

PERIOD 2: 1607–1754

Chapter 2 *The Thirteen Colonies and the British Empire, 1607–1754*

Chapter 3 *Colonial Society in the 18th Century*

In a period of almost 150 years during the 17th and 18th centuries, the British established 13 colonies along the Atlantic coast that provided a profitable trade and a home to a diverse group of people.

Overview From the establishment of the first permanent English settlement in North America to the start of a decisive war for European control of the continent, the colonies evolved. At first, they struggled for survival, but they became a society of permanent farms, plantations, towns, and cities. European settlers brought various cultures, economic plans, and ideas for governing to the Americas. In particular, with varying approaches, they all sought to dominate the native inhabitants. The British took pride in their tradition of free farmers working the land. The various colonies developed regional or sectional differences based on many influences including topography, natural resources, climate, and the background of their settlers. They largely viewed the American Indian as an obstacle to colonial growth. With their emphasis on agriculture came a demand for labor, and this led to a growing dependence on slavery and the Atlantic slave trade to power the economy. The start of the Seven Years' War signified the maturity of the British colonies and the influence of European conflicts in the power struggle for control in North America.

Alternate View Historians disagree on what date best marks the end of the colonial era. Some identify the conclusion of the Seven Years' War in 1763 or the start of the American Revolution in 1775 or the signing of a peace treaty in 1783. Historians who focus on cultural rather than political and military events might choose other dates for both the start and end of the period that emphasize the role of non-English residents, such as the Scotch-Irish, Germans, and enslaved Africans, in the colonies.

Key Concepts

2.1: Differences in imperial goals, cultures, and the North American environments that different empires confronted led Europeans to develop diverse patterns of colonization.

2.2: European colonization efforts in North America stimulated intercultural contact and intensified conflict between the various groups of colonizers and native peoples.

2.3: The increasing political, economic, and cultural exchanges within the “Atlantic World” had a profound impact on the development of colonial societies in North America.

Source: *AP U. S. History Curriculum Frameworks, 2014–2015*, The College Board

THE THIRTEEN COLONIES AND THE BRITISH EMPIRE, 1607–1754

If they desire that Piety and godliness should prosper; accompanied with sobriety, justice and love, let them choose a Country such as this is; even like France, or England, which may yield sufficiency with hard labour and industry. . . .

Reverend John White, *The Planter's Plea*, 1630

Starting with Jamestown (Virginia) in 1607 and ending with Georgia in 1733, a total of 13 distinct English colonies developed along the Atlantic Coast of North America. Every colony received its identity and its authority to operate by means of a charter (a document granting special privileges) from the English monarch. Each charter described in general terms the relationship that was supposed to exist between the colony and the crown. Over time, three types of charters—and three types of colonies—developed:

- Corporate colonies, such as Jamestown, were operated by joint-stock companies, at least during these colonies' early years.
- Royal colonies, such as Virginia after 1624, were to be under the direct authority and rule of the king's government.
- Proprietary colonies, such as Maryland and Pennsylvania, were under the authority of individuals granted charters of ownership by the king.

Unlike the French and Spanish colonists, the English brought a tradition of representative government. They were accustomed to holding elections for representatives who would speak for property owners and decide important measures, such as taxes, proposed by the king's government. While political and religious conflicts dominated England, feelings for independence grew in the colonies. Eventually, tensions emerged between the king and his colonial subjects. This chapter summarizes the development of the English colonies.

Early English Settlements

In the early 1600s, England was finally in a position to colonize the lands explored more than a century earlier by John Cabot. By defeating a large Spanish fleet—the Spanish Armada—in 1588, England had gained a reputation as a major naval power. Also in this period, England’s population was growing rapidly while its economy was depressed. The number of poor and landless people increased, people who were attracted to opportunities in the Americas. The English devised a practical method for financing the costly and risky enterprise of founding colonies. A joint-stock company pooled the savings of many investors, thereby spreading the risk. Thus, colonies on the North Atlantic Coast were able to attract large numbers of English settlers.

Jamestown

England’s King James I chartered the Virginia Company, a joint-stock company that founded the first permanent English colony in America at Jamestown in 1607.

Early Problems The first settlers of Jamestown suffered greatly, mostly from their own mistakes. The settlement’s location in a swampy area along the James River resulted in fatal outbreaks of dysentery and malaria. Moreover, many of the settlers were gentlemen unaccustomed to physical work. Others were gold-seeking adventurers who refused to hunt or farm. One key source of goods was from trade with American Indians—but when conflicts erupted between settlers and the natives, trade would stop and settlers went hungry. Starvation was a persistent issue in Jamestown.

Through the forceful leadership of Captain John Smith, Jamestown survived its first five years, but barely. Then, through the efforts of John Rolfe and his Indian wife, Pocahontas, the colony developed a new variety of tobacco that would become popular in Europe and become a profitable crop.

Transition to a Royal Colony Despite tobacco, by 1624 the Virginia colony remained near collapse. More than 6,000 people had settled there, but only 2,000 remained alive. Further, the Virginia Company made unwise decisions that placed it heavily in debt. King James I had seen enough. He revoked the charter of the bankrupt company and took direct control of the colony. Now known as Virginia, the colony became England’s first royal colony.

Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay

Religious motivation, not the search for wealth, was the principal force behind the settlement of two other English colonies, Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay. Both were settled by English Protestants who dissented from the official government-supported Church of England, also known as the Anglican Church. The leader of the Church of England was the monarch of England. The Church of England had broken away from the control of the pope in Rome, so it was no longer part of the Roman Catholic Church. However, it had kept most of

the Catholic rituals and governing structure. The dissenters, influenced by the teachings of Swiss theologian John Calvin, charged that the Church of England should break more completely with Rome. In addition, the dissenters adopted Calvin's doctrine of predestination, the belief that God guides those he has selected for salvation even before their birth. England's King James I, who reigned from 1603 to 1625, viewed the religious dissenters as a threat to his religious and political authority and ordered them arrested and jailed.

The Plymouth Colony

Radical dissenters to the Church of England were known as the Separatists because they wanted to organize a completely separate church that was independent of royal control. Several hundred Separatists left England for Holland in search of religious freedom. Because of their travels, they became known as Pilgrims. Economic hardship and cultural differences with the Dutch led many of the Pilgrims to seek another haven for their religion. They chose the new colony in America, then operated by the Virginia Company of London. In 1620, a small group of Pilgrims set sail for Virginia aboard the *Mayflower*. Fewer than half of the 100 passengers on this ship were Separatists; the rest were people who had economic motives for making the voyage.

After a hard and stormy voyage of 65 days, the *Mayflower* dropped anchor off the Massachusetts coast, a few hundred miles to the north of the intended destination in Virginia. Rather than going on to Jamestown as planned, the Pilgrims decided to establish a new colony at Plymouth.

Early Hardships After a first winter that saw half their number perish, the settlers at Plymouth were helped to adapt to the land by friendly American Indians. They celebrated a good harvest at a thanksgiving feast (the first Thanksgiving) in 1621. Under strong leaders, including Captain Miles Standish and Governor William Bradford, the Plymouth colony grew slowly but remained small. Fish, furs, and lumber became the mainstays of the economy.

Massachusetts Bay Colony

A group of more moderate dissenters believed that the Church of England could be reformed. Because they wanted to purify the church, they became known as Puritans. The persecution of Puritans increased when a new king, Charles I, took the throne in 1625. Seeking religious freedom, a group of Puritans gained a royal charter for the Massachusetts Bay Company (1629).

In 1630, about a thousand Puritans led by John Winthrop sailed for the Massachusetts shore and founded Boston and several other towns. A civil war in England in the 1630s drove some 15,000 more settlers to the Massachusetts Bay Colony—a movement known as the Great Migration.

Early Political Institutions

From their very beginning, the American colonies began taking steps toward self-rule.

Representative Assembly in Virginia The Virginia Company encouraged settlement in Jamestown by guaranteeing colonists the same rights as residents of England, including representation in the lawmaking process. In 1619, just 12 years after the founding of Jamestown, Virginia's colonists organized the first representative assembly in America, the House of Burgesses.

Representative Government in New England Aboard the *Mayflower* in 1620, the Pilgrims drew up and signed a document that pledged them to make decisions by the will of the majority. This document, known as the Mayflower Compact, was an early form of colonial self-government and a rudimentary written constitution.

In the Massachusetts Bay Colony, all freemen—male members of the Puritan Church—had the right to participate in yearly elections of the colony's governor, his assistants, and a representative assembly.

Limits to Colonial Democracy Despite these steps, most colonists were excluded from the political process. Only male property owners could vote for representatives. Those who were either female or landless had few rights; slaves and indentured servants had practically none at all. Also, many colonial governors ruled with autocratic or unlimited powers, answering only to the king or others in England who provided the colonies' financial support. Thus, the gradual development of democratic ideas in the colonies coexisted with antidemocratic practices such as slavery and the widespread mistreatment of American Indians.

The Chesapeake Colonies

In 1632, King Charles I subdivided the Virginia colony. He chartered a new colony on either side of Chesapeake Bay and granted control of it to George Calvert (Lord Baltimore), as a reward for this Catholic nobleman's service to the crown. The new colony of Maryland thus became the first proprietary colony.

Religious Issues in Maryland

The king expected proprietors to carry out his wishes faithfully, thus giving him control over a colony. The first Lord Baltimore died before he could achieve great wealth in his colony while also providing a haven for his fellow Catholics. The Maryland proprietorship passed to his son, Cecil Calvert—the second Lord Baltimore—who set about implementing his father's plan in 1634.

Act of Toleration To avoid persecution in England, several wealthy English Catholics emigrated to Maryland and established large colonial plantations. They were quickly outnumbered, however, by Protestant farmers. Protestants therefore held a majority in Maryland's assembly. In 1649, Calvert persuaded the assembly to adopt the Act of Toleration, the first colonial statute granting religious freedom to all Christians. However, the statute also called for the death of anyone who denied the divinity of Jesus.

Protestant Revolt In the late 1600s, Protestant resentment against a Catholic proprietor erupted into a brief civil war. The Protestants triumphed, and the Act of Toleration was repealed. Catholics lost their right to vote in elections for the Maryland assembly. In the 18th century, Maryland's economy and society was much like that of neighboring Virginia, except that in Maryland there was greater tolerance of religious diversity among different Protestant sects.

Labor Shortages

In both Maryland and Virginia, landowners saw great opportunities. They could get land, either by taking it from or trading for it with American Indians, and Europeans had a growing demand for tobacco. However, they could not find enough laborers. For example, in Virginia, the high death rate from disease, food shortages, and battles with American Indians meant that the population grew slowly. Landowners tried several ways to find the workers they wanted.

Indentured Servants At first, the Virginia Company hoped to meet the need for labor using indentured servants. Under contract with a master or landowner who paid for their passage, young people from the British Isles agreed to work for a specified period—usually between four to seven years—in return for room and board. In effect, indentured servants were under the absolute rule of their masters until the end of their work period. At the expiration of that period, they gained their freedom and either worked for wages or obtained land of their own to farm. For landowners, the system provided laborers, but only temporarily.

Headright System Virginia attempted to attract immigrants through offers of land. The colony offered 50 acres of land to (1) each immigrant who paid for his own passage and (2) any plantation owner who paid for an immigrant's passage.

Slavery In 1619, a Dutch ship brought an unusual group of indentured servants to Virginia: they were black Africans. Because English law at that time did not recognize hereditary slavery, the first Africans in Virginia were not in bondage for life, and any children born to them were free. Moreover, the early colonists were struggling to survive and too poor to purchase the Africans who were being imported as slaves for sugar plantations in the West Indies. By 1650, there were only about 400 African laborers in Virginia. However, by the end of the 1660s, the Virginia House of Burgesses had enacted laws that discriminated between blacks and whites. Africans and their offspring were to be kept in permanent bondage. They were slaves.

Economic Problems Beginning in the 1660s, low tobacco prices, due largely to overproduction, brought hard times to the Chesapeake colonies Maryland and Virginia. When Virginia's House of Burgesses attempted to raise tobacco prices, the merchants of London retaliated by raising their own prices on goods exported to Virginia.

Conflict in Virginia

Sir William Berkeley, the royal governor of Virginia (1641–1652; 1660–1677), used dictatorial powers to govern on behalf of the large planters. He antagonized small farmers on Virginia's western frontier because he failed to protect them from Indian attacks.

Bacon's Rebellion Nathaniel Bacon, an impoverished gentleman farmer, seized upon the grievances of the western farmers to lead a rebellion against Berkeley's government. Bacon and others resented the economic and political control exercised by a few large planters in the Chesapeake area. He raised an army of volunteers and, in 1676, conducted a series of raids and massacres against American Indian villages on the Virginia frontier. Berkeley's government in Jamestown accused Bacon of rebelling against royal authority. Bacon's army succeeded in defeating the governor's forces and even burned the Jamestown settlement. Soon afterward, Bacon died of dysentery and the rebel army collapsed. Governor Berkeley brutally suppressed the remnants of the insurrection, executing 23 rebels.

Lasting Problems Although it was short-lived, Bacon's Rebellion, or the Chesapeake Revolution, highlighted two long-lasting disputes in colonial Virginia: (1) sharp class differences between wealthy planters and landless or poor farmers, and (2) colonial resistance to royal control. These problems would continue into the next century, even after the general conditions of life in the Chesapeake colonies became more stable and prosperous.

Development of New England

Strong religious convictions helped sustain settlers in their struggle to establish the Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay colonies. However, Puritan leaders showed intolerance of anyone who questioned their religious teachings. The Puritans often banished dissidents from the Bay colony. These banished dissidents formed settlements that would develop into Rhode Island and Connecticut.

Rhode Island Roger Williams went to Boston in 1631 as a respected Puritan minister. He believed, however, that the individual's conscience was beyond the control of any civil or church authority. His teachings on this point placed him in conflict with other Puritan leaders, who ordered his banishment from the Bay colony. Leaving Boston, Williams fled southward to Narragansett Bay, where he and a few followers founded the settlement of Providence in 1636. The new colony was unique in two respects. First, it recognized the rights of American Indians and paid them for the use of their land. Second, Williams' government allowed Catholics, Quakers, and Jews to worship freely. Williams also founded one of the first Baptist churches in America.

Another dissident who questioned the doctrines of the Puritan authorities was Anne Hutchinson. She believed in *antinomianism*—the idea that faith alone, not deeds, is necessary for salvation. Banished from the Bay colony, Hutchinson and a group of followers founded the colony of Portsmouth in

1638, not far from Williams' colony of Providence. A few years later, Hutchinson migrated to Long Island and was killed in an American Indian uprising.

In 1644, Roger Williams was granted a charter from the Parliament that joined Providence and Portsmouth into a single colony, Rhode Island. Because this colony tolerated diverse beliefs, it served as a refuge for many.

Connecticut To the west of Rhode Island, the fertile Connecticut River Valley attracted other settlers who were unhappy with the Massachusetts authorities. The Reverend Thomas Hooker led a large group of Boston Puritans into the valley and founded the colony of Hartford in 1636. The Hartford settlers then drew up the first written constitution in American history, the *Fundamental Orders of Connecticut* (1639). It established a representative government consisting of a legislature elected by popular vote and a governor chosen by that legislature. South of Hartford, a second settlement in the Connecticut Valley was started by John Davenport in 1637 and given the name New Haven.

In 1665, New Haven joined with the more democratic Hartford settlers to form the colony of Connecticut. The royal charter for Connecticut granted it a limited degree of self-government, including election of the governor.

NEW ENGLAND AND ATLANTIC COLONIES 1600s



New Hampshire The last colony to be founded in New England was New Hampshire. Originally part of Massachusetts Bay, it consisted of a few settlements north of Boston. Hoping to increase royal control over the colonies, King Charles II separated New Hampshire from the Bay colony in 1679 and made it a royal colony, subject to the authority of an appointed governor.

Halfway Covenant In the 1660s, a generation had passed since the founding of the first Puritan colonies in New England. To be a full member of a Puritan congregation, an individual needed to have felt a profound religious experience known as a conversion. However, fewer members of the new native-born generation were having such experiences. In an effort to maintain the church's influence and membership, a *halfway covenant* was offered by some clergy. Under this, people could become partial church members even if they had not had felt a conversion.

Other ministers rejected the halfway covenant and denounced it from the pulpit. Nevertheless, as the years passed, strict Puritan practices weakened in most New England communities in order to maintain church membership.

New England Confederation In the 1640s, the New England colonies faced the constant threat of attack from American Indians, the Dutch, and the French. Because England was in the midst of a civil war, the colonists could expect little assistance. Therefore in 1643, four New England colonies (Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay, Connecticut, and New Haven) formed a military alliance known as the New England Confederation. The confederation was directed by a board composed of two representatives from each colony. It had limited powers to act on boundary disputes, the return of runaway servants, and dealings with American Indians.

The confederation lasted until 1684, when colonial rivalries and renewed control by the English monarch brought this first experiment in colonial cooperation to an end. It was important because it established a precedent for colonies taking unified action toward a common purpose.

King Philip's War Only a few years before the confederation's demise, it helped the New England colonists cope successfully with a dire threat. A chief of the Wampanoags named Metacom—known to the colonists as King Philip—united many tribes in southern New England against the English settlers, who were constantly encroaching on the American Indians' lands. In a vicious war (1675–1676), thousands on both sides were killed, and dozens of towns and villages were burned. Eventually, the colonial forces prevailed, killing King Philip and ending most American Indian resistance in New England.

Restoration Colonies

New American colonies were founded in the late 17th century during a period in English history known as the Restoration. (The name refers to the restoration to power of an English monarch, Charles II, in 1660 following a brief period of Puritan rule under Oliver Cromwell.)

The Carolinas

As a reward for helping him gain the throne, Charles II granted a huge tract of land between Virginia and Spanish Florida to eight nobles, who in 1663 became the lord proprietors of the Carolinas. In 1729, two royal colonies, South Carolina and North Carolina, were formed from the original grant.

THE THIRTEEN ENGLISH COLONIES
AROUND 1750



South Carolina In 1670, in the southern Carolinas, a few colonists from England and some planters from the island of Barbados founded a town named for their king. Initially, the southern economy was based on trading furs and providing food for the West Indies. By the middle of the 18th century, South Carolina's large rice-growing plantations worked by enslaved Africans resembled the economy and culture of the West Indies.

North Carolina The northern part of the Carolinas developed differently. There, farmers from Virginia and New England established small, self-sufficient tobacco farms. The region had few good harbors and poor transportation; therefore, compared to South Carolina, there were fewer large plantations and less reliance on slavery. North Carolina in the 18th century earned a reputation for democratic views and autonomy from British control.

New York

Charles II wished to consolidate the crown's holdings along the Atlantic Coast and close the gap between the New England and the Chesapeake colonies. This required compelling the Dutch to give up their colony of New Amsterdam centered on Manhattan Island and the Hudson River Valley.

In 1664, the king granted his brother, the Duke of York (the future James II), the lands lying between Connecticut and Delaware Bay. As the lord high admiral of the navy, James dispatched a force that easily took control of the Dutch colony from its governor, Peter Stuyvesant. James ordered his agents in the renamed colony of New York to treat the Dutch settlers well and to allow them freedom to worship as they pleased and speak their own language.

James also ordered new taxes, duties, and rents without seeking the consent of a representative assembly. In fact, he insisted that no assembly should be allowed to form in his colony. But taxation without representation met strong opposition from New York's English-speaking settlers, most of whom were Puritans from New England. Finally, in 1683, James yielded by allowing New York's governor to grant broad civil and political rights, including a representative assembly.

New Jersey

Believing that the territory of New York was too large to administer, James split it in 1664. He gave the section of the colony located between the Hudson River and Delaware Bay to Lord John Berkeley and Sir George Carteret. In 1674, one proprietor received West New Jersey and the other East New Jersey. To attract settlers, both proprietors made generous land offers and allowed religious freedom and an assembly. Eventually, they sold their proprietary interests to various groups of Quakers. Land titles in the Jerseys changed hands repeatedly, and inaccurate property lines added to the general confusion. To settle matters, the crown decided in 1702 to combine the two Jerseys into a single royal colony: New Jersey.

Pennsylvania and Delaware

To the west of New Jersey lay a broad expanse of forested land that was originally settled by a peace-loving Christian sect, the Quakers.

Quakers Members of the Religious Society of Friends—commonly known as Quakers—believed in the equality of all men and women, nonviolence, and resistance to military service. They further believed that religious authority was found within each person’s soul and not in the Bible and not in any outside source. Such views posed a radical challenge to established authority. Therefore, the Quakers of England were persecuted and jailed for their beliefs.

William Penn William Penn was a young convert to the Quaker faith. His father had served the king as a victorious admiral. Although the elder Penn opposed his son’s religious beliefs, he respected William’s sincerity and bequeathed him considerable wealth. In addition, the royal family owed the father a large debt, which they paid to William in 1681 in the form of a grant of American land for a colony that he called Pennsylvania, or Penn’s woods.

“The Holy Experiment” Penn put his Quaker beliefs to the test in his colony. He wanted his new colony to provide a religious refuge for Quakers and other persecuted people, to enact liberal ideas in government, and generate income and profits for himself. He provided the colony with a Frame of Government (1682–1683), which guaranteed a representative assembly elected by landowners, and a written constitution, the Charter of Liberties (1701), which guaranteed freedom of worship for all and unrestricted immigration.

Unlike other colonial proprietors, who governed from afar in England, Penn crossed the ocean to supervise the founding of a new town on the Delaware River named Philadelphia. He brought with him a plan for a grid pattern of streets, which was later imitated by other American cities. Also unusual was Penn’s attempt to treat the American Indians fairly and not to cheat them when purchasing their land.

To attract settlers to his new land, Penn hired agents and published notices throughout Europe, which promised political and religious freedom and generous land terms. Penn’s lands along the Delaware River had previously been settled by several thousand Dutch and Swedish colonists, who eased the arrival of the newcomers attracted by Penn’s promotion.

Delaware In 1702, Penn granted the lower three counties of Pennsylvania their own assembly. In effect, Delaware became a separate colony, even though its governor was the same as Pennsylvania’s until the American Revolution.

Georgia: The Last Colony

In 1732, a thirteenth colony, Georgia, was chartered. It was the last of the British colonies and the only one to receive direct financial support from the government in London. There were two reasons for British interest in starting a new southern colony. First, Britain wanted to create a defensive buffer to protect the prosperous South Carolina plantations from the threat of Spanish

Florida. Second, thousands of people in England were being imprisoned for debt. Wealthy philanthropists thought it would relieve the overcrowded jails if debtors were shipped to an American colony to start life over.

Special Regulations Given a royal charter for a proprietary colony, a group of philanthropists led by James Oglethorpe founded Georgia's first settlement, Savannah, in 1733. Oglethorpe acted as the colony's first governor and put into effect an elaborate plan for making the colony thrive. There were strict regulations, including bans on drinking rum and slavery. Nevertheless, partly because of the constant threat of Spanish attack, the colony did not prosper.

Royal Colony By 1752, Oglethorpe and his group gave up their plan. Taken over by the British government, Georgia became a royal colony. Restrictions on rum and slavery were dropped. The colony grew slowly by adopting the plantation system of South Carolina. Even so, at the time of the American Revolution, Georgia was the smallest and poorest of the 13 colonies.

Mercantilism and the Empire

Most European kingdoms in the 17th century adopted the economic policy of *mercantilism*, which looked upon trade, colonies, and the accumulation of wealth as the basis for a country's military and political strength. According to mercantilist doctrine, a government should regulate trade and production to enable it to become self-sufficient. Colonies were to provide raw materials to the parent country for the growth and profit of that country's industries. Colonies existed for one purpose only: to enrich the parent country.

Mercantilist policies had guided both the Spanish and the French colonies from their inception. Mercantilism began to be applied to the English colonies, however, only after the turmoil of England's civil war had subsided.

Acts of Trade and Navigation England's government implemented a mercantilist policy with a series of Navigation Acts between 1650 and 1673, which established three rules for colonial trade:

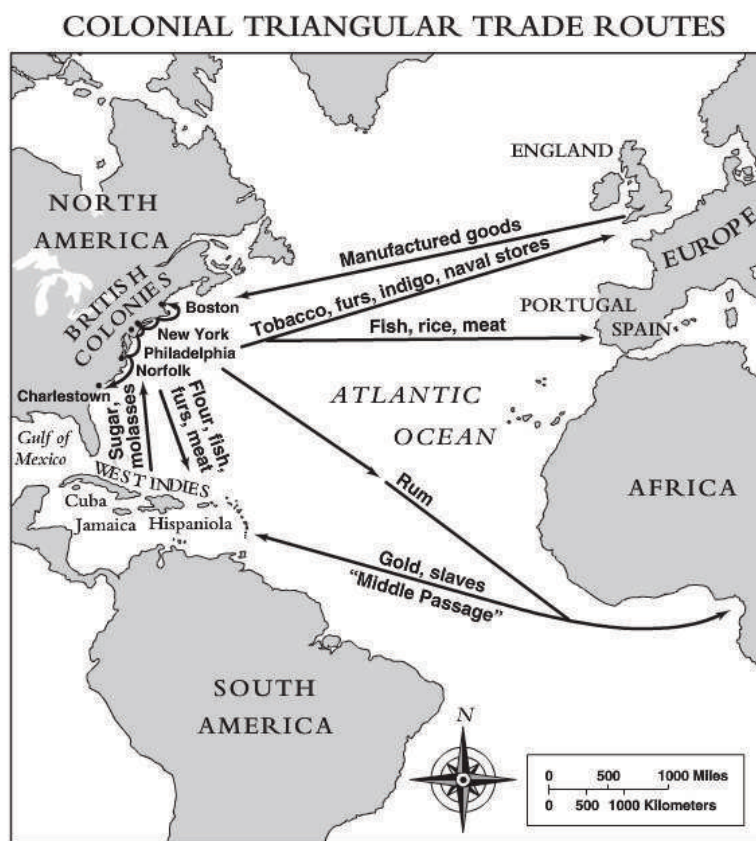
1. Trade to and from the colonies could be carried only by English or colonial-built ships, which could be operated only by English or colonial crews.
2. All goods imported into the colonies, except for some perishables, had to pass through ports in England.
3. Specified or "enumerated" goods from the colonies could be exported to England only. Tobacco was the original "enumerated" good, but over the years, the list was greatly expanded.

Impact on the Colonies The Navigation Acts had mixed effects on the colonies. The acts caused New England shipbuilding to prosper, provided Chesapeake tobacco with a monopoly in England, and provided English military forces to protect the colonies from potential attacks by the French and Spanish. However, the acts also severely limited the development of colonial

manufacturing, forced Chesapeake farmers to accept low prices for their crops, and caused colonists to pay high prices for manufactured goods from England.

In many respects, mercantilist regulations were unnecessary, since England would have been the colonies' primary trading partner in any case. Furthermore, the economic advantages from the Navigation Acts were offset by their negative political effects on British-colonial relations. Colonists resented the regulatory laws imposed by the distant government in London. Especially in New England, colonists defied the acts by smuggling in French, Dutch, and other goods.

Enforcement of the Acts The British government was often lax in enforcing the acts, and its agents in the colonies were known for their corruption. Occasionally, however, the crown would attempt to overcome colonial resistance to its trade laws. In 1684, it revoked the charter of Massachusetts Bay because that colony had been the center of smuggling activity.



The Dominion of New England A new king, James II, succeeded to the throne in 1685. He was determined to increase royal control over the colonies by combining them into larger administrative units and doing away with their representative assemblies. In 1686, he combined New York, New Jersey, and the various New England colonies into a single unit called the Dominion of New England. Sir Edmund Andros was sent from England to serve as governor of

the dominion. The new governor made himself instantly unpopular by levying taxes, limiting town meetings, and revoking land titles.

James II did not remain in power for long. His attempts at asserting his royal powers led to an uprising against him. The Glorious Revolution of 1688 succeeded in deposing James and replacing him with two new sovereigns, William and Mary. James's fall from power brought the Dominion of New England to an end and the colonies again operated under separate charters.

Permanent Restrictions Despite the Glorious Revolution, mercantilist policies remained in force. In the 18th century, there were more English officials in the colonies than in any earlier era. Restrictions on colonial trade, though poorly enforced, were widely resented and resisted.

The Institution of Slavery

More important than mercantilism in the early 18th century was the growth of slavery. By 1750, half of Virginia's population and two-thirds of South Carolina's population were enslaved.

Increased Demand for Slaves The following factors explain why slavery became increasingly important, especially in the southern colonies:

1. *Reduced migration:* Increases in wages in England reduced the supply of immigrants to the colonies.
2. *Dependable workforce:* Large plantation owners were disturbed by the political demands of small farmers and indentured servants and by the disorders of Bacon's Rebellion (see page 29). They thought that slavery would provide a stable labor force totally under their control.
3. *Cheap labor:* As tobacco prices fell, rice and indigo became the most profitable crops. To grow such crops required a large land area and many inexpensive, relatively unskilled field hands.

Slave Laws As the number of slaves increased, white colonists adopted laws to ensure that African Americans would be held in bondage for life and that slave status would be inherited. In 1641, Massachusetts became the first colony to recognize the enslavement of "lawful" captives. Virginia in 1661 enacted legislation stating that children automatically inherited their mother's enslaved status for life. By 1664, Maryland declared that baptism did not affect the enslaved person's status, and that white women could not marry African American men. It became customary for whites to regard all blacks as social inferiors. Racism and slavery soon became integral to colonial society.

Triangular Trade In the 17th century, English trade in enslaved Africans had been monopolized by a single company, the Royal African Company. But after this monopoly expired, many New England merchants entered the lucrative slave trade. Merchant ships would regularly follow a triangular, or three-part, trade route. First, a ship starting from a New England port such as Boston would carry rum across the Atlantic to West Africa. There the rum would be traded for hundreds of captive Africans. Next, the ship would set out on the horrendous

Middle Passage. Those Africans who survived the frightful voyage would be traded as slaves in the West Indies for a cargo of sugarcane. Third, completing the last side of the triangle, the ship would return to a New England port where the sugar would be sold to be used in making rum. Every time one type of cargo was traded for another, the slave-trading entrepreneur usually succeeded in making a substantial profit.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: HOW INFLUENTIAL WERE THE PURITANS?

To what extent did the Puritan founders of Massachusetts shape the development of an American culture? Although some early historians such as James Truslow Adams have minimized the Puritan role, more recent scholars generally agree that the Puritans made significant cultural and intellectual contributions. There is continuing disagreement, however, about whether the Puritan influence encouraged an individualistic spirit or just the opposite.

Some historians have concentrated their study on the writings and sermons of the Puritan clergy and other leaders. They have concluded that the leaders stressed conformity to a strict moral code and exhorted people to sacrifice their individuality for the common good. According to these historians, in other words, the Puritan influence tended to suppress the individualism that later came to characterize American culture.

Other historians believe that the opposite is true. They raise objections to the method of studying only sermons and the journals of leading Puritans such as John Winthrop. If one examines the writings and actions of ordinary colonists in Massachusetts society, say these historians, then one observes many instances of independent thought and action by individuals in Puritan society. According to their argument, American individualism began with the Puritan colonists.