

# Notes – Settling New England

## I. Protestant Reformation - salvation by faith alone

- A. John Calvin - taught the doctrine of predestination
  - 1. some are destined for heaven, others for hell - only God knows which
  - 2. the “elect” demonstrate their salvation by being a “visible saint”
- B. Puritans - English Calvinists who wanted to “purify” the Anglican church of all Catholic sacraments
- C. Separatists - extreme Puritans who wanted to break entirely with the Church of England - targeted for religious persecution

## II. Pilgrim Migration

- A. Pilgrims - Separatists who fled England to live with Calvinist Dutch - feared their children were becoming “too Dutch”
- B. Led by William Bradford - arrived on the Mayflower off the coast of New England (Plymouth) in 1620.
- C. Group included both “saints” (the elect) and “strangers” (those yet to receive the gift of grace)
  - 1. Miles Standish - soldier hired to organize defenses for the Pilgrims
- D. Mayflower Compact (1620) - 1st agreement for self-government; bound the freemen to obey “just and equal laws”
- E. Landed in Plymouth harbor in winter - nearly half died from exposure and disease.
  - By fall, on good terms with Indians, fur trading, corn crop, lumber for shipment
  - 1st Thanksgiving - 1621
- F. Gov’t. of colony grew out of the Mayflower Compact - civil govt. grew out of church govt.

## III. Massachusetts Bay Colony

- A. Originally intended to be a holy commonwealth - not as extreme as Pilgrims (Separatists), these settlers wanted to still reform the Church of England - they were non-Separatist Puritans.
- B. populated by Puritans from the Great Migration - exodus to the New World by Puritans escaping religious persecution and economic depression
- C. Massachusetts Bay Company
  - 1. led by John Winthrop - former atty. who wanted to use colony as refuge for persecuted Puritans.
    - believed the colony should be as “a city set upon a hill” - a beacon to all of what a godly community should be.

- D. Economy (in 17th century) based on fur trading, fishing, shipbuilding, whaling ... reflective of geography and climate?
1. labor source - Protestant Work Ethic - Puritan commitment to work
  2. Navigation Acts - (1650 - 1700) - response to Dutch trading - required all goods imported into England or the colonies must arrive on English ships and the majority of the crew must be English
    - \* impact of Navigation Acts: made England the funnel through which all colonial imports/exports had to be routed ... *made the colonies a money-making venture for the Crown*
- E. Government of Massachusetts Bay Colony: theocracy or democracy?
- church was entirely separated from the state except that all residents were taxed for church support; all residents were required to attend church services, even if they were not members
    1. Governor - had to consult advisors before taking action (balance of power)
    2. General Court - elected legislature
      - right to vote was limited to male church members
      - church membership was limited to those who could present evidence of their having experienced "saving grace" (ie: the "visible saints")
      - clergymen were not allowed to hold public office, yet did have considerable control over who was allowed church membership
        - a. John Cotton - fiery Puritan minister
    3. town meetings - more inclusive (all male property holders)
      - local issues were discussed and decided with a majority vote
      - taught people to express themselves openly and helped foster self-government
- E. Dissension - not tolerated; dissenters were punished, banished
1. Quakers - ignored the authority of the Puritan clergy
  2. Anne Hutchinson - banished by Puritans for heresy: claimed that a holy life was no sure sign of salvation and the truly saved need not bother to obey the laws of either God or man. (Antinomianism)
  3. Roger Williams - extreme Separatist who argued for the complete separation of church and state (total purity of the church required absolute separation from all manner of government); also questioned the king's right to sell Indian lands without paying the Indians for it.
- F. Religion and Congregational Churches - Congregationalism became the official tax-supported religion in MA, CT, NH
1. Halfway Covenant - offered partial church membership to those not yet converted. (Indicative of the increase in worldliness in New England - eventually, church membership opened to all)
  2. jeremiads - type of sermon which criticized parishioners for their lack of piety
- H. Salem Witch Craze (1692)
1. Cause: superstition of the era, local feuds and property disputes, defiance of traditional roles of women
  2. Outcome: repentance years later for those convicted, public apology, restitution paid by state to families of victims

## I. The Family/Women/Education

1. The “Godly Family” - based on covenants
  - a. family’s authority based on 5th commandment: “honor thy father and mother”
  - b. authority in family flowed downward: father was boss, family was nuclear
  - c. structure
    1. father - provided physical welfare for home; economics
    2. mother - subordinate domestic position: keep house, educate children, “loving Mother and obedient wife”
    3. children - obedient: “better whipped than damned”; household chores taught Protestant Work Ethic
2. Education - primarily the responsibility of the family and church
  - a. reasons for schools - educate the population so they may study the Bible ... education was highly respected
  - b. “dame schools” - grammar schools taught by elderly widowed women
  - c. Harvard College - (1636) - set the example for the rest of the colony to promote education

## IV. **New England Confederation** - Puritan union of Connecticut, New Haven, Plymouth, and Massachusetts.

Formed in friendship for defense (indians, French, Dutch), offense (dealing with runaway servants and criminals), and advice (settling disputes through Confederation)

- 2 commissioners from each colony, regardless of population

## V. **Dominion of New England (1684)** - decreed by royal authority to bring colonies back under royal control

1. led by Governor Edmund Andros - autocratic, loyal to the crown, Anglican
  - a. levied taxes without consent of General Court
  - b. curbed town meetings
  - c. enforced Navigation Acts and suppressed smuggling
  - d. took over a Puritan church for Anglican worship in Boston
2. Glorious Revolution in Britain inspired American colonists to rebel against Andros and send him back to England (1st colonial rebellion)