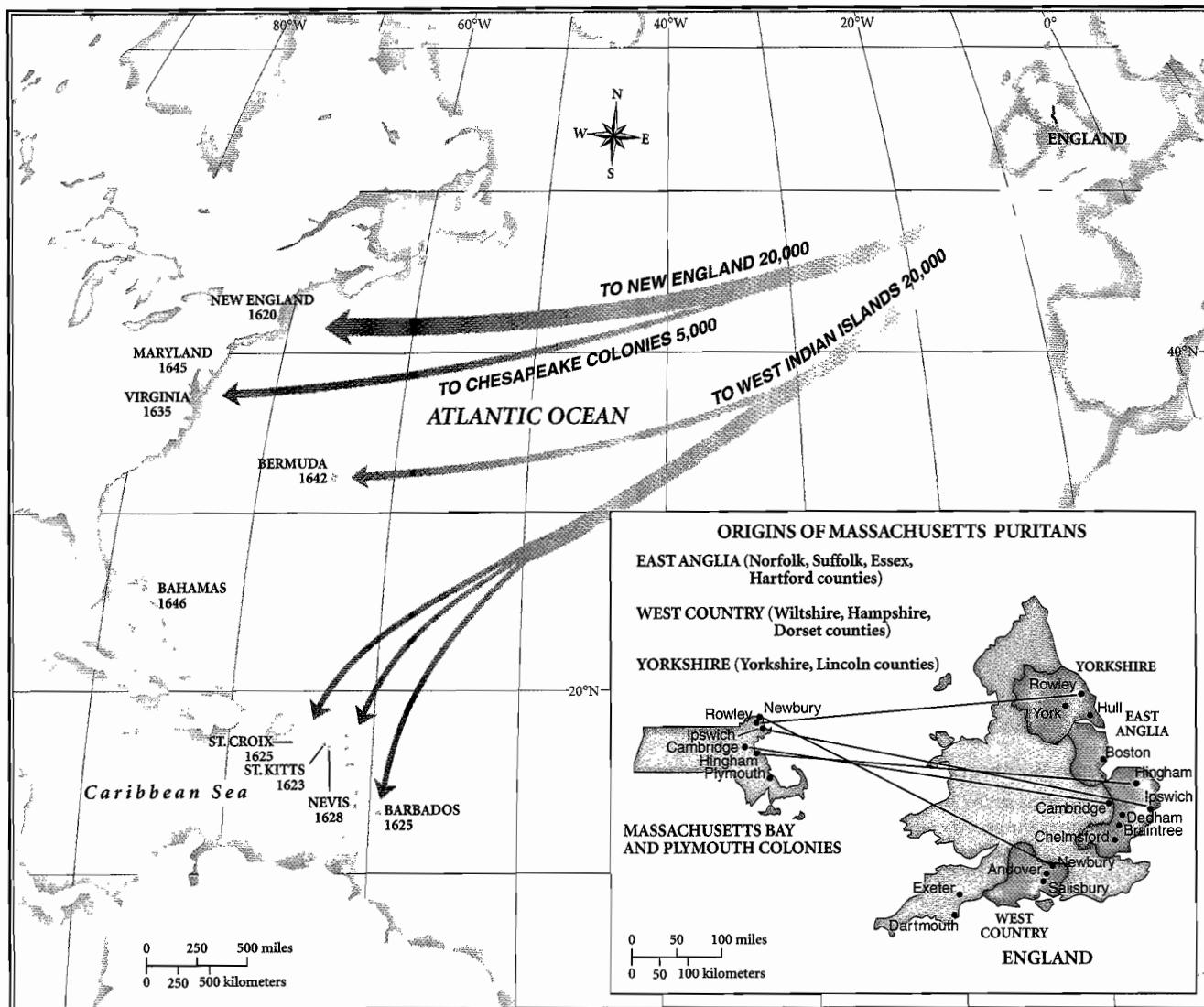
resolved to migrate to America to maintain their English identity. Led by William Bradford and joined by 67 other migrants from England, they sailed to America aboard the *Mayflower* in 1620 (Map 2.5).

Before departing, the Pilgrims organized themselves into a joint-stock corporation with backing from sympathetic Puritan merchants. Arriving in America without a royal charter, they created their own covenant of government, the *Mayflower Compact*, to “combine ourselves together into a civill body politick.” This document was the first “constitution” adopted in North America and used the Puritan model of a self-governing religious congregation as the blueprint for political society.

The first winter in America tested the Pilgrims. As in Virginia, hunger and disease took a heavy toll; of the 102 migrants who arrived in November, only half survived until the spring. Thereafter the Plymouth colony—unlike Virginia—became a healthy and thriving community. The cold climate inhibited the spread of mosquito-borne diseases, and the Pilgrims’ religious discipline established a strong work ethic. Moreover, because a severe smallpox epidemic in 1618 had killed 90 percent of the local Wampanoag people, the migrants faced few external threats. The Pilgrims quickly built solid houses, planted ample crops, and entered the fur trade. Their numbers grew rapidly to 3,000 by 1640, prompting the creation of ten new self-governing towns. A legal code embodied their social ethics, providing for a colonywide system of representative self-government, broad political rights, and a prohibition of government interference in spiritual matters.

Meanwhile, England was plunging deeper into religious turmoil. King Charles I supported the Church of England but personally repudiated some Protestant doctrines, such as the role of grace in salvation. English Puritans, who had gained many seats in Parliament, accused the king of “popery”—holding Catholic beliefs. Charles’s response was to dissolve Parliament in 1629, claiming that he ruled by “divine right.” He began to raise money through royal edicts, customs duties, and the sale of monopolies. The king’s arbitrary rule struck at the power of the landed gentry, who expected to exercise authority through the House of Commons, and cut away at the profits of the merchant community, a stronghold of Puritanism. Then in 1633 the king chose William Laud, who loathed Puritans, to head the Church of England. Laud removed hundreds of Puritan ministers and forced Anglican rituals on their congregations, prompting thousands to seek refuge in America.

The Massachusetts Bay Colony. The exodus began in 1630, when 900 Puritans boarded eleven ships and sailed across the Atlantic under the leadership of John Winthrop, a well-educated country squire. Calling England morally corrupt and “overburdened with people,” Winthrop sought land and opportunity for his



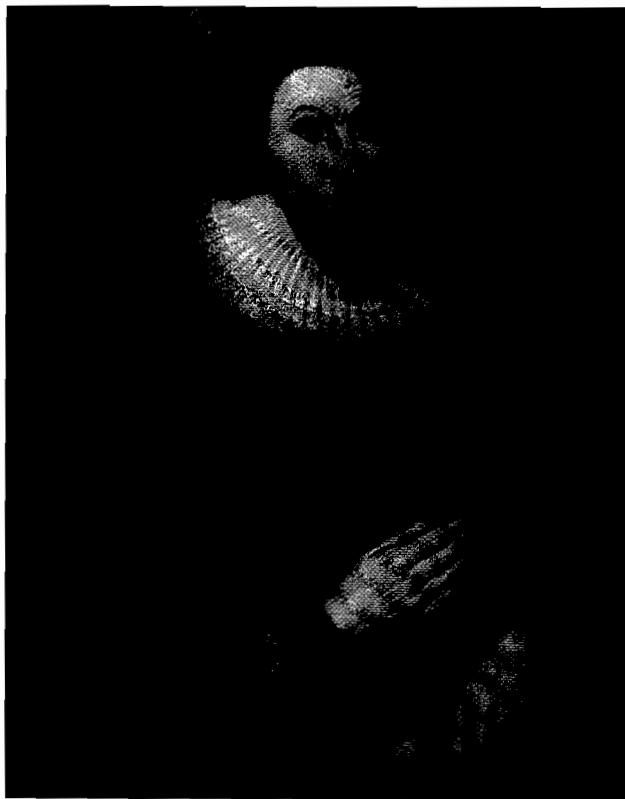
MAP 2.5 The Puritan Migration to America, 1620–1640

Nearly fifty thousand Puritans left England between 1620 and 1640, but they managed to create Puritan-dominated societies only in the New England colonies of Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay, and Connecticut. Within New England, migrants from the three major areas of English Puritanism—Yorkshire, East Anglia, and the West Country—commonly settled among those from their own region. They named American communities after their English towns of origin and transplanted regional customs to New England, such as the open-field agriculture practiced in Rowley in Yorkshire and Rowley in Massachusetts Bay.

children and a place in Christian history for his people. “We must consider that we shall be as a City upon a Hill,” Winthrop told his fellow passengers aboard the ship *Arbella* in 1630. “The eyes of all people are upon us.” Like the Pilgrims, this larger wave of Puritans envisioned a reformed Christian society, a genuinely “New” England. They saw themselves as a “saving remnant” chosen by God to preserve the true faith in America and inspire religious change in England.

Winthrop and his associates established the Massachusetts Bay colony in the area around Boston and transformed their joint-stock business corporation, the

General Court of shareholders, into a colonial legislature. Over the next decade about 10,000 Puritans migrated to the Massachusetts Bay colony, along with 10,000 others fleeing hard times in England. The Puritans created representative political institutions that were locally based, with the governor as well as the assembly and council elected by the colony’s freemen. However, to ensure rule by the godly, the Puritans limited the right to vote and hold office to men who were church members. Eschewing the religious toleration of the Pilgrims, they established Puritanism as the state-supported religion and barred members of other faiths from conducting services.



Governor John Winthrop

This portrait, painted in the style of the Flemish artist Anthony Van Dyke, captures the gravity and intensity of Winthrop, whose policies of religious orthodoxy and elite rule shaped the early history of the Massachusetts Bay colony.

Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society.

Massachusetts Bay became a religious commonwealth with the Bible as its legal as well as spiritual guide. Following a biblical rule, Massachusetts Bay Puritans divided inheritances among all children in a given family, with a double portion going to the oldest son. “Where there is no Law,” the colony’s government advised local magistrates, they should rule “as near the law of God as they can.”

Religion and Society, 1630–1670

In establishing their churches, the Puritans in New England tried to re-create the simplicity of the first Christians. They eliminated bishops and devised a democratic church structure controlled by the laity, or the ordinary members of the congregation—hence their name, Congregationalists. Influenced by John Calvin, Puritans embraced **predestination**, the doctrine that God had decided, or “predestined,” the fates of all people before they were born and chosen a few “elect” men and women (the Saints) for salvation and condemned the rest to damnation. Most congregations set extraordinarily high standards for church membership, rigorously examining those who applied. Even so, many Saints lived in great

anxiety, for they could never be sure that God had predestined them for salvation.

Puritans dealt with the uncertainties of divine election in three ways. Some congregations stressed the conversion experience: when God infused a soul with grace, the person was “born again” and knew that salvation was at hand. Other Puritans stressed “preparation,” the confidence in redemption that came from years of spiritual guidance and church discipline. Still others believed that God had entered into a covenant, or contract, with them, promising to treat them as a divinely “chosen people” as long as they lived according to his laws.

Roger Williams and Rhode Island. To maintain God’s favor, the Puritan magistrates of Massachusetts Bay felt they must purge their society of religious dissidents. One target was Roger Williams, who in 1634 had become the minister of the Puritan church in Salem. Williams preferred the Pilgrims’ separation of church and state in Plymouth colony and condemned the legal establishment of Congregationalism in Massachusetts Bay. He taught that political magistrates should have authority over only the “bodies, goods, and outward estates of men,” not their spiritual lives. Moreover, he questioned the Puritans’ seizure (rather than purchase) of Indian lands. In response, the Puritan magistrates banished him from Massachusetts Bay.

In 1636 Williams and his followers resettled in Rhode Island, founding the town of Providence on land acquired from the Narragansett Indians. Other religious dissidents founded Portsmouth and Newport. In 1644 these towns obtained a corporate charter from the English Parliament that granted them full authority “to rule themselves.” In Rhode Island as in Plymouth there was no legally established church; every congregation was autonomous, and individual men and women could worship God as they pleased.

Anne Hutchinson. Puritan magistrates in Massachusetts Bay also felt threatened by Anne Hutchinson, the wife of a merchant and a mother of seven who worked as a midwife. Hutchinson held weekly prayer meetings in her house—attended by as many as sixty women—in which she accused certain Boston clergymen of placing undue emphasis on church laws and good behavior. In words that recalled Martin Luther’s rejection of indulgences, Hutchinson argued that salvation could not be earned through good deeds; there was no “covenant of works.” Rather, God bestowed salvation through the “covenant of grace.” Hutchinson stressed the importance of revelation: God directly revealing truth to the individual believer. Since the doctrine of revelation diminished the role of ministers and, indeed, of all established authority, Puritan magistrates found it heretical.

The magistrates also resented Hutchinson because of her sex. Like other Christians, Puritans believed in the



Changing Images of Death

Death—sudden and arbitrary—was a constant presence in the preindustrial world, but it was given various cultural meanings. In the Calvinistic world of pre-1700 New England, gravestones often depicted death as a frightening skull, warning sinners to repent of their sins. After 1700, a smiling cherub adorned many gravestones, suggesting that later generations of Puritans held a more optimistic view of the afterlife. Peabody & Essex Museum.

equality of souls: both men and women could be saved. When it came to the governance of church and state, however, women were seen as being clearly inferior to men. As the Pilgrim minister John Robinson put it, women “are debarred by their sex from ordinary prophesying, and from any other dealing in the church wherein they take authority over the man.” Puritan women could never be ministers, lay preachers, or even voting members of the congregation.

In 1637 the Massachusetts Bay magistrates put Hutchinson on trial for heresy, accusing her of believing that inward grace freed an individual from the rules of the church. Hutchinson defended her views with great skill and tenacity, and even Winthrop admitted that she was “a woman of fierce and haughty courage.” But the judges found her guilty and berated her for not attend-

ing to “her household affairs, and such things as belong to women.” Banished, she followed Roger Williams into exile in Rhode Island.

The coercive policies of the magistrates, along with the desire for better land, prompted some Puritans to leave Massachusetts Bay. In 1636 Thomas Hooker led a hundred settlers to the Connecticut River Valley, where they established the town of Hartford. Others followed, settling along the river at Wethersfield and Windsor. In 1639 the Connecticut Puritans adopted the Fundamental Orders, a plan of government that included a representative assembly and a popularly elected governor. Connecticut was patterned after Massachusetts Bay, with a firm union of church and state and a congregational system of church government, but voting rights were extended to most property-owning men—not just church members.

The English Puritan Revolution. As Puritans established themselves in America, England fell into a religious war. When Archbishop Laud imposed a Church of England prayer book on Presbyterian Scotland in 1642, a Scottish army invaded England. Thousands of English Puritans joined the revolt, demanding greater authority for Parliament and reform of the established church, and hundreds more Puritans returned from America to join the conflict. After four years of civil war the Parliamentary forces led by Oliver Cromwell were victorious. In 1649 Parliament executed Charles I, proclaimed a republican commonwealth, and banished bishops and elaborate rituals from the Church of England.

The Puritan triumph was short-lived. Popular support for the Commonwealth ebbed, especially after 1653 when Cromwell took dictatorial control of the government. Following Cromwell’s death, moderate Protestants and a resurgent aristocracy summoned the son of Charles I from Europe, restoring the monarchy and the power of bishops in the Church of England. For many Puritans, Charles II’s accession in 1660 represented the victory of the Antichrist—the false prophet described in the last book of the New Testament.

For the Puritans in Massachusetts Bay, the restoration of the monarchy began a new phase of their “errand into the wilderness.” They had come to New England to preserve the “pure” Christian church, expecting to return to Europe in triumph. When that sacred mission was dashed by the failure of the English Revolution, Puritan ministers articulated a new vision: they exhorted their congregations to create a permanent new society in America based on their faith and ideals.

The Puritan Imagination and Witchcraft

Like the Native Americans they encountered in New England, the Puritans thought that the physical world was full of supernatural forces. This belief in “spirits”

stemmed in part from Christian teachings, such as the Catholic belief in miracles and the Protestant faith in the powers of “grace.” Devout Christians saw signs of God’s (or Satan’s) power in blazing stars, birth defects, and other unusual events. Noting that “more Ministers’ Houses than others proportionally had been smitten with Lightning,” Cotton Mather, a prominent Massachusetts minister, wondered “what the meaning of God should be in it.”

The Puritans’ respect for spiritual forces also reflected certain pagan assumptions shared by nearly everyone. When Samuel Sewall, a well-educated Puritan merchant and judge, moved into a new house, he tried to fend off evil spirits by driving a metal pin into the floor. Thousands of ordinary Puritan farmers followed the pagan astrological charts printed in almanacs to determine the best times to plant crops, marry, and make other important decisions.

Zealous ministers attacked many of these beliefs and practices as “superstition” and condemned “cunning” individuals who claimed to have special powers as healers or prophets. Indeed, many Christians looked on folk doctors or conjurers as “wizards” or “witches” who acted at the command of Satan. The people of Andover, Massachusetts, “were much addicted to sorcery,” claimed one observer, and “there were forty men in it that could raise the Devil as well as any astrologer.” Between 1647 and 1662 civil authorities in Massachusetts and Connecticut hanged 14 people for witchcraft, mostly older women who, their accusers claimed, were “double-tongued” or “had an unruly spirit.”

The most dramatic episode of witch-hunting took place in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1692. Initially, a few young girls experienced strange seizures and accused various neighbors of bewitching them. When judges allowed the introduction of “spectral” evidence—visions seen only by the young accusers—the number of accusations spun out of control. Eventually, Massachusetts authorities arrested 175 people and executed 20 of them. The causes of this mass hysteria were complex and are still hard to fathom. Some historians stress group rivalries, pointing out that many of the accusers were the daughters and young female servants of poor farmers in a rural area of Salem, whereas many of the accused witches were wealthier church members or their friends. Because 19 of those executed were women, other historians view the witchcraft trials as part of a broader attempt to keep women, especially those who had inherited property, as subordinate “helpmates” to their husbands. Still other scholars focus on the fears raised by recent Indian attacks in nearby Maine, raids that killed the parents of the young girls whose accusations sparked the Salem prosecutions.

Whatever the cause, the Salem episode marked a turning point for New England. Popular revulsion against the executions weakened the ties between state and church; there would be no more legal prosecutions for



An Affluent Puritan Woman

This well-known painting (c. 1671) of Elizabeth Freake and her daughter Mary is perhaps the finest portrait of a seventeenth-century American. The skill of the artist, probably a visiting English portraitist, and the finery of Mrs. Freake's dress and bonnet suggest the growing cosmopolitanism and prosperity of Boston's merchant community. Worcester Art Museum.

witchcraft or heresy. The European Enlightenment, a major intellectual movement that began around 1675, also helped to limit the number of witchcraft accusations by promoting a more rational view of the world. Increasingly, educated people explained accidents and sudden deaths through theories that drew upon the “laws of nature,” not through religion, astrology, or witchcraft. In contrast to Cotton Mather (d. 1728), who believed that lightning might be a supernatural sign, well-read men of the next generation—such as Benjamin Franklin—would conceive of lightning as a natural phenomenon.

A Yeoman Society, 1630–1700

In creating their communities in New England, Puritans consciously shunned the worst features of traditional Europe. They had no wish to live in towns dominated by a few wealthy landowners or controlled by a distant government that levied oppressive taxes. Consequently, they devised land-distribution policies that created self-governing towns and encouraged broad property ownership. Instead of granting thousands of acres to wealthy planters (as occurred in the Chesapeake colonies), the

General Courts of Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut bestowed the title to a township on a group of settlers, or **proprietors**, who distributed the land among themselves. Legal title passed in **fee simple**, which meant that the proprietors' families held the land outright, free from manorial obligations or feudal dues; they could sell, lease, or rent it as they pleased.

Widespread ownership of land did not mean equality of wealth or status. Like most seventeenth-century Europeans, Puritans believed in a social and economic hierarchy. "God had Ordained different degrees and orders of men," proclaimed the wealthy Boston merchant John Saf-fin, "some to be Masters and Commanders, others to be Subjects, and to be commanded." Town proprietors normally bestowed the largest plots of land on men of high social status, who often became selectmen and justices of the peace. However, all male heads of families received some land, laying the basis for a society of independent yeomen, and landowners had a voice in the town meeting, the main institution of local government (Map 2.6).

Consequently, ordinary farmers in New England communities had much more political power than did most peasants in European villages and most yeomen in the planter-dominated local governments of the Chesapeake colonies. Each year the town meeting chose selectmen to manage its affairs. The meeting also levied taxes; enacted ordinances regarding fencing, lot sizes, and road building; and regulated the use of common fields for grazing livestock and cutting firewood. Beginning in 1634 each town in Massachusetts Bay elected its own representatives to the General Court, a political innovation that gradually shifted authority away from the governor and into the hands of the towns' representatives in the General Court.

As one generation gave way to the next, the farming communities of New England became more socially divided. The larger proprietors owned enough land to divide among all their sons, who usually numbered three or four. Smallholding farmers could provide land for only some of their sons, forcing the rest to begin adult life as propertyless laborers. Newcomers who lacked the rights of proprietors were the least well off, for they had to buy land or work as tenants or laborers. By 1702 in Windsor, Connecticut, landless sons and newcomers accounted for 30 percent of the male taxpayers. It would take years of saving or migration to a new town for these men and their families to become freeholders.

Despite these inequalities, nearly all New Englanders had an opportunity to acquire property, and even those at the bottom of the social scale enjoyed some economic security. When he died in the 1690s, Nathaniel Fish was one of the poorest men in Barnstable, Massachusetts, yet he owned a two-room cottage, eight acres of land, an ox, and a cow. For him and thousands of other settlers, New England had proved to be the promised land, a new world of opportunity.

The Indians' New World

Native Americans along the Atlantic coast were also living in a new world, but for them it was a bleak, dangerous, and conflict-ridden place. Some Indian peoples, like the Pequots, resisted the invaders by force. Others retreated into the Appalachian Mountains to preserve their traditional culture or to band together in new tribes.

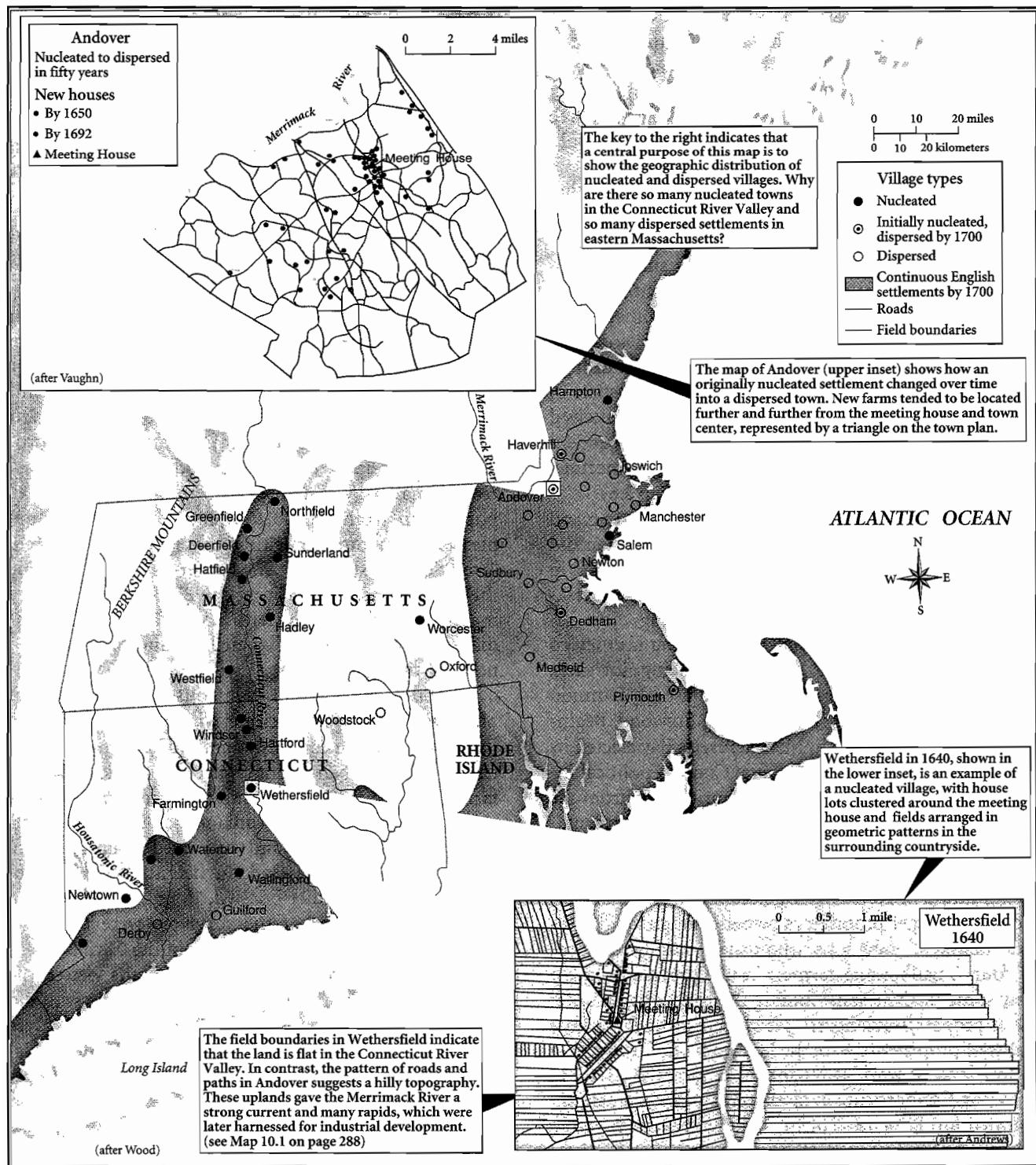
Puritans and Pequots

Seeing themselves as God's chosen people, the Puritans justified their intrusions on Native American lands on moral grounds. "By what right or warrant can we enter into the land of the Savages," they asked themselves while still in England, "and take away their rightfull inheritance from them?" John Winthrop provided a clear answer by seeing God's hand in a disastrous smallpox epidemic that reduced the Indian population from 13,000 to 3,000. "If God were not pleased with our inheriting these parts," he asked, "why doth he still make room for us by diminishing them as we increase?" Citing the Book of Genesis, the magistrates of Massachusetts Bay declared that the Indians had not "subdued" their land and therefore had no "just right" to it.

Imbued with moral righteousness, the Puritans often treated Native Americans with a brutality equal to that of the Spanish conquistadors and Nathaniel Bacon's frontiersmen. When Pequot warriors attacked English farmers who had intruded onto their lands in 1636, Puritan militiamen and their Indian allies led a surprise attack on a Pequot village and massacred about 500 men, women, and children. "God laughed at the Enemies of his People," one soldier boasted, "filling the Place with Dead Bodies." Many of the survivors were ruthlessly tracked down and sold into slavery in the Caribbean.

Like most Europeans, English Puritans viewed the Indians as "savages," culturally inferior people who did not deserve civilized treatment. But the Puritans were not racist as the term is understood today. To them, Native Americans were not genetically inferior—they were white people with sun-darkened skins—and "sin" or Satan, rather than race, accounted for their degenerate condition. "Probably the devil" delivered these "miserable savages" to America, wrote the Puritan minister Cotton Mather, "in hopes that the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ would never come here to destroy or disturb his absolute empire over them."

This interpretation of the Indians' history inspired the Puritan minister John Eliot to convert them to Christianity. Eliot translated the Bible into Algonquian and undertook numerous missions to Indian villages in eastern Massachusetts. Because Puritans demanded that Indians understand the complexities of Protestant



MAP 2.6 Settlement Patterns within New England Towns, 1630–1700

Initially, most Puritan towns were compact; regardless of the local topography (hills or plains), families lived close to one another in the nucleated village center and traveled daily to work in the surrounding fields. This pattern is clearly apparent in the 1640 map of Wethersfield, Connecticut, which is situated on the broad plains of the Connecticut River Valley. The first settlers of Andover, Massachusetts, also chose to live in the village center. However, the rugged topography of eastern Massachusetts encouraged a dispersed form of settlement, and by 1692 many residents of Andover lived on their own farms.

theology to become full members of Puritan congregations, only a few Native Americans did so. However, the Puritans created “**praying towns**” that, like the Spanish Franciscans’ missions in New Mexico, supervised the Indian population; more than 1,000 Indians lived in fourteen special mission towns. By 1670 the combination of European diseases, military force, and Christianization had pacified most of the Algonquian-speaking peoples who lived along the seacoast of New England, guaranteeing, at least temporarily, the safety of the white settlers.

Metacom’s Rebellion

By the 1670s there were three times as many whites as Indians in New England. As the English population grew from 20,000 in 1640 to 55,000, the number of Indians plummeted: from an estimated 120,000 in 1570, to 70,000 in 1620, to barely 16,000. To Metacom, leader of the Wampanoags, the future looked grim. When his people copied English ways, raising hogs and selling pork in Boston, Puritan officials accused them of selling at “an under rate” and placed restrictions on their trade. When they killed wandering livestock that damaged their cornfields, authorities denounced them for violating English property rights. Like Opechancanough in Virginia and Popé in New Mexico, Metacom finally concluded that only military resistance could save Indian lands and culture. So in 1675 Metacom (whom the English called King Philip) forged a military alliance with the Narragansetts and Nipmucks and attacked white settlements throughout New England. Bitter fighting continued into 1676, ending only when Indian warriors ran short of guns and powder, and Mohegans and Mohawks allied with the Massachusetts Bay government ambushed and killed Metacom.

The rebellion was a deadly affair. The Indians burned 20 percent of the English towns in Massachusetts and Rhode Island and killed 1,000 whites, about 5 percent of the adult population. Almost every day, recalled settler William Harris, he had heard new reports of the Indians’ “burneing houses, takeing cattell, killing men & women & Children: & carrying others captive.” But the Indians’ own losses—from famine and disease as well as battle—were much larger: as many as 4,500, or 25 percent of an already diminished population. Many survivors were sold into slavery in the Caribbean, including Metacom’s wife and nine-year-old son.

Other members of the defeated Algonquian peoples migrated farther into the New England backcountry, where they intermarried with tribes tied to the French. They had suffered a double tragedy, losing both their land and the integrity of their traditional cultures. Over the next century, these displaced peoples would take their revenge, allying with the French to attack their Puritan enemies (see American Voices, “Mary Rowlandson: A Captivity Narrative,” p. 64).



Metacom (King Philip), Chief of the Wampanoag

The Indian uprising of 1675 left an indelible mark on the historical memory of New England. This painting from the 1850s, done on semitransparent cloth and lit from behind for dramatic effect, was used by traveling performers during the 1850s to tell the story of King Philip’s War. Note that Metacom is not depicted as a savage but as a dignified man; freed from fear of Indian attack, nineteenth-century New England whites could adopt a romanticized version of their region’s often brutal history. Shelburne Museum.

The Fur Trade and the Inland Peoples

As English settlers slowly advanced up the river valleys from the Atlantic coast, the Indians who lived near the Appalachian Mountains and in the great forested areas beyond remained independent. Yet even these distant Indian peoples felt the European presence, as they entered the fur trade to obtain guns and manufactures. Partly because of their location in present-day central New York, the militarily aggressive and diplomatically astute Iroquois peoples were the most successful. Iroquois warriors moved quickly to the east and south along the Mohawk, Hudson, Delaware, and Susquehanna Rivers to exchange goods with (or threaten) the English and Dutch colonies. They traveled north via Lake Champlain and the Richelieu River to French traders in Quebec and west by means

Mary Rowlandson

A Captivity Narrative

Mary Rowlandson, a minister's wife in Lancaster, Massachusetts, was one of many settlers taken captive by the Indians during Metacomet's war. Mrs. Rowlandson spent twelve weeks in captivity, traveling constantly, until her family ransomed her for the considerable sum of £20. Her account of this ordeal, *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God*, published in 1682, became one of the most popular prose works of its time.

On the tenth of February 1675, came the Indians with great numbers upon Lancaster: their first coming was about sunrising; hearing the noise of some guns, we looked out; several houses were burning, and the smoke ascending to heaven. . . . [T]he Indians laid hold of us, pulling me one way, and the children another, and said, "Come go along with us"; I told them they would kill me: they answered, if I were willing to go along with them, they would not hurt me. . . .

The first week of my being among them I hardly ate any thing; the second week I found my stomach grow very faint for want of something; and yet it was very hard to get down their filthy trash; but the third week . . . they were sweet and savory to my taste. I was at this time knitting a pair of white cotton stockings for my [Indian] mistress; and had not yet wrought upon a sabbath day. When the sabbath came they bade me go to work. I told them it was the sabbath-day, and desired them to let me rest, and told them I would do as much more tomorrow; to which they answered me they would break my face. . . .

During my abode in this place, Philip [Metacomet] spake to me to make a shirt for his boy, which I did, for which he gave me a shilling. I offered the money to my master, but he bade me keep it; and with it I bought a piece of horse flesh. Afterwards he asked me to make a cap for his boy, for which he invited me to dinner. I went, and he gave me a pancake, about as big as two fingers. It was made of parched wheat, beaten, and fried in bear's grease, but I thought I never tasted pleasanter meat in my life. . . .

Hearing that my son was come to this place, I went to see him. . . . He told me also, that awhile before, his master (together with other Indians) were going to the French for powder; but by the way the Mohawks met with them, and killed four of their company, which made the rest turn back again, for which I desire that myself and he may bless the Lord; for it might have been worse with him, had he been sold to the French, than it proved to be in his remaining with the Indians. . . .

My master had three squaws, living sometimes with one, and sometimes with another one. . . . [It] was Weetamoo with whom I had lived and served all this while. A severe and proud dame she was, bestowing every day in dressing herself near as much time as any of the gentry of the land: powdering her hair, and painting her face, going with necklaces, with jewels in her ears, and bracelets upon her hands. When she had dressed herself, her work was to make girdles of wampom and beads. . . .

On Tuesday morning they called their general court (as they call it) to consult and determine, whether I should go home or no. And they all as one man did seemingly consent to it, that I should go home. . . .

Source: C. H. Lincoln, ed., *Original Narratives of Early American History: Narratives of Indian Wars, 1675–1699* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1952), 14: 139–41.

of the Great Lakes and the Allegheny–Ohio river system to the rich fur-bearing lands of the Mississippi Valley.

The rise of the Iroquois was breathtakingly rapid, just as their subsequent decline was tragically sobering. In 1600 the Iroquois in New York numbered about 30,000 and lived in large towns of 500 to 2,000 inhabitants. Two decades later they had organized themselves in a great “longhouse” confederation of the Five Nations: the Senecas, Cayugas, Onondagas, Oneidas, and Mohawks.

Although a virulent smallpox epidemic in 1633 cut their numbers by a third, the Iroquois waged a successful series of wars against the Iroquoian-speaking Hurons (1649), Neutrals (1651), Eries (1657), and Susquehannocks. The victorious Iroquois warriors carried hundreds of captives to New York, where villagers tortured them with firebrands to atone for those lost in battle.

These triumphs gave the Iroquois control of the fur trade with the French in Quebec and the Dutch in New

York. Equally important, it replenished the populations of villages hard hit by epidemics and wartime losses. Taking control of those war captives that were not tortured and killed, Iroquois families conducted “requickening” ceremonies that transferred to them their dead relatives’ names, along with social roles and duties. By 1667 half of the population of many Mohawk towns consisted of adopted prisoners. The cultural diversity within Iroquoia further increased as the Five Nations made peace with their traditional French foes and allowed Jesuit missionaries to live among them. Soon about 20 percent of the Iroquois were Catholics, some living under French protection in separate mission-towns.

In 1680 the Iroquois repudiated the treaty with the French. To obtain furs to trade for guns and goods with the English and Dutch merchants in New York, they embarked on a new series of western wars. Warriors of the Five Nations pushed a dozen Algonquian-speaking peoples allied with the French—the Ottawas, Foxes, Sauks, Kickapoos, Miamis, and Illinois—out of their traditional lands north of the Ohio River and into a newly formed multatribal region (present-day Wisconsin) west of Lake Michigan. The cost of these victories was high;



Algonquian Beaver Bowl

In part because of the importance to the fur trade, the beaver played a significant role in Native American cultural life. This beaver-shaped bowl, carved from the root of an ash tree, was the work of an eighteenth-century Algonquian artisan in present-day Ohio or Illinois.

Peabody Museum, Harvard University. Photo by Hillel Burger.



An English View of Pocahontas

By depicting the Indian princess Pocahontas as a well-dressed European woman, the artist casts her as a symbol of peaceful assimilation to English culture. In actuality, marriages between white men (often fur traders) and Indian women usually created bilingual families that absorbed elements from both cultures.

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution / Art Resource, NY.

after losing about 2,200 warriors, in 1701 the Iroquois again made peace with the French, bringing peace to the inland region for two generations.

However, the character of Indian society in the eastern woodlands had been permanently altered. Most tribes had become smaller as the fighting and European diseases devastated their peoples and as the rum and corn liquor sold by fur traders took their toll. “Strong spirits . . . Causes our men to get very sick,” a Catawba leader protested, “and many of our people has Lately Died by the Effects of that Strong Drink.” Many Indian peoples also lost their economic and cultural independence. As they exchanged furs for European-made iron utensils and cloth blankets, they neglected traditional artisan skills—each year making fewer flint hoes, clay pots, and skin garments. As a Cherokee chief complained in the 1750s, “Every necessity of life we must have from the white people.” Moreover, as French missionaries won converts among the Hurons, Iroquois, and inland peoples, they divided communities into hostile religious factions.

The commitment to constant warfare altered tribal politics. Most strikingly, it increased the influence of those who made war, shifting political power from cautious elders, the sachems, to headstrong young warriors. The sachems, one group of Seneca warriors said with scorn, “were a parcell of Old People who say much but who Mean or Act very little.” Equally important, the position and status of women changed in complex and contradictory ways. Traditionally, eastern Woodland women had asserted authority as the chief providers of food and

handcrafted goods. As a French Jesuit noted of the Iroquois, “The women are always the first to deliberate . . . on private or community matters. They hold their councils apart and . . . advise the chiefs . . . , so that the latter may deliberate on them in their turn.” The influx of European goods and the disruptive impact of warfare on agricultural production threatened the economic basis of women’s power. At the same time, the influence of women in victorious tribes increased as they assumed responsibility for assimilating hundreds of captive peoples into the culture.

Finally, the sheer extent of the fur industry—the trapping and killing of hundreds of thousands of beaver, deer, otter, and other animals—profoundly altered the environment. Streams ran faster because there were fewer beaver dams, and the winter hunt for food became more arduous and less fruitful. Death from trapping and hunting severely depleted the animal population of North America, just as death from disease and warfare cut down

its Indian inhabitants. The native animals as well as the native peoples now lived in a new American world.

FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

- ▶ For definitions of key terms boldfaced in this chapter, see the glossary at the end of the book.
- ▶ To assess your mastery of the material covered in this chapter, see the Online Study Guide at bedfordstmartins.com/henretta.
- ▶ For suggested references, including Web sites, see page SR-2 at the end of the book.
- ▶ For map resources and primary documents, see bedfordstmartins.com/henretta.

Beginning in 1565, first Spain and then England, France, and Holland established permanent settlements in North America. Spain claimed most of the continent, but settled military garrisons and Franciscan missions only in present-day Florida and New Mexico. Both soldiers and friars exploited native laborers, prompting Indian revolts that by 1700 had temporarily expelled most Spaniards from New Mexico. The fur trade became the lifeblood of the Dutch colony of New Netherland and the far-flung French settlements in Canada and Louisiana, where Jesuit priests extended France's influence among the native peoples. The English came primarily as settlers, and their relentless quest for land led to frequent conflict with the Indian peoples.

The English created two types of colonies in North America. Settlers in the Chesapeake region created plantation societies that raised tobacco for export to Europe and were controlled by wealthy planters who exploited the labor of thousands of white indentured servants. In Virginia, economic hardship and political corruption by Governor Berkeley prompted Nathaniel Bacon's unsuccessful rebellion of 1675–1676. Subsequently, Chesapeake planters turned increasingly to slave labor from Africa, creating full-scale slave societies.

The Puritan migrants to New England created a society of freehold farmers who raised crops mostly for their own consumption. Reacting against hierarchical institutions in England, the Puritans set up self-governing churches and towns. At first Puritan magistrates in Boston enforced religious orthodoxy, banishing Roger Williams, Anne Hutchinson, and other religious dissidents, but they gradually relinquished power to a town-based representative assembly.

Wherever Europeans intruded, native peoples died from epidemic diseases, fur-trade-related wars, and political revolts. The Pueblo peoples rose against the Spanish in 1598 and 1680, the Chesapeake Indians nearly wiped out the Virginia colony in 1622, and Metacomet's forces dealt New England a devastating blow in 1675–1676. However, by 1700 many Indian communities in New Mexico and along the Atlantic seaboard had been nearly annihilated by disease and warfare, and native peoples in the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys had experienced grave cultural damage.

- 1539–** Coronado and de Soto explore northern lands
- 1543**
- 1565** Spain establishes St. Augustine, Florida
- 1598** Acoma rebellion in New Mexico
- 1603–** James I, king of England
- 1625**
- 1607** English adventurers settle Jamestown, Virginia
- 1608** Samuel de Champlain founds Quebec
- 1613** Dutch set up fur-trading post on Manhattan Island
- 1619** First Africans arrive in the Chesapeake region
Virginia House of Burgesses convened
- 1620** Pilgrims found Plymouth colony
- 1620–** Tobacco boom in Chesapeake colonies
- 1660**
- 1621** Dutch West India Company chartered
- 1622** Opechancanough's uprising
- 1624** Virginia becomes a royal colony
- 1625–** Charles I, king of England
- 1649**
- 1630** Puritans found Massachusetts Bay colony
- 1634** Maryland settled
- 1636–** Pequot war
- 1637** Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson banished
- 1640s** Puritan revolution in England
Iroquois go to war over fur trade
- 1651** First Navigation Act
- 1660** Restoration of English monarchy
Poor tobacco market begins
- 1664** English conquer New Netherland
- 1675–** Bacon's Rebellion
- 1676** Metacomet's uprising
Expansion of African slavery in the Chesapeake region
- 1680** Popé's rebellion in New Mexico
- 1692** Salem witchcraft trials

