

III. New England

A. The Puritans of England

1. Many Englishmen were dissatisfied with Anglicanism. They believed that rebelling against the pope merely because the king wanted to remarry and obtain an heir was not a proper reason. They viewed Calvinism as a more properly religious new sect.
2. For some time, English Calvinists hoped to be able to make Anglicanism purer (more like Calvinism). Thus they became known as “Puritans.”
3. King James I and his son Charles I believed in the “divine right” of kings, however, and refused to accept their suggestions for improving the Church of England.
4. They began to make plans to leave for the English colony of Virginia in America.

B. The Pilgrims and the Plymouth Colony

1. The Puritans departed England on the famous ship named “Mayflower” on a pilgrimage to America just before the winter of 1620. Instead of sailing all the way to Virginia, they stopped at a location they named Plymouth (in present-day Massachusetts).
2. Over half of the original 100 settlers died in their first harsh winter in America.
3. Remarkably, the local natives were friendly, and helped the settlers to grow food.
4. To celebrate the survival of the colony, the settlers held a now famous Thanksgiving feast in the fall of 1621.
5. The colony was still in a very fragile condition. They did not have the king’s permission to settle there. Also, it was going to be difficult to get more people to leave England to create a colony for religious reasons alone.

C. The Growth of New England

1. Back in England, those Puritans who had chosen not to leave continued to try to change Anglicanism.
2. Charles I was even more suspicious of those who disagreed with him than his father James I, and he became ever more tyrannical.
3. Many Puritans lost hope for change in England, and decided it was time to leave.
4. The Massachusetts Bay Company was chartered by the king (he didn’t know its colonists were leaving for religious reasons) and a “Great Puritan Migration” began.
5. The Winthrop Fleet, led by John Winthrop, carried 1000 colonists in 1630 alone, and over the next ten years, the number of colonists in New England jumped from 300 to 30,000.

D. The Question of Religious Freedom

1. It is often said that the Pilgrims came to America for “religious freedom,” but this is not accurate. The Pilgrims came to escape persecution in England, but they did not accept that people in their community should choose their own beliefs.
2. In 1624 a settlement neighboring Plymouth called Wollaston was created by Anglicans. They chose to celebrate a traditional, non-Christian, festival called May Day, where they danced around a Maypole. The Plymouth Puritans attacked Wollaston and arrested its leaders.
3. In 1631, Anglicans who had arrived in Massachusetts Bay tried to create an Anglican Church in the new colony. They were banished.
4. In 1636, a Puritan preacher named Roger Williams defended the idea of religious freedom. He was also banished.

5. Roger Williams and his supporters left Massachusetts and settled with a nearby Indian tribe called the Naragansetts. They obtained land from this tribe and create a new settlement in 1636, called Providence, which became the colony of Rhode Island.

IV. The Growth of English Colonies in America

A. Other New England Colonies

1. Two other New England colonies had been created by 1636. New Hampshire was created in 1623, and Connecticut began in 1636.
2. Maine was started as a separate colony, but it became part of Massachusetts, and stayed that way until 1820.

B. Maryland

1. In 1634 the colony of Maryland was started by George Calvert, a.k.a. Lord Baltimore, a personal friend and advisor to King Charles I of England.
2. Baltimore was secretly Catholic, and when he obtained permission from Charles I to create a colony, he had to allow Anglicanism as well as Catholicism.
3. Religious toleration (at least involving Catholics and Anglicans) thus became a part of the laws of Maryland from the outset.

C. Delay in Further Colonization

1. The Puritans and others rebelled against Charles I in 1642 and a Civil War against the King lasted until 1649, when the king was captured and executed.
2. Then from 1649 to 1660, the Puritans ruled England without a king, during a period known as the Interregnum.
3. Because of this violent episode, England was too busy to conduct further colonization. No new colony was created until 1663.

D. Later Colonies

1. During the English Civil War and Interregnum, the son of Charles I had lived in exile from England with the help of many loyal supporters.
2. When he became Charles II, he rewarded these supporters with land in America, starting with the Carolinas (later split into North and South Carolina) in 1663.
3. The Dutch had begun their own colony called New Netherlands. The English king did not like the idea of his American colonies being divided by territory belonging to another European country and he ordered a sneak attack on it in 1664. It was captured in and turned into New York (later split into New York and New Jersey).
4. In 1681, a part of New Netherlands was given to a proprietor named William Penn, who belonged to a new sect called the Quakers. He created Pennsylvania as a colony of religious toleration, and was also granted Delaware in 1682.
5. In 1720, England got a new king, George I. Not surprisingly, when the last of America's first thirteen colonies was created in 1732, it was named Georgia.