

The New England Colonies in the 17th Century



Pilgrims arrive in Plymouth



Harvard College founded



King Philip's War

1620

1629

1636

1644

1675

1692

Puritans found Massachusetts Bay



Rhode Island founded



Salem Witch Trials



The New England Colonies

Theme #1:

Seventeenth-century New England was characterized by a homogeneous society that revolved largely around Puritanism and its stern ideal of perfectionism. The New England colonies contained a healthy population with long life spans, a strong family structure, tightly-knit towns and congregations, and a diversity of economic activities.

What political and religious circumstances in England led to the formation and development of New England?

I. Protestant Reformation (1517)

A. Martin Luther: breaks with Catholic church



B. John Calvin: *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536)

1. Elaborated on Luther's ideas
2. God was all-powerful, all-knowing, all-good
3. Humans were weak and wicked due to original sin



4. Predestination

a. “The elect”

b. “visible saints”-
conversion
experience

c. Refuted “Good works”
philosophy of the
Catholic Church

C. Church of England

1. **King Henry VIII** broke with the Roman Catholic Church in 1534
-- Leader of the **Church of England**
(Anglican Church)
2. **Puritans:** sought to *reform* the church
3. **Separatists** (later, Pilgrims) sought to *leave* the Anglican Church permanently
4. King James I was threatened by the Separatist challenge and persecuted them

II. Pilgrims

A. First wave of Separatists

1. Separatists left England for Holland

-- Led by Rev. **John Robinson**

2. Separatists later left Holland
for America in
1620



3. *Mayflower*, 1620

4. Plymouth Bay







The Rev. John Robinson and others aboard the Mayflower

5. Mayflower Compact, 1620

-- Rule of the majority under the regulations agreed upon.

“Having undertaken, for the Glory of God, ... and honor of our King and Country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the Northern parts of Virginia, ...covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic; for our better ordering, and preservation... and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony; unto which we promise all due submission and obedience.”

Mayflower Compact

- What did the signers promise?
- What do you believe the impact of the Compact was upon early colonial America?

B. Relations with Amerindians

1. Squanto

2. Wampanoag (Pokanokets) led by Chief Massasoit, helped Pilgrims to survive



Massasoit and Pilgrims sign a peace treaty

3. The First Thanksgiving, 1621





A Wampanoag dwelling



C. Success of the Pilgrims

1. Fur trade,
fishing and
lumber

2. William Bradford

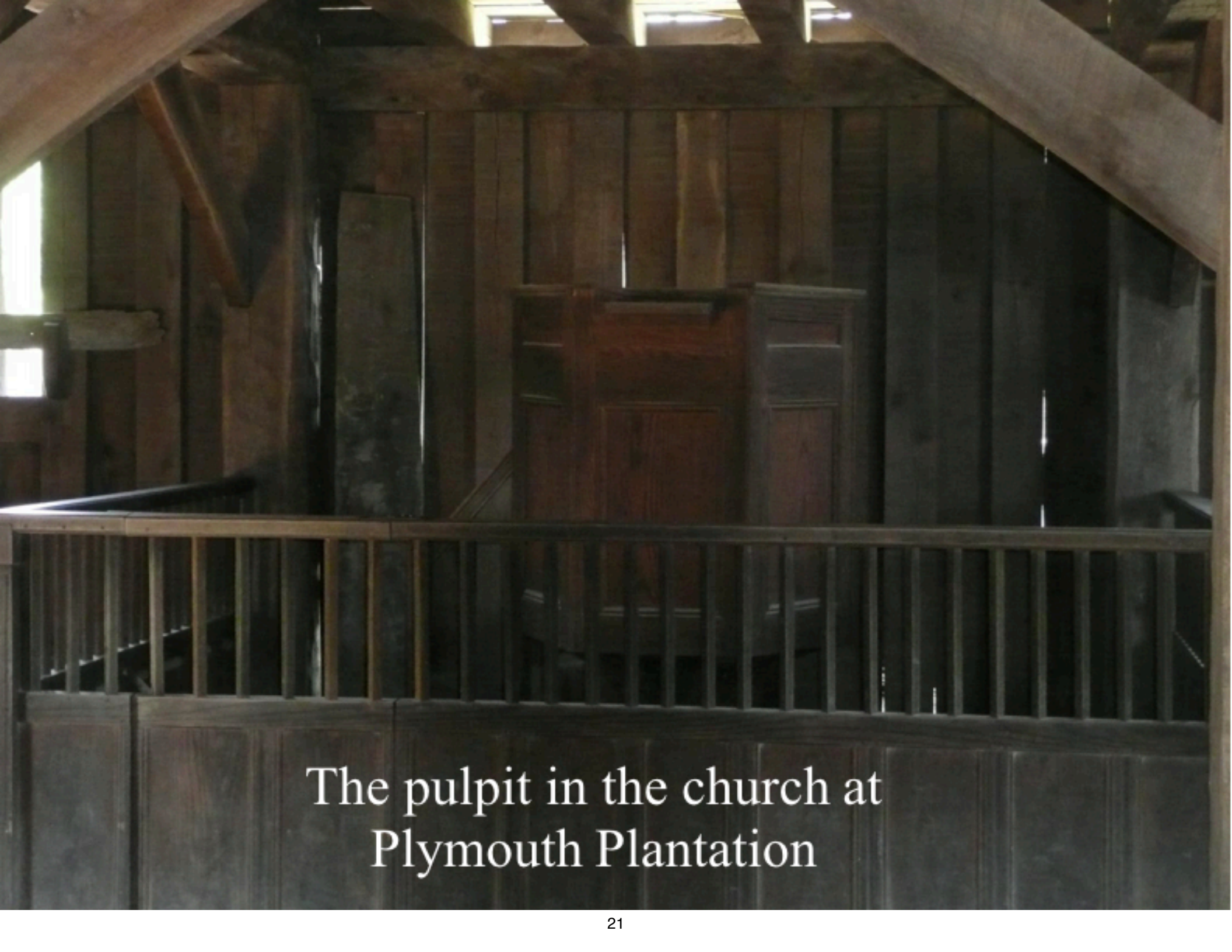
D. 1691, merged
with
Massachusetts
Bay Colony



Plymouth Plantation

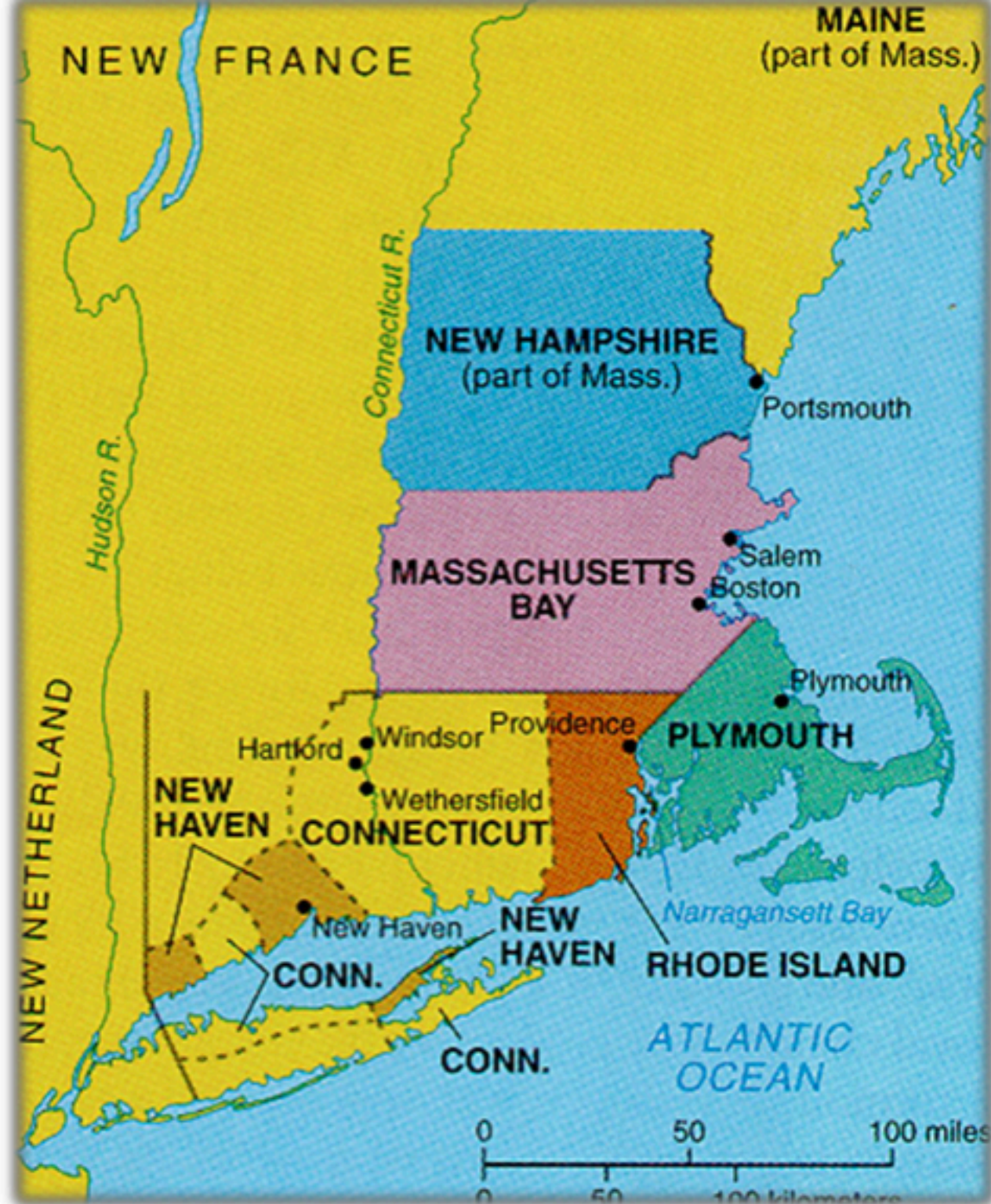




The image shows the interior of a rustic wooden church. In the center, a wooden pulpit stands against a wall of vertical wooden planks. Above the pulpit, a balcony with a wooden railing and vertical balusters is visible. The ceiling features exposed wooden beams and rafters. Light enters from the left, creating a bright area near the balcony. The overall atmosphere is aged and historical.

The pulpit in the church at
Plymouth Plantation

Map of Colonial New England



III. Massachusetts Bay Commonwealth

A. Why did Puritans leave England?

-- Fled tyranny of Charles I &
Archbishop Laud

B. MBC founded in 1629 by non-Separatist Puritans

-- Royal charter served as the MBC constitution for many years

C. The Great Migration (1630s)

a. Over 15,000 Puritans arrived
in New England

b. Ended due to English Civil War

D. Governor John Winthrop

1. Covenant theology

“We shall build
a city on a hill.”

-- *Model of
Christian Charity*,
1630



E. MBC became largest and most influential colony in New England

-- Protestant work ethic



How did Puritanism in New England
lean towards democracy?

IV. Religion and Politics in the MBC

A. Governing open to all free adult males

1. **Congregational Church** (based on Calvinism)

2. Male Voting rights (1631)

3. **Townhall** meetings (mostly property owners, majority rule)



B. Purpose of government: enforce Gods laws!

1. Gov't under Winthrop was not a democracy (only visible saints were free men and thus could vote)
2. Congregational Church was “established” (all paid taxes)
3. Religious dissenters were often punished

(NE became the least tolerant!)





In Puritan Massachusetts, religious nonconformists suffered this fate—and much worse.

C. Church leadership (experienced conversion)

1. **John Cotton** (defends govt's duty to enforce religion but advocated a civil government)

2. Clergy
barred
from
formal
political office: (sep. of church
and state!)



3. **Cambridge Platform (1648)**-MBC,
Plymouth, CT,
New Haven (more uniform)

D. Representative assembly formed in 1634

E. Early dissension in the MBC

1. Quakers (persecuted)

2. Anne Hutchinson

- **antinomianism** (declared that faith alone, not obedience to religious law is necessary for salvation)
- Banished and set out to R. I.



Question: Why might Roger Williams and other exiles desire religious freedom?

1. Complete religious freedom develops, in part, because leaders have the desire to protect their philosophy from the state
2. Guarantee of freedom written into charter
3. Almost complete white male suffrage (mentioned before)
4. Other colonies refer to R.I. as Rogues Island – that sewer
5. Hutchinson later killed in an Indian attack in New York
(John Winthrop said it was divine retribution for her false teachings)

The Trial of Anne Hutchinson



"You have stepped out of your place, you have rather been a husband than a wife, and a preacher than a hearer. You have been a naughty woman."

3. Roger Williams

- a. “liberty of conscience”
- b. “Wall of separation” (Jefferson! And no establishment clause)
- c. Rhode Island
- **Denied authority of civil govt. to regulate religious behavior**
- **No man should be forced to go to church**



Why the decline in power of the
Puritan Clergy in the late 17th?

F. The decline of Puritanism

1. Loss of religious zeal and spread of population

2. Response:

a. **Jeremiad**-had to be more committed, children of non-converted members could not be baptized.

b. **Half-way Covenant (1662)**-partial membership to those who were baptized as children.

c. Open membership by 1700

1. **Salem Witch Trials (1692)**

Cotton Mather-supported trials



Salem Witch Trials, 1692



Salem Witch Trials

- Many believed devil worked with witches in the real world
- 1st accusation when young girls listen to tales of voodoo from a black servant, began behaving oddly
- Older women became targets
- Young accusers were poor from the west, accused the wealthy from the east.
- 20 people executed.

V. Completing the New England Colonies

A. Rhode Island: Founded by Roger Williams, 1636

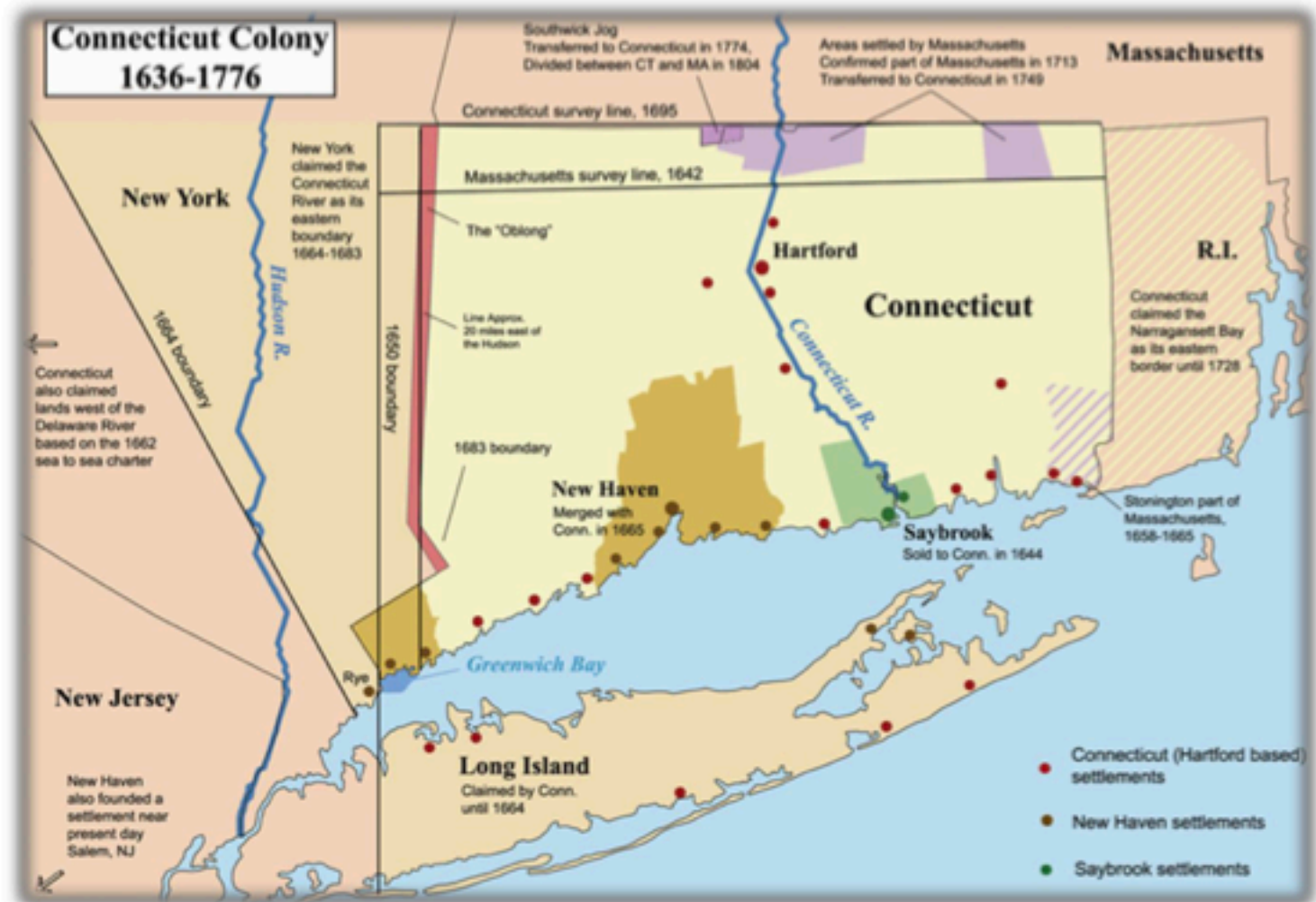
1. Founded first Baptist church in America
 - a. Freedom of religion
 - b. No compulsory worship
 - c. No taxes to support state church
2. Simple manhood suffrage
3. **Charter colony:** Given charter from Parliament in 1644

B. Connecticut River Colony (1636)

1. Thomas Hooker

2. Fundamental Orders (1639)

-- Significance



C. **Maine** absorbed by Massachusetts
Bay in 1677

D. **New Hampshire** separated from
MBC in 1679

VI. New England Confederation (1643): MBC, Plymouth, Connecticut River settlements, & New Haven

A. Pequot War, 1636

Result: Pequot towns destroyed



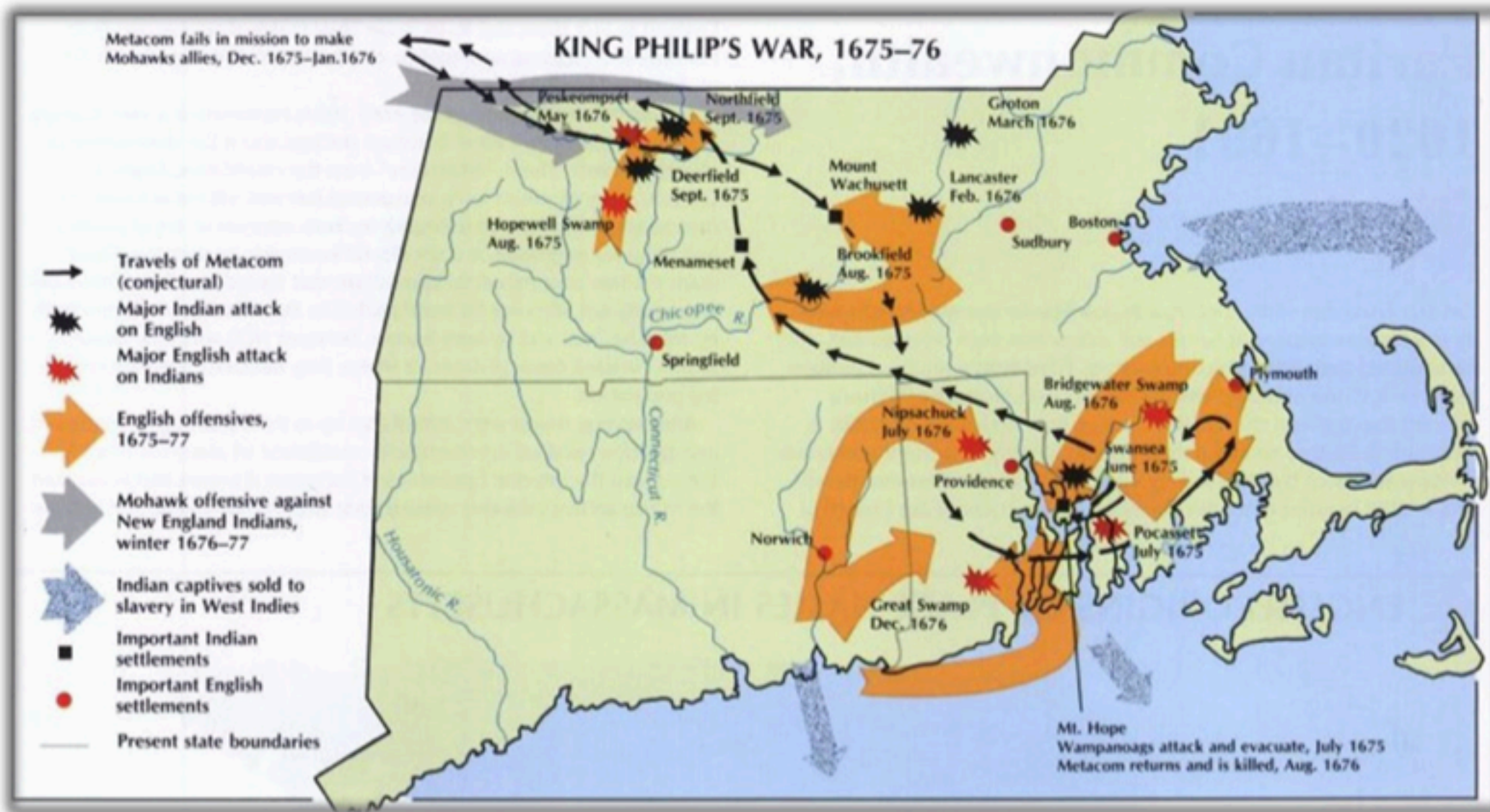
- B. Colonies were left to fend for themselves during English Civil War
 - **1st milestone on the road to colonial unity**

C. **King Philip's War, 1675**

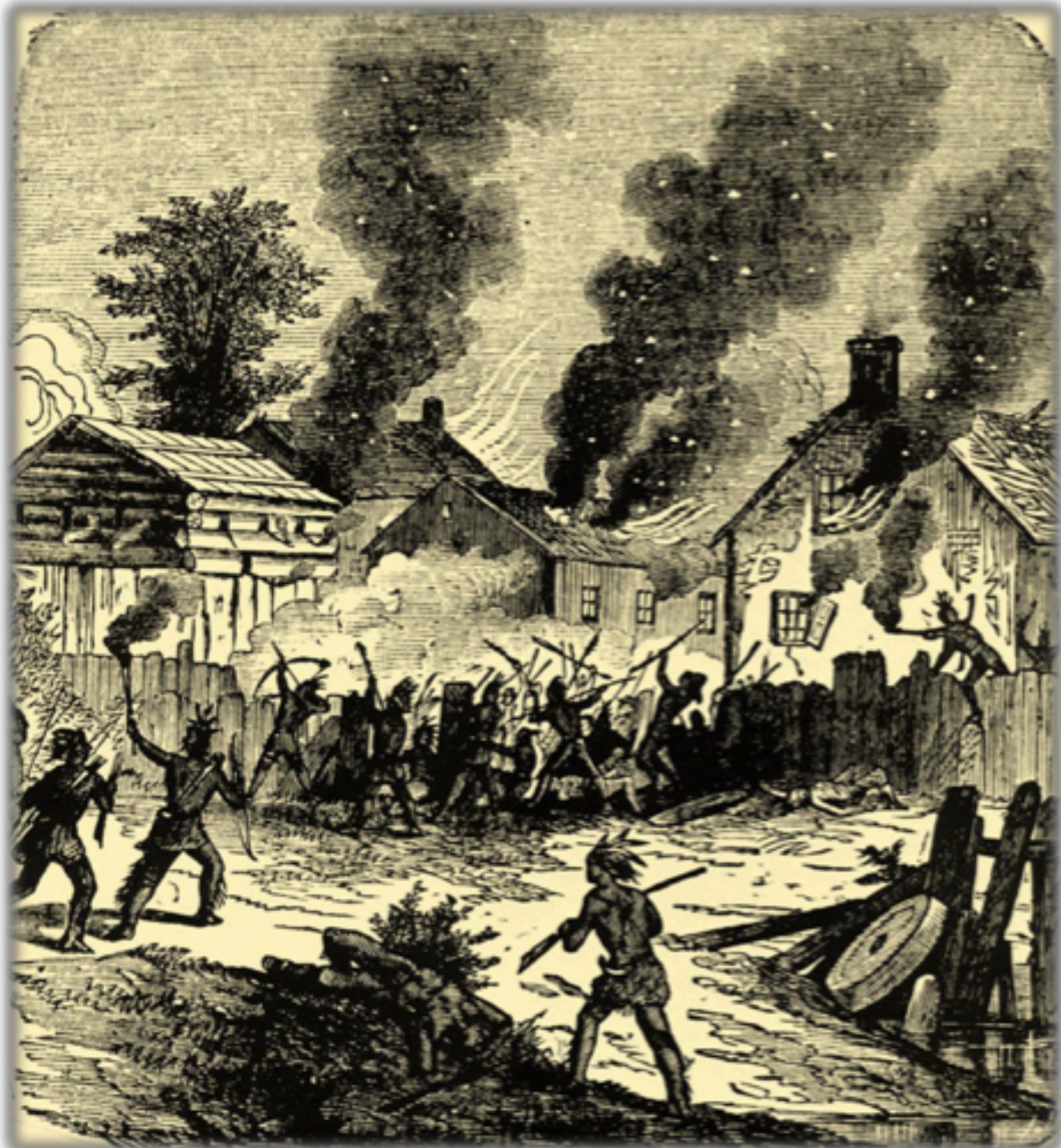
1. **Metacom**, Wampanoag chief, attacked MBC towns after being provoked by settlers.
 - New England Confederation put to the test



2. Bloodiest war ever fought on New England soil



Wampanoags attack a Puritan settlement



3. Results: Native Americans were defeated and effectively removed from much of MBC, CT & RI.



*The death of King Philip at the hands
of two Massachusetts colonists.*

VII. Dominion of New England (1686) and the “Glorious Revolution”

A. The crown clamped down on MBC

B. Dominion of New England



1. Purposes: **mercantilism**

a. Enforce **Navigation Laws**

b. Provide defense for colonies

2. **Sir Edmund Andros**

C. “**Glorious Revolution**” (1688)

1. Inspired “1st American Revolution”

2. Andros was removed

D. Post-Glorious Revolution New England

1. 1691, MBC made a royal colony
-- Loss of charter colony status
2. Tighter administrative control
by the crown over British America

VIII. New England Life and Contributions to the American character

A. Geography & Economy

1. Rocky soil: few cash crops
--**Subsistence farming common**
2. **Diverse economy:** fishing, shipbuilding, lumbering, shipping, fur, dairy

3. Less ethnic diversity



B. Puritan contribution to American character

1. Seeds of democracy

- a. Townhall meetings
- b. Voting rights to church members, 1631

2. Perfectibility of society (“**perfectionism**”)

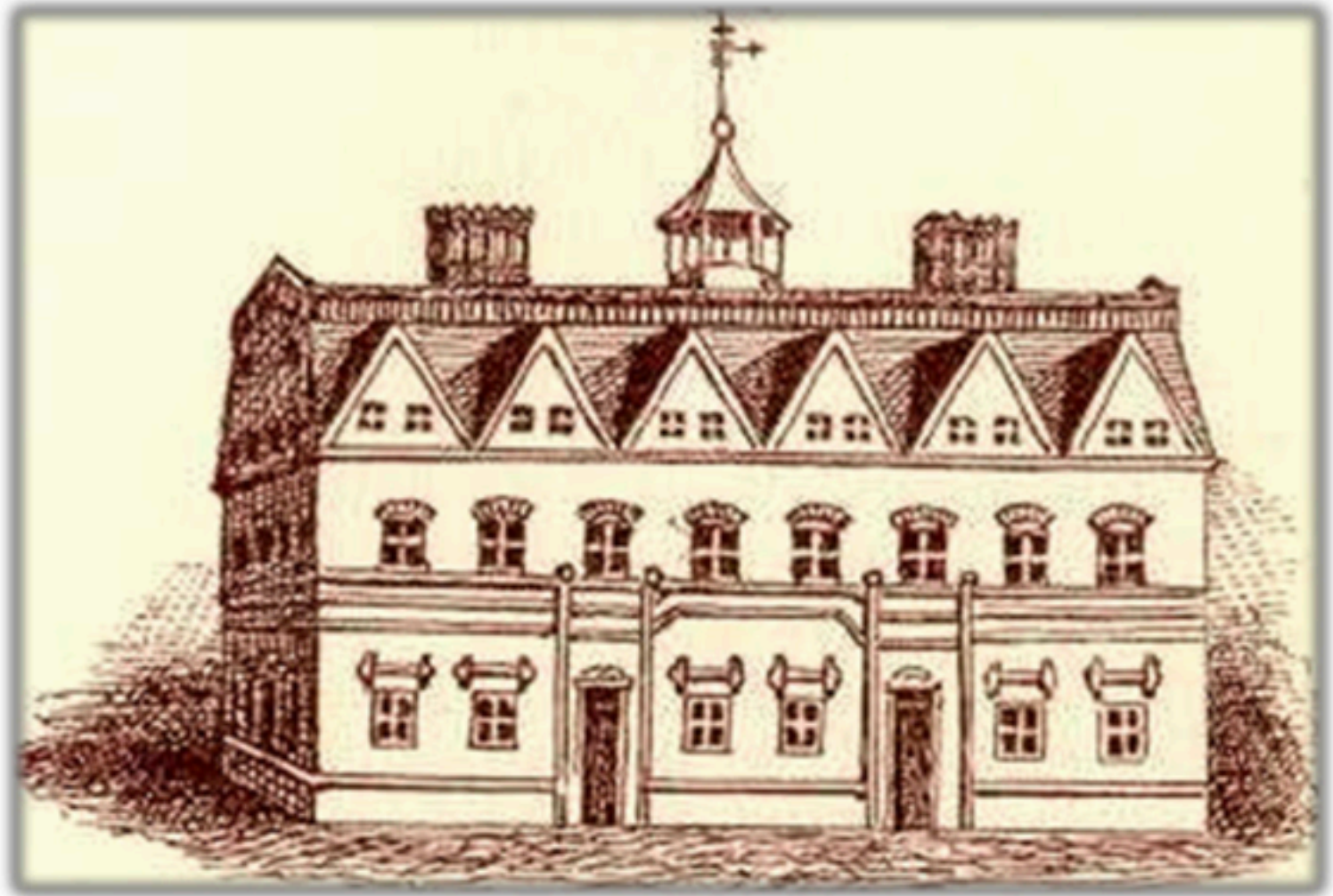
- a. Covenant theology & Protestant work ethic
- b. Inspired later reforms: abolition movement, women’s rights, education, prohibition

3. Protestant work ethic

C. Education

1. Purpose: train the clergy

2. Harvard College (1636)



3. **Massachusetts School of Law,** 1647

- a. Towns with 50 or more families required to provide public education
- b. Resulted in a highly literate population

IX. New England Family

- A. High life expectancy
- B. Family migration
- C. High natural reproduction
- D. Strong family stability



A Puritan Wedding Procession