

= Middle Colonies =

The Middle Colonies comprised the middle region of the Thirteen Colonies of the British Empire in North America . Much of the area was part of the New Netherland until the British exerted their control over the region . The English captured much of the area in its war with the Dutch around 1664 , and the majority of the conquered land became the Province of New York . The Duke of York and the King of England would later grant others ownership of the land which would become the Province of New Jersey and the Province of Pennsylvania . The Delaware Colony later separated from Pennsylvania , which was founded by William Penn .

The Middle Colonies had lots of rich soil , which was allowing the area to become a major exporter of wheat and other grains . The lumber and shipbuilding industries enjoyed success in the Middle Colonies because of the abundant forests , and Pennsylvania saw moderate success in the textile and iron industry . The Middle Colonies were the most ethnically and religiously diverse British colonies in North America , they had settlers coming from all parts of Europe . Civil unrest in Europe and other colonies saw an influx of immigrants to the Middle Colonies in the 18th century . With the new arrivals came various religions which were protected in the Middle Colonies by written freedom of religion laws . This tolerance was very unusual and distinct from other British colonies .

= = History = =

The Middle Colonies were explored by Henry Hudson on a journey into the Hudson River and Delaware Bay in 1609 . The Dutch soon claimed the land . Although the Swedes and the Dutch fought over the land in the 1630s through the ultimately the Dutch claimed the land , calling it New Netherland . In the 1660s , the English largely conquered this land from the Dutch , renaming the area New York after the Duke of York , James II . The colony 's land was periodically granted to various proprietors and split into the Province of New York and the Province of Pennsylvania .

= = Province of New Jersey = =

King Charles II renamed the land west of the Hudson River New Jersey and gave the region between New England and Maryland to his brother , the Duke of York (later King James II of England) as a proprietary colony . James II later granted the land between the Hudson River and the Delaware River to two friends who had been loyal to him through the English Civil War : Sir George Carteret and Lord Berkeley of Stratton . This land grant became the Province of New Jersey .

In 1665 , the Concession and Agreement was written in an effort to entice settlers to New Jersey . This document provided for religious freedom , no taxes without assembly approval , and a governor appointed by the proprietors . The first governor appointed in this way was Philip Carteret , who founded Elizabethtown . Colonists were required to pay annual quit @-@ rent taxes . On March 18 , 1674 , after encountering difficulty collecting the taxes , Lord Berkeley sold his share in the colony to Edward Byllynge , a Quaker businessman from London . This sale divided New Jersey into East Jersey and West Jersey ; however , the border between the two was not agreed upon until the Quintipartite Deed in 1676 . From 1701 to 1765 , colonists skirmished in the New York @-@ New Jersey Line War over disputed colonial boundaries .

On April 15 , 1702 , Queen Anne united West and East Jersey into one Royal Colony , the Province of New Jersey . Edward Hyde , 3rd Earl of Clarendon became the royal colony 's first governor . After Hyde was recalled to England in 1708 over charges of graft , bribery , and corruption , the governor of New York was charged to also preside over New Jersey . Finally , in 1738 , King George II appointed a separate governor , Lewis Morris , to run New Jersey .

The Provincial Congress of New Jersey , made up of elected delegates , formed in January 1776 to govern the colony . The Congress had Royal Governor William Franklin arrested on June 15 , declaring him " an enemy to the liberties of this country " . On July 2 , 1776 , New Jersey enacted the New Jersey State Constitution , soon after having empowered delegates to the Continental

Congress , on June 21 , to join in a declaration of independence . The United States Declaration of Independence ended their colonial status .

= = Province of Pennsylvania = =

King Charles II granted the land for the Pennsylvania Colony to William Penn on March 4 , 1681 as payment for a debt the crown owed his family . Penn wrote the Frame of Government of Pennsylvania before departing for the colony , which called for religious tolerance towards many groups , including the Religious Society of Friends and local natives . As a proprietary colony , Penn governed Pennsylvania , yet its citizens were still subject to the English crown and laws . Penn 's cousin William Markham served as the first colonial deputy governor .

Demarcated by the 42nd parallel north and 39th parallel north , Pennsylvania was bordered by the Delaware River and the colonies of New York , Maryland , and New Jersey . In 1704 , Dutch land given to Penn by the Duke of York was separated and once again became part of the Delaware Colony . From 1692 to 1694 , revolution in England deprived Penn of the governance of his colony . The Pennsylvania Assembly took this opportunity to request expanded power for elected officials , led by David Lloyd . Upon visiting the colony in 1669 and 1701 , Penn eventually agreed to allow their Charter of Privileges to be added to the constitution . When the British banned western expansion in 1764 , fighting among colonists and against the natives swelled . In 1773 , Arthur St. Clair ordered the arrest of a Virginian officer who was commanding troops against armed settlers loyal to Pennsylvania . Pennsylvanian revolutionary sentiment continued to grow , and Philadelphia , the largest city in America , soon became the meeting place of the Continental Congress . The publication of the Pennsylvania Constitution of 1776 by locally elected revolutionaries concluded the history of the Colony , and began the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania .

= = Province of New York = =

The first Dutch settlements in the New York area appeared around 1613 . The English captured the New Netherland Colony from the Dutch in 1664 , renaming it the Province of New York after the King 's brother , the Duke of York (later King James II) . The Dutch recaptured the colony in July 1673 during the Third Anglo - Dutch War , but gave it back to the English under the Treaty of Westminster in exchange for Suriname . The Duke of York never governed the colony himself : he instead appointed governors , councils , and other officers to run the government . Richard Nicolls served as the first governor of New York .

In 1665 , the Province of New Jersey split from New York ; however , the New York - New Jersey Line War continued until the final borders were decided in 1769 , and approved by the legislatures and the King in 1772 and 1773 respectively . A Colonial Assembly convened in October 1683 , making New York the last colony to have an assembly . A constitution was drafted and passed on October 30 , 1683 , giving the colonists many rights , including the rights to taxation without representation . However , upon learning of the constitution , James II declared it void .

When the Duke of York became King James II of England , New York became a royal province . In May 1688 the province briefly became part of the Dominion of New England . When James II was overthrown , the citizens of New York rebelled against the Royal Governor in Leisler 's Rebellion . When Henry Sloughter became governor in March 1691 , the rebellion was crushed and its leader , Jacob Leisler was arrested , tried , and executed for treason . New York 's charter and constitution were reinstated soon after . In April 1775 , American patriots formed the New York Provincial Congress to replace the assembly . Governor William Tryon and all royal officials were forced from the colony on October 19 , 1775 . Colonial status ended for the new state with the United States Declaration of Independence in July 1776 .

= = Delaware Colony = =

Delaware changed hands between the Dutch and Swedes between 1631 and 1655 . The Dutch

maintained control of Delaware until 1664 , when Sir Robert Carr took New Amstel for the Duke of York , renaming it New Castle . A Deputy of the Duke governed Delaware from 1664 to 1682 . When William Penn received his land grant of Pennsylvania in 1681 , he received the Delaware area from the Duke of York , and dubbed them " The Three Lower Counties on the Delaware River " . In 1701 , after he had troubles governing the ethnically diverse Delaware territory , Penn agreed to allow them a separate colonial assembly .

= = Geography = =

The partly unglaciated Middle Colonies enjoyed fertile soil vastly different from the nearby New England Colonies , which contained more rocky soil . Because of the large grain exports resulting from this soil , the colonies came to be known as the Bread Basket Colonies . Pennsylvania became a leading exporter of wheat , corn , rye , hemp , and flax , making it the leading food producer in the colonies , and later states , between the years of 1725 and 1840 . Broad navigable rivers of relaxed current like the Susquehanna River , the Delaware River , and the Hudson River attracted diverse business . Fur trappers moved along these rivers , and there was enough flow to enable milling with water wheel power .

= = Industry = =

Abundant forests attracted both the lumbering and shipbuilding industries to the Middle Colonies . These industries , along with the presence of deep river estuaries , led to the appearance of important ports like New York and Philadelphia . While the Middle Colonies had far more industry than the Southern Colonies , it still did not rival the industry of New England . In Pennsylvania , sawmills and gristmills were abundant , and the textile industry grew quickly . The colony also became a major producer of pig iron and its products , including the Pennsylvania long rifle and the Conestoga wagon . Other important industries included printing , publishing , and the related industry of papermaking .

= = Politics = =

The Middle Colonies political groups began as small groups with narrowly focused goals . These coalitions eventually grew into diverse and large political organizations , evolving especially during the French and Indian War .

The Middle Colonies were generally run by Royal or Proprietary Governors and elected Colonial Assemblies . Many Middle Colony constitutions guaranteed freedom of religion and forbade taxation without representation . Royal governors were arrested or overthrown on more than one occasion , most notably when New Jersey arrested its governor and during Leisler 's Rebellion in New York . Growing unrest in the Middle Colonies eventually led the region to become the meeting place for the Continental Congress , and a center for revolution . However , there were numerous pockets of neutrals and Loyalists .

= = Demographics = =

The Middle Colonies tended to mix aspects of the New England and Southern Colonies . Landholdings were generally farms of 40 to 160 acres (16 ? 65 hectares) , owned by the family that worked it . In New York 's Hudson Valley , however , the Dutch patroons operated very large landed estates and rented land to tenant farmers .

Ethnically , the Middle Colonies were more diverse than the other British colonial regions in North America and tended to be more socially tolerant . For example , in New York , any foreigner professing Christianity was awarded citizenship , leading to a more diverse populace . As a consequence , early German settlements in the Americas concentrated in the Middle Colonies region . Indentured servitude was especially common in Pennsylvania , New Jersey , and New York

in the eighteenth century , though fewer worked in agriculture .

German immigrants favored the Middle Colonies . German immigration greatly increased around 1717 , and many immigrants began coming from the Rhineland . They were erroneously labeled the Pennsylvania Dutch (the German word for German is " Deutsch ") , and comprised one @-@ third of the population by the time of the American Revolution . The industry and farming skills they brought with them helped solidify the Middle Colonies ' prosperity . They were noted for tight @-@ knit religious communities , mostly Lutheran but also including many smaller sects such as the Moravians , Mennonites and Amish

The Scotch @-@ Irish began immigrating to the Middle Colonies in waves after 1717 . They primarily pushed farther into the western frontier of the colonies , where they repeatedly confronted the Indians . Other groups included the French Huguenots , Welsh , Dutch , Swedes , Swiss , and Scots Highlanders .

= = = English colonists = = =

When the English took direct control of the Middle Colonies around 1664 , many Quakers from Rhode Island had already been pushed into the region by Puritans , while Episcopalian businessmen settled in Philadelphia and New York City .

Welsh Quakers , Baptists and Methodists settled in the Welsh Tract of Pennsylvania . While some Welsh colonists like Roger Williams , left to found Rhode Island , Anne Hutchinson founded a seed settlement in New York . Rhode Island was not initially counted as part of New England , having been excluded from the New England Confederation , but later joined the Dominion of New England . Thus , the definition of the Middle Colonies sometimes changed and overlapped with Rhode Island 's colonial boundaries . After joining the Dominion of New England , however , Rhode Island was permanently thought of as a New England colony . New York 's initial possession of parts of Maine ensured a close relationship with other New England colonies like Vermont and a continuing New England influence in the colony .

Both William Penn and the Lords Baltimore encouraged Irish Protestant immigration , hoping they could obtain indentured servants to work on their estates and on colonial developments . Often areas of the Middle Colonies displayed prevalent Irish cultural influence .

= = = Labor = = =

Labor was always in short supply . The most common solution was indentured servitude of young whites . These were teenagers in Britain or Germany whose parents arranged for them to work for families in the colonies until age 21 , in exchange for their ocean passage . The great majority became farmers or farm wives . By the mid @-@ eighteenth century , African American slaves comprised 12 % of the population of New York . Most were house servants in Manhattan , or farmworkers on Dutch estates .

= = = Religion = = =

The Middle Colonies were the religiously diverse part of the British Empire , with a high degree of tolerance . The Penn family were Quakers , and the colony became a favorite destination for that group as well as German Lutherans , German Reformed and numerous small sects such as Mennonites , Amish and Moravians , not to mention Scotch Irish Presbyterians . The Dutch Reformed were strong in upstate New York and New Jersey , and Congregationalists were important in Long Island . The First Great Awakening invigorated religiosity and helped stimulate the growth of Congregational , Methodist and Baptist churches . Non @-@ British colonists included Dutch Calvinist , Swedish Lutherans , Palatine Mennonites , and the Amish .

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