

Tracing Your Ancestors on the Move in America

Colonial Migrations and Records

August 2022

THE BRUE FAMILY LEARNING CENTER



American Ancestors®
by NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Meet today's presenter



Lindsay Fulton

VP of Research and Library Services

OVERVIEW

- **Presentation (60 mins.)**
 - Understanding the trends and historical context of colonization
 - Evolution of records in the United States
 - Case study
- **Q&A (30 mins.)**

Challenges

- The records do not exist!
 - Early stages of government
 - Fire
- Border changes
- Your ancestors avoided the record keepers
- Your ancestors were not wealthy
- Where did they come from!? Where did they go!?

Strategies

- Understand historical and geographical context
- Motivations
- Knowing which records to use- who is in charge?
- Cluster research
- Stay organized!

Colonization

Spanish

- Florida
- Louisiana Territory (Dakotas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, and parts of Montana, Colorado, Wyoming)
- Texas
- New Mexico
- California



French



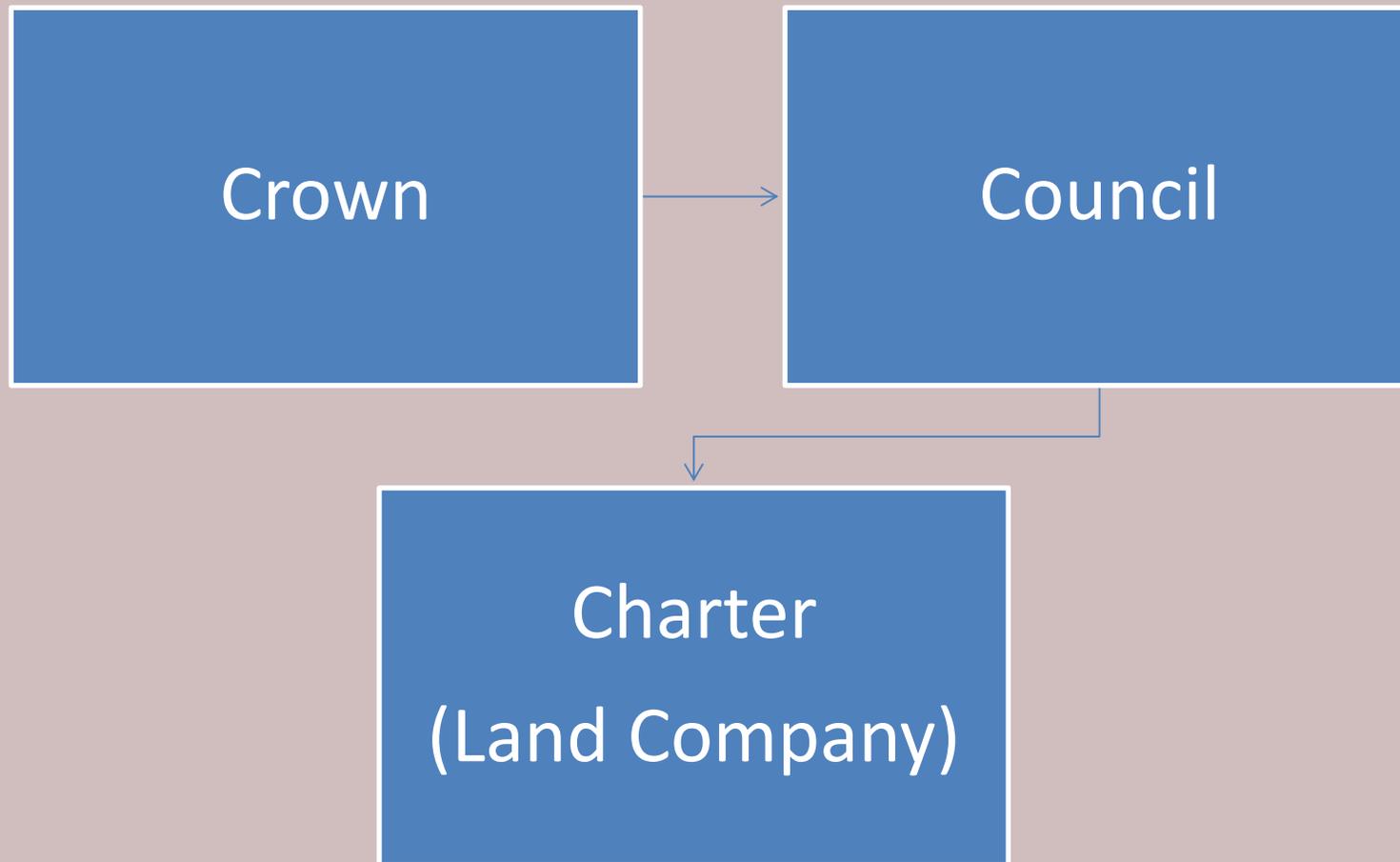
- Louisiana Territory (Dakotas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, and parts of Montana, Colorado, Wyoming)
- Much of Canada
- Midwest states and parts of New York and Pennsylvania

British

- Much of Canada
- Area east of the Mississippi River (not New Orleans)



Legal Process for Settlement



Virginia Company of London (1609)



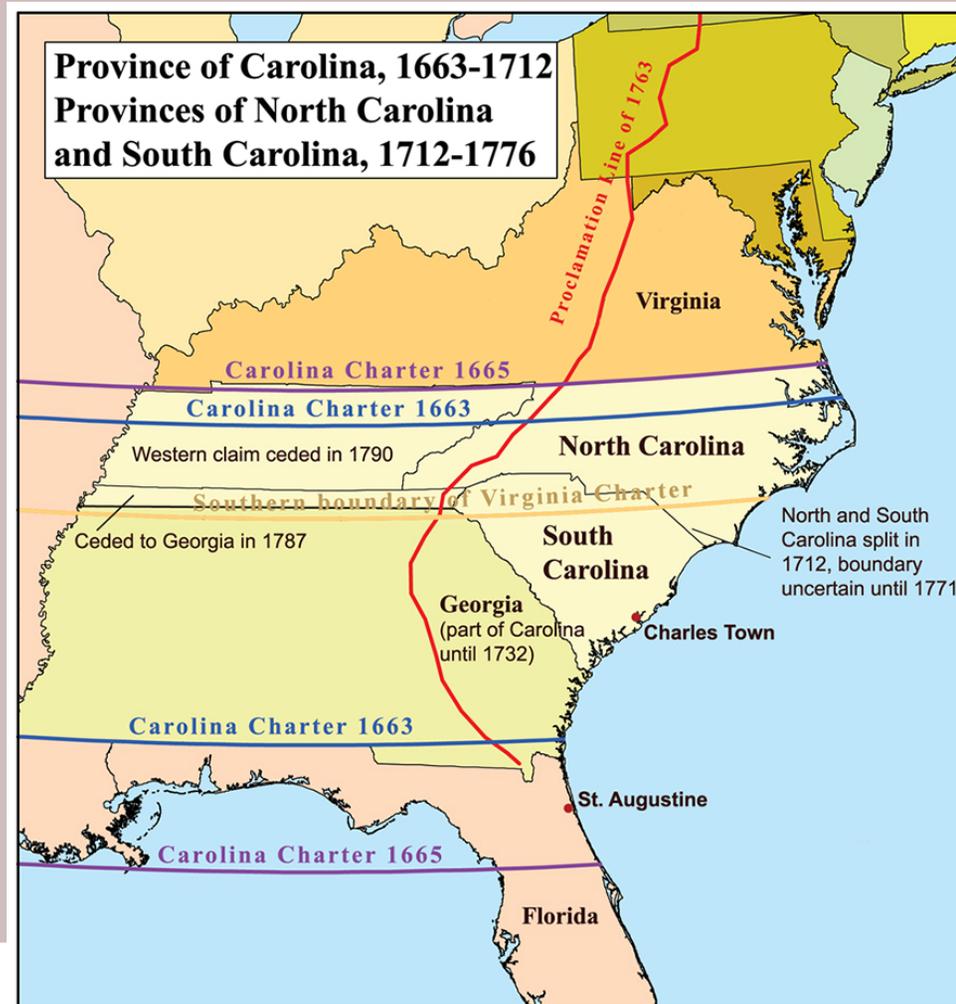
- 34th to 40th latitude (northern South Carolina to southern Pennsylvania)
- Northern border extended at a west and northwest angle from the east coast to the Pacific Ocean

Jamestown

- Settled mostly by adventurers (economics)
- Initially met significant loss in life, but eventually succeeded
- 100 acres to each shareholder
- Headrights gave an extra 50 acres for every additional settler



Carolinas and Georgia



New England Council (1620)

- 40th latitude north to the 48th latitude (southern Pennsylvania to Quebec)
- Westward to the Pacific Ocean
- 1622- council grants two tracts (modern NH, VT, and ME)



Plymouth Colony

- Did not have a royal charter
- Core group were Separatists who had first fled to Leiden, Holland
- Small in population and grew slowly

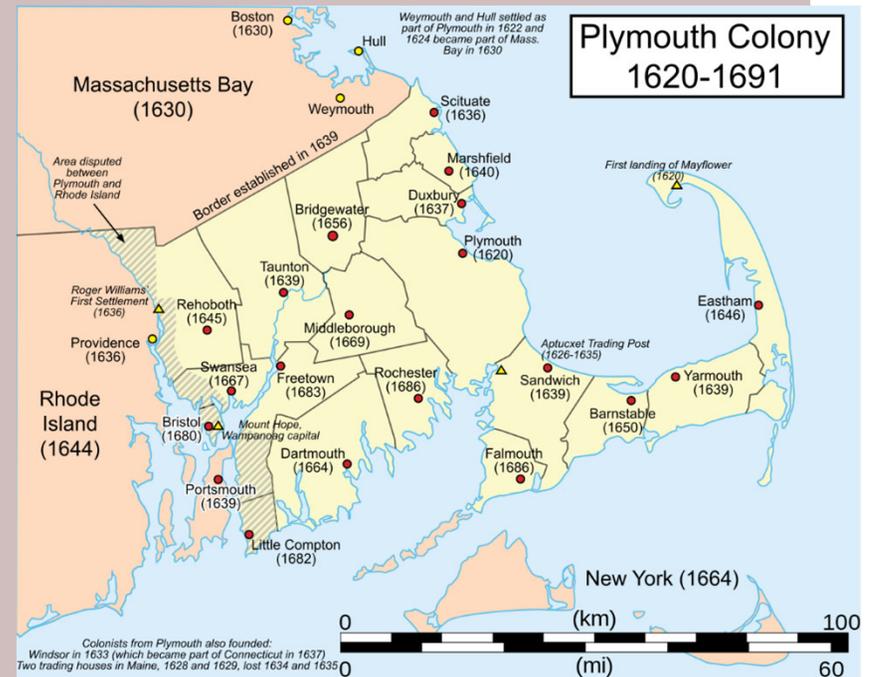


Image by Hoodinski at Wikipedia Commons

Massachusetts Bay Company

- Established and led by Puritans
- By far the most populous and influential colony in New England



Image by Kmusser at Wikipedia Commons

Duke of York

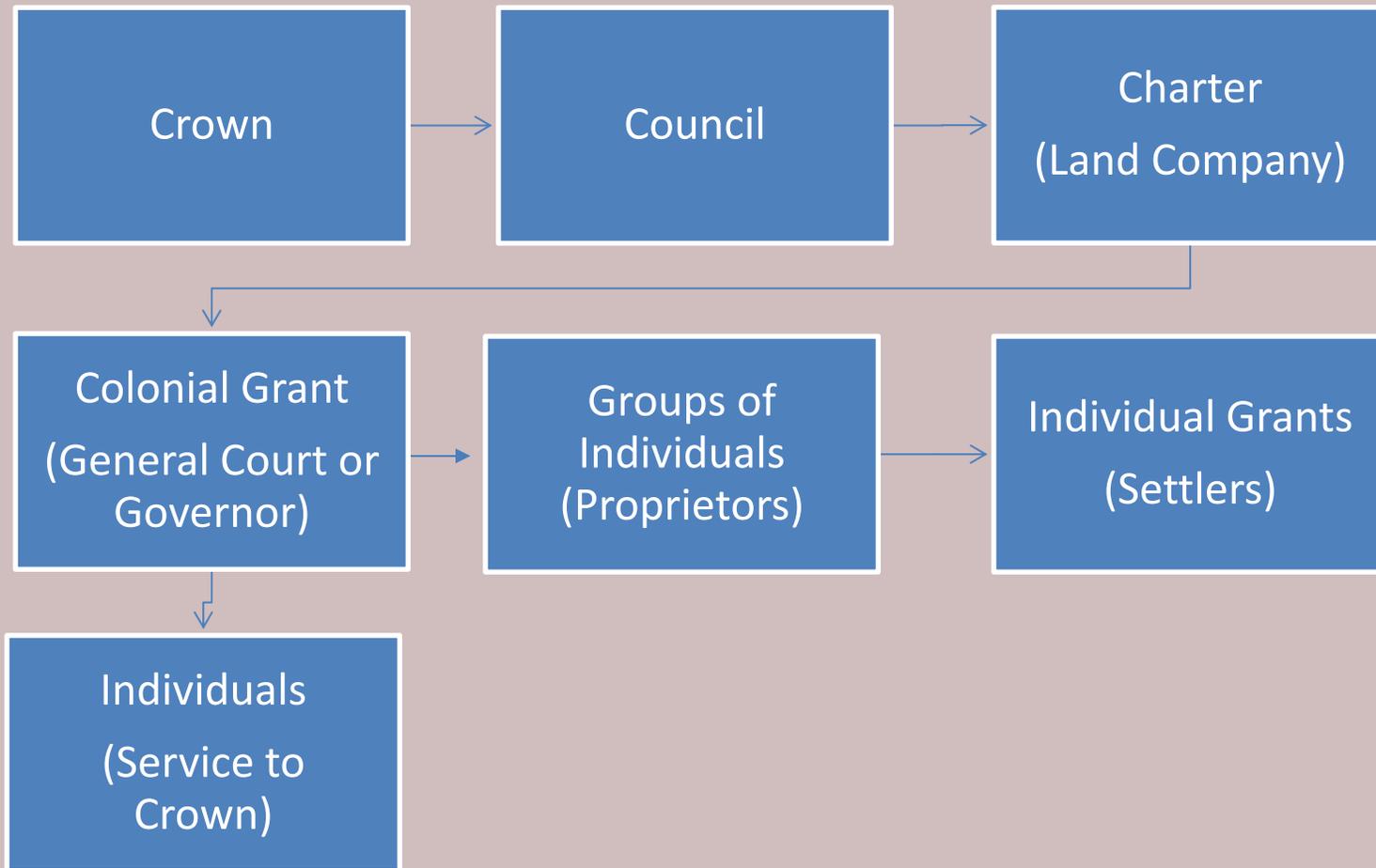
- Manhattan Island (first settled by the Dutch, 1624)
- Delaware (first settled by the Swedes, 1638)
- New York
- Connecticut
- Massachusetts
- Pennsylvania
- New Jersey



QUESTIONS?

The Records- Who is in Charge?

Process in New England & NY



Charter

Names Investors and/or Settlers





WILLIAM VASSALL

ORIGIN: London

MIGRATION: 1630

FIRST RESIDENCE: Boston

REMOVES: Scituate 1635, England 1646, Barbados 1648

RETURN TRIPS: Returned to England in fall 1630 on the *Lyon*, and back to New England 1635 on *Blessing*; returned to England on the *Supply*

OCCUPATION: Merchant [Aspinwall 177].

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP: About 1635 "Mrs. Anna Vassail the wife of Mr. William Wassaille [was admitted to Roxbury church]. Her husband brought five children to this land, Judith, Francis, John, Margret, Mary" [RChR 80]. "Mr. Vassel joined" Scituate church on 28 November 1636 [NEHGR 9:280].

FREEMAN: Took the oath of allegiance to the king, 1 February 1638/9 [PCR 1:110, 8:182].

EDUCATION: He made his mark to his will, but he signed his name numerous times as a witness [Aspinwall 30, 71, 218]. Vassall's surveying instruments were frequently used in Plymouth Colony [PCR 2:52].

OFFICES: Assistant, Massachusetts Bay Company, 23 March 1628[9], 11 May 1629, 13 May 1629, 20 October 1629 [MBCR 1:37, 39, 40, 60]. Committee to consider division of lands, 5 March 1628/9 [MBCR 1:30]. Committee to resolve orders, 21 May 1629 [MBCR 1:44]. Arbiter, 19 September 1629 [MBCR 1:51]. Present at a court of assistants on the *Arbella*, 23 March 1629[30] [MBCR 1:70].

Deputy, 27 September 1642 [PCR 2:46]. Council of War, 27 September 1642 [PCR 2:47]. In Scituate section of 1643 Plymouth Colony list of men able to bear arms [PCR 8:191].

ESTATE: On 15 December 1629 "Capt. Waller and Mr. Vassall were content to give the first £50 to the plantation, so as their other £50 might go on wholly to this new stock" [MBCR 1:67].

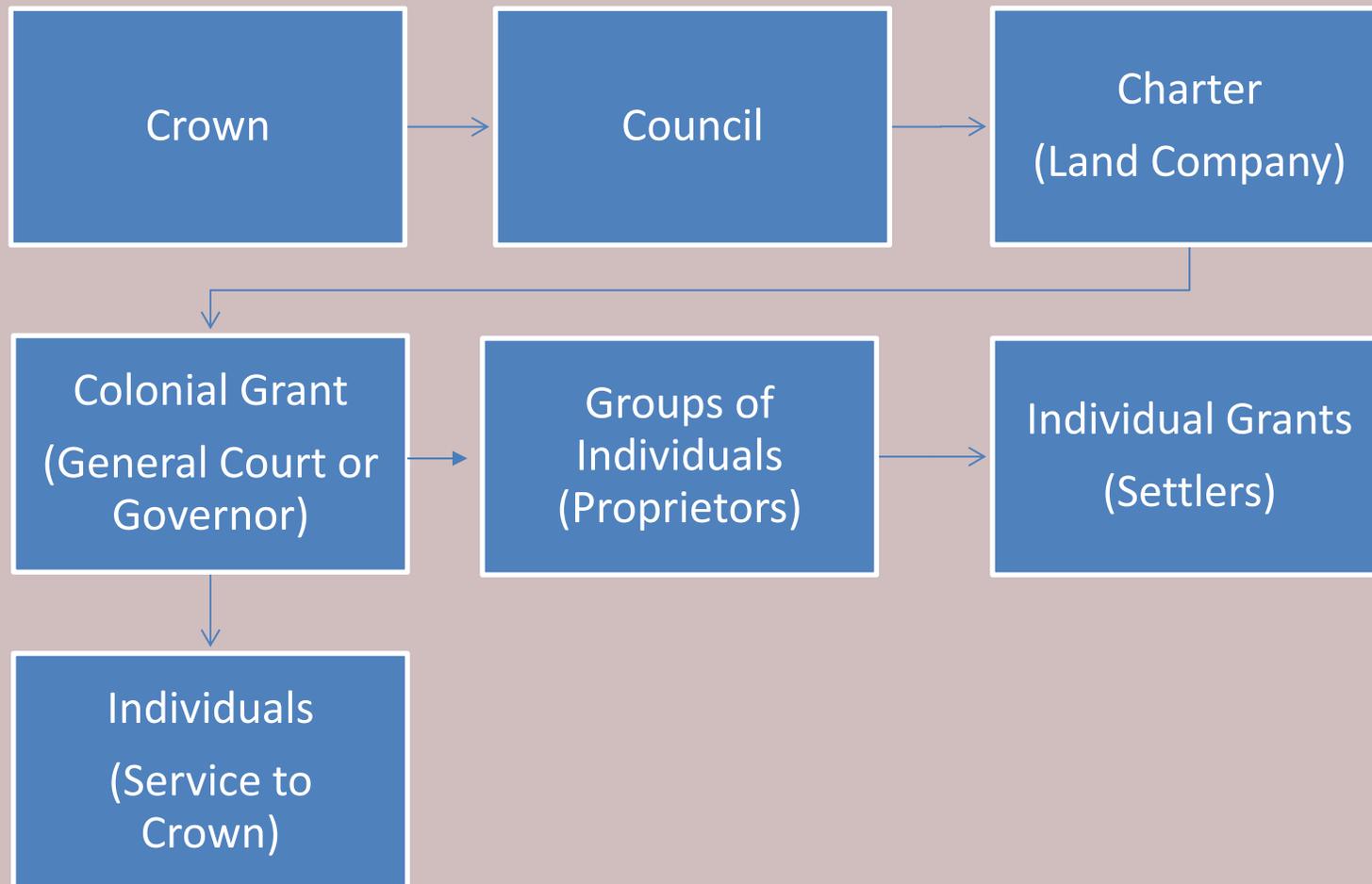
Rev. John Lothrop listed "Mr. Vassell's" first among the houses built in Scituate in 1636 [NEHGR 10:42].

Charter and General Court Grants

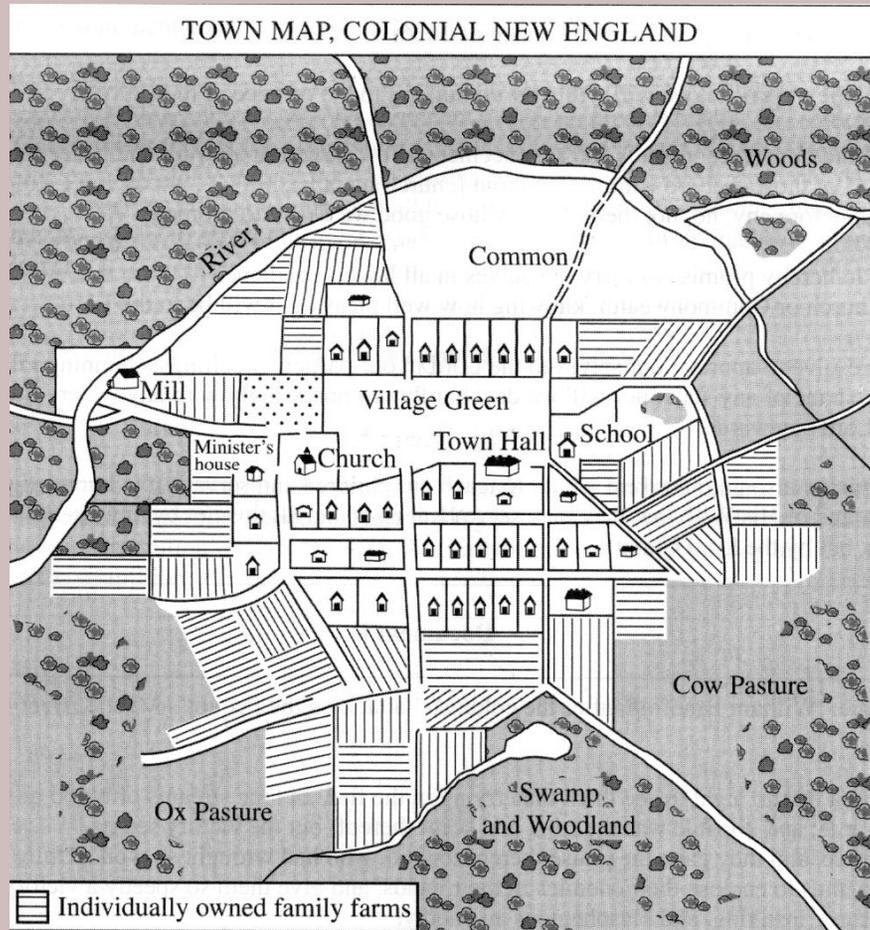
- State Archives
- State Library
- State Historical Societies
- State Judicial Archives
- Transcribed volumes (common for colonial records)
 - Examine library catalogs and digitized book collections

Proprietors

Process in New England & NY



Earliest Colonial Settlements

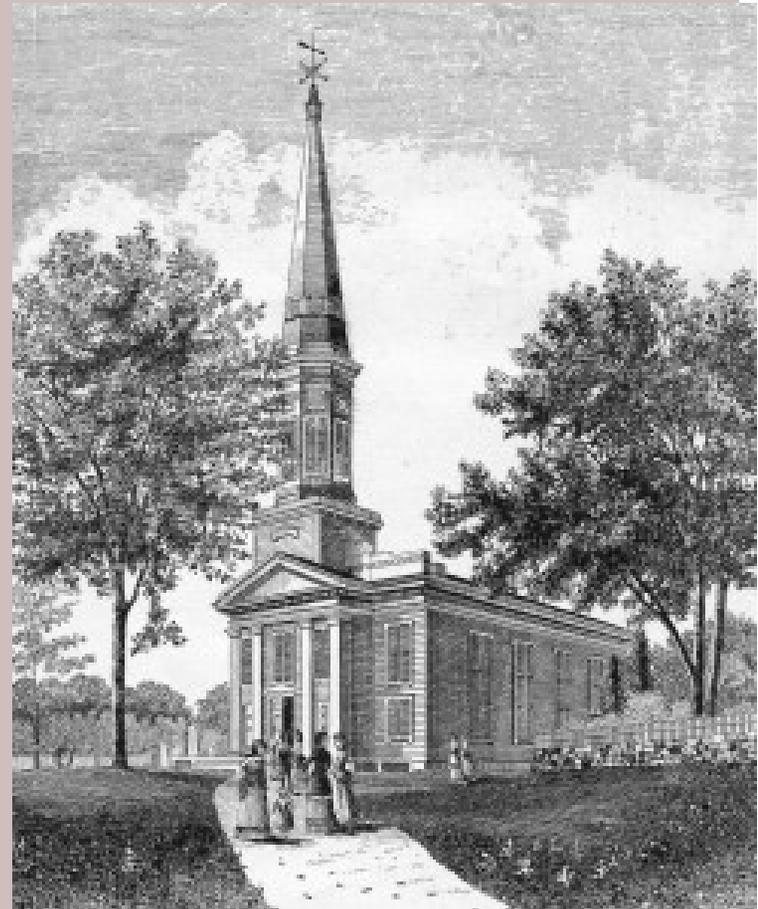


- Distinguishing features
 - Church
 - Common
 - Houses facing Common
 - Farmland outside the Settlement

<http://www.trinityhistory.org/AH/u2map.html>

Matters of Discontent

- “Too many” settlers (anywhere from 15 to 30 freemen)
- Church disputes
- Desire to determine own standards for church and government
- Inability to adapt to prevailing order



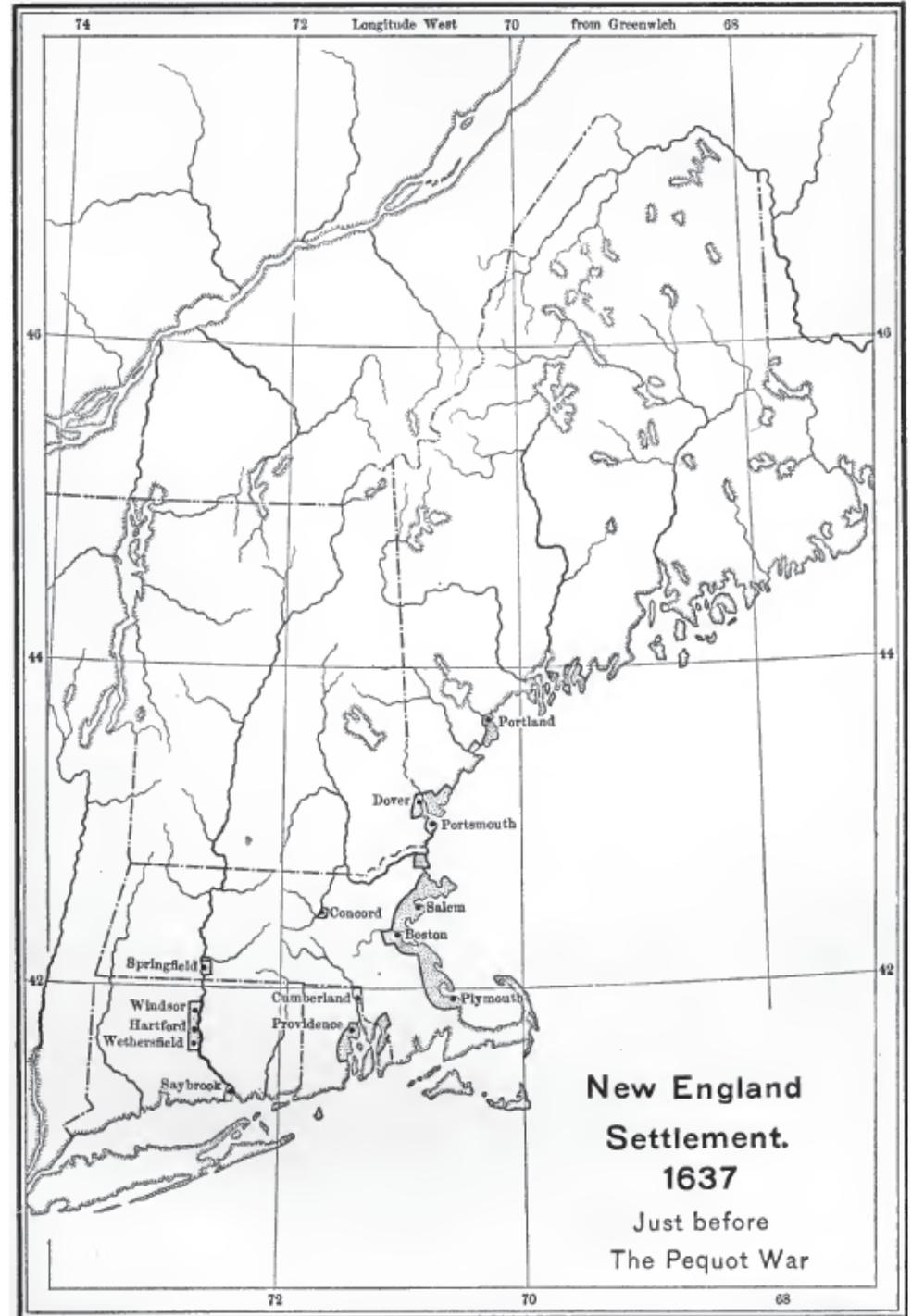
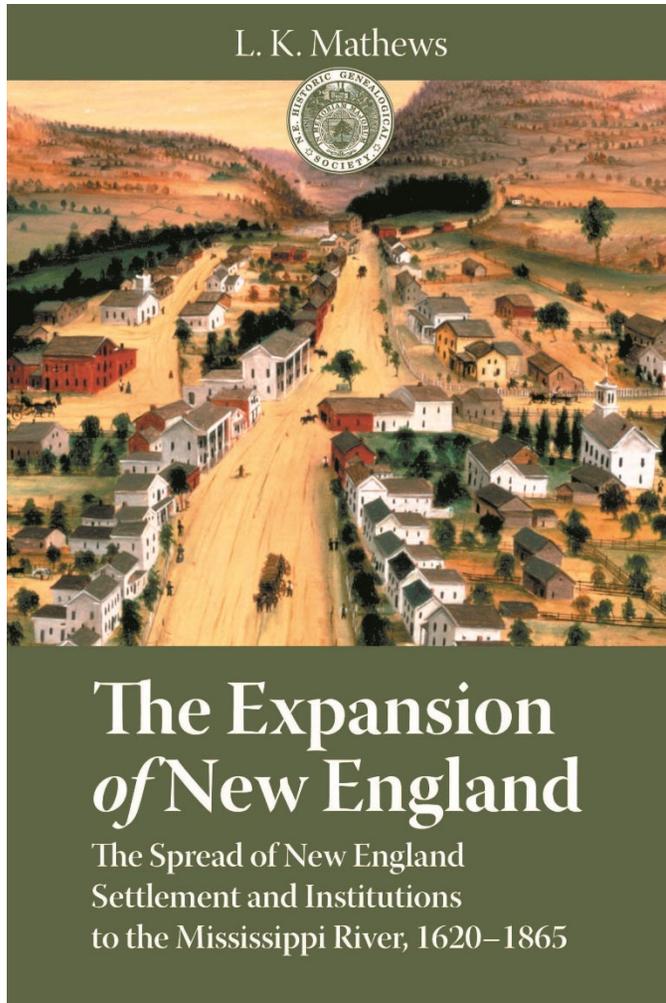
Other Push factors



- Lack of opportunities, e.g., younger son
- Environment – poor soil, poor weather
- War

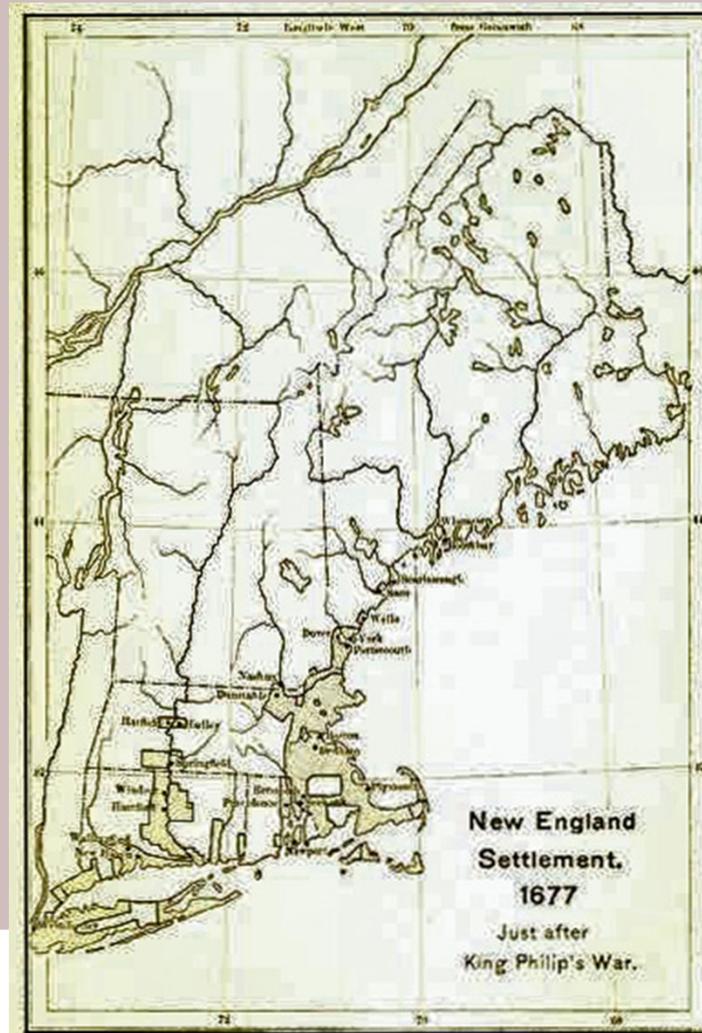
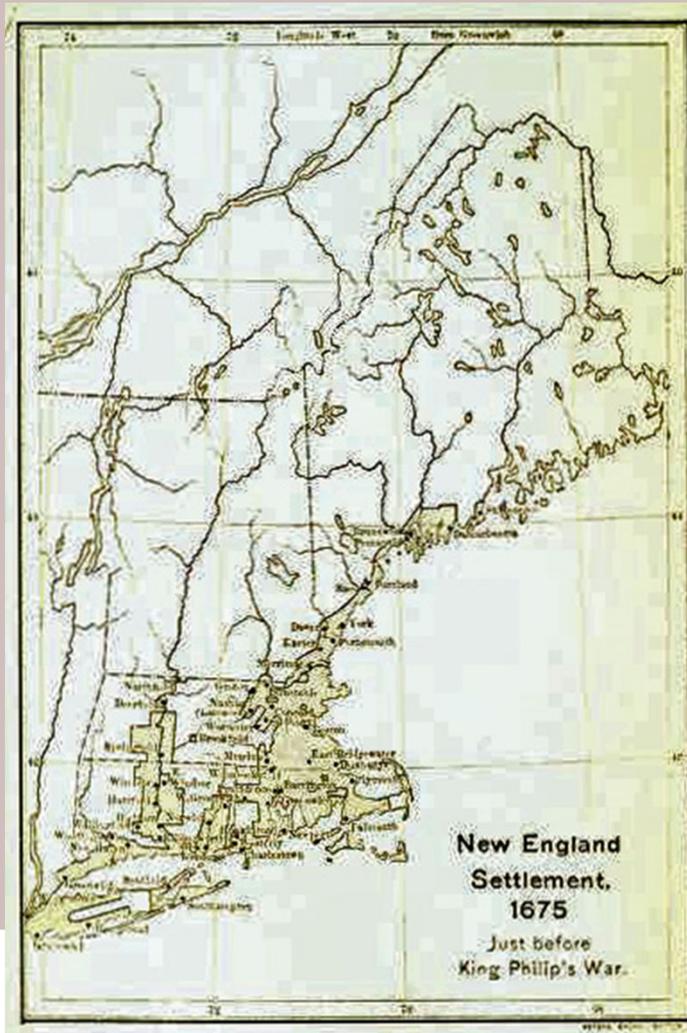
What pulled your ancestors to a new place?

- Land
- Opportunity
- Ease of getting there
- War



Maps from *The Expansion of New England*,
Lois Kimball Mathews

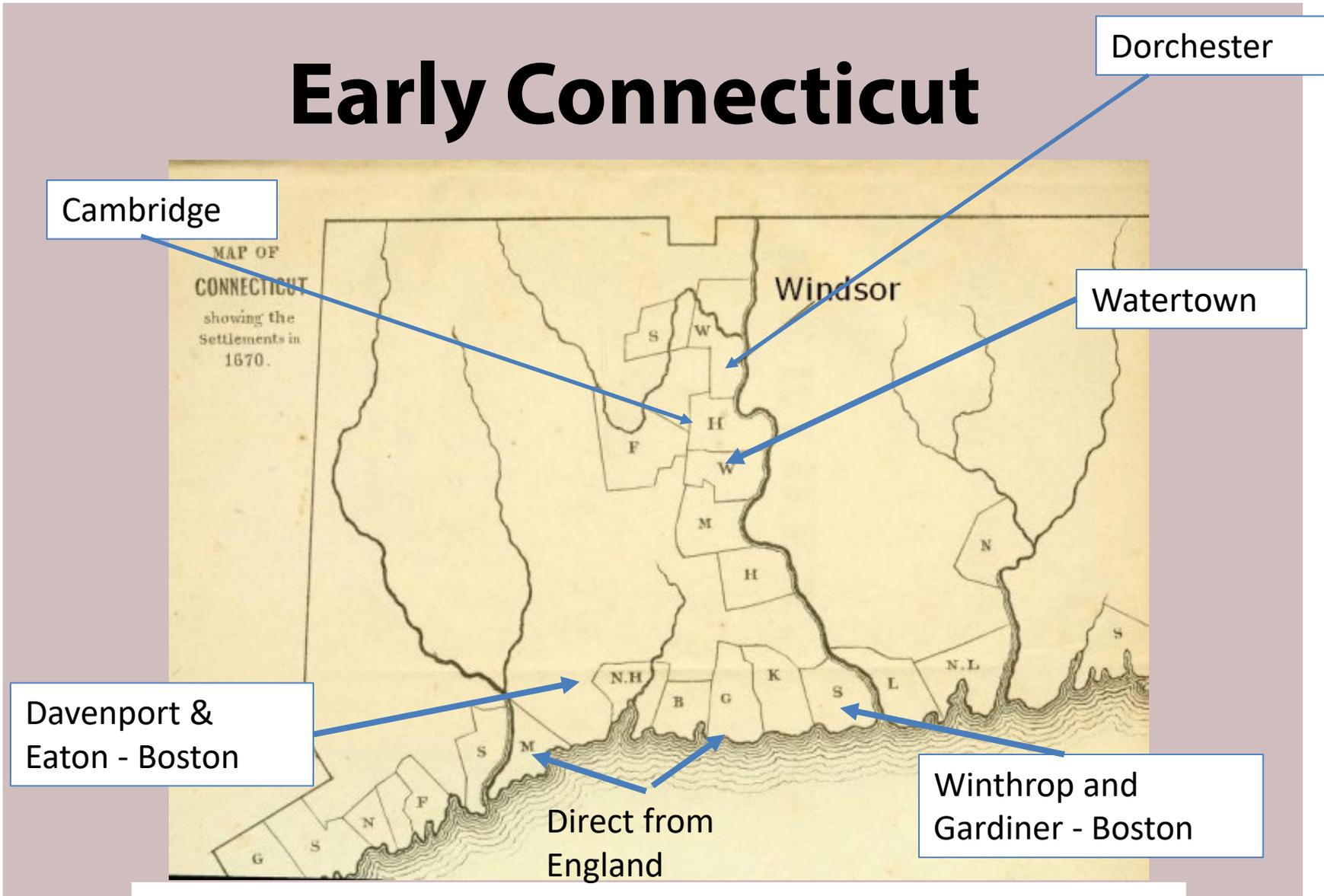
Impact of King Philip's War on Maine



Proprietors

- Absolute ownership and complete control over tracts of land granted to them
- Responsible for the improvement of the land
- Required to enlist settlers and newcomers, assigning lots, building highways, and subdividing land/meadow/forest
- Common management, both political and economic
- Early years- no distinction between town and proprietors

Early Connecticut

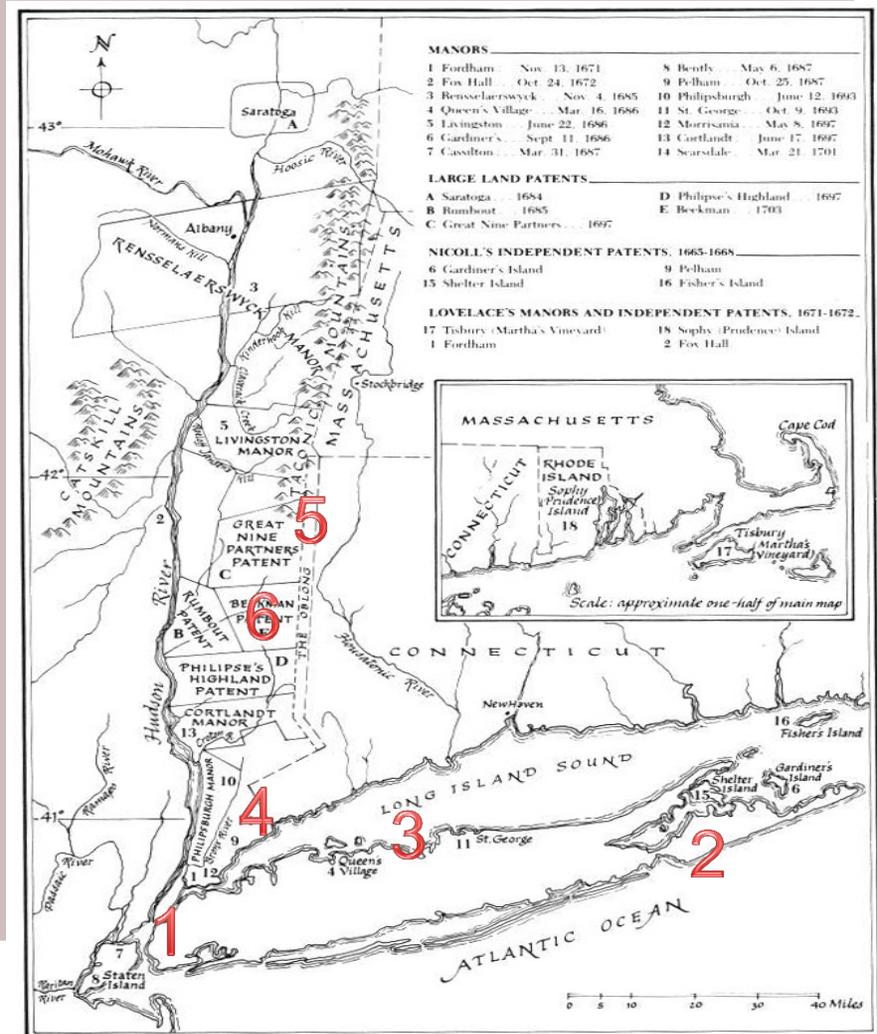


Connecticut's Oldest English Settlement

Map of Connecticut showing the settlements in 1670 from *Historical Sketches of Meriden* by G.W. Perkins

Early Planting of New York

1. Gravesend 1640 from Mass.
2. Southampton 1640 (40 families from Lynn, Mass.)
3. Migration from Conn. to L.I.
4. Bedford & Rye from Conn., R.I., SE Mass.
5. The Oblong (mainly Cape Cod Quakers)
6. Beekman Patent & Dutchess County



Proprietors

17th Century

- Socio-religious
- Residents
- Mixed with Town Records

Town=Proprietor

18th Century

- Economic
- Non-residents
- Separated from Town Records

Proprietor=land

Freeman=town meeting



Refine your search ▼

Search by:

Place

United States, Vermont, Wind

Surnames

Titles

Author

Subjects

Keywords

Search for:

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- ▶ [United States, Vermont, Windham, Rockingham - Census - 1920 \(1 \)](#)
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- ▶ [United States, Vermont, Windham, Rockingham - Church records \(2 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, Vermont, Windham, Rockingham - Directories \(1 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, Vermont, Windham, Rockingham - Genealogy \(4 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, Vermont, Windham, Rockingham - History \(4 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, Vermont, Windham, Rockingham - History - Periodicals \(1 \)](#)
- ▼ **[United States, Vermont, Windham, Rockingham - Land and property \(2 \)](#)**

[Land records, 1761-1919; index to land records v. 1-23, 1779-1881](#)

Author: Rockingham (Vermont). Town Clerk

[Proprietor's records, 1752-1764](#)

Author: Rockingham (Vermont). Proprietor's Clerk

- ▶ [United States, Vermont, Windham, Rockingham - Politics and government \(1 \)](#)
- ▶ [United States, Vermont, Windham, Rockingham - Public records \(1 \)](#)
- ▼ **[United States, Vermont, Windham, Rockingham - Town records \(1 \)](#)**

[Land records, 1761-1919; index to land records v. 1-23, 1779-1881](#)

Author: Rockingham (Vermont). Town Clerk

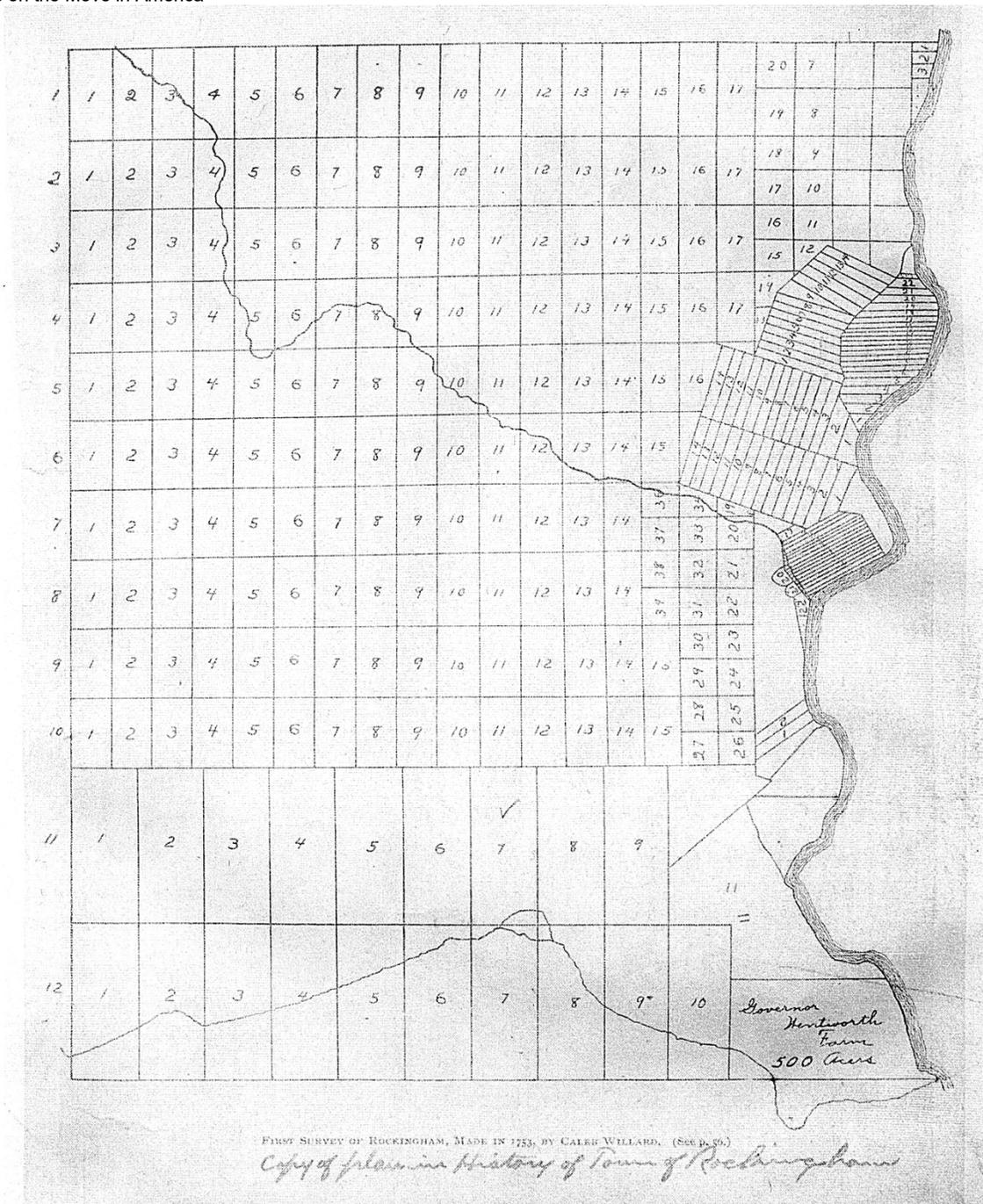
- ▶ [United States, Vermont, Windham, Rockingham - Vital records \(6 \)](#)

www.FamilySearch.org

(York)

Names of the Grantees of Rockingham
Sam^l Johnson, Nathan Smith, Ezra Farnsworth
William Parker, Isaac Parker, Jonah Moor, John
Kilbun, Samuel Hastings, Salvendus Hastings,
Jonathan White, Josiah Willard, Valentine
Butler, Nathan Willard, Benjamin Bellows,
Robert Henery, Benjamin Stowel, William Willard,
Andrew Gardner, Peter Bellows, Jonathan Wetherbee,
Abijah Wetherbee, Andrew Gardner jun^r, William Simonis,
Samuel Wetherbee, Oliver Willard, David Farnsworth
Stephen Farnsworth, Asel Stebens, Jonathan Biggels,
John Densmore, Totham Bush, John Arms Simeon
Knight, Jacob Elmore, Samuel Larrabee, Josiah
Lawyer, David Page, Thomas Stebens, Heretiah
Elmore, Benjamin French, Asa Douglas, John
Moffett, Johanna Wetherbee, Daniel Maynard,
Sazariah How, Daniel Warren, John Stow, Eben^r
Kindred, Obidiah Dickerson, Jonathan Marble
William Syme, Timothy Taylor, Palmer Goulding
Isaac Winslow, Joseph Lee, Richard Clark, Thomas
Martin, Fulte Hubbard, Samuel Wentworth

Rockingham, Vermont

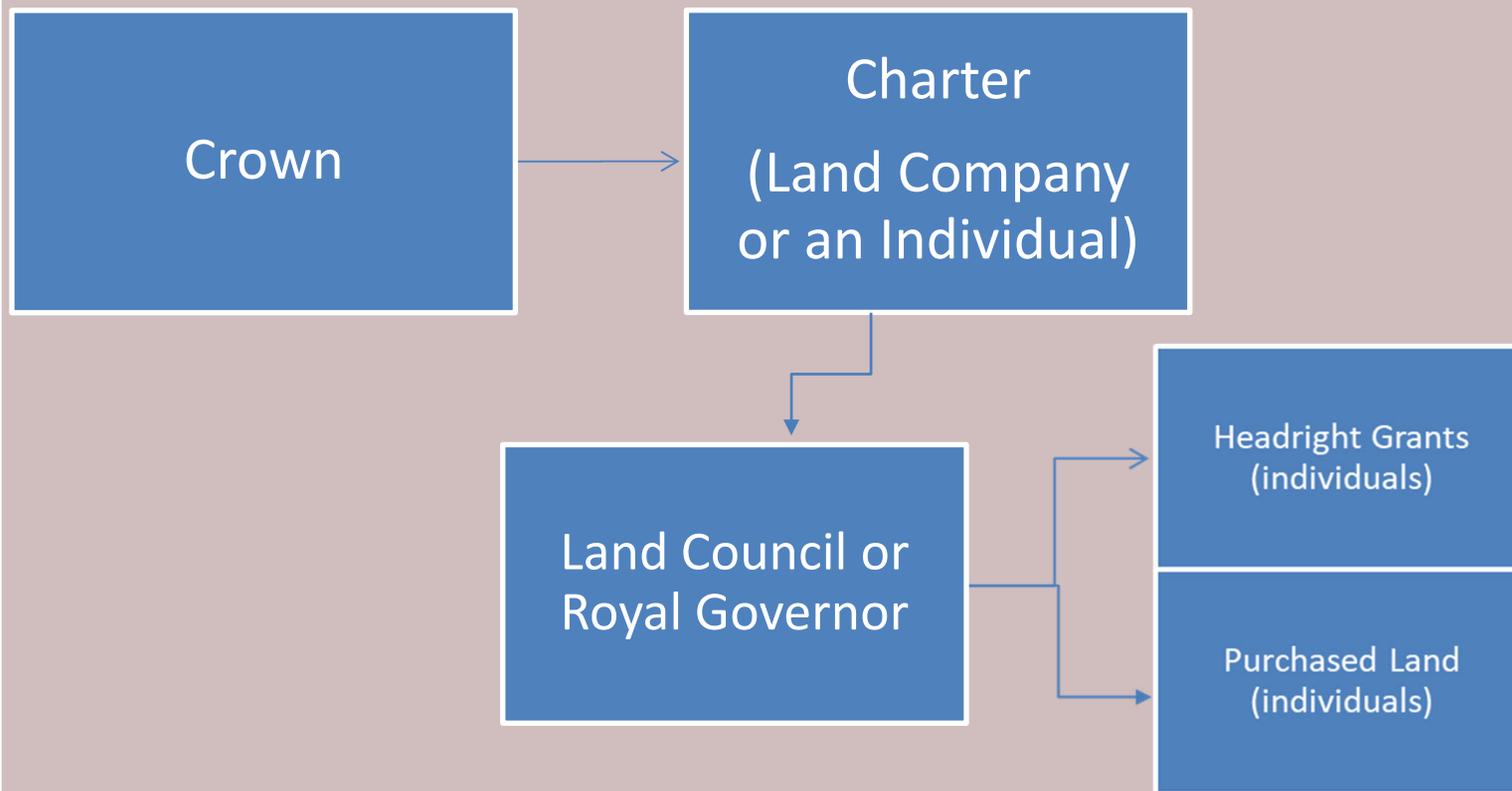


A List of the Number of Each House Lot and
 Each meadow Lot as apportioned to each Man
 Name these meadows Lot in Wilkes County, N.C. Range

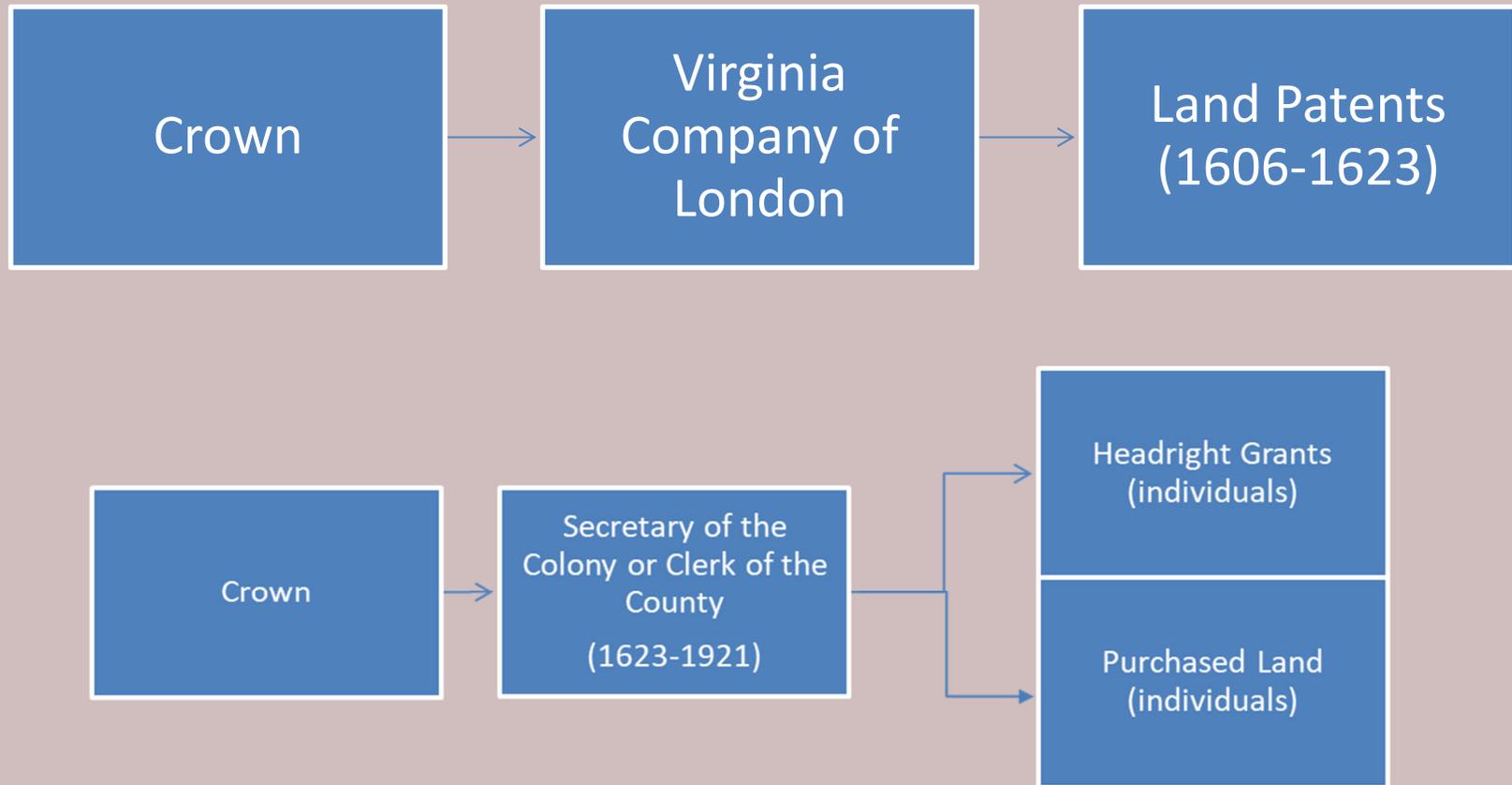
Name	House Lot	Meadow Lot	3
William Willard House Lot, 1st	13	18	2
Johanna Withler & house lot in 2nd	12	11	21
Jonathan Begeton 9th New South Range	4	14	2
Saml. Johnson House lot at 2nd South Range	5	15	3
John Densmore House Lot, 1st South Range	6	16	4
David Jones with House lot 1st South Range	7	17	5
Robert L. ... House lot 1st South Range	8	18	6

QUESTIONS?

Process in Mid-Atlantic and South



Process in Virginia



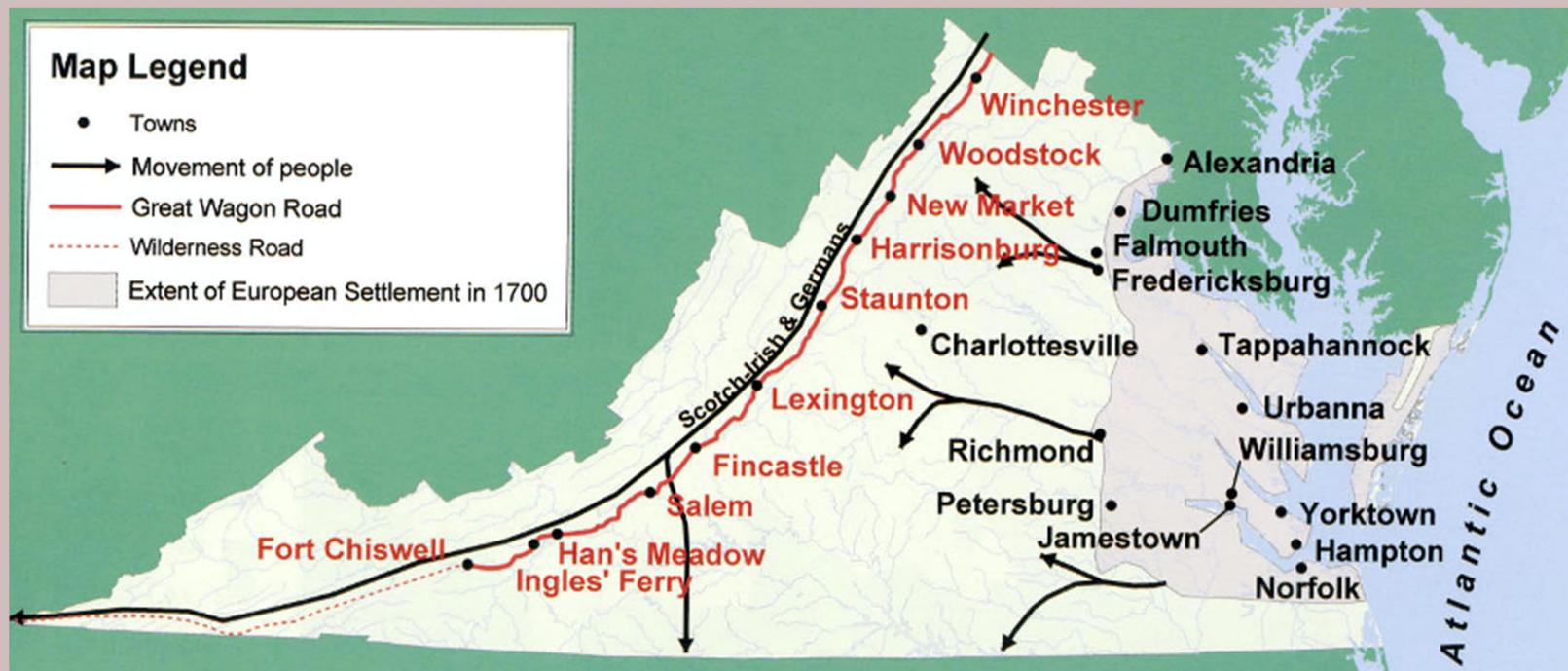
Headright and Patents

- A Patent is the first deed to a piece of land from the government
 - Cash sale
- A headright is a legal grant of land to settlers
 - Generally between 50 and 1,000 acres
 - Extra 50 acres for each additional person
 - Responsible for improving land

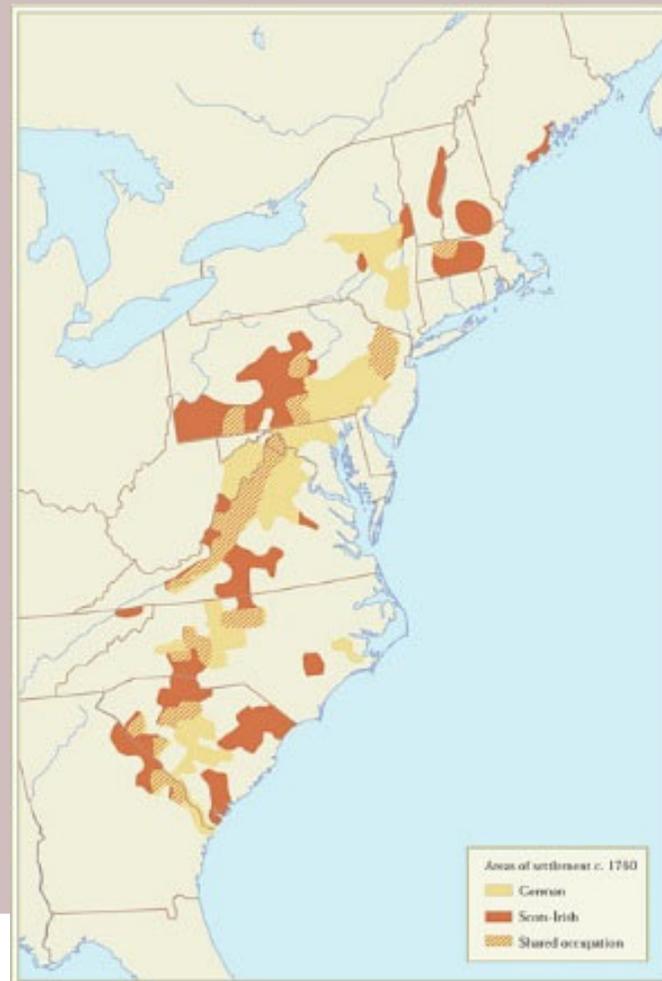
Mid-Atlantic Colonial Settlement

- Along coast and inland rivers
- First to move away from coast were farmers with pioneering skills, often German or Scots-Irish
- Tended to move north and south because of Appalachian Mountain chain

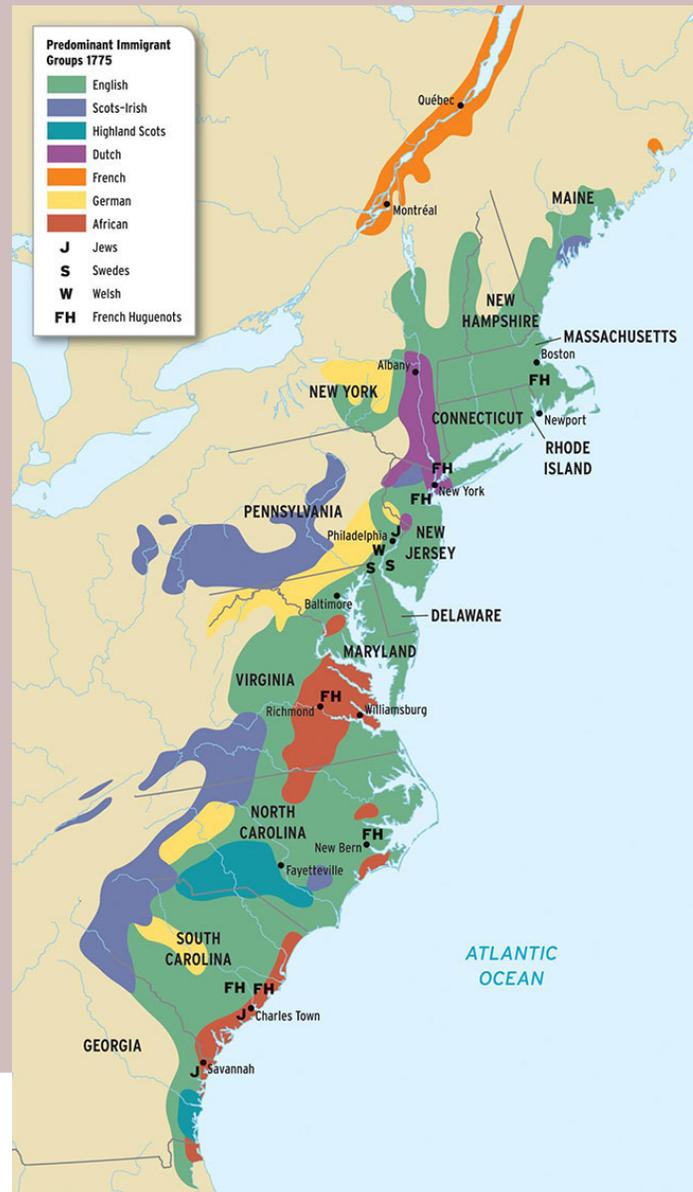
German and Scots-Irish Migration



German and Scots-Irish Settlement - 1760



Into the Carolinas



<http://global.oup.com/us/companion.websites/9780199389315/map/maps/mapsch5/>

Headrights, Grants, Patents, and Warrants

- State Archives
- State Library
- State Historical Societies
- State Judicial Archives
- Transcribed volumes (common for colonial records)
 - Examine library catalogs and digitized book collections

 **GEORGIA ARCHIVES**
UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA **VIRTUAL VAULT**

 
Advanced Search

 **Campaign Materials Collection**
While many of our founding fathers disdained political campaigning it did not take long before campaigns including speeches, slogans, and songs became an important part of the American experience. Georgia was no exception and throughout its history many memorable campaigns have been run, won, and lost. This collection highlights the material produced during some of these campaigns from the ubiquito...

 **Capitol Art Collection (Capitol Museum Collection)**
In 1825, Georgia state government commissioned life-size portraits of James Oglethorpe, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and Marquis de Lafayette to be displayed in the Milledgeville Capitol. These five paintings became the foundation of an art collection that now numbers close to 300 portraits, sculptures, and other memorials. The completion of the current Capitol building in 1889 led to the...

 **Carnegie Family Collection**
Photograph albums compiled by the family of Lucy Coleman Carnegie, who owned most of Cumberland Island, Georgia, from 1881 to 1972 when it was purchased by the National Park Service. The albums feature Lucy Carnegie's children and grandchildren from 1888 to 1919. Prominent are albums compiled by or featuring Lucy Coleman Carnegie; Nancy Carnegie Rockefeller, daughter of Lucy Carnegie's son...

 **Chatham County Deed Books**
Deeds showing property transactions in Chatham County, Georgia. These are from Record Group 125-01-003, Chatham County, Superior Court, Deeds and Mortgages. Usage Note: Students and teachers may use images in classroom reports and presentations if the following credit line is included with the image: Courtesy of the Georgia Archives. Each image has a "Cite as" field in the Document Description. User...

 **Church Records Microfilm Collection**
The Church Records Microfilm Index is the card catalog, compiled by Georgia Archives staff, of the Archives' holdings of church records on microfilm. The cards have been scanned and saved in PDF format with one PDF for the cards for each county. Arrangement: Church records are arranged alphabetically by denomination, then by the name of the church and grouped together in alphabetical sections, with the locatio...

 **Colonial Conveyances**
The Colonial Conveyances (deeds) are the recorded property transactions between private citizens in the Colony of Georgia.

 **Colonial Estate Records**
Estate records from estates probated in the Colony of Georgia, 1754-1777. These records are from Record Group 49-1-1, Colony of Georgia -Estate Records. Historical Background These documents are the copies submitted to the Ordinary for transcription into volumes. The Royal Governor served as Ordinary for the Colony of Georgia. Records submitted include letters of administration, administrators' bonds, petitions...

 **Colonial Plats and Warrants**
Warrants of survey and plats of land grants recorded in the Colony of Georgia. These records are from Record Group 3-3-56, Surveyor General, Survey Records, Colonial Plats and Warrants. While Georgia was a Royal Colony, land grants were issued by the Royal Governor in the name of the King of Great Britain. A colonist submitted a petition to the governor with a general description of the land he wanted. The...

<https://vault.georgiaarchives.org/digital/>

Gasper Austeter Warrant

Georgia

By his Excellency John Reynolds Esq^r
Captain General and Governor in Chief in and over
his Majesty's said Province

To Henry Young and William DePratto
Esq^r Secretaries General

^{2c} You are hereby directed and required to Measure or cause to be advertised
and laid out unto Gasper Austeter One hundred Acres of Land joining North
on Lands granted to Jacob Filler on the same Course

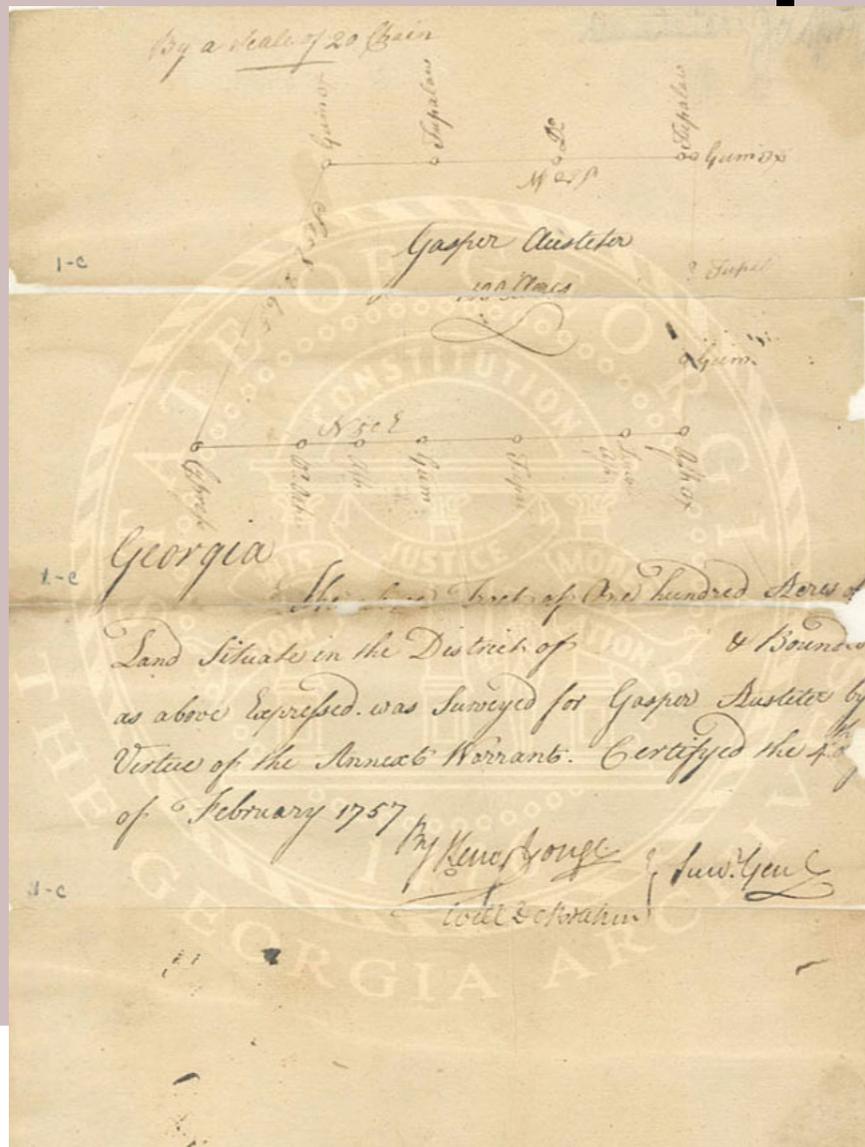
Observing his Majesty's Instructions in laying out the same and taking the
^{2c} great Care you can that the same has not been heretofore run out on any other
or other Part of Secret Land and return this Warrant with a plot of the Lands
so laid out annexed Certified by you into the Secretaries Office within six Months
from this Date that a Grant may be prepared for the same

Given under my hand and Seal this first
day of February 1757

^{2c} Secretaries Office
Certified by
James Whitefield per Sec^y

Reynolds

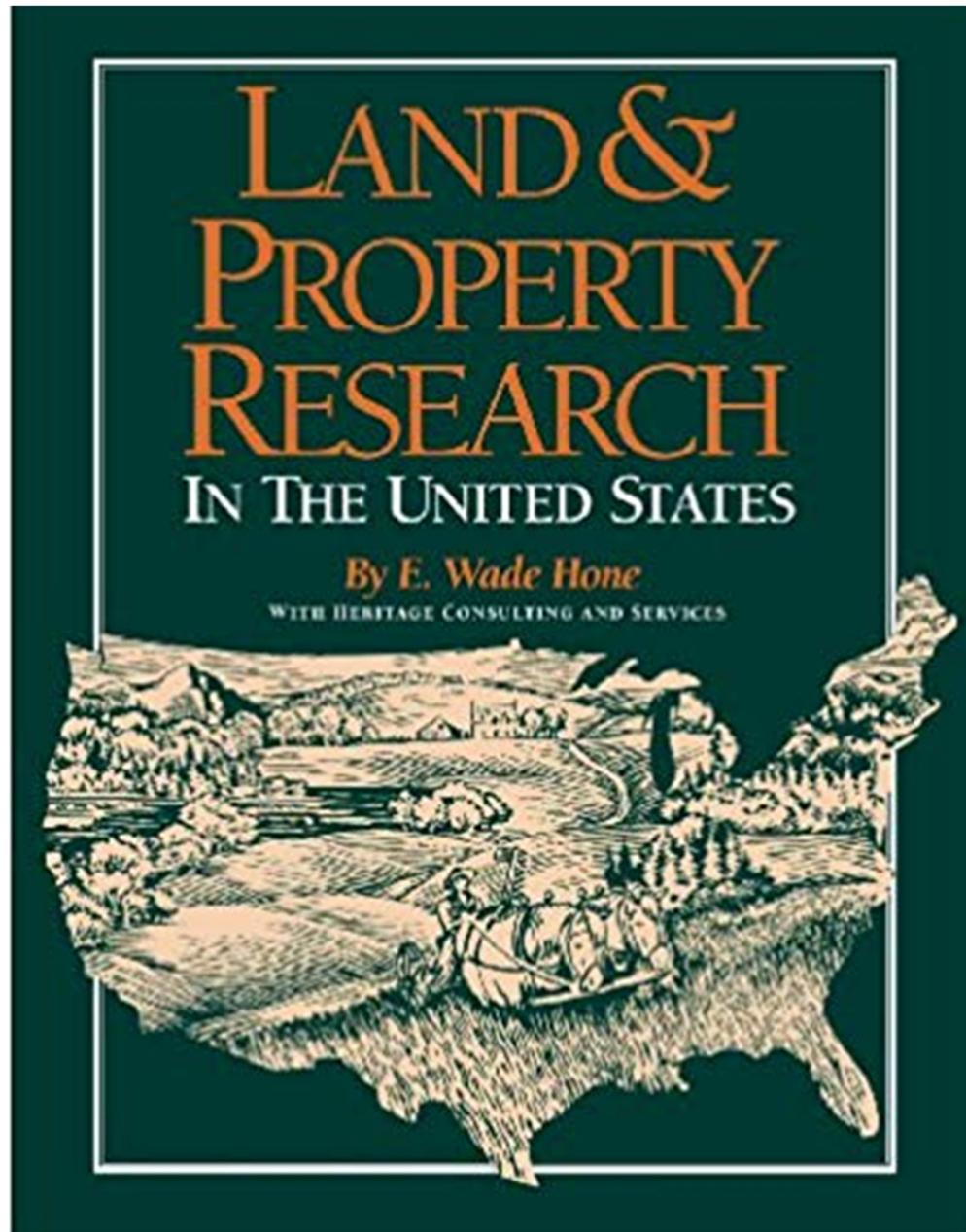
Warrant Map



Deeds or Conveyances

Deeds

- Written, legal document transferring property from one to another (*in fee*)
 - Grantee- a buyer of property
 - Grantor- a seller (or donor) of property





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Georgia Land and Property

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Contents [hide]

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- 3 [Land Lottery Records](#)
- 4 [County Records](#)
- 5 [Websites](#)

Online Resources [edit source]

- [Georgia, Deed Indexes, 1927-1979](#)(\$)
- [Land Grants to Georgia Revolutionary War Veterans](#) Index and images (\$)
- [Georgia, Headright and Bounty Land Records, 1783-1909](#) Images.
- [Georgia's Virtual Vault Colonial and Headright Plat Index](#)
- [Georgia's Virtual Vault Headright and Bounty Plats](#) Index and images
- [Georgia Land Lottery, 1827](#) Abstracts (\$)
- [Georgia Cherokee Land Lottery, 1832](#) Reprint of Official Register (\$)
- [USGenWeb Archives Land Lottery for 1807, 1821, 1827, 1832](#) >
- [Georgia, Elbert County Records, 1790-2002](#) at FamilySearch — Index and images

Colonial and State Records [edit source]

From 1732 to 1755 the area that is now Georgia was a trusteeship in which land was allotted to males and their heirs. After 1755 lands were granted without restrictions. Land transfers before 1777 were generally recorded in Savannah, and many early land grants have been transcribed and published. One source for these records is Pat Bryant, *Entry of Claims for Georgia Landholders, 1733-1755* (Atlanta, Georgia: State Printing Office, 1975; [Digital Version](#); [At various libraries \(WorldCat\)](#); FHL Film 1450719, Book 975.8 R2br.

Georgia was a state-land state in which land was distributed first by the governor and then through land courts established from 1783 to 1909. From 1756 land was distributed in the eastern quarter by headright and bounty grants. The grants usually do not give residences, family names, or military information. Not all bounties were for military service. These records are listed in Index to the *Headright and Bounty Grants of Georgia 1756-1909* (Vidalia, Georgia: Georgia Genealogical Reprints, 1970; [At various libraries \(WorldCat\)](#); FHL Book 975.8 R2i.

The Family History Library and the Georgia Surveyor General Department at the Georgia Department of Archives and History have original land grants on microfilm. The records at the Family History Library include books of conveyances (1750-1802), mortgages (1755-1822), fiats for grants (1755-76), and bonds, sales, and gift records (1755-1829).

- [Georgia Headright and Bounty Land Records, 1783-1909](#) (FamilySearch Historical Records - Free)

Georgia Wiki Topics



Beginning Research

- [Guided Research](#)
- [Research Strategies](#)
- [Record Finder](#)

Record Types

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Adoption | • Land & Property |
| • Bible Records | • Military Records |
| • Cemeteries | • Naturalization & Citizenship |
| • Census | • Newspapers |
| • Church Records | • Online Records |
| • Correctional Institutions | • Periodicals |
| • Court Records | • Probate Records |
| • Directories | • Taxation |
| • Emigration & Immigration | • Vital Records |
| • Genealogies | • Voter Records |

Georgia Background

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • Biography | • Maps |
| • Gazetteers | • Migration |
| • History | • For Further Reading |

www.familysearch.org/wiki/

Review Strategies

- **Understand historical and geographical context**
- Motivations
- **Knowing which records to use- who is in charge?**
- Cluster research
- **Stay organized!**

Migration Patterns

Problem: What was the Maiden Name of Ann Grosvenor of Pomfret, Connecticut?

Here Lyes ye Body of Mrs Ann Grosvenor the widow of Mr Ebenezer Grosvenor she died July 30 1743 in ye 56th Year of her Age

- Born about 1687
- Married about 1707 based on birth of first child
- Births of children listed as “d.” or “s.” of Ebenezer and Ann
- Ebenezer Grosvenor of Roxbury, came to Pomfret in 1700 with his mother, Esther (or Hester).
- How would you approach this problem?
 - ❖ P.S. Pomfret was first settled in 1699

Early Settlement

- Land in Pomfret was purchased in 1686 by 12 men from Roxbury, Massachusetts, but not settled until 1699.
- Woodstock, just north of Pomfret, was purchased by 39 men from Roxbury at the same time and settled immediately



Settlers of Woodstock (with ages)

- Aspinwall, Peter (22)
- Bacon, Joseph (20)
- Bacon, Thomas (28)
- Bowen, Henry (53)
- Bowen, John (24)
- Bugbee, John (21)
- Bugbee, Joseph (46)
- Butcher, John (23)
- Chandler, John (51)
- Chandler, John Jr. (21)
- Corbin, James (21)
- Craft, Samuel (49)
- Davis, Jonathan (21)
- Davis, Matthew (22)
- Frizzel, John (22)
- Garey, Nathaniel (23)
- Griggs, Benjamin (19)
- Griggs, George (25)
- Holmes, John (25)
- Johnson, Nathaniel (39)
- Leavens, John (46)
- Lyon, Thomas (38)
- Lyon, William Sr (65)
- Lyon, William Jr. (34)
- Marcy, John (24)
- May, Samuel (25)
- Morris, Ebenezer (22)
- Morris, Edward (56)
- Peacock, Samuel (29)
- Peake, Jonathan (49)
- Peake, Joseph (41)
- Sabin, Benjamin (40)
- Sanger, Nathan (34)
- Scarborough, Samuel (40)
- Watkins, Andrew (20)

Births of Ann's in Roxbury (1680-1690)

- Ann Baker, d. Robert and Mary, 8 June 1685
- Ann White, d. Benjamin, 4 July 1685
- Ann Dudley, d. Joseph and Rebeca, 27 August 1684
- Anna Gorde, d. Joseph, 27 August 1682
- **Anna Lyon, d. Thomas, 4 March 1682**
- **Anna Lyon, d. Thomas and Abigail, 28 April 1689**
- Anna Heath, d. Isaac, Jr, 12 November 1681
- **Anne Massey, d. John and Sarah, 11 October 1687**

Next Steps?

- Search Town Records and Proprietor Records in Woodstock, Connecticut for more information about John Massey/Marcy
- Search Probate Records in Connecticut for John or Sarah
 - Connecticut is organized by probate district (54 currently)

Review Strategies

- Understand historical and geographical context
- Motivations
- Knowing which records to use- who is in charge?
- Cluster research
- Stay organized!

QUESTIONS?

Hire Research Services

research@nehgs.org

Chat with a Genealogist

AmericanAncestors.org/chat



THANK YOU!

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