

From the foundation of the colonies beginning with the founding of Jamestown until the beginning of the Revolutionary War, different regions of the eastern coast had different characteristics. Once established, the thirteen British colonies could be divided into three geographic areas: New England, Middle, and Southern. Each of these had specific economic, social, and political developments that were unique to the regions.

New England Colonies: New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. These were known for being rich in forests and fur trapping. Harbors were located throughout the region. The area was not known for good farmland. Therefore, the farms were small, mainly to provide food for individual families. New England flourished instead with fishing, shipbuilding, lumbering, and fur trading along with trading goods with Europe. The famous Triangle Trade occurred in the New England colonies where slaves were sold in the West Indies for molasses. This was sent to New England to make Rum which was then sent to Africa to trade for slaves.

In New England, small towns were the centers of local government. In 1643, Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, Connecticut, and New Haven formed the New England Confederation to provide defense against Indians, Dutch, and the French. This was the first attempt to form a union between colonies.

A group of Massasoit Indians organized themselves under King Philip to fight the colonists. King Philip's War lasted from 1675-78. The Indians were finally defeated at a great loss.

Middle Colonies: New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. This area was excellent for farming and included natural harbors. Farmers grew grain and raised livestock. The Middle Colonies also practiced trade like New England, but typically they were trading raw materials for manufactured items.

One important event that happened in the Middle Colonies during the colonial period was the Zenger Trial in 1735. John Peter Zenger was arrested for writing against the royal governor of New York. Zenger was defended by Andrew Hamilton and found not guilty helping to establish the idea of freedom of the press.

Southern Colonies: Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. Southern colonies grew their own food along with growing three major cash crops: tobacco, rice, and indigo. These were grown on plantations typically worked by slaves and indentured servants. The main commerce of the South was with England. Plantations kept people widely separate which prevented the growth of many towns.

Virginia and Maryland are often characterized as their own region: Chesapeake Colonies, while the Carolinas and Georgia are sometimes referred to a "Deep South." In later eras, the "Deep South" refers to states on Gulf Coast from Louisiana to Florida.

An important event that occurred in the Southern Colonies was Bacon's Rebellion. Nathaniel Bacon led a group of Virginia colonists against Indians who were attacking frontier farms. The royal governor, Sir William Berkeley, had not moved against the Indians. Bacon was labeled a traitor by the governor and ordered arrested. Bacon attacked Jamestown and seized the government. He then became ill and died. Berkeley returned, hanged many of the rebels, and was eventually removed from office by King Charles II.

COLONY NAME	YEAR FOUNDED	FOUNDED BY	BECAME ROYAL COLONY
Virginia	1607	London Company	1624
Massachusetts	1620	Puritans	1691
New Hampshire	1623	John Wheelwright	1679
Maryland	1634	Lord Baltimore	N/A
Connecticut	c. 1635	Thomas Hooker	N/A
Rhode Island	1636	Roger Williams	N/A
Delaware	1638	Peter Minuit and New Sweden Company	N/A
North Carolina	1653	Virginians	1729
South Carolina	1663	Eight Nobles with a Royal Charter from Charles II	1729
New Jersey	1664	Lord Berkeley and Sir George Carteret	1702
New York	1664	Duke of York	1685
Pennsylvania	1682	William Penn	N/A
Georgia	1732	James Edward Oglethorpe	1752

Colony	Region	Founder	Founded	Purpose	Note
Roanoke	Southern	Sir Walter Raleigh	1585	Establish English colony in New World	Colonists disappeared without a trace.
Virginia	Southern	John Smith	1607	Trade and profits Founded as joint-stock company.	House of Burgesses (1619). Only 60 of 1st 900 colonists survived.
Plymouth	New England	William Bradford	1620	Religious freedom for Separatists	Mayflower Compact. Led by William Bradford
New York	Middle	Peter Minuit	1626	Trade and profits	Set up as Dutch colony, taken over by English in 1664
Massachusetts Bay	New England	John Winthrop	1630	Religious freedom for Puritans	Led by John Winthrop. 18,000 settlers by 1642
New Hampshire	New England	John Mason	1630	Escape for those constricted by religious and economic rules	Puritan harshness led these settlers north and inland.
Maryland	Middle	George Calvert	1634	Religious freedom for Catholics	Slow growing (only 600 by 1650). Maryland Toleration Act (1649)
Connecticut	New England	Thomas Hooker	1636	Religious and economic freedom	Leaders of Massachusetts asked Hooker and followers to leave.
Rhode Island	New England	Roger Williams	1636	Religious freedom	Williams set up most tolerant colony
Delaware	Middle	Peter Minuit	1638	Trade and profits	Established by Sweden; taken by English in 1664
North Carolina	Southern	Group of proprietors	1653	Trade and profits	Joint business venture
New Jersey	Middle	Lord Berkeley	1660	Trade and profits	Established by Sweden; taken by English in 1664
South Carolina	Southern	Group of proprietors	1670	Trade and profits	Rice major crop.
Pennsylvania	Middle	William Penn	1682	Religious freedom for Quakers; trade and profits	Originally Quaker, became home to many European immigrants
Georgia	Southern	James Oglethorpe	1733	Debtor colony. Buffer for Spanish colonies	Restrictions on blacks, size of plantations kept colony small.

Colonial Society in the Mid-Eighteenth Century

I. Social Structure/Family Life

- A. South – gap wide between rich and poor – hierarchy of wealth and status
 - 1. Planter aristocracy w/ slaves mimicking feudalism of Europe
 - 2. planters were hardworking, involved in day-to-day affairs
 - 3. Few cities – poor transportation
 - 4. Women more powerful – men die leaving property to widows
 - [a. Weaker gender – see Eve's failure b. Divorce rare – courts could order you to reunite]
- B. North– not as much disease due to weather, reproduction high – fertile people/not soil
 - 1. Early marriage = high birth rates, several mothers – death during childbirth
 - [a. Habits of obedience, strong links to grandparents b. Women's role not as powerful – no property rights]

II. Farm and Town Life

- A. Towns in New England united – geography/fear of Indians force close relations
 - 1. Puritanism makes unity important
 - 2. More than 50 families in town requires education
 - 3. Puritans ran churches democratically – led to democratic government
 - 4. New England way of life – climate, bad soil, Puritanism made people touch, self-reliant
 - a. Seasons led to diversified agriculture and industry to survive
 - b. Dense forests led to shipbuilding
 - c. Not diverse at first – immigrants not attracted
- B. Southern settlement random by independent individual

III. Immigration – melting pot from the beginning

- A. Germans – left for war, religion, bad economy – settle in Pennsylvania – not pro-British
- B. Scots-Irish – Scottish kicked out of Ireland because not Catholic – settled in mountains
 - 1. Lawless, individualistic – lived in Appalachian hills – whickey making
 - 2. Not wanted by Germans or New Englanders – forced to hills
- C. Other groups embraced – French, Dutch, Swedes, Jews, Irish, Swiss
- D. Largest immigrant group – slaves

IV. Economy – triangle trade in South – natural resources to England > weapons/textiles to Africa > slaves to Indies/South > sugar to America > England

- A. Economy – Agriculture #1 but, putting out system at home – manufacturing/lumbering
- B. South – staple crops of indigo, rice, tobacco

V. Great Awakening – people swaying from the lord – God all powerful – must return to church

- A. Started by Jonathan Edwards – Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” B. Powerful, angry, animated speaking spread across colonies – United colonies

VI. Education – New England – colleges for lawyers, priests – theology and dead languages

- A. Independent thinking not encouraged – discipline severe – stuck in the classics

VII. Colonial Folkways – life not romantic, pretty boring

- A. Food pretty high protein, homes poorly made
- B. pleasure came from working together – quilting, raising barn, painting, funerals, weddings
- C. Lotteries, horse racing, holidays celebrated, but not Christmas in New England