

Station #1-New England Colonies

Document #1: The Mayflower Compact, agreement between Settlers at New Plymouth, 1620

In the name of God, Amen. We whose names are under-written, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign Lord, King James, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland King, Defender of the Faith, etc. Having undertaken, for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, and honor of our King and Country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia, do by these presents solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God, and one of another, covenant and combine our selves together into a civil body politic, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; 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. In witness whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names at Cape Cod, the eleventh of November [New Style, November 21], in the year of the reign of our sovereign lord, King James, of England, France, and Ireland, the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth. Anno Dom. 1620.

John Carver
William Brewster
John Alden
William Mullins
John Craxton
John Howland
John Tilly
Thomas Tinker
John Turner
Digery Priest
Edmond Margeson
Richard Clark
Thomas English
John Goodman

William Bradford
Isaac Allerton
Samuel Fuller
William White
John Billington
Steven Hopkins
Francis Cook
John Rigdale
Francis Eaton
Thomas Williams
Peter Brown
Richard Gardiner
Edward Doten
George Soule

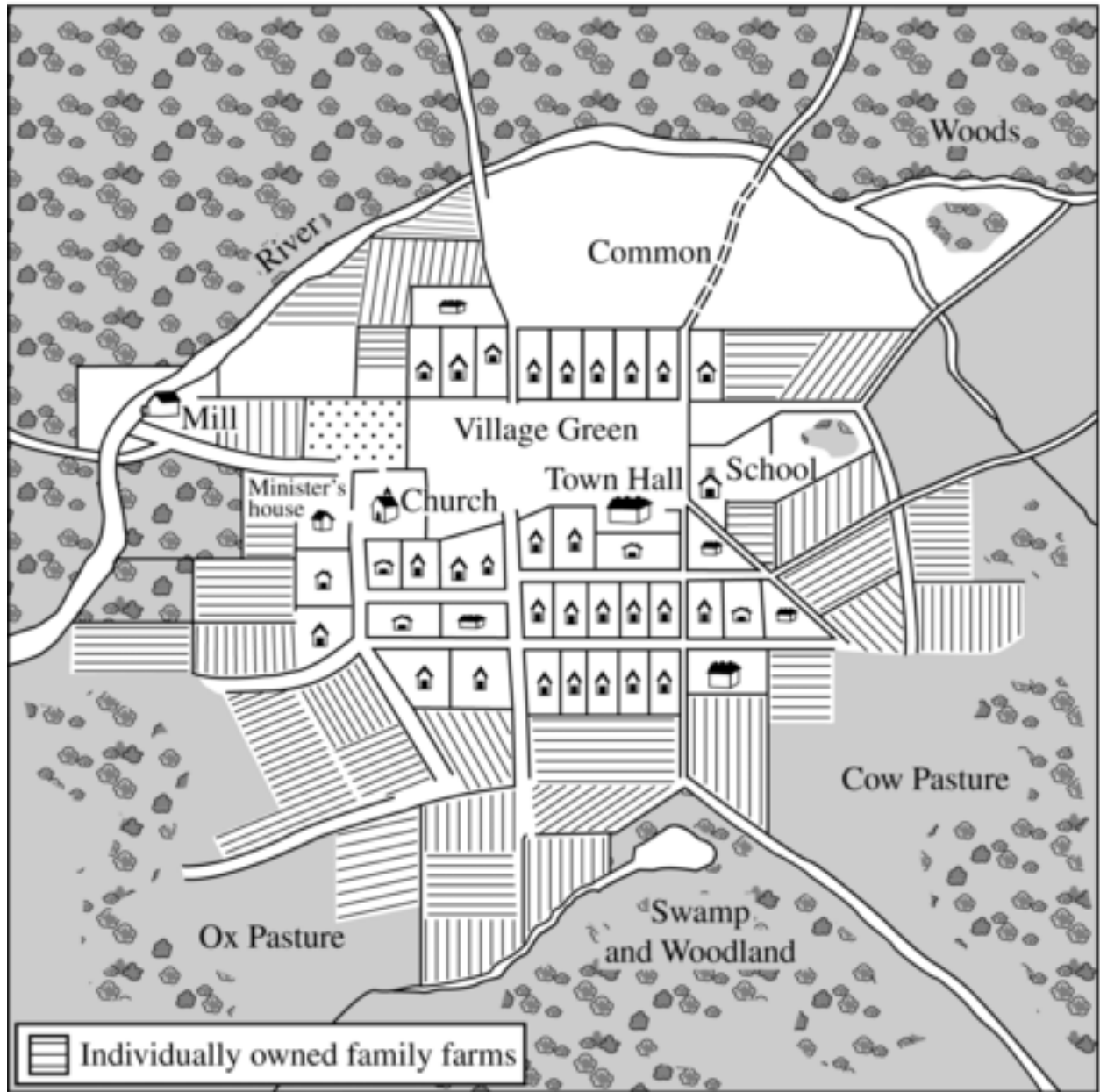
Edward Winslow
Miles Standish
Christopher Martin
James Chilton
Richard Warren
Edward Tilly
Thomas Rogers
Edward Fuller
Moses Fletcher
Gilbert Winslow
Richard Bitteridge
John Allerton
Edward Liester

Document #2: City Upon a Hill- John Winthrop, 1630

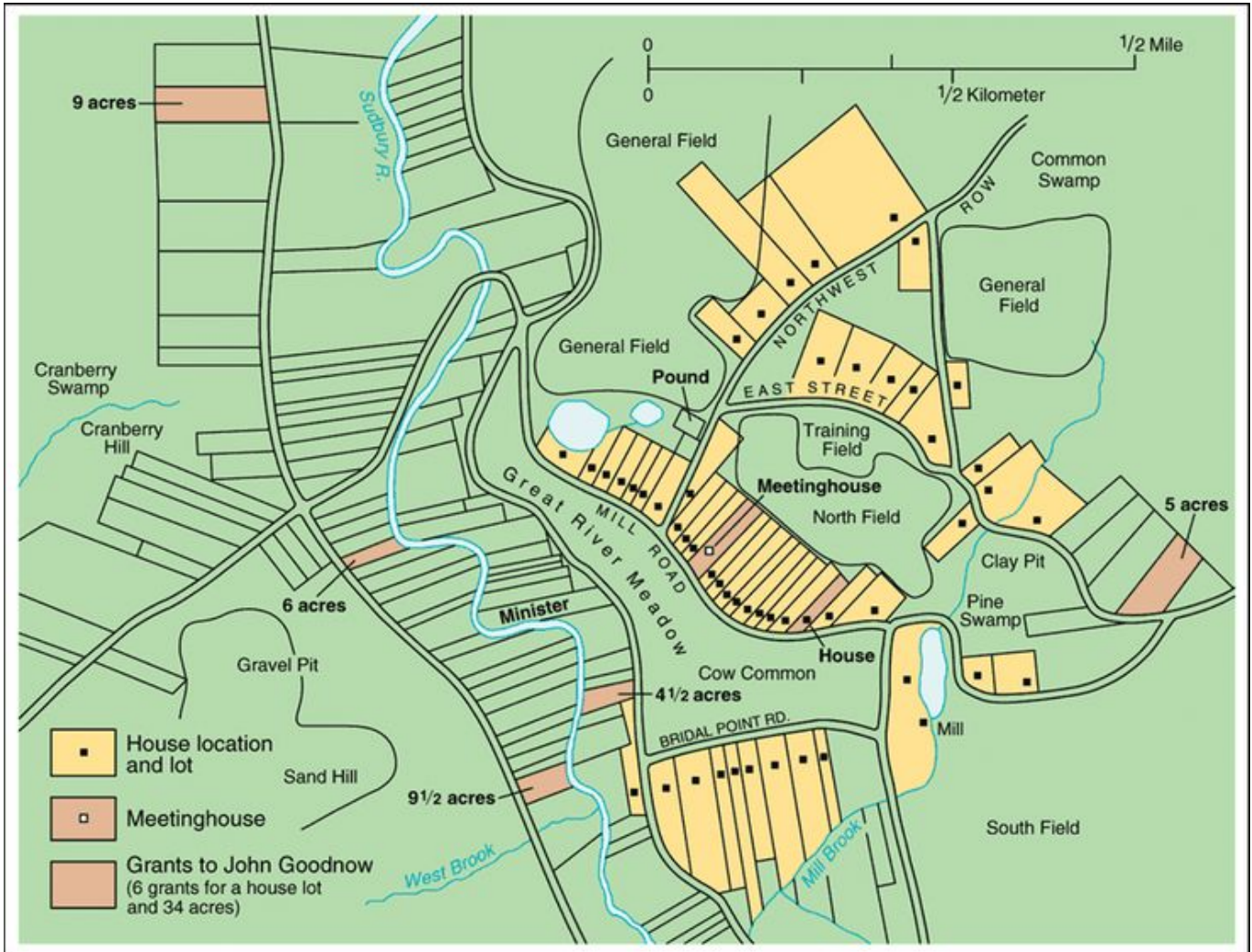
Now the onely way to avoyde this shipwracke and to provide for our posterity is to followe the Counsell of Micah, to doe Justly, to love mercy, to walke humbly with our God, for this end, wee must be knitt together in this worke as one man, wee must entertaine each other in brotherly Affeccion, wee must be willing to abridge our selves of our superfluities, for the supply of others necessities, wee must uphold a familiar Commerce together in all meekenes, gentlenes, patience and liberallity, wee must delight in eache other, make others Condictions our owne rejoyce together, mourne together, labour, and suffer together, allwayes haveing before our eyes our Commission and Community in the worke, our Community as members of the same body, soe shall wee keepe the unitie of the spirit in the bond of peace, the Lord will be our God and delight to dwell among us, as his owne people and will commaund a blessing upon us in all our wayes, soe that wee shall see much more of his wisdome power goodnes and truthe then formerly wee have beene acquainted with, wee shall finde that the God of Israell is among us, when tenn of us shall be able to resist a thousand of our enemies, when hee shall make us a prayse and glory, that men shall say of succeeding plantacions: the lord make it like that of New England: for wee must Consider that wee shall be as a Citty upon a Hill, the eies of all people are uppon us; soe that if wee shall deale falsely with our god in this worke wee have undertaken and soe cause him to withdrawe his present help from us, wee shall be made a story and a byword through the world, wee shall open the mouthes of enemies to speake evill of the wayes of god and all professours for Gods sake; wee shall shame the faces of many of gods worthy servants, and cause their prayers to be turned into Cursse upon us till wee be consumed out of the good land whether wee are going: And to shutt upp this discourse with that exhortacion of Moses that faithfull servant of the Lord in his last farewell to Israell Deut. 30. Beloved there is now sett before us life, and good, deathe and evill in that wee are Commaunded this day to love the Lord our God, and to love one another to walke in his wayes and to keepe his Commaundements and his Ordinance, and his lawes, and the Articles of our Covenant with him that wee may live and be multiplyed, and that the Lord our God may blesse us in the land whether wee goe to possesse it: But if our heartes shall turne away soe that wee will not obey, but shall be seduced and worshipp other Gods our pleasures, and proffitts, and serve them, it is propounded unto us this day, wee shall surely perishe out of the good Land whether wee passe over this vast Sea to possesse it; Therefore lett us choose life, that wee, and our Seede, may live; by obeyeing his voyce, and cleaveing to him, for hee is our life, and our prosperity.

Document #3: Town Maps of Colonial New England

TOWN MAP, COLONIAL NEW ENGLAND



(see other side for second map)



Sudbury, Massachusetts. Just as the plantation was a characteristic social form in the southern colonies, the town was the most common social unit in New England. This map shows the organization of Sudbury, Massachusetts, a town west of Boston, in the early years of the seventeenth century. Note the location of the houses, and church.

Document #4: Ship's List of Emigrants Bound for New England, Weymouth March 20, 1635

1. Joseph Hull, of Somerset, a minister, 40 years
2. Agnes Hull, his wife, 25 years
3. Joan Hull, his daughter, 15 years
4. Joseph Hull, his son, 13 years
5. Trinstram Hull, his daughter, 7 years
6. Elizabeth Hull, his daughter, 7 years
7. Temperance Hull, his daughter, 9 years
8. Grissel Hull, his daughter, 5 years
9. Dorothy Hull, his daughter, 3 years
10. Judith French, his servant, 20 years
11. John Wood, his servant, 20 years

74. Rober Lovell, husbandman, 40 years
75. Elizabeth Lovell, his wife, 35 years
76. Zacheus Lovell, his son, 15 years
77. Anne Lovell, his daughter, 16 years
78. John Lovell, his son, 8 years
79. Ellyn Lovell, his daughter, aged 1 year
80. James Lovell, his son, aged 1 year
81. Joseph Chickin, his servant, 16 years
82. George Land, his servant, 22 years

Document #5: Slaves in New England-Joanne Pope Melish, Disowning Slavery,2000

“Few if any colonists challenged the prevailing belief system regarding slavery and indentured servitude. The relatively low number of people living in slavery in New England colonies was NOT due to antislavery sentiments. Rather, economic, social, and geographic conditions resulted in a directly New England pattern of slavery.

A number of blacks in New England, as in the other colonies, held the status of freedmen.

Freedom was gained in many ways. In some cases the slaves won their freedom by entering into formal contracts with their masters to serve them for a period of years in return for their freedom. Some slaves were manumitted for faithful service; others through the wills of their owners.

The free blacks of New England, however, occupied an intermediate and inferior status, somewhat between that of a white person and indentured servants. Legally, their condition did not differ much from that of the slaves and they were usually included in the slave codes with Indian and black slaves.

For nearly two hundred years the North maintained a slave regime that was more varied than that of the South. Rather than using slaves as primarily agricultural labor, the North trained and diversified its slave force to meet the needs of its more complex economy. Owned mostly by ministers, doctors, and the merchant elite, enslaved men and women in the North often performed household duties in addition to skilled jobs.

When a slave replaced the household head’s labor, this often enabled the household head to develop a profession or a craft. This would raise the status and income of his family.

The introduction of slave labor into the New England household economy enabled its expansion from small-time farms to large agricultural production, the expansion of local and regional markets, widespread entrepreneurial activity, and the rise of manufacturing.

From the seventeenth century onward, slaves in the North could be found in almost every field of Northern economic life. They worked as carpenters, shipwrights, sailmaker, printers, tailors, shoemakers, coopers, blacksmiths, bakers, weavers, and goldsmiths. Many became so talented in the crafts that the free white workers lost jobs to them.”

Document #6: NPR, Forgotten History: How The New England Colonists Embraced the Slave Trade, June 21, 2016

GROSS: This is FRESH AIR. And if you're just joining us, my guest is historian Wendy Warren who teaches at Princeton. She's the author of the new book "New England Bound: Slavery And Colonization In Early America." So when we think of the Puritans in New England, we think of them as having come here for religious freedom.

But there were some Puritans who actually owned enslaved Africans. And it's hard to reconcile this vision of religious freedom with the practice of slavery. How was that reconciled? Like, what was their justification that they used to justify this to themselves?

WARREN: Well, I wouldn't say that they came for religious freedom, or I guess I would limit that a little and say they came for freedom for themselves, to practice as they wish. But they certainly weren't embracing any sort of melting pot. They were actually quite exclusive of anyone they felt veered from their doctrine.

GROSS: Not about diversity (laughter).

WARREN: No, they were not about diversity. They were, in fact, leaving because they wanted more exclusive control over what was appropriate. So if they were exceptionally exclusive, they were not unusual in embracing slavery. The Bible approved of it, they felt. And the English approved of it, so did all of Europe. It wasn't anything anyone was questioning at the time.

And so in that sense, they weren't very exceptional at all. They didn't have any problem with slavery.

GROSS: And even, like, John Winthrop, who wrote about the Puritan mission in New England and wrote the famous phrase about we shall be as a city upon a hill, his son - was it? - became a slave owner.

WARREN: Right, so several of his sons were involved in West Indian slavery. Some of them were trading with the West Indies pretty aggressively. Samuel Winthrop, I think, was his 12th son and owned a plantation in Antigua. I think when he died, he owned 60 slaves. John Winthrop Jr., who stayed in New England mostly, owned slaves.

And Henry Winthrop, who was kind of the family ne'er-do-well, went early to Barbados and tried to get into cash crops and slavery. At no point did John Winthrop Sr. object to any of this, and nor is there any reason he should have, according to the temper of the times.

GROSS: I have to say, when I was in school, and I'm talking about, like, you know, grade school, high school, during the times when we learned about slavery, we never learned about slavery in the North. We never learned about the enslavement of Native Americans. Did you?

WARREN: No, I mean, No. I grew up in California. We hardly learned about New England at all, to be sure.

GROSS: (Laughter) Oh, we had to sing songs about the Pilgrims growing up in Brooklyn.

WARREN: No, it was a little exotic for us, New England. But I just had two kids go through kindergarten. They both did sort of the pilgrim play for Thanksgiving. And it wasn't exactly what I write about, I should say. There's a lot more friendly - you know, the term colonial New England, when I encounter people in

airplanes or wherever I encounter people who find out I'm a historian, and they hear colonial America or colonial New England, colonial, that adjective, is really just a place marker for them.

It's this synonym with ye old or quaint. You know, it doesn't mean what it actually means, which is the process of colonization, this bloody process of removal and replacement and clearing of land and warfare. It's just - it's very sanitized in the mind - and of my students. They don't really know what happened.

So I don't think you're alone in not having learned about the role of slavery. And you're certainly not alone in maybe not of learning about what colonial New England was about or colonial America.

GROSS: For the colonists who came here, how familiar were they with the institution of slavery? England was a slave trading country, but how many slaves were actually in England?

WARREN: I don't know how many slaves were in England. We know that Elizabeth complained in 1596, I think. She said that there were too many slaves in London - she meant African slaves - too many already. So they're involved. John Hawkins is a famous trader early on in the 16th century. His coat of arms actually has a slave on it, a man in bondage, an African slave.

The English get to colonization later than the Spanish and Portuguese. They're a little - England's behind the times, you could say. So they rushed to catch up in the 17th century. The Spanish have already been in Latin America by that point since, you know, 1492. So the English are over a century behind the Portuguese and Spanish.

In a way, that helps them because many things have been established already. They don't have to figure everything out from scratch. They've heard what the Spanish have encountered. So things are less surprising, certainly. But they're behind the times.

GROSS: So the first documents kind of legalizing slavery and setting out the justification and legalization come from the New England colonies. And the first one is in 1641, ironically named the Body of Liberties. You're right, it's based on the Magna Carta. And there's this phrase in it that says it is ordered by this court and the authority thereof that there shall never be any bond slavery or captivity among us unless it be lawful captives taken in just wars and such strangers as willingly sell themselves or are sold to us.

I mean, wow, it's basically saying there will not be any slavery unless we buy the slaves. (Laughter) I mean, am I interpreting that incorrectly?

WARREN: No, I think that's right. You know, they're Puritan. They're concerned about - they have a sort of legalistic mind that you could almost say, are they doing things by the book, literally? They're very invested in one particular book. And so they write down these laws in 1641, which are based on English law, based on many precedents.

But there is this line, as you just quoted, that suggests initially if you read it, that there isn't going to be any slavery. And then there's this unless that's so capacious as to negate the whole first part of the line. And then in fact, they do have bond slavery. And they have it very early.

They have it at the time those laws are written, as evidenced by what Samuel Maverick is doing in Boston's harbor.

GROSS: So then other colonies adopt laws. There's the Connecticut code of laws of 1646. And that made reference to Indian and African slavery as a legitimate form of punishment for wrongdoing. Would you explain that?

WARREN: Oh, well, it seems that slavery is a legitimate punishment. It seems that if you committed certain crimes and you were a certain kind of person, although sometimes English people are sent away initially in the - early in the century, that perpetual slavery is a punishment you could face, which is very interesting.

And so early on in the 1640s in Connecticut, they're acknowledging that there's a trade out of the region, that you could be sold out of the region or kept in the region as a perpetual slave.

GROSS: So would this mean that if you were a Native American and did anything that was considered lawbreaking by the colonists' laws, such as resisting colonization, that you therefore could be legally enslaved?

WARREN: Well, sure. And this is where the idea of just wars comes into play. They say if you've been captured in a just war, and, of course, the wars of colonization for most English colonists are just wars because they're bringing Christianity and civilization to this land. So by nature - by definition, they're just wars.

GROSS: And the people who are writing the laws are the people who are behind all of this, so of course they're going to be just in those people's mind.

WARREN: Yes, as is always the case throughout history, (laughter) that seems to be the case here as well. So if you're fighting against the English, you are, by definition, you know, a combatant in an unjust - you're on the unjust side. And so, yes, you could be sold for perpetual slave.