The New England Colonies

Chapter 3, Section 2
Religious beliefs and dissent influenced the New England colonies

Religion played a key role in colonies that were established in New England.

Many colonies were established by people who were exiled because of their religious beliefs.
A group known as the Puritans wanted to reform the Church of England.

In the early 1600s, the Puritans were respected professionals who were influential in England.

But in the 1620s, King Charles I opposed and persecuted the Puritans.
In 1630, about 900 Puritans left England in 11 ships, led by John Winthrop.

They had formed the Massachusetts Bay Company, which received a charter to establish settlements in present-day Massachusetts and New Hampshire.
## Geography of New England

| Location | • New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine are in northern New England.  
|          | • Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island are in southern New England. |
| Landforms | • Much of New England is made up of hills, mountains, and forests.  
|          | • Thin and rocky soil makes farming there difficult. |
| Climate  | • Winters are long and snowy, and summers are shorter and warm.  
|          | • Colonists caught fewer diseases and lived longer than Virginia colonists. |
The Puritans established several settlements in their colony, including Boston.

By 1643, about 20,000 people lived in the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

By the mid-1630s, Massachusetts Bay had an elected governor and an elected assembly—the General Court—but only adult male Puritans could vote.
The Puritans believed:

- towns and churches should manage their own affairs.
- people should work hard and live in strong and stable families.

Each Puritan town governed itself by setting up a town meeting, but only men could participate.
Although they founded their own colony so they could have religious freedom, the Puritans did not believe in religious toleration for others.

Disagreements about religion led to the founding of other colonies in New England.
**Providence, Rhode Island**

| Beginnings          | • Minister *Roger Williams* thought the Puritans should split entirely from the Church of England.  
|                     | • He also thought colonists should pay Native Americans for their land.  
|                     | • In 1635, Williams was expelled from Massachusetts Bay. |
| The Colony          | • Williams moved to present-day Rhode Island, bought land from Native Americans, and founded Providence in 1636. |
Religious Freedom in Providence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Charter</th>
<th>• In 1644, the colonists in Rhode Island received a charter from the king to govern themselves.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Were Welcome</td>
<td>• The colonists decided that Rhode Island would have no established church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Many people found religious freedom in Rhode Island, including followers of the Jewish faith.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Hutchinson’s Settlement

| Beginnings       | • Boston resident **Anne Hutchinson** questioned some Puritan teachings.  
                  | • She was expelled from Massachusetts in 1638. |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| The Settlement   | • Hutchinson established a settlement on an island that is part of present-day Rhode Island. |
Hartford, Connecticut

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginnings</th>
<th>• <strong>Thomas Hooker</strong>, who disagreed with Puritan leaders, left Massachusetts with 100 followers in 1636.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The Colony | • They settled in present-day Connecticut, where Hooker founded the town of Hartford.  
• Hundreds of Puritans followed, and soon there were new settlements. |
| Government | • In 1639, the colonists established a new elected legislature and governor.  
• In 1662, the king granted Connecticut a charter that made it self-governing. |
Exeter, New Hampshire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginnings</th>
<th>• John Wheelright was expelled from Massachusetts because he agreed with some of Hutchinson’s views.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Colony</td>
<td>• In 1638, Wheelright and some followers founded the town of Exeter, New Hampshire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>• In 1680, a charter from the king made New Hampshire a separate colony.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The New England colonies had a great variety of resources.

Seas, forests, and farms provided a good living for colonists.
By 1670, there were only 12,000 Native Americans in New England, one-tenth of their population 100 years earlier.

The main cause of this decline was diseases Native Americans caught from Europeans.
In 1675, a major conflict erupted between Native American groups led by Metacom and the Puritans.

During the conflict, which was called King Philip’s War, Metacom and his allies destroyed 12 English towns.

After Metacom was killed in 1676, the war ended, leaving the English free to expand.
By the 1670s, a new generation of people had been born in North America. This new generation had lost some of the older Puritans’ religious fervor. Successful merchants were becoming the new community leaders.