

# Basics of Early New England Research

*Class 1: Settlement of New England*

David Allen Lambert, Chief Genealogist

THE BRUE FAMILY LEARNING CENTER



American Ancestors®  
by NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

# Meet today's presenter

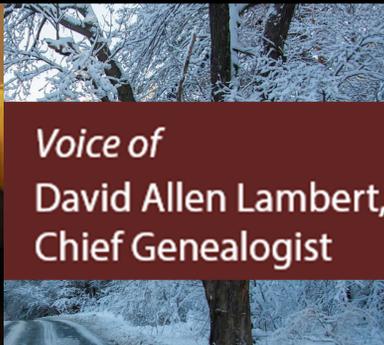


David Allen Lambert

Chief Genealogist

# OVERVIEW

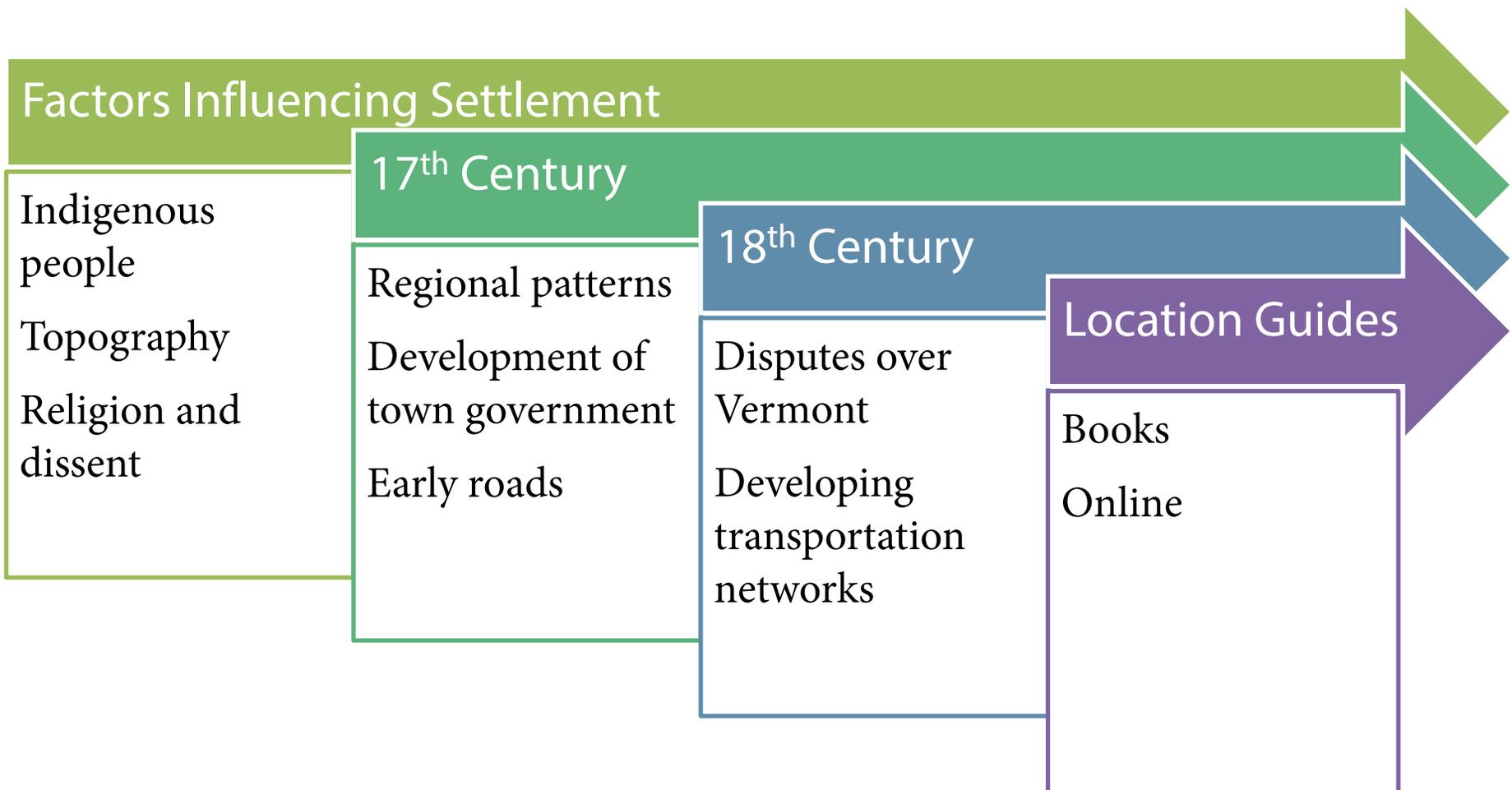
- **Presentation (60 mins.)**
  - Factors influencing settlement
  - 17<sup>th</sup> Century
  - 18<sup>th</sup> Century
  - Location Guides



*Voice of*  
David Allen Lambert,  
Chief Genealogist



# Session Roadmap



# In the Beginning: Algonquin Linguistic Group



Southern NE Tribes-By Nikater; adapted to English by Hydrargyrum - Wikimedia Commons - Image:Wohngebiet\_Südneuengland.png, as of 5 July 2006, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=5276243>

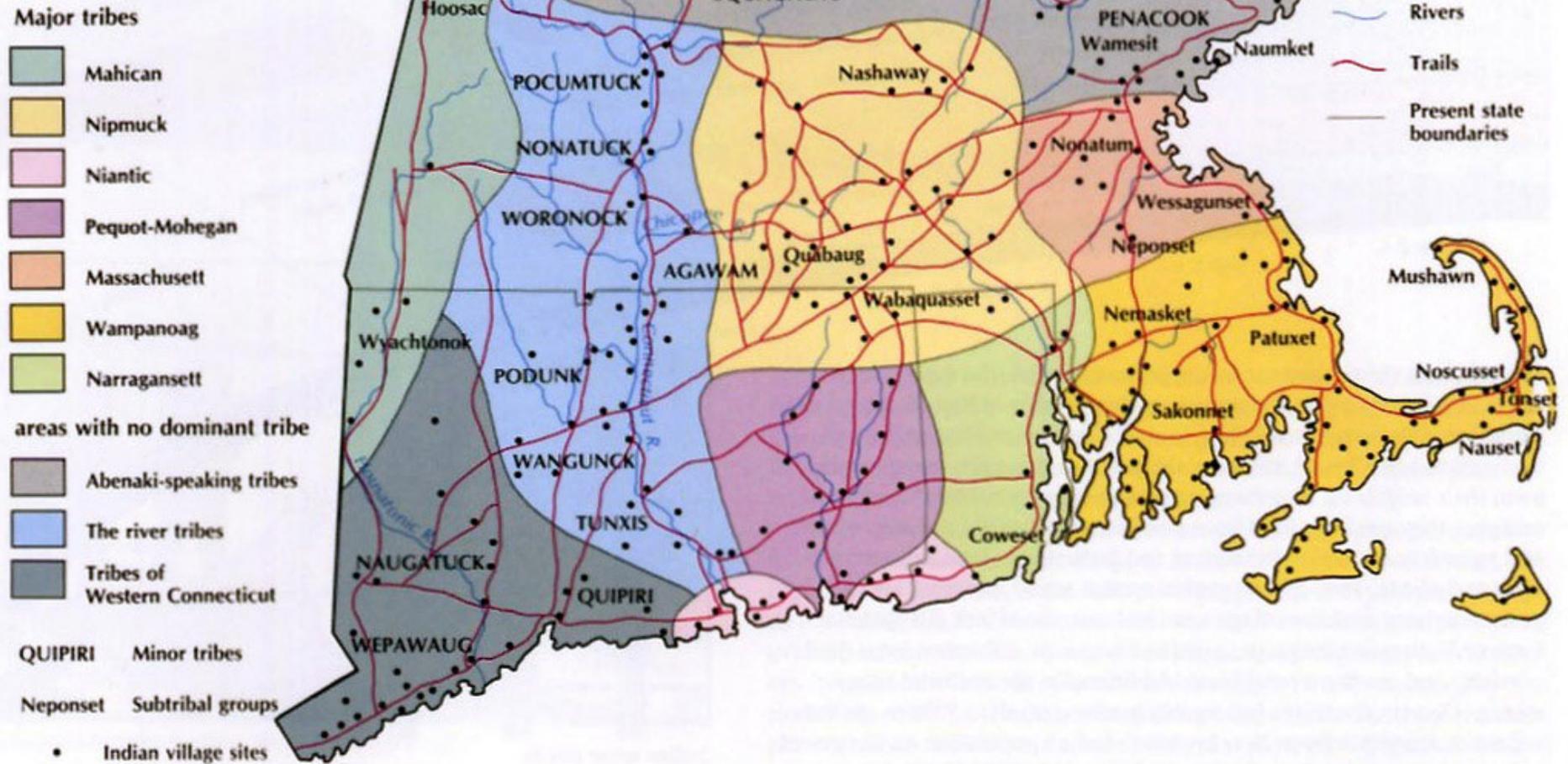


Western Abenaki--CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=510577>



Eastern Abenaki - CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=485753>

### NATIVE SETTLEMENTS AND TRAILS c.1600–1650

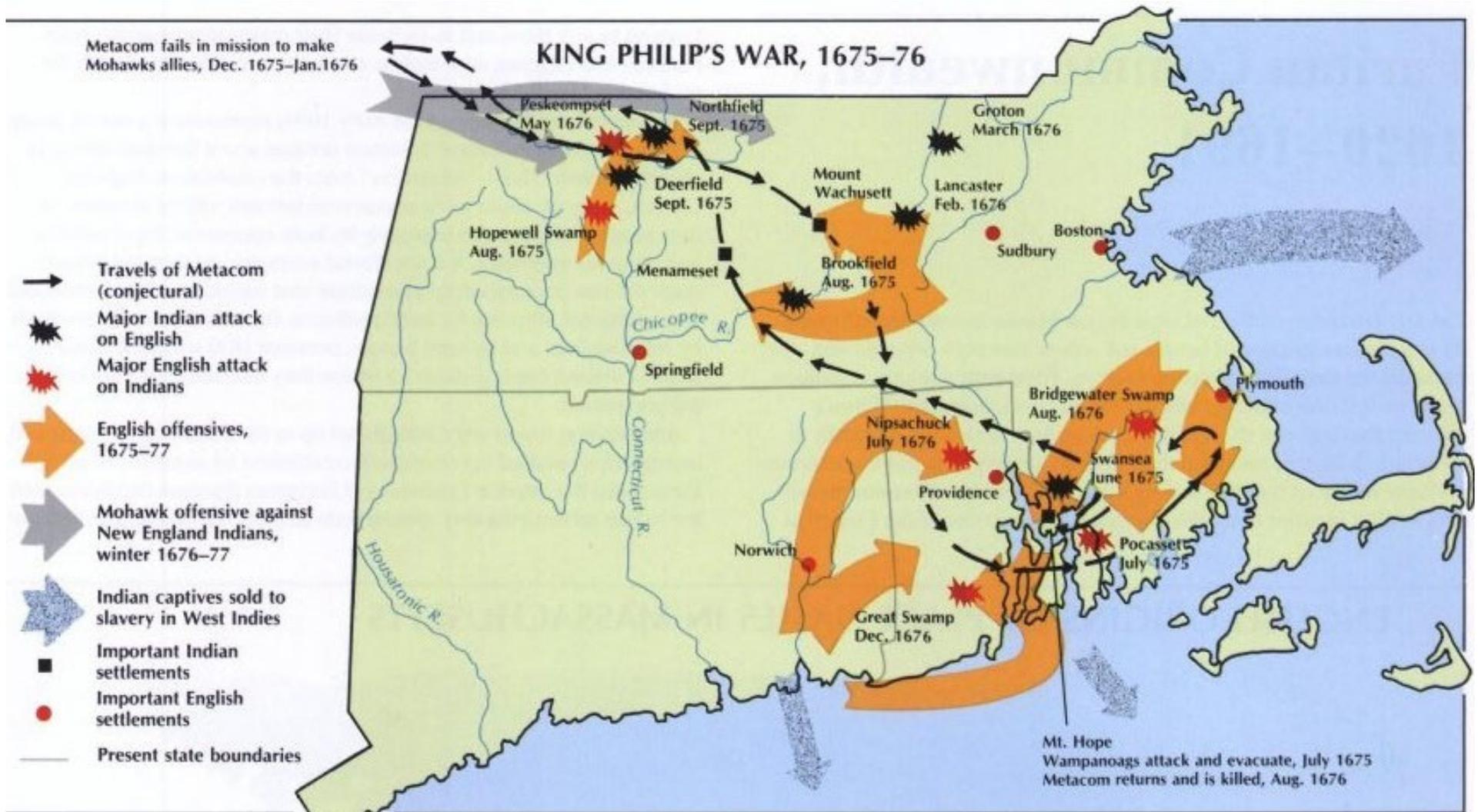


Source: Wilke and Tager, *Historical Atlas of Massachusetts* (University of Massachusetts, 1991), p. 12

# Pequot War

- Pitted the Pequot who were allied with the Dutch against the Connecticut colonies in 1636 and 1637
- Pequot allied with the Dutch
- Colonists allied with Mohegan and Narragansett tribes
- Pequot tribe was decimated

# King Philip's War



Tip

Indigenous groups allied  
with the French in  
18<sup>th</sup> century

# Queen Anne's War: 1702-1713

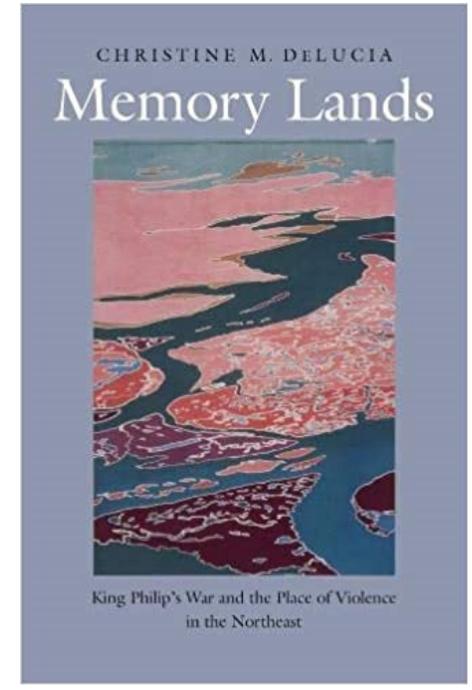
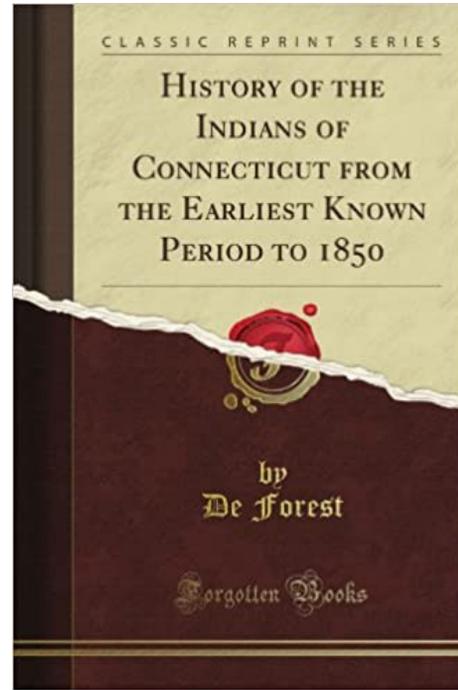
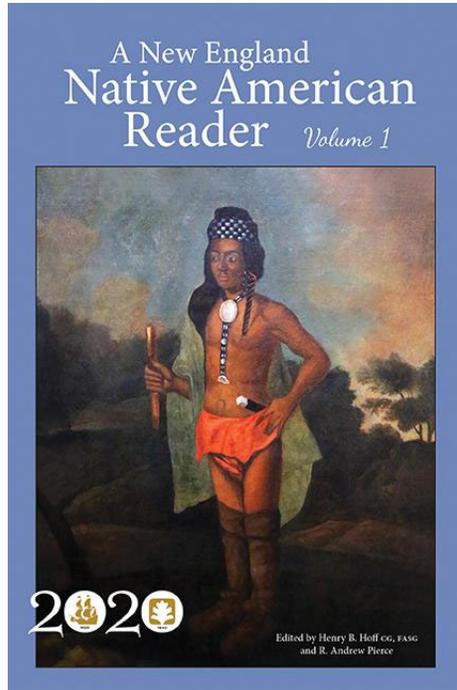
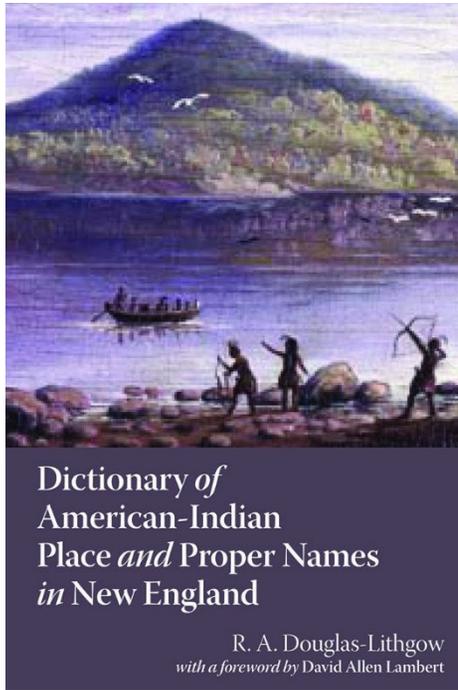
- England at war with France
- Raids by French and allied Indians from Canada into Northern New England communities
- Attack on Deerfield, 1704



# Seven Years War

- Also known as the French and Indian Wars
- Boundary disputes between English colonists and French
- Recapture of Fortress Louisbourg in 1759
- Many British soldiers would later fight against the crown in Revolution

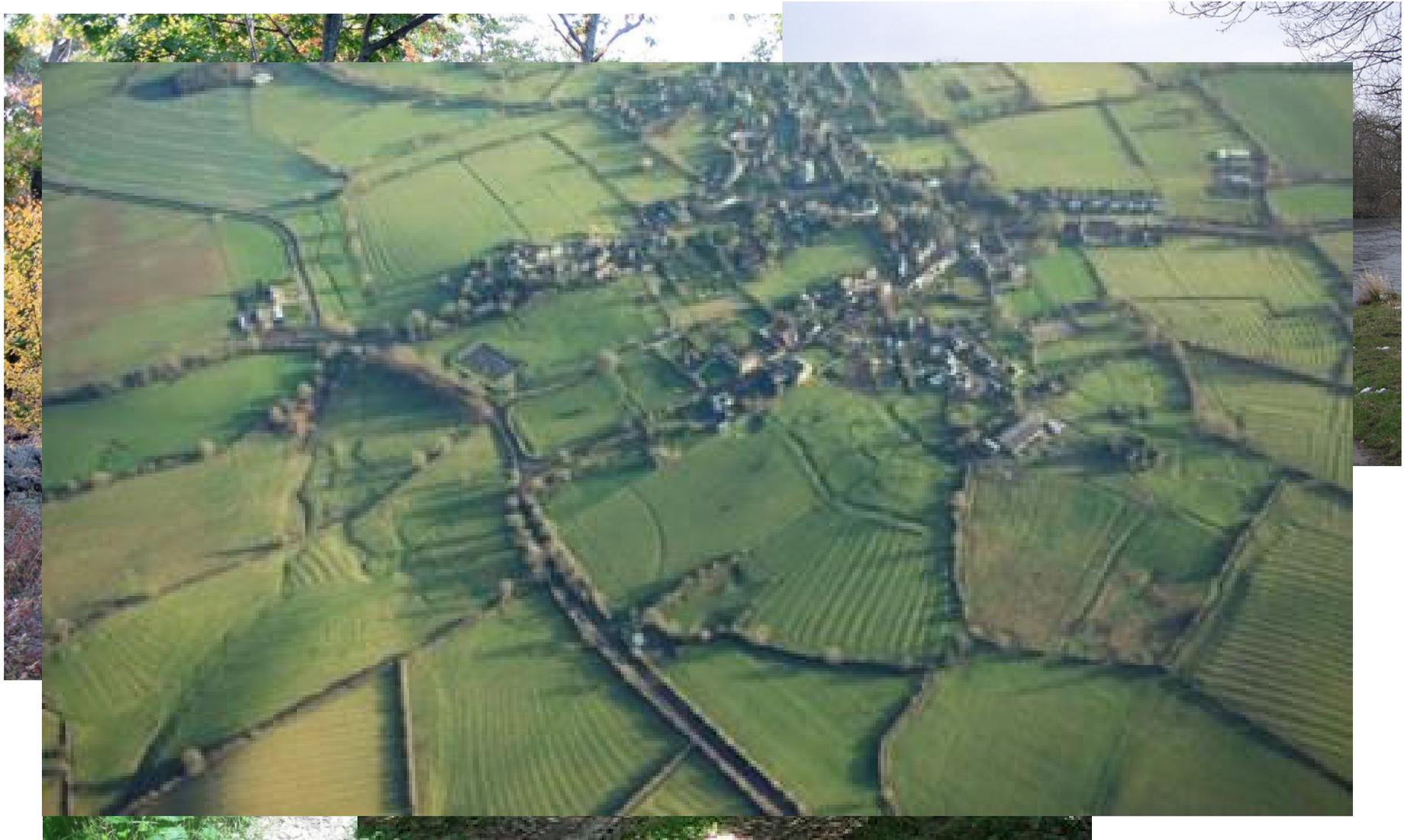




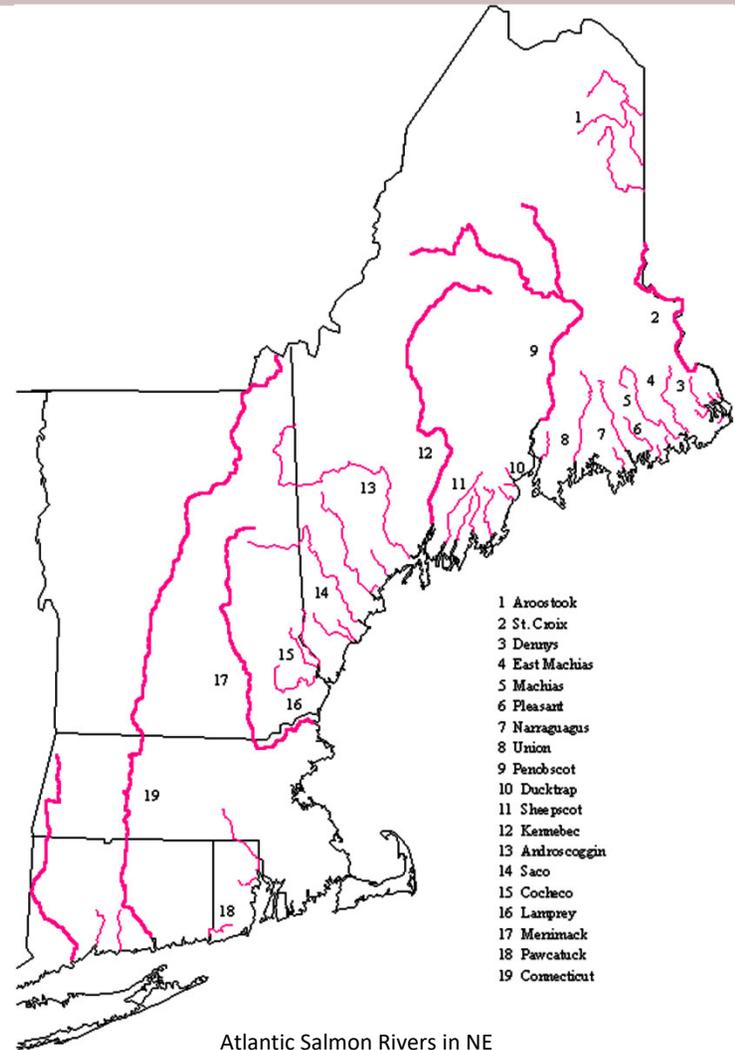
## Resources for Researching Indigenous Settlements

# Topography

# Early European Settlers Found . . .



# New England Topography



<https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/search/commonwealth:vh53xs716>

Atlantic Salmon Rivers in NE

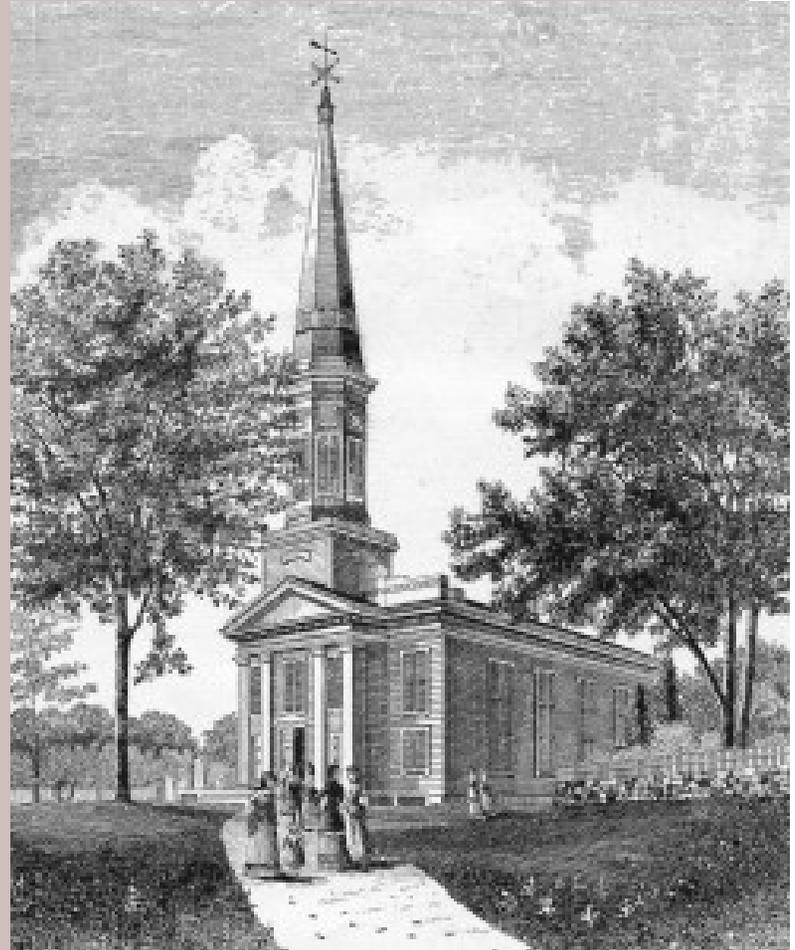
# Religion

# Religion in Early New England

- Most settlers came to America opposing the established Anglican Church of England
- Pilgrims – advocated separation from CoE
- Puritans – advocated change from within the CoE
- Religion dictated community life and systems

# Matters of Discontent

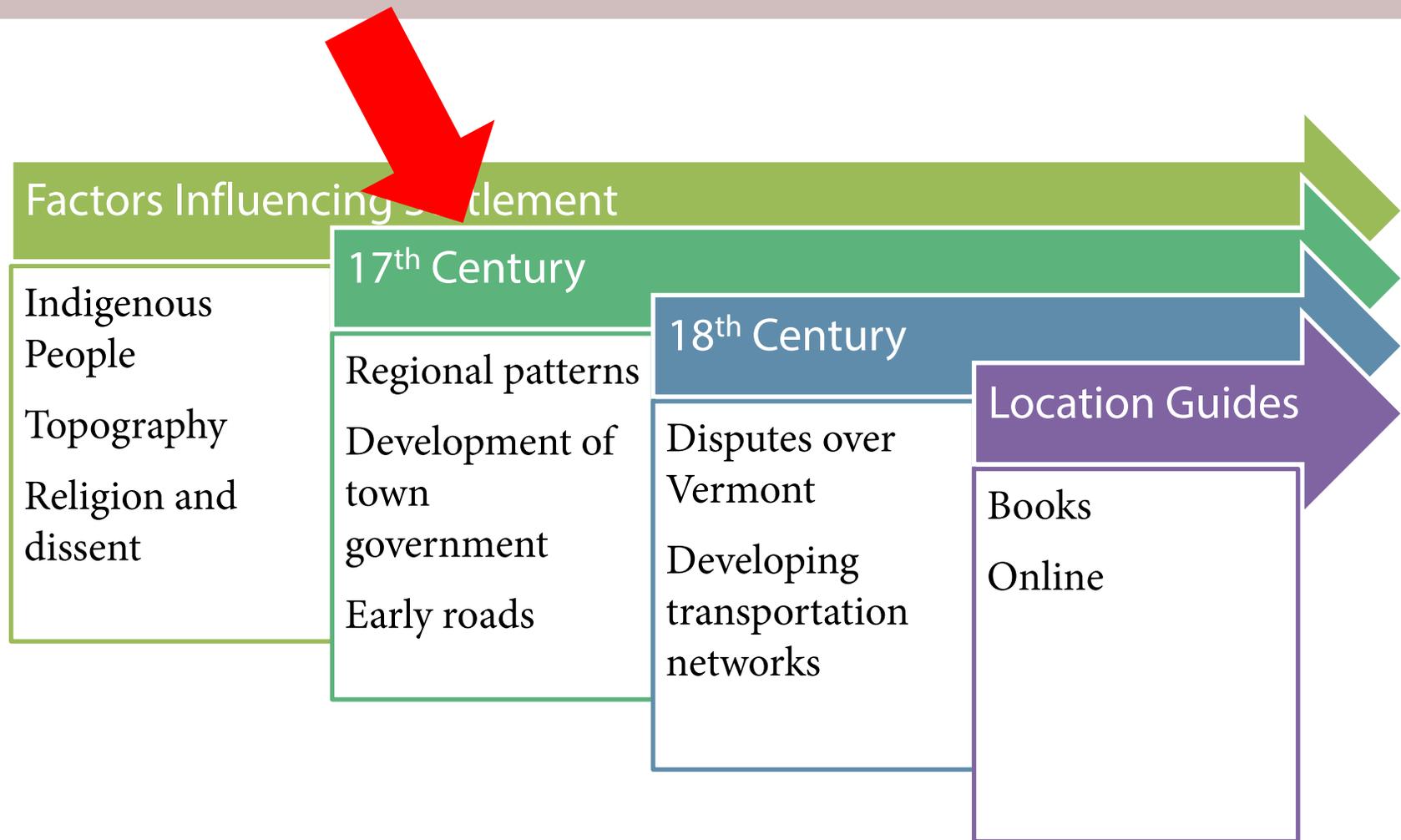
- “Too many” settlers  
(anywhere from 15 to 30  
freemen)
- Church disputes
- Desire to determine own  
standards for church and  
government
- Inability to adapt to  
prevailing order



# Religious Dissent

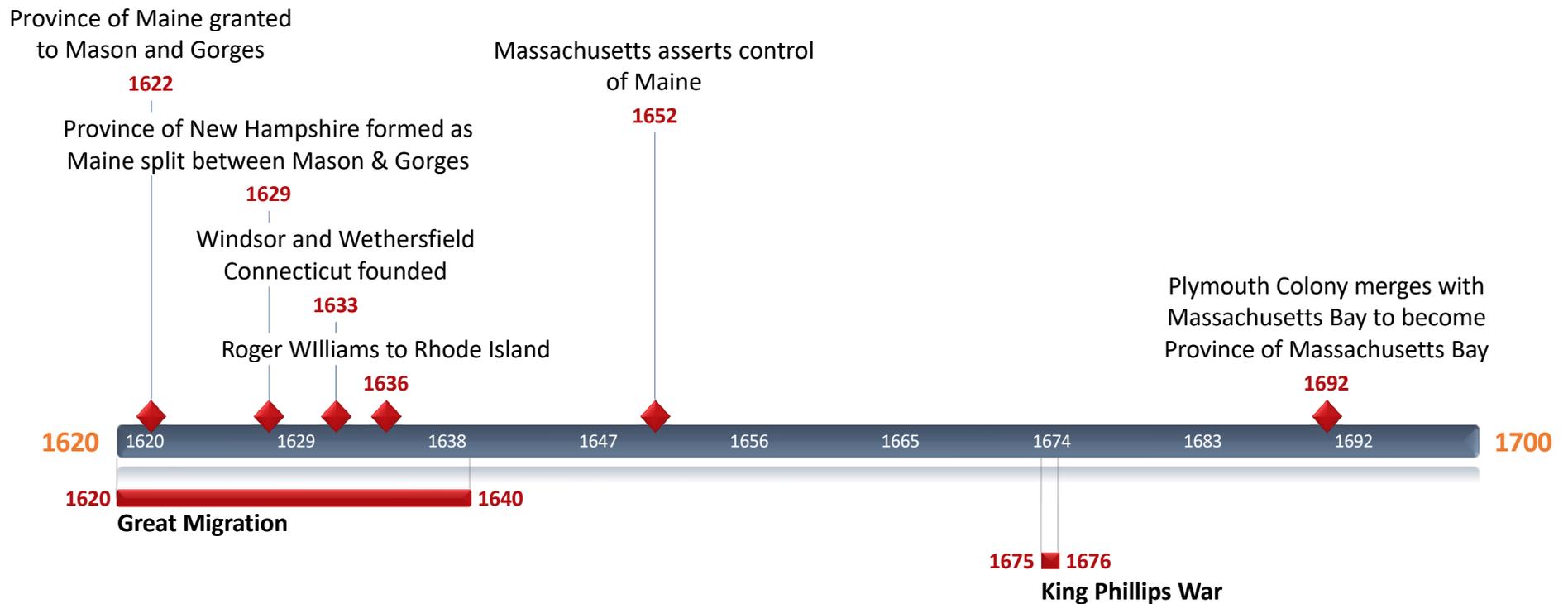
- Dissenters left Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay over
  - Puritan and Pilgrim lack of religious tolerance (Roger Williams)
  - Belief that no intermediary was needed for a relationship with God (Roger Williams and Ann Hutchinson)
  - Voting privileges within a community should not be limited to church members (Thomas Hooker)
  - Desire for control of civil matters by “the godly” (Davenport & Eaton)

# Session Roadmap

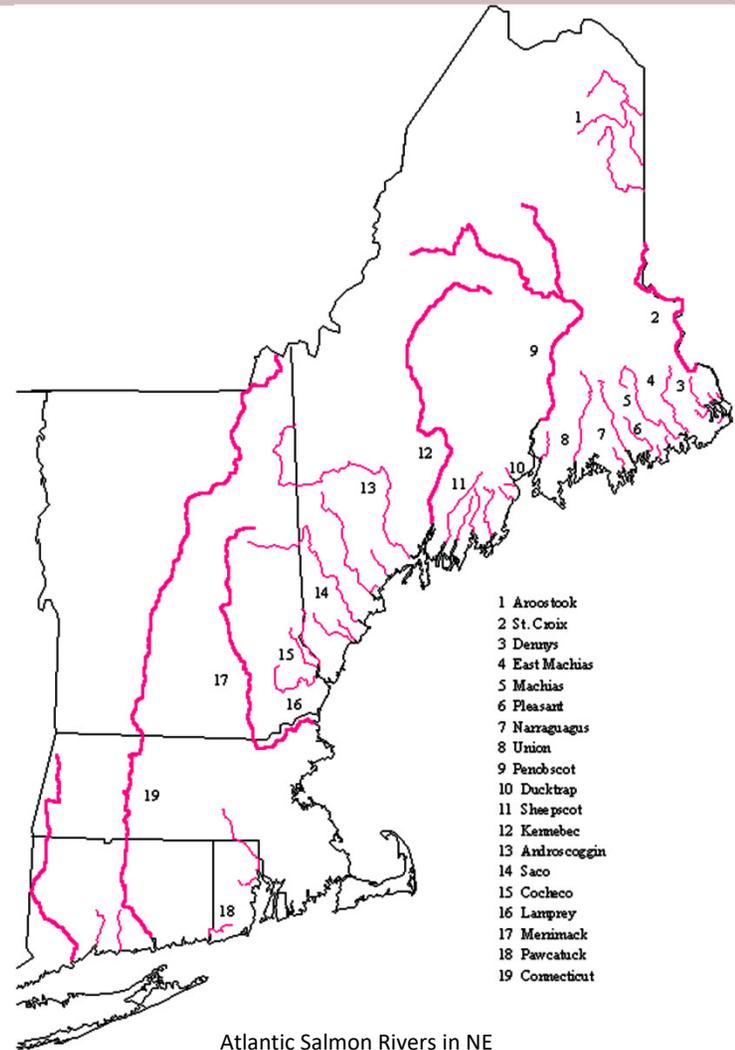


# Settlement by Region

# First European Settlements in New England



# New England Topography



<https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/search/commonwealth:vh53xs716>

# Plymouth Colony

- Core group were Separatists who had first fled to Leiden, Holland
- Small in population and grew slowly

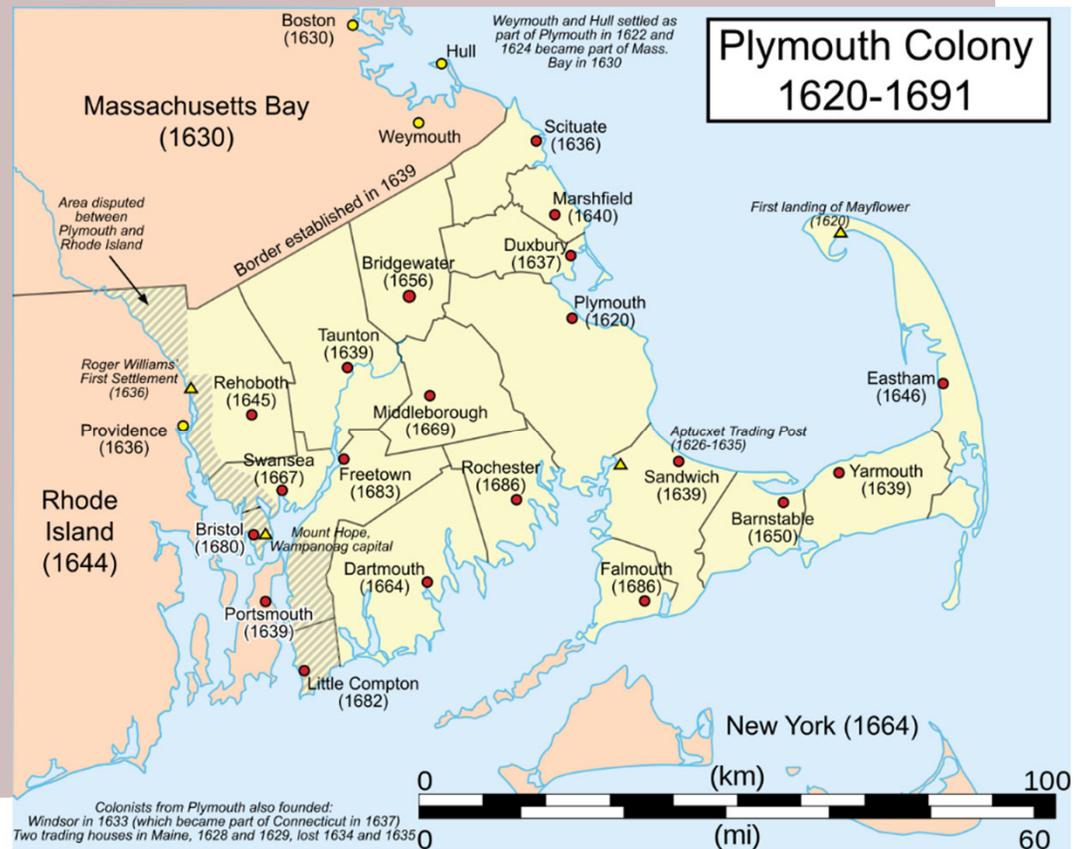
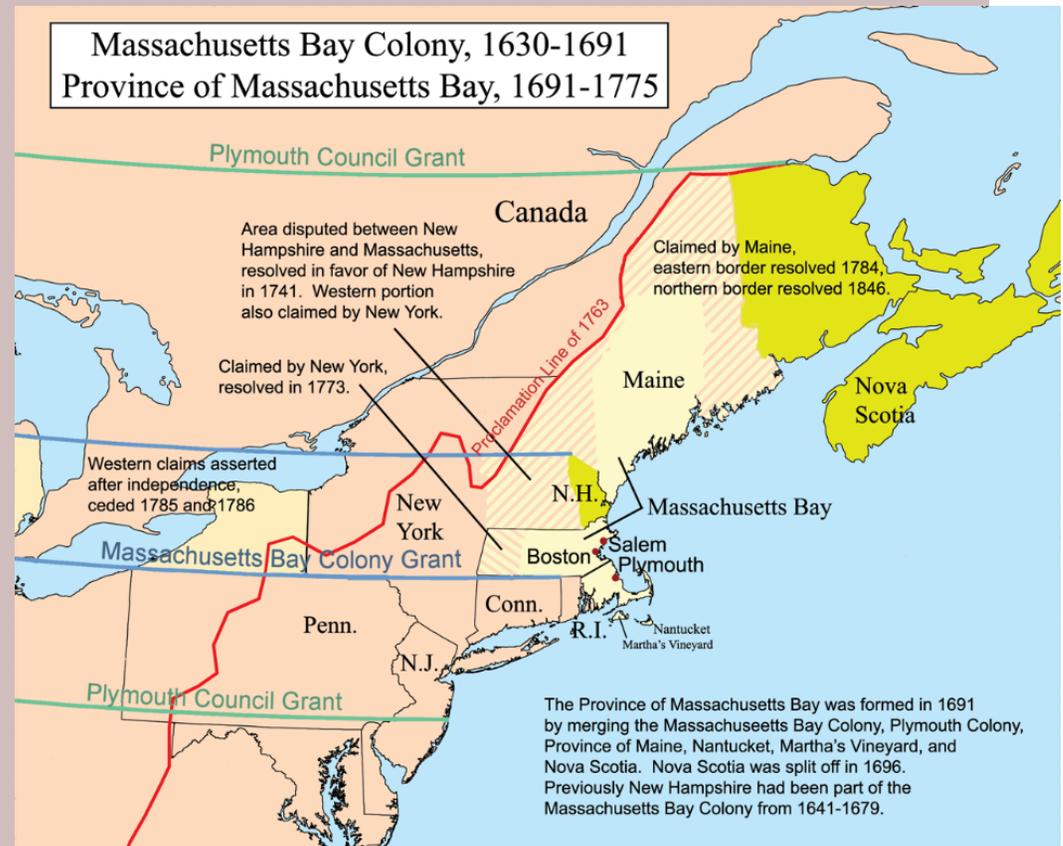


Image by Hoodinski at Wikipedia Commons

# Massachusetts Bay Colony

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



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Massachusetts\\_Bay\\_Colony#/media/File:Masscolony.png](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Massachusetts_Bay_Colony#/media/File:Masscolony.png)

# Early Connecticut

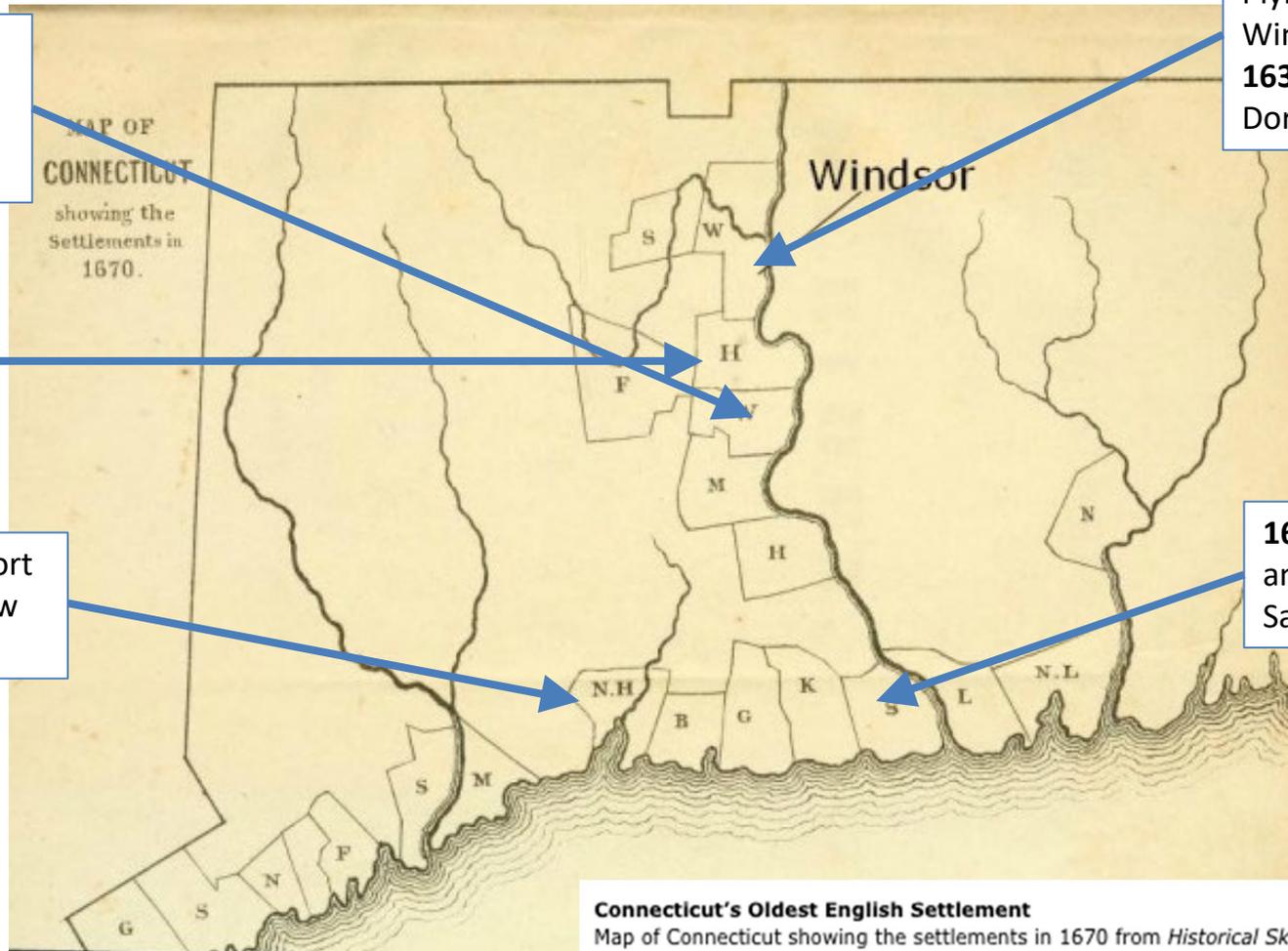
**1633:** Holmes from Plymouth to Windsor  
**1635:** settlers from Dorchester

**1634:** Oldham & Co. from Watertown to Wethersfield

**1636:** Hooker & Co. from Cambridge to Hartford

**1637:** Davenport & Eaton to New Haven

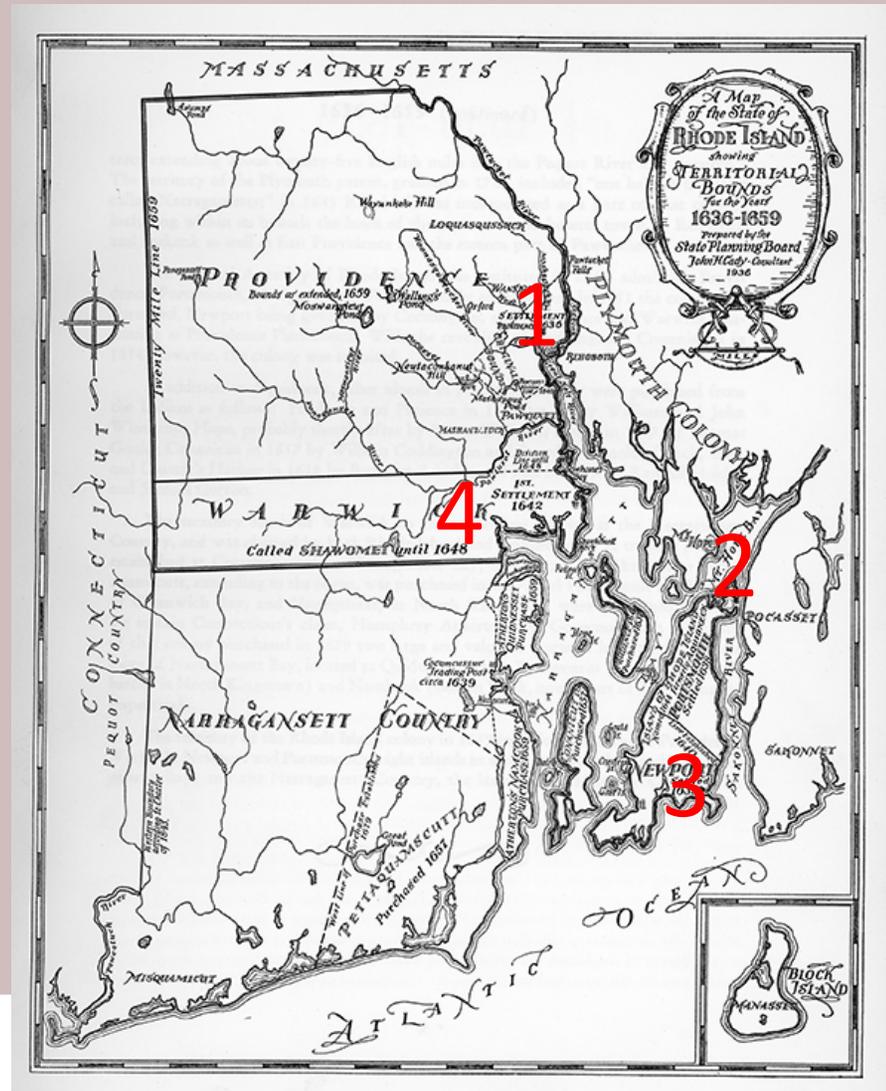
**1635:** Winthrop and Gardiner to Saybrook



**Connecticut's Oldest English Settlement**  
Map of Connecticut showing the settlements in 1670 from *Historical Sketches of Meriden* by G.W. Perkins

# Dissenters Founded Rhode Island

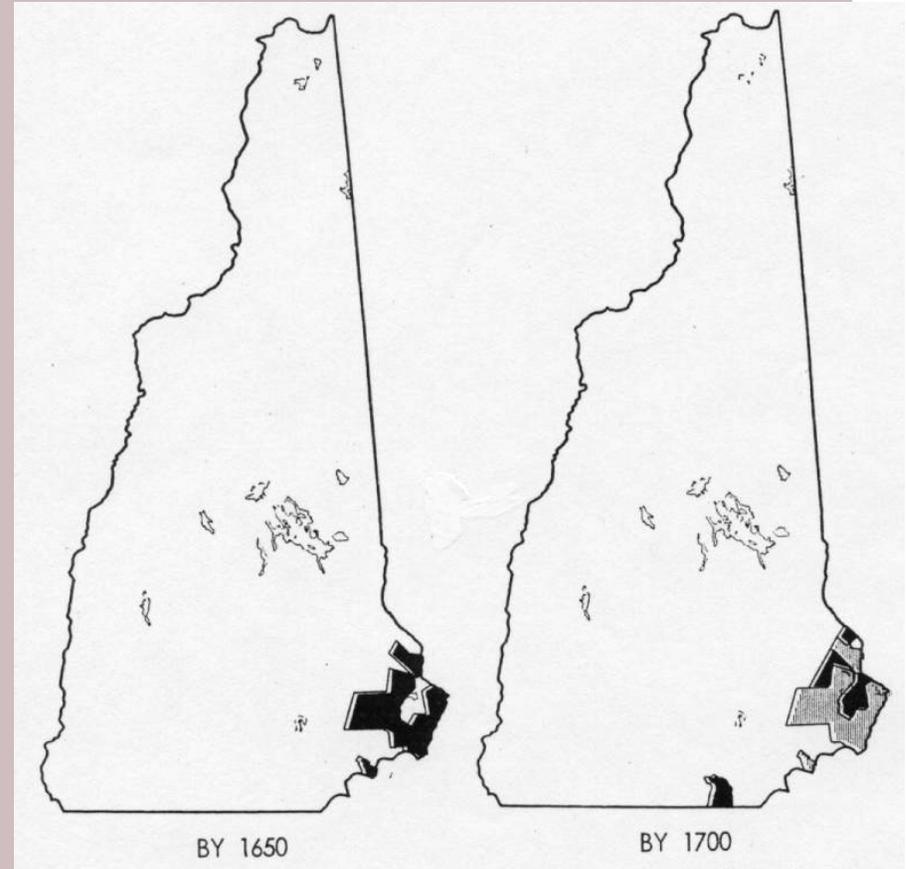
- 1636 – Providence (Roger Williams)
- 1638 – Portsmouth (Ann Hutchinson)
- 1639 – Newport (8 families)
- 1642 – Warwick (Samuel Gorton)



<http://www.findingrogerwilliams.com/images/maps/cady2.jpg>

# New Hampshire

- 1622 Captain John Mason and Sir Ferdinando Gorges received patent for New Hampshire and Maine
- 1623 Mouth of the Piscataqua River settled by Hiltons
- Mason and Gorges split the charter into NH and Maine in 1629



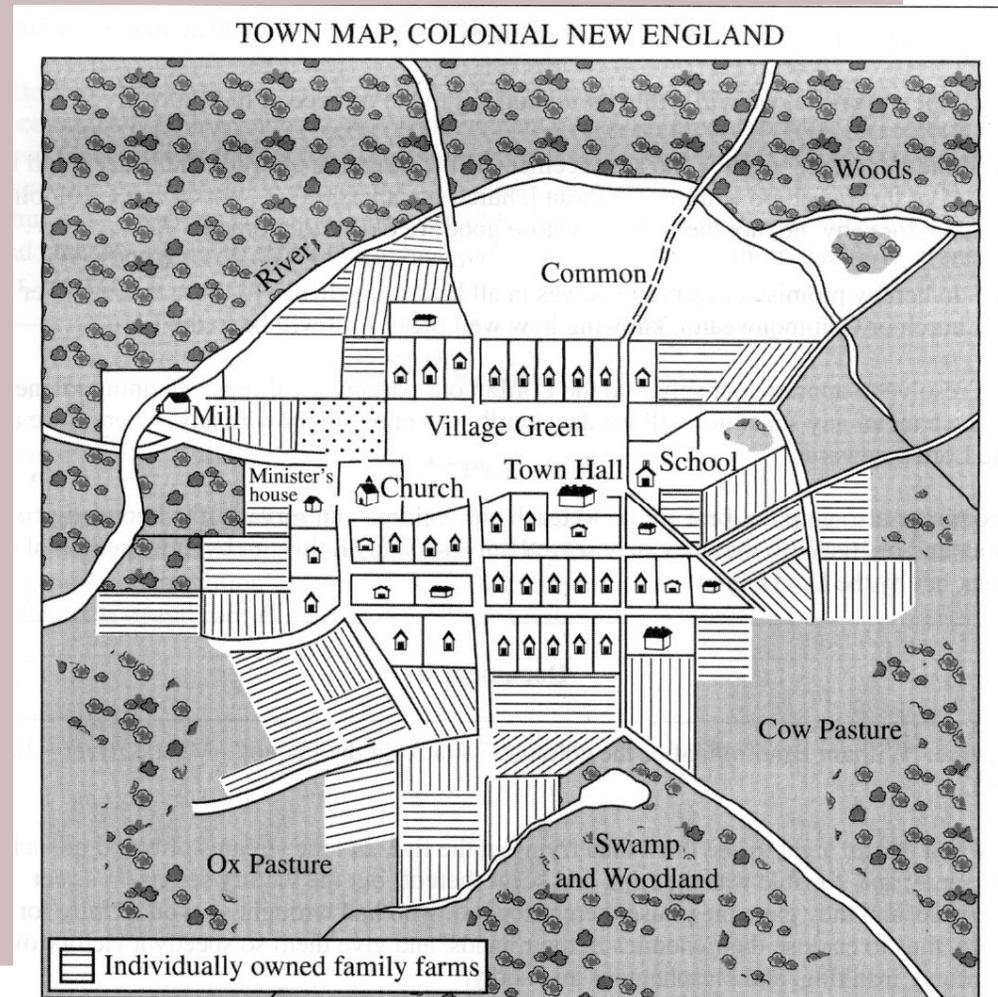


# The New England Town

# Early Towns

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

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



# Privileges of Town Inhabitancy



- Land
- Common land for grazing
- Fishing and hunting privileges
- If became indigent, right to be cared for by the town

Image from [www.revolutionarywarjournal.com](http://www.revolutionarywarjournal.com)

# Who Was Considered a Town Inhabitant?

- Landowners
- Individuals born in the town
- Apprentices trained in the town
- Newcomers allowed if:
  - Good character
  - Vouched for by existing town inhabitant OR
  - Approved by Selectmen
  - Deemed not become a burden to the town

# Freemen

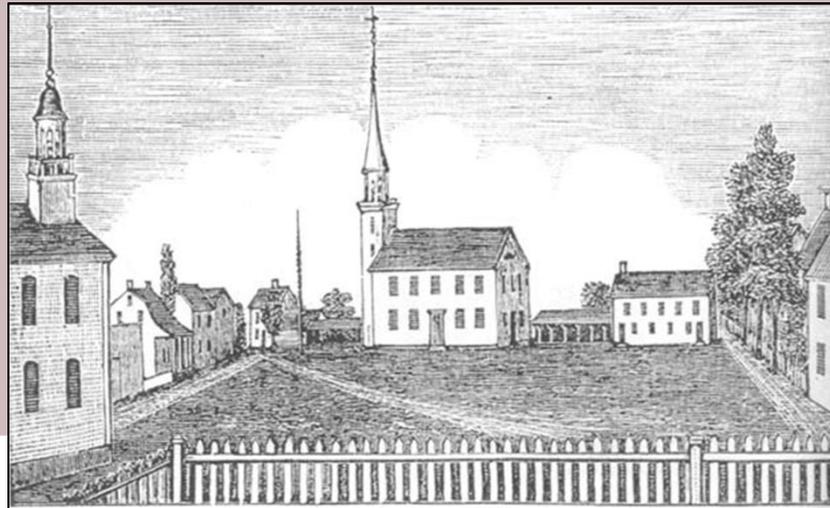
- Applied for privilege
  - Male, usually over 21
  - Church member (varied by Colony)
  - Land ownership (varied by Colony)
  - Good character
- Participate in Town Meeting
- Vote on Town business
- Serve on juries



Mural at Post Office, Ipswich, MA

# Town Government

- Unit of government in New England
- Elected town officers governed the town, kept records, recorded laws
- Freemen voted for elected officials at town meeting



# Typical Functions of NE Towns

- Assess and collect taxes
- Record land transactions
- Build and maintain roads
- Maintain law and order
- Care for indigent members of the community
- Maintain schools

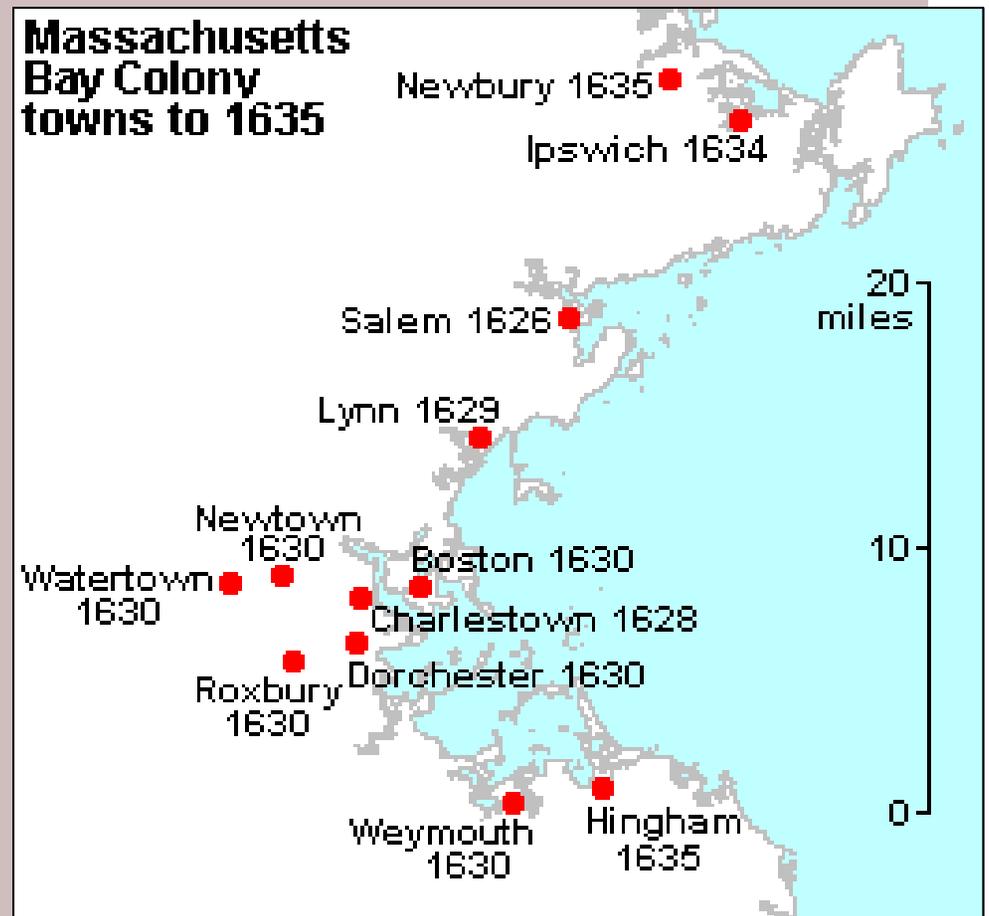
# The Town Meeting

- Notice posted to townspeople
- Often required attendance
- Led by a moderator
- Election of town officials
- General town business

# Earliest Towns

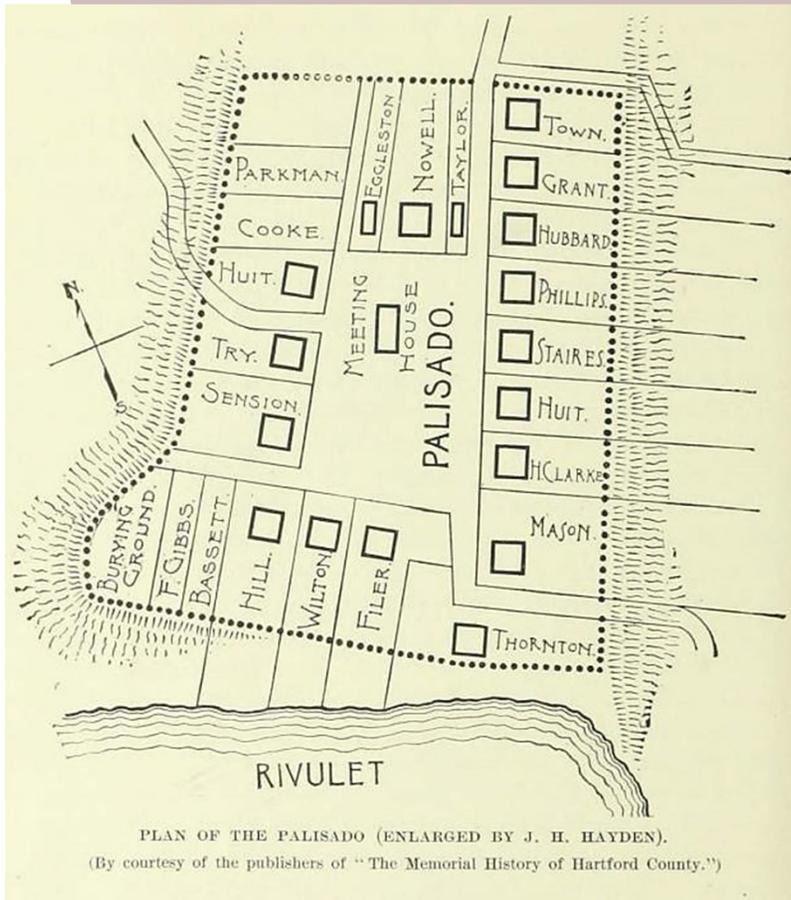
# Early Massachusetts Towns

- Plymouth, 1620
- Cape Ann/Gloucester: 1623
- Boston: 1625
- Salem: 1626
- Lynn: 1629
- Marblehead 1629
- Weymouth: 1630
- Watertown: 1630
- Cambridge/Newtown: 1631



Map at <https://www.theedkins.co.uk/jo/genealogy/earlydib/colony.htm>

# First Connecticut Settlement - Windsor

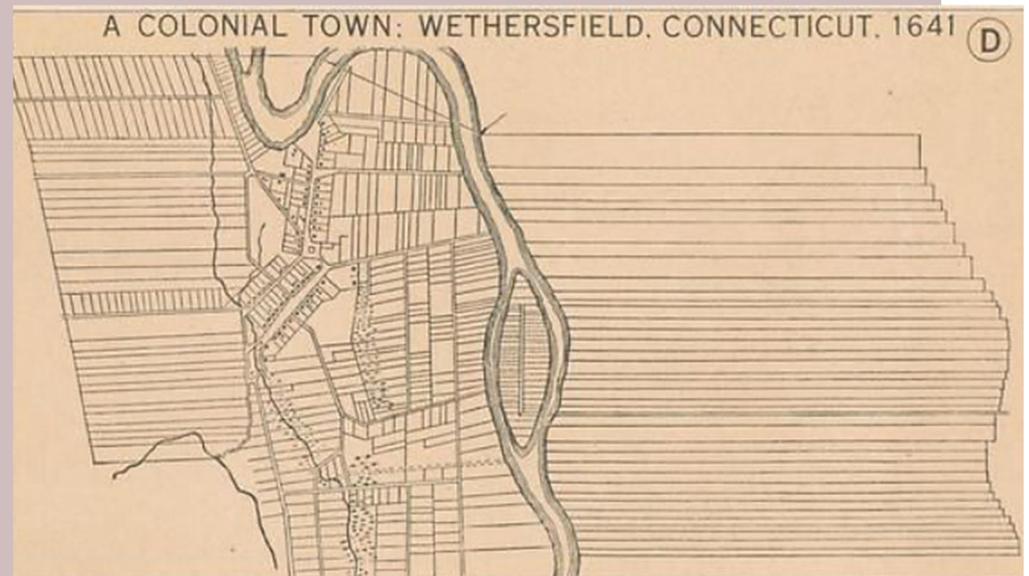


- William Holmes establishes trading post 1633 near junction of Farmington River and Connecticut River
- English counterbalance to the Dutch settlement at Hartford
- Permanent settlers from Dorchester arrive in 1635

*Ancient Histories and Genealogies of Windsor*, viewed at HathiTrust.org, page 140.

# Founding of Wethersfield

- John Oldham and others from Watertown, MA 1634
- Welcomed by the Wangunk desirous of trading beaver pelts
- Merged with Hartford and Windsor by 1637



Paullin, *Atlas of Historical Geography*

# First Connecticut Colonies



## Saybrook

- Founded by Winthrop and Gardiner, 1635

## Connecticut River Colony

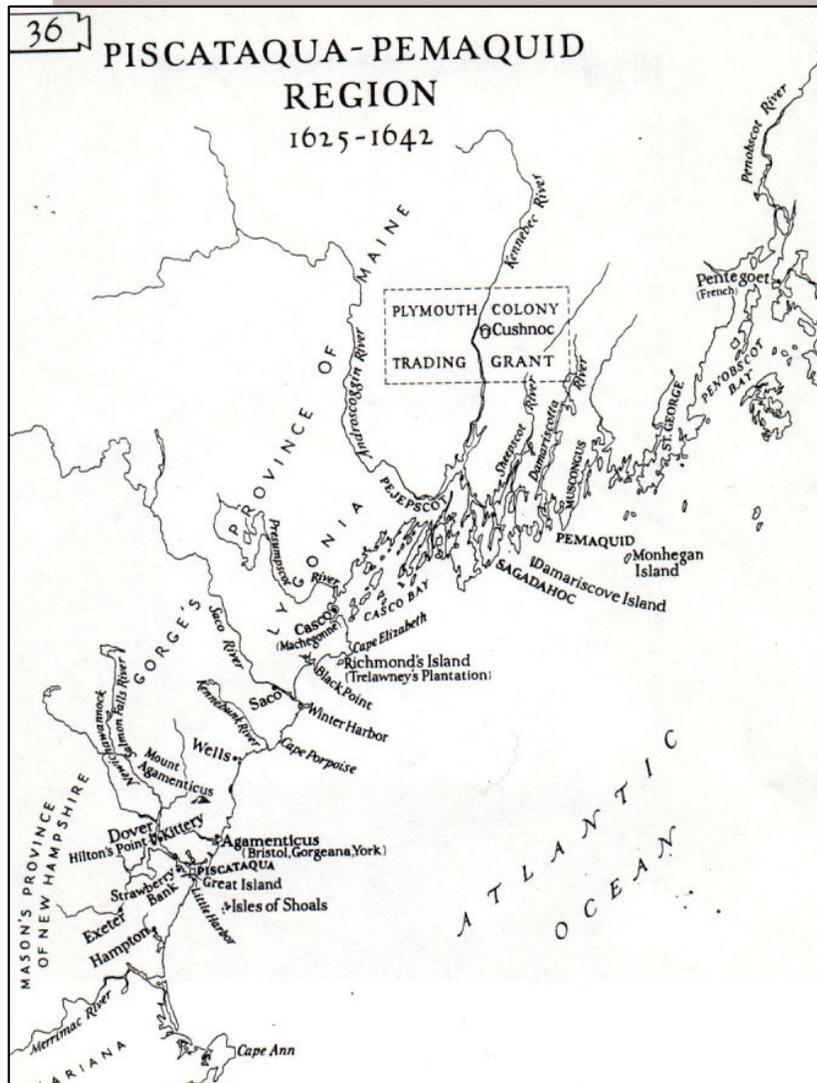
- Merger of Hartford, Windsor and Wethersfield towns - 1637

## New Haven

- Founded by Davenport and Eaton, 1637

National Geographic: Connecticut ca 1645, accessed 21 Dec 2021

# First New Hampshire Towns



- Strawberry Banke/  
Portsmouth - 1623
- Exeter - 1637
- Dover - 1638
- Hampton - 1638

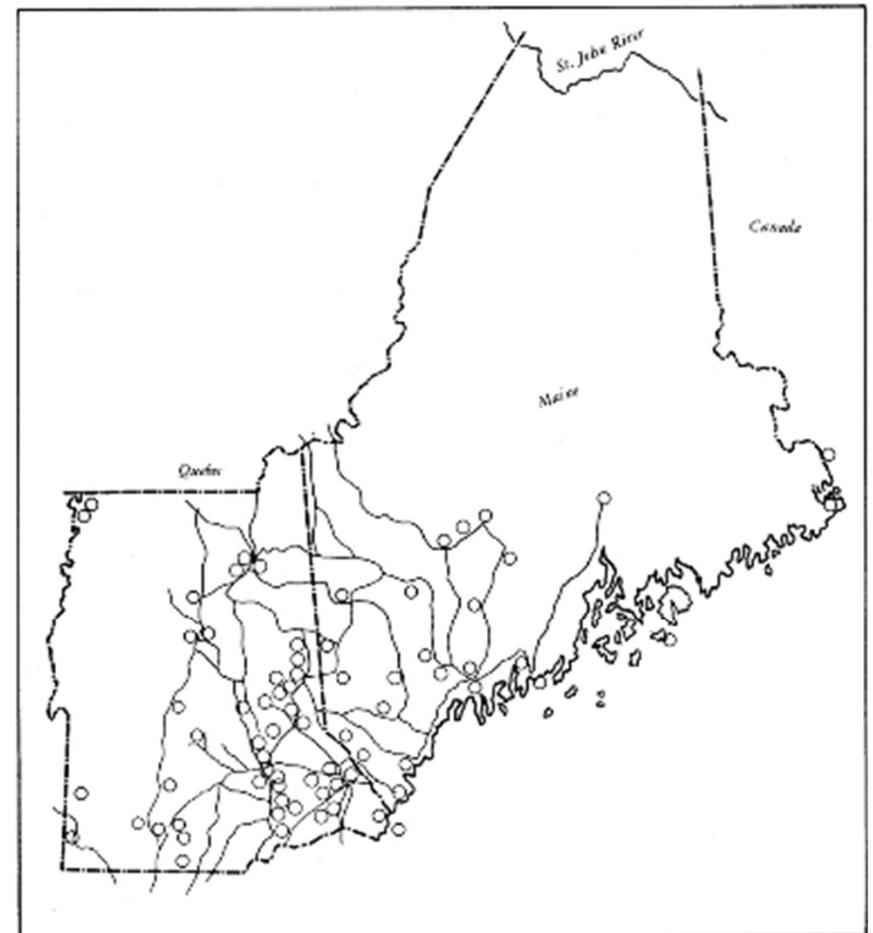
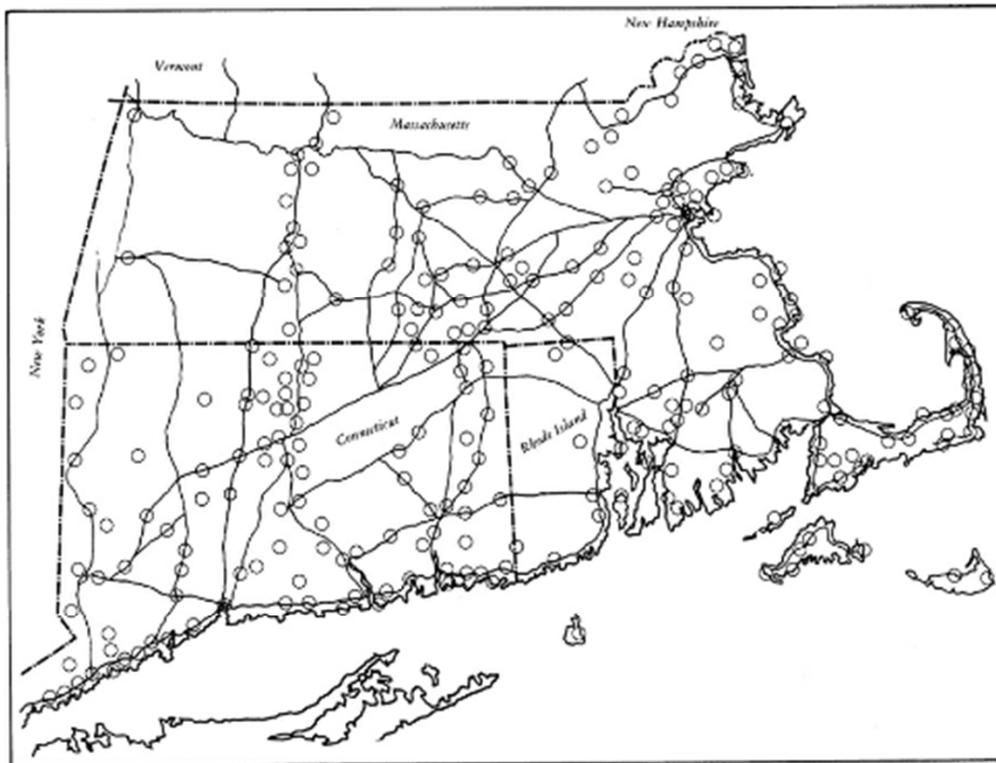
# First Maine Towns

- Kittery – 1623
- Biddeford - 1623
- York - 1624
- Wells - 1653



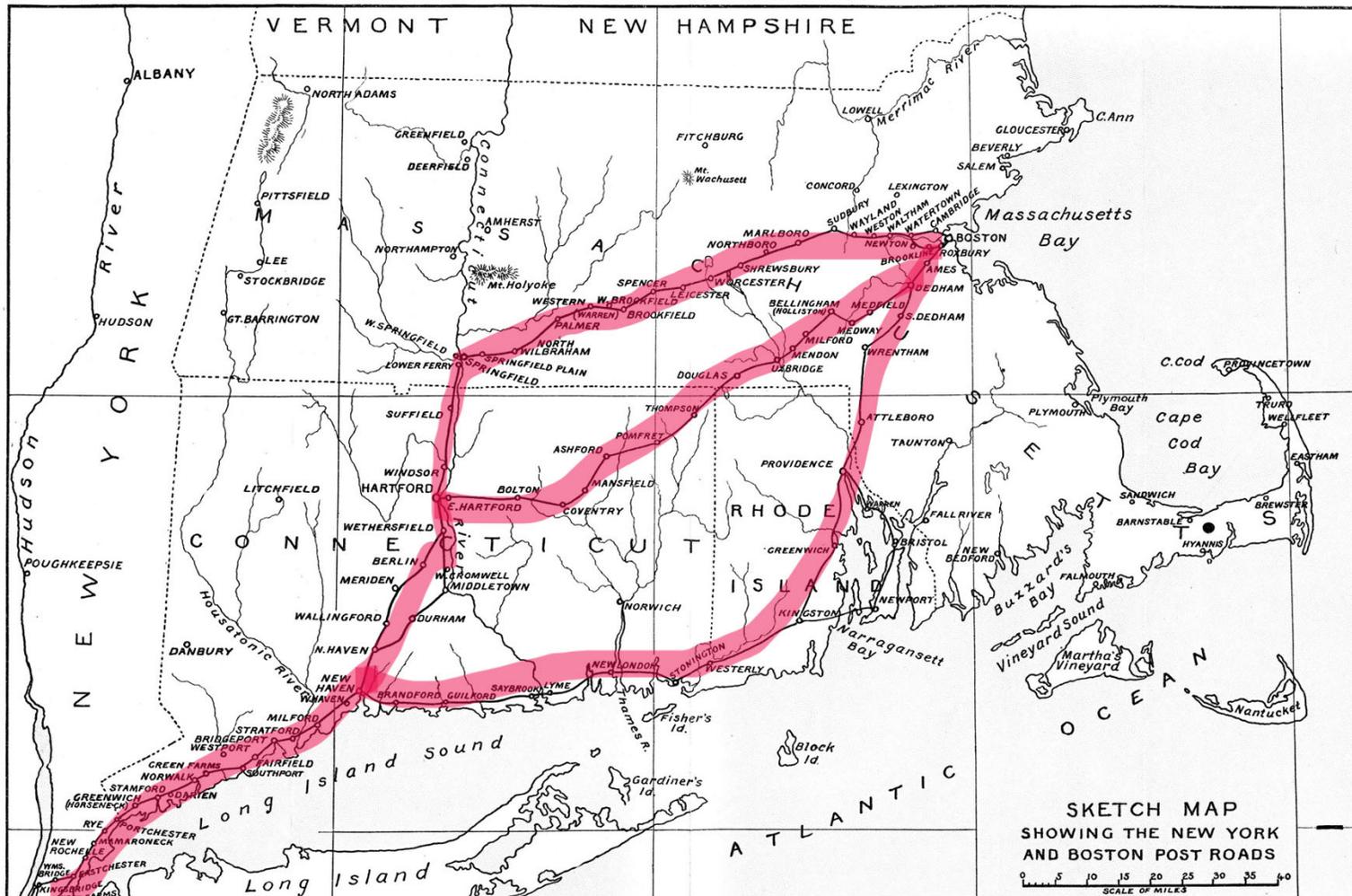
# Early Roads

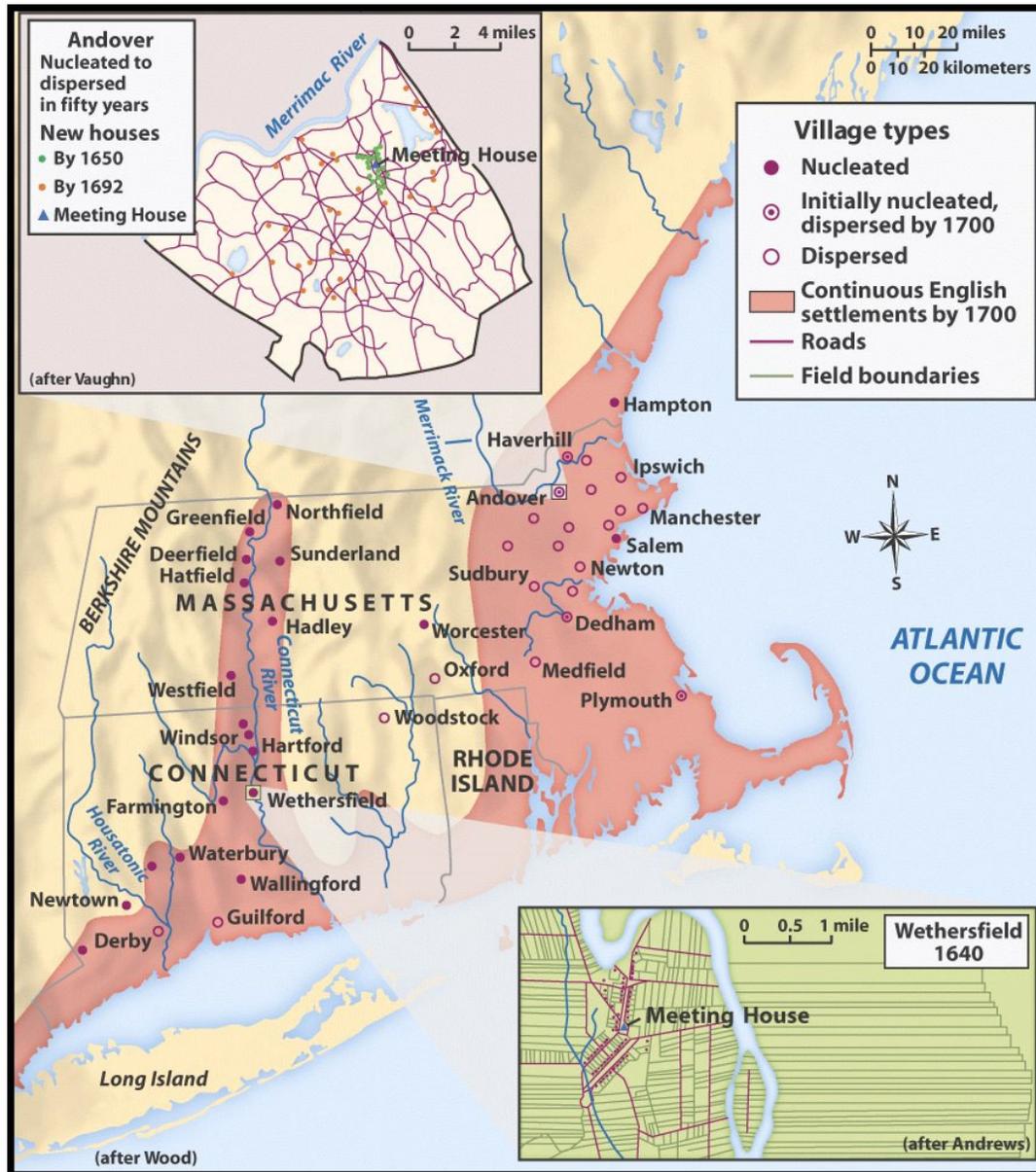
# Native Trails 1600



Howard Russell, *Indian New England Before the Mayflower* (Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England, 1980)

# Boston Post Road

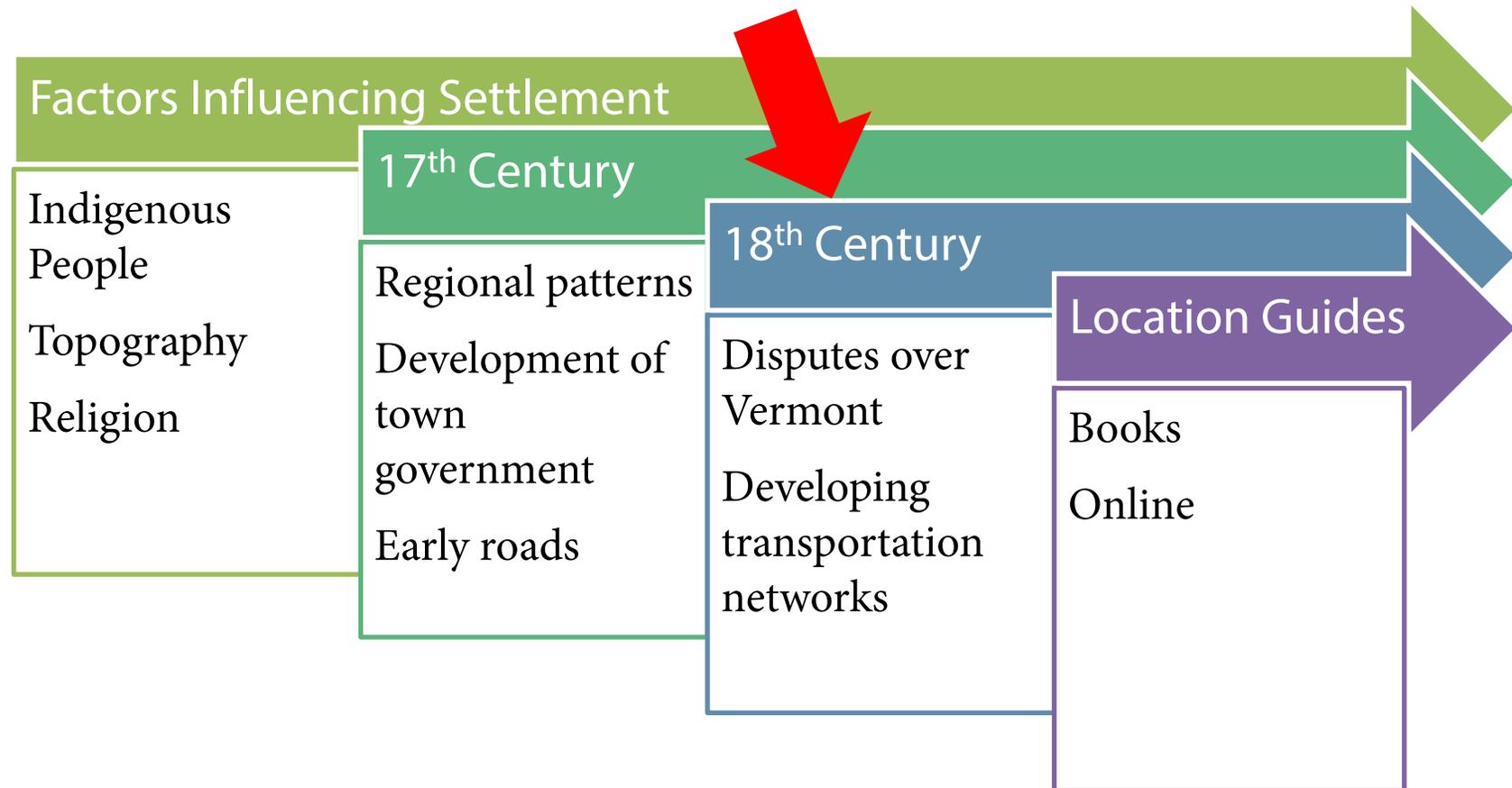




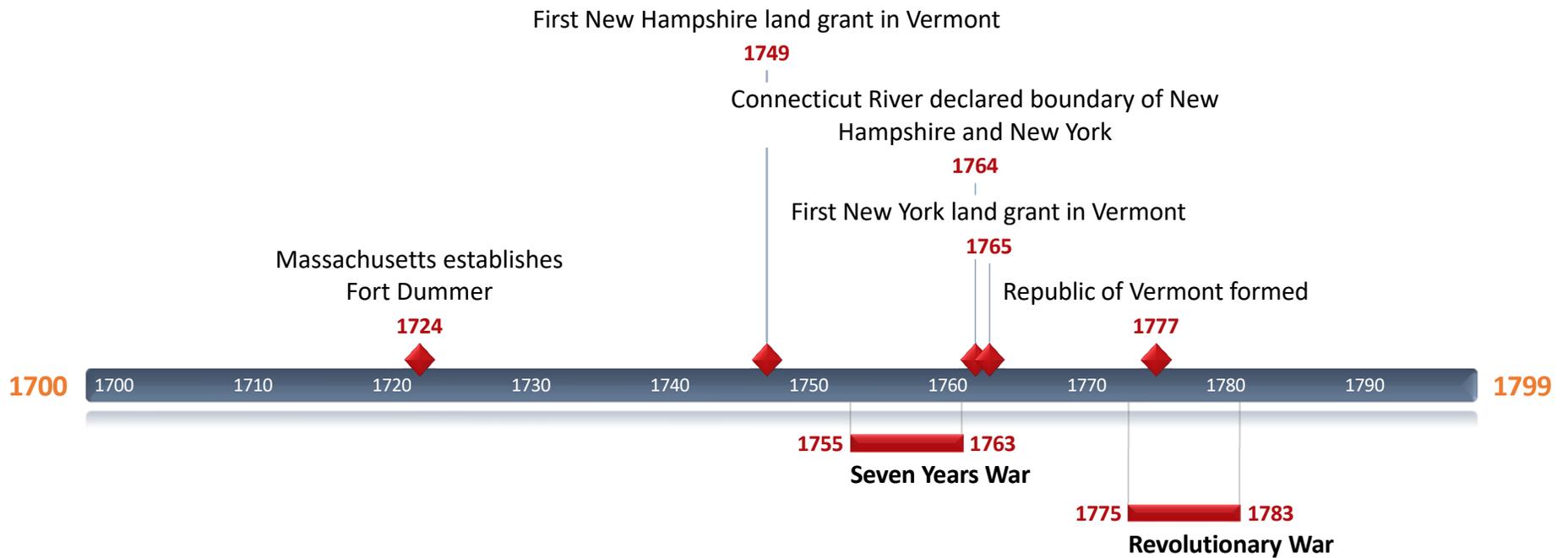
Map 2-3, *America: A Concise History*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed, Bedford/St Martin's 2006

## New England by 1700

# Session Roadmap



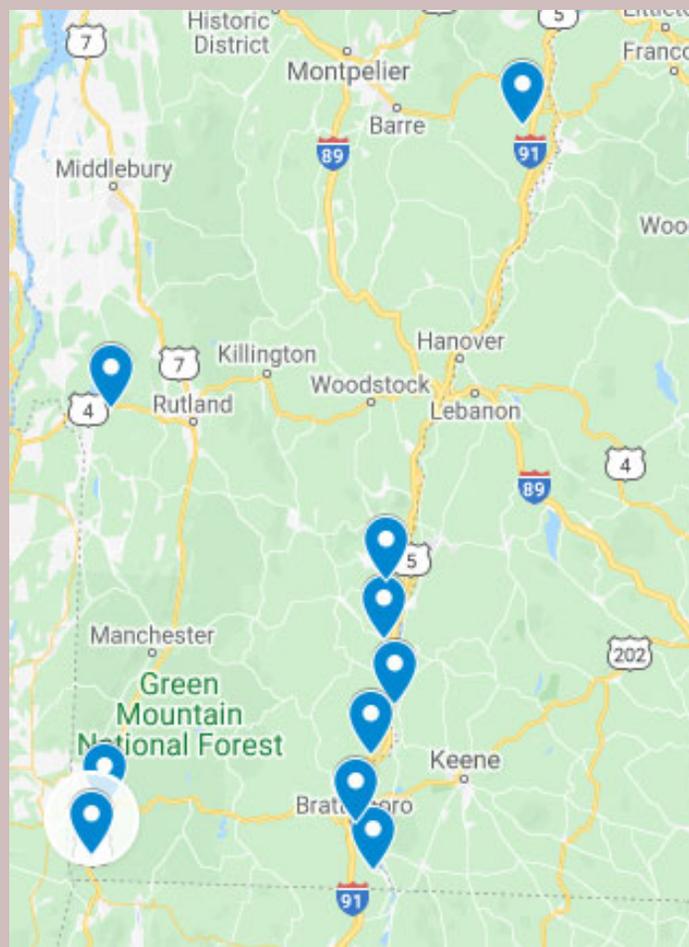
# A Timeline for Vermont



# First Towns

TABLE 5  
SETTLEMENT OF VERMONT TOWNS BY YEAR, 1739-1773

Date of Settlement	Towns Settled	Annual Number of Towns	Cumulative Number of Towns
1739	Westminster	1	1
1740	Hinsdale	1	2
1753	Putney, Rockingham, Springfield	3	5
1754	Guilford	1	6
1761	Bennington, Castleton, Halifax	3	9
1762	Brattleboro, Newbury, Pownal	3	12
1763	Chester, Hertford, Marlboro, Norwich, Shaftsbury	5	17
1764	Arlington, Fulham, Guildhall, Hartford, Lunenburg, Manchester, Panton, Sharon, Thetford, Townshend, Windsor	11	28
1765	Addison, Danby, Mooretown, Weathersfield	4	32
1766	Fairlee, Newfane, Shoreham, Sunderland	4	36
1767	Vergennes	1	37
1768	Andover, Bridport, Dorset, Grafton, Pawlet, Shelburn, Strafford, Thomlinson, Wells, Woodstock	10	47
1769	1739 Westminster		
1770	1740 Hinsdale		
1771	1753 Putney, Rockingham, Springfield		
1772	1754 Guilford		
1773	1761 Bennington, Castleton, Halifax		
	1762 Brattleboro, Newbury, Pownal		



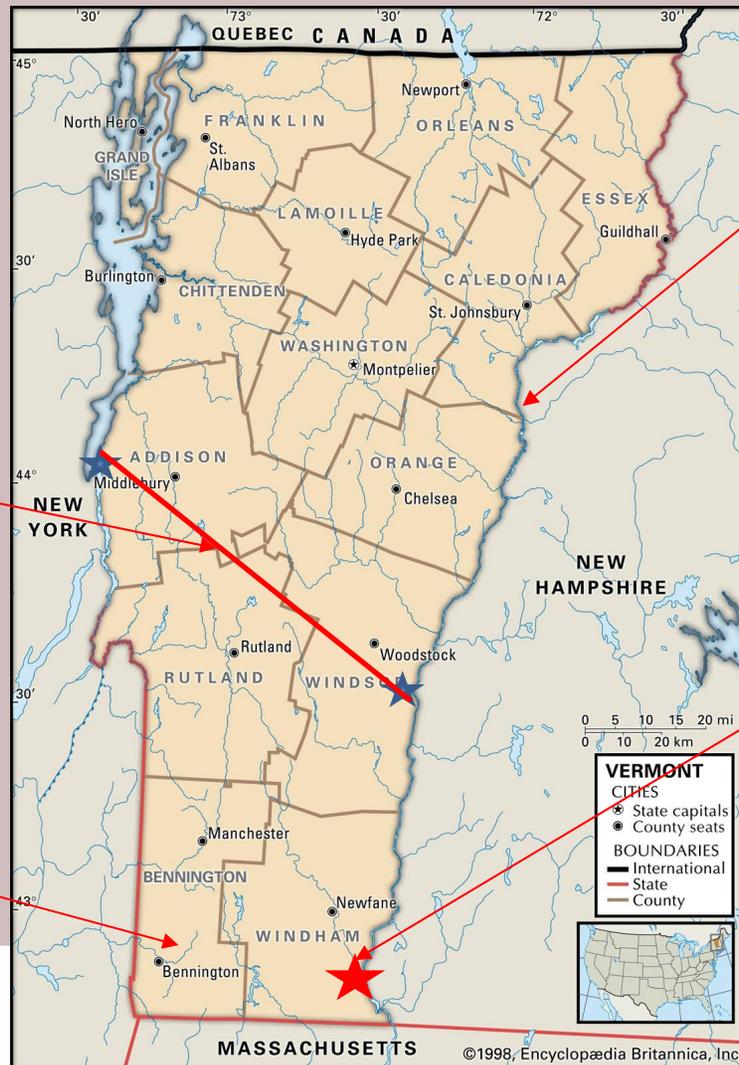




Black River

# Rest of Vermont 1757

# Vermont Mid-18th Century



King George II decrees  
Connecticut  
River is western  
boundary of NH  
- 1764

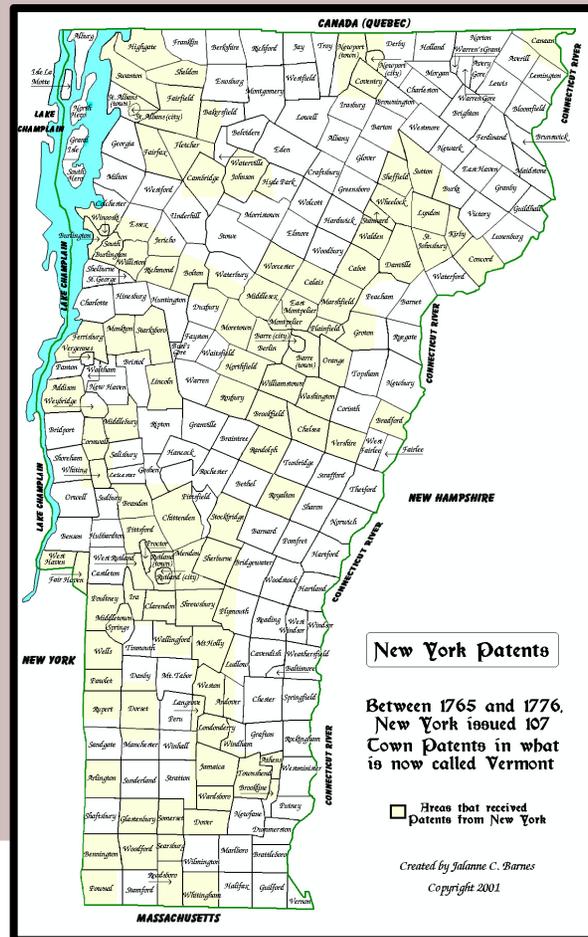
Crown Point Road -  
1760

Fort Dummer - 1724

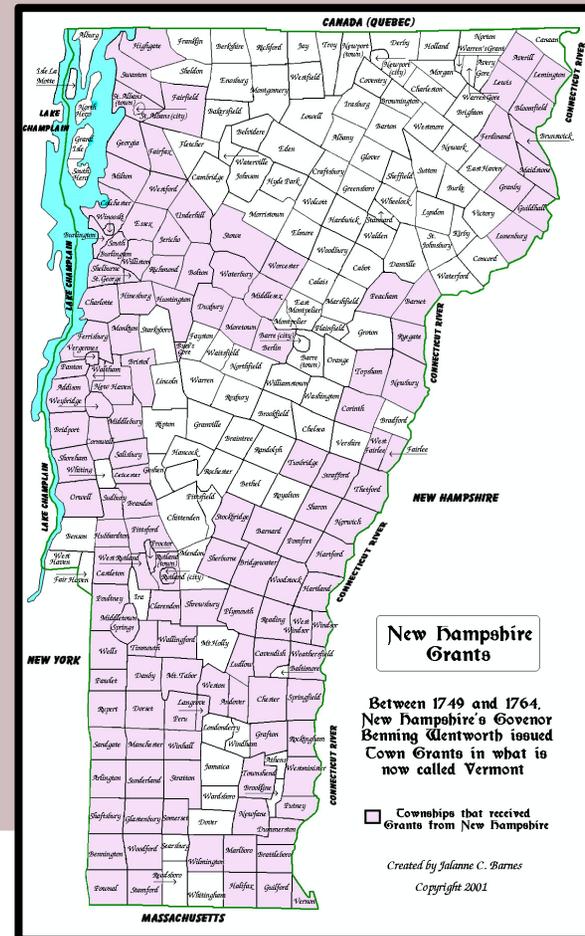
First NH Land  
Grant - 1749

# NY Patents and NH Grants

## New York

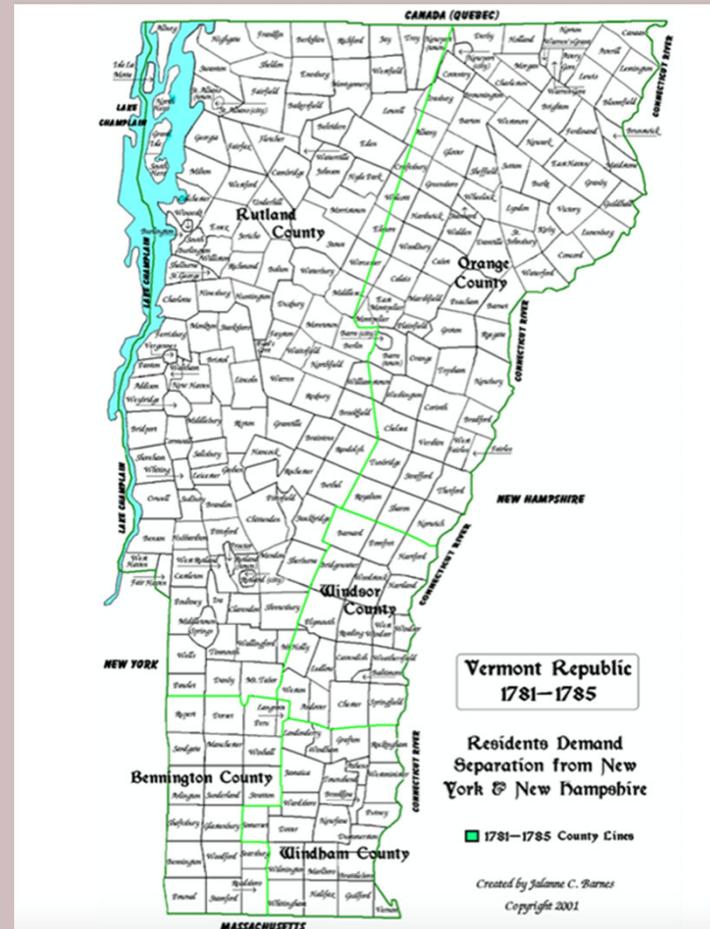


## New Hampshire



# Republic of Vermont 1777-1791

- 1770 Green Mountain Boys organize
- 15 January 1777 – Vermont becomes independent
- 1790 Vermont settles land dispute with New Hampshire and New York
- Admitted to the Union as the 14<sup>th</sup> state - 4 March 1791



# Where Did Vermont Settlers Come From?

- Up the Connecticut River
  - Connecticut
  - Rhode Island
  - Western Massachusetts
- Across the Connecticut River
  - New Hampshire
  - Eastern Massachusetts
- From Quebec
  - Lake Champlain
  - Lake Memphremagog

# Road Networks

# Major Routes

1644

- Boston Post Road – three branches – Boston to NYC

1699

- Albany Post Road – Albany to NYC

1722

- Mohawk Trail Boston to Utica, NY

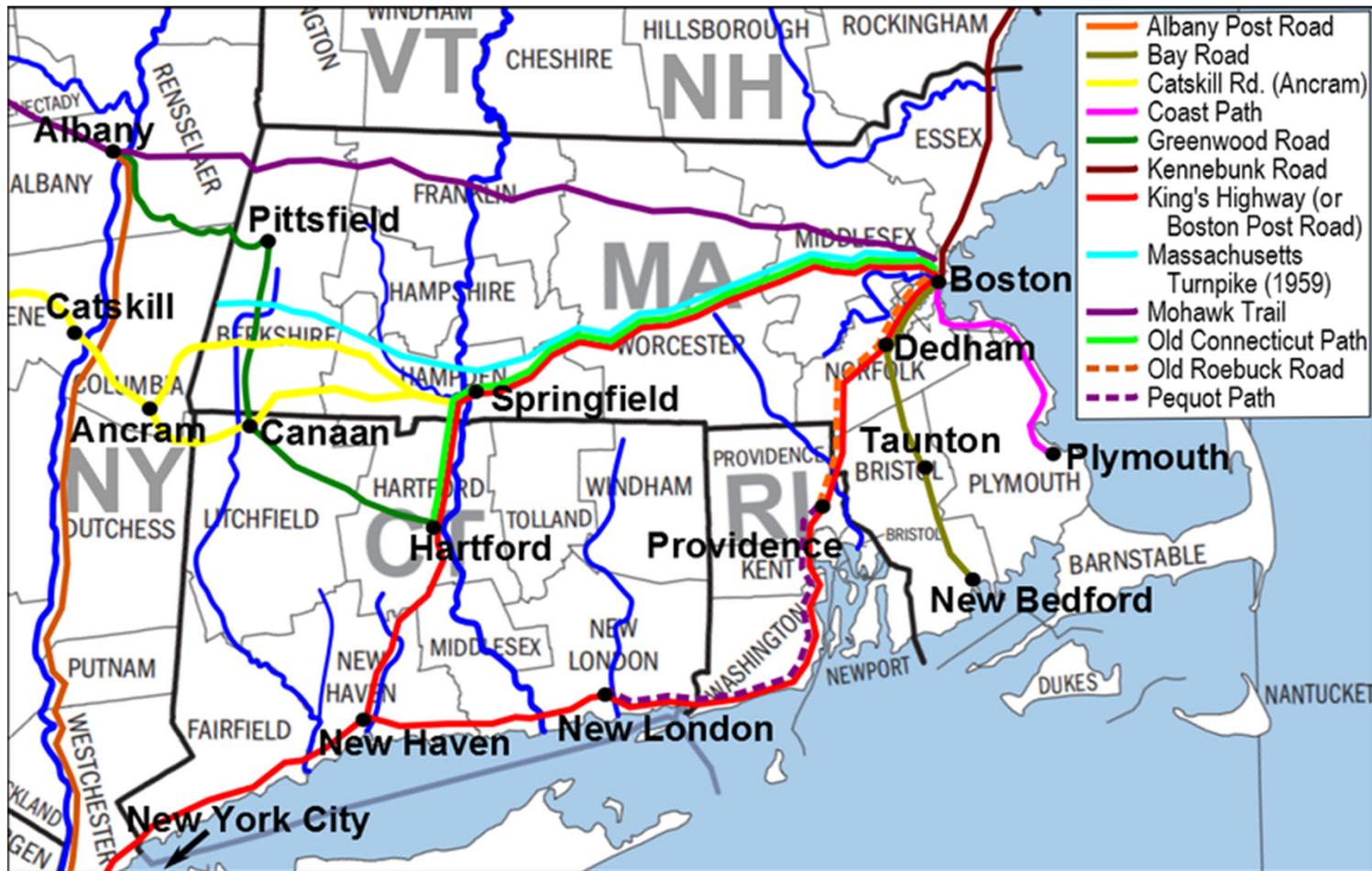
1735

- Kings Highway – continued Boston Post Road from NYC to Charleston SC.

1745

- Catskill Road – Springfield to Catskill, Greene County, NY on Hudson

# More Roads



FamilySearch - New England Migration Routes.png

# Settlement to 1760



National Geographic Society, The Making of America, published by National Geographic Society © 2002

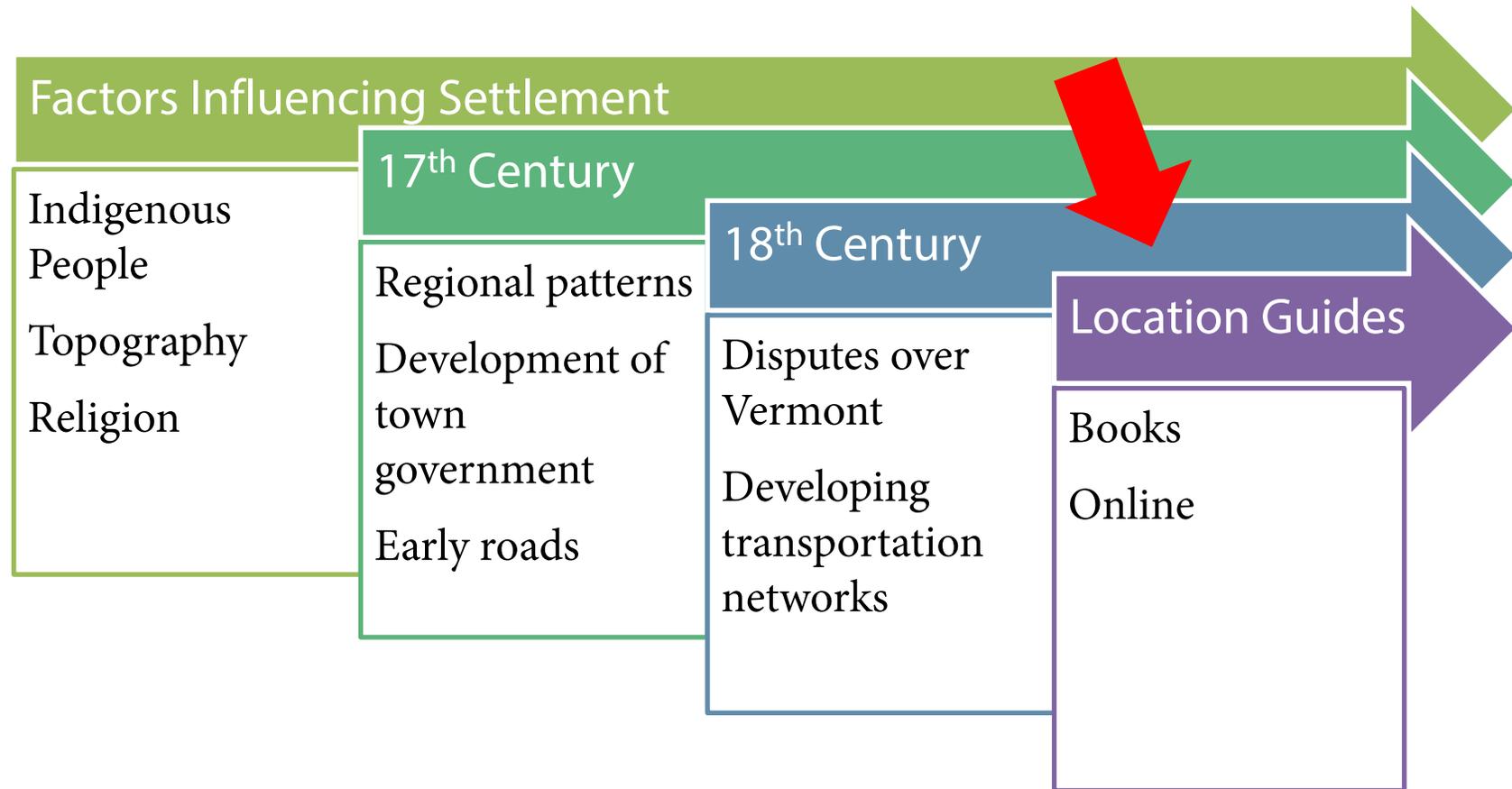
©New England Historic Genealogical Society, AmericanAncestors.org; produced by The Brue Family Learning Center

# 1763 – A Momentous Year for Settlers

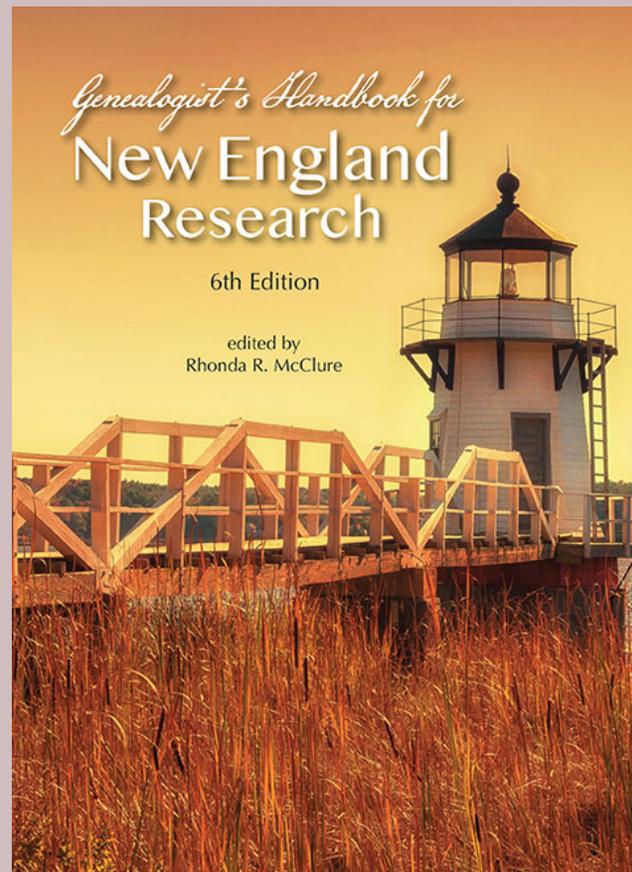
- September: Treaty of Paris ended the French and Indian War
  - England received territory east of the Mississippi
  - Spain received territory west of the Mississippi
- October: Royal Proclamation of 1763
  - Pontiac's War – loose confederation of tribes protesting new British rule (different attitude to gift giving)
  - George III sets aside Indian Reserve, orders all settlers to leave, declares the Crown rather than individual colonies has the right to negotiate settlements



# Session Roadmap



# ***Genealogist's Handbook for New England Research* 6<sup>th</sup> edition**



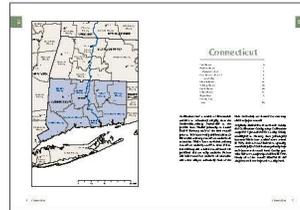
 NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC  
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

## Using This Book

The first chapter of the *Genealogist's Handbook for New England Research* includes general information about researching and recordkeeping in New England, a focus on sources for early colonial-era ancestors, and a list of major New England repositories. The chapters that follow cover all six New England states, each with the following elements:

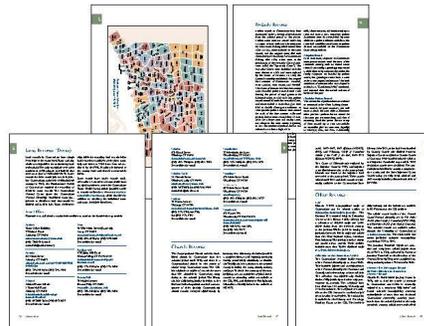
### State Profile

Each chapter opens with a map of the entire state with county boundaries marked and labeled, and reference given to the states (or province) with which it shares borders.



A profile provides general information about the state and also specific information about essential genealogical resources, including:

- Vital Records
- Probate Records
- Land Records (Deeds)
- Church Records
- Military Records
- Court Records
- Other Records



The major state repositories and organizations are listed, with contact information and web addresses:

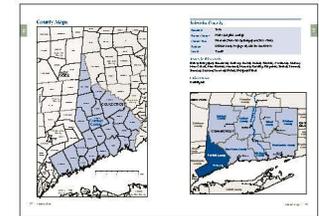
- State archives
- State library
- State judicial archives
- State historical society
- State genealogical society
- Major repositories with extensive collections of interest to genealogists



### County Maps

Each individual county has an entry which provides:

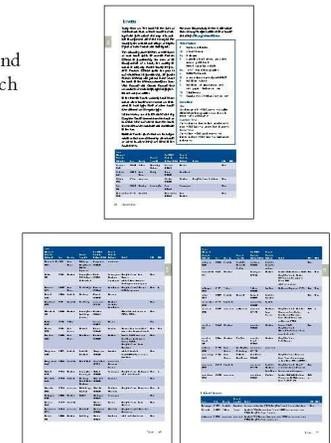
- A map of the county, with towns named, including towns in bordering counties
- A map showing the county's placement in its state
- The date of county formation
- Parent county/counties
- County seat
- Where to find probate records (courthouse, district, or other agency)
- Where to find land deeds (courthouse, district, or other agency)
- List of towns in the county



### Cities, Towns, and Plantations

The final section contains information about cities and towns (and plantations in the state of Maine). For each state, an extensive table offers at least the following information:

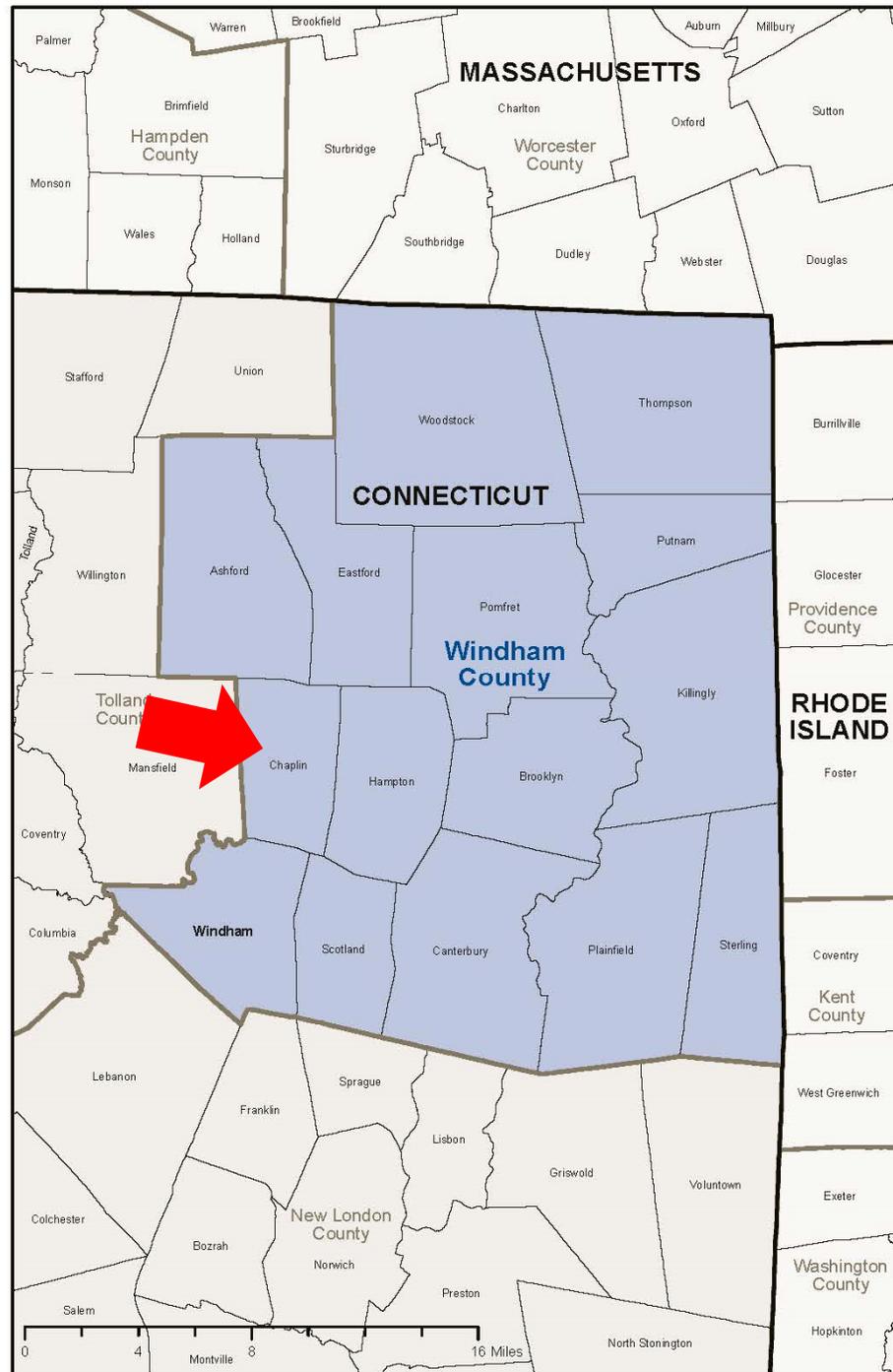
- Current city/town/plantation name
- Date of grant/incorporation as a town
- Current county in which the town is located
- Parent town(s)
- Daughter town(s)
- Special notes for the town, such as date of settlement, date of original grant, name changes, etc.
- Information on vital records and church records available in published form, manuscript, typescript, or on AmericanAncestors.org



After the town table, special tables list extinct towns, unincorporated (and most likely uninhabited) towns, and towns ceded to other states.

As the world continues to move online, it is wise to check websites for the most up-to-date information about a repository, record availability, and what might be available in a digitized format on their site. Always contact the staff with any questions prior to visiting and ask about closures for state or local holidays.

CT



Windham County Map, p. 82

CT

Town (Current Probate District)	Inc.	County	Parent Town(s)	Pre-2011 Probate District (Est.)	Parent Probate District	Notes	VRs	CRs
Chaplin (28)	1822	Windham	Hampton, Mansfield, Windham	Chaplin (1850)	Windham	Alias: Suffrage.	B, W	
Cheshire (18)	1780	New Haven	Wallingford	Cheshire (1829)	Wallingford	Daughter Town: Prospect.	B, W	
Chester (33)	1836	Middlesex	Deep River (Saybrook)	Saybrook (1780)	Guilford		B, W	
Clinton (33)	1838	Middlesex	Killingworth	Clinton (1862)	Killingworth		B, N, W	
Colchester (28)	1698	New London		Colchester (1832)	East Haddam	Named in 1699. Daughter Towns: Marlborough, Salem.	B, W	
Colebrook (23)	1779	Litchfield		Winchester (1838)	Norfolk	Alias: Coldbrook.	B, W	
Columbia (13)	1804	Tolland	Lebanon	Andover (1851)	Hebron		B, W	
Cornwall	1740	Litchfield		Cornwall	Litchfield		B, W	

## Connecticut Town Pages with Chaplin, Windham County

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# Hamden, New Haven County, Connecticut Genealogy

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## Brief History

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Hamden is a town in [New Haven County, Connecticut, United States Genealogy](#). Hamden is a suburb of the city of New Haven.

Originally settled by Puritans as part of the town of [New Haven](#), Hamden was purchased by Theophilus Eaton and Reverend John Davenport in 1638 from the local Quinnipiack (Quinnipiac) Native American tribe. It remained a part of New Haven until 1786 when 1,400 local residents incorporated the area as a separate town, naming it after the English statesman John Hampden.

The Farmington Canal, which ships traveled from New Haven northward, passed through Hamden between 1825 and 1848

The screenshot shows the AmericanAncestors.org website. At the top, the logo reads "AmericanAncestors by NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY" and "A National Center for Family History, Heritage & Culture". Navigation links include "Search", "Events", "Membership", "Give", "Publications", "Expert Help", "Tools", "Signature Projects", and "Activities & Initiatives". A "LOG IN" button is in the top right. The "Tools" dropdown menu is open, listing "American AncestREES", "Video Library", "Research Guides", "Research Templates", "DNA Resources", and "Youth Education". A red arrow points to "Research Guides". Below the menu are three "RESEARCH GUIDE" cards. The first card, "Town Guides", features a photo of a wooden barn and a "FIND OUT MORE" button with a red arrow pointing to it. The second card, "Vermont Genealogy", features a photo of a white church. The third card, "World War Veteran Research", features a photo of a gravestone.

[AmericanAncestors.org/tools/research-guides](https://AmericanAncestors.org/tools/research-guides)

# Repositories and Societies

- American Ancestors
- General Society of Mayflower Descendants
- National Archives and Records Administration/Northeast Region
- Connecticut State Library
- Each state has an historical society
  - Connecticut Historical Society – Hartford
  - Maine Historical Society – Portland
  - Massachusetts Historical Society – Boston
  - New Hampshire Historical Society – Concord
  - Rhode Island Historical Society – Providence
  - Vermont Historical Society - Barre



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## History & Genealogy: Reference

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The Nutmeg Navigator

### About the History & Genealogy Unit

Thousands of researchers visit our busy department each year in search of information about our state and its diverse population. Our reference staff assists a steady stream of genealogists, historians, students, state employees, attorneys, environmental researchers, and others in search of historical information about our state and the people who have lived in it.

### Contact Us



#### History and Genealogy Reference Unit

- [Contact us](#)

### Directory of History & Genealogy Subject Guides

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- [Aerial Photographs](#)
- [Resources for studying African-American Heritage at the CT State Library](#)
- [Biographical Information](#)
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- ["Connecticut Archives", 1629-1820](#)
- [Connecticut Town Documents](#)
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- [Divorce Records for Genealogy Research](#)

### History News & Fun Stuff



Learn about an exciting project involving New Haven County Court Records at the CT State Archives! See the link below.

Also be sure to check the Nutmeg Navigator for news from the Reference



Units at the CT State Library (History & Genealogy, Law, & Government Information).

- [New Haven County Court Records](#)

<https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/hg/home>

# Online Resources

State	Archive	URL
Maine	DigitalMaine	<a href="https://digitalmaine.com/archives/">https://digitalmaine.com/archives/</a>
New Hampshire	New Hampshire Historical Society	<a href="https://www.nhhistory.org/Research/Collections-Catalog#/">https://www.nhhistory.org/Research/Collections-Catalog#/</a>
Vermont	Vermont History	<a href="https://vermonthistory.org/digital-resources/">https://vermonthistory.org/digital-resources/</a>
Massachusetts	Massachusetts Archives	<a href="https://www.sec.state.ma.us/arc/arcdigitalrecords/digitalrecordsidx.htm">https://www.sec.state.ma.us/arc/arcdigitalrecords/digitalrecordsidx.htm</a>
Massachusetts	American Ancestors Digital Library	<a href="https://digital.americanancestors.org/">https://digital.americanancestors.org/</a>
Connecticut	Connecticut State Library Digital Collections	<a href="https://cslib.contentdm.oclc.org/digital">https://cslib.contentdm.oclc.org/digital</a>
Rhode Island	Rhode Island State Digital Archives	<a href="https://sosri.access.preservica.com/home/">https://sosri.access.preservica.com/home/</a>

# Vermont History Digital Collections



Begin your journey here...



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## GENEALOGY LISTS AND INDEXES

<i>Names of Adults</i>	<i>Minister</i>	<i>Residence</i>	<i>Date of Bop.</i>	<i>Witnesses</i>
<i>Lymour Russell.</i>	<i>B. Hawley</i>	<i>Village</i>	<i>Oct. 12. 1862</i>	<i>Congregation.</i>
<i>Eveline Russell.</i>	<i>"</i>	<i>"</i>	<i>" "</i>	<i>"</i>
<i>Carric L. Hyde.</i>	<i>"</i>	<i>"</i>	<i>" "</i>	<i>"</i>
<i>Susan M. Gardner.</i>	<i>"</i>	<i>"</i>	<i>Dec. 31. "</i>	<i>"</i>
<i>Roxanna Warner.</i>	<i>"</i>	<i>"</i>	<i>" "</i>	<i>"</i>
<i>Elizabeth A. Potter.</i>	<i>"</i>	<i>Ira.</i>	<i>March 18. 1863</i>	<i>The Family.</i>
<i>S. Elizabeth Race.</i>	<i>"</i>	<i>Castleton</i>	<i>June 28 "</i>	<i>Congregation</i>
<i>John M. Jackman.</i>	<i>R. J. Wade.</i>	<i>"</i>	<i>Feb 12. 1865</i>	<i>"</i>

This page contains links to unique indexes of original genealogical documents or collections at the Leahy Library of the Vermont Historical Society in Barre, Vermont. We intend to add materials to this electronic collection as time allows.

# Summary

- New England settlement was shaped by the presence of indigenous people, topography, and religion
- The basic unit of government in early New England was the town; many records still exist at the town level
- Vermont was settled last, in part because of the strong Abenaki presence and their alliance with the French



# THANK YOU!

[AmericanAncestors.org](https://AmericanAncestors.org)



NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC  
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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