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THOMAS MORTON

New English Colonies

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OF American Literature

Second Edition

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Preface to the Second Edition

IN THIS NEW EDITION of *The Norton Anthology of American Literature* we retain those major innovations which have found favor with a host of teachers and students, but have also introduced changes in response to the useful suggestions and criticisms of those who have used the book in the classroom. Like other Norton anthologies, then, this edition is the product of a collaboration between editors and teachers.

A vital literary culture (and most markedly in America) is always on the move, and it was in recognition of this fact that, in the first edition, we took the innovative step of putting Whitman and Dickinson in Volume 1, in order to allow more room in the second volume for important writing of the recent past. And because the twentieth century is now eighty-five years old, we make sense of its literary achievement by dividing it into three sections: American Literature between the Wars (1914-1945); American Prose (1945-); and American Poetry (1945-). In each of these sections, writers who normally get short shrift are introduced judiciously and helpfully, and are represented by selections that enable students to read them in some depth. This change was not, however, made at the expense of writers in the early periods.

For example: approximately one hundred pages of new material have been added to the earliest section, the literature between 1620 and 1820. John Smith writes about our beginnings in Virginia, and so balances the accounts of New England included in the first edition. Other important new writers in this section are Thomas Morton, Roger Williams, and Michael Wigglesworth. Selections from the diary of Samuel Sewall (our fifth new author) enable the journal tradition to be studied in greater depth, using also our present offerings and our new selections from the journals of Winthrop and Byrd. We have increased the selections from Bradford, Bradstreet, Taylor, Franklin (including some much-wanted lighter pieces), and Crèvecoeur.

The section embracing American literature from 1820 to 1865 has been justly acclaimed for its rich variety of works by all the major authors and by many others. We have added Emerson's