

Settling the Northern Colonies, 1619–1700

To Banbury [England] came I, O profane one!
Where I saw a Puritan once
Hanging of his cat on Monday,
For killing of a mouse on Sunday.

Richard Brathwaite, 1638

Prologue: The English authorities, angered by the efforts of Puritans to de-Catholicize the established Church of England, launched persecutions that led to the founding of Plymouth in 1620 and the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630. The Bay Colony early fell under the leadership of Puritan (Congregational) clergymen. Although they had been victims of intolerance in old England, they understandably sought to enforce conformity in New England by persecuting Quakers and banishing dissenters like Anne Hutchinson and Roger Williams. Partly as a result of the uncongenial atmosphere in Massachusetts Bay, settlements in Connecticut and Rhode Island sprang into existence. These offshoot colonies, as well as the older ones, developed the pure-democracy town meeting and other significant institutions. All the colonies sometimes had troubled relationships with the Indians, especially in King Philip's War, 1675–1676. A more hospitable atmosphere in the Quaker colonies, notably William Penn's Pennsylvania, attracted heavy immigration, largely German. The Dutch in New Netherland, after a precarious existence from 1624 to 1664, were finally absorbed by the English, who renamed the colony New York.

A. The Planting of Plymouth

1. The Pilgrims Leave Holland (1620)

William Bradford, then a youth of nineteen, was one of the small group of Puritan Separatists who in 1609 fled from England to Holland in search of religious freedom.

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But the new home proved to be unsatisfactory. The Pilgrims complained of theological controversy, unremitting toil, grinding poverty, and the unhealthy condition of their children, who were becoming “Dutchified” and developing “licentious habits.” It seemed better to start anew in the New World, where they could all live and die as English subjects while advancing the “gospel of the Kingdom of Christ.” Bradford became not only the leader of Plymouth but also its distinguished historian, as his classic Of Plymouth Plantation attests. As the selection opens, Bradford has just reported that the Pilgrims first discussed the perils of the long sea voyage, the dangers of famine and nakedness, and the diseases that might come from the “change of air, diet, and drinking water.” In his account of the decision to leave Holland, were the Pilgrims fully aware of their perils? What light does his analysis cast on their character?

And also those which should escape or overcome these difficulties should yet be in continual danger of the savage people, who are cruel, barbarous, and most treacherous, being most furious in their rage, and merciless where they overcome; not being content only to kill and take away life, but delight to torment men in the most bloody manner that may be; flaying some alive with the shells of fishes, cutting off the members and joints of others by piecemeal and broiling on the coals, eat the collops [slices] of their flesh in their sight whilst they live, with other cruelties horrible to be related.

And surely it could not be thought but the very hearing of these things could not but move the very bowels of men to grate within them and make the weak to quake and tremble.

It was further objected that it would require greater sums of money to furnish such a voyage, and to fit them with necessaries, than their consumed estates would amount to; and yet they must as well look to be seconded with supplies as presently to be transported. Also many precedents of ill success and lamentable miseries befallen others in the like designs were easy to be found, and not forgotten to be alleged; besides their own experience, in their former troubles and hardships in their removal into Holland, and how hard a thing it was for them to live in that strange place, though it was a neighbor country and a civil and rich commonwealth.

It was answered that all great and honorable actions are accompanied with great difficulties, and must be both enterprised and overcome with answerable courages. It was granted the dangers were great, but not desperate. The difficulties were many, but not invincible. For though there were many of them likely, yet they were not certain. It might be sundry of the things feared might never befall; others by provident care and the use of good means might in a great measure be prevented. And all of them, through the help of God, . . . might either be borne or overcome.

True it was that such attempts were not to be made and undertaken without good ground and reason, not rashly or lightly, as many have done for curiosity or hope of gain, etc. But their condition was not ordinary, their ends were good and honorable, their calling lawful and urgent; and therefore they might expect the blessing of God in their proceeding. Yea, though they should lose their lives in this action, yet might they have comfort in the same and their endeavors would be honorable.

They lived here [in Holland] but as men in exile and in a poor condition, and as great miseries might possibly befall them in this place. For the twelve years of truce

were now out,* and there was nothing but beating of drums and preparing for war, the events whereof are always uncertain. The Spaniard might prove as cruel as the savages of America, and the famine and pestilence as sore here as there, and their liberty less to look out for remedy.

After many other particular things answered and alleged on both sides, it was fully concluded by the major part to put this design in execution and to prosecute it by the best means they could.

2. Framing the Mayflower Compact (1620)

Leaving Plymouth (England) in the overburdened Mayflower, the plucky band of Pilgrims crossed the Atlantic. After severe storms and much seasickness, they sighted the Cape Cod coast of Massachusetts, far to the north of the site to which they had been granted patent privileges by the Virginia Company. The absence of valid rights in the Plymouth area, so William Bradford recorded, caused “some of the strangers amongst them” to utter “discontented and mutinous speeches” to the effect that when they “came ashore they would use their own liberty; for none had the power to command them, the patent they had being for Virginia, and not for New England. . . .” In an effort to hold the tiny band together, the leaders persuaded forty-one male passengers to sign a solemn pledge known as the Mayflower Compact. A constitution is “a document defining and limiting the functions of government.” Was the Compact, as is often claimed, the first American constitution? In what ways did it foreshadow the development of democratic institutions?

In the name of God, amen. We whose names are underwritten, 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 another, covenant and combine ourselves 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 hereunto subscribed our names at Cape Cod the eleventh of November, in the reign of our sovereign lord, King James, of England, France, and Ireland, the eighteenth, and of Scotland, the fifty-fourth. Anno Domini 1620.

*The twelve years' truce in Holland's bitter war of independence against Spain had been negotiated in 1609.

²B. P. Poore, ed., *The Federal and State Constitutions*, 2nd ed. (1878), part 1, p. 931.

3. Abandoning Communism at Plymouth (1623)

Some wag has said that the Pilgrims first fell on their knees, and then on the aborigines. The truth is that a plague—probably smallpox, possibly measles—had virtually exterminated the Indians near Plymouth, and the Pilgrims got along reasonably well with the few survivors. The Native Americans taught the whites how to grow maize (corn), which helped revitalize the ragged, starving, disease-decimated newcomers. The story of the first Thanksgiving (1621) is well known, but less well known is the fact that the abundant harvest of 1623 was made possible when the Pilgrims abandoned their early scheme of quasi-communism. For seven years, there was to have been no private ownership of land, and everyone was to have been fed and clothed from the common stock. William Bradford, the historian and oft-elected governor of the colony, here tells what happened when each family was given its own parcel of land. Why did individual ownership succeed where communal enterprise had failed?

This had very good success, for it made all hands very industrious, so as much more corn was planted than otherwise would have been by any means the Governor or any other could use, and saved him a great deal of trouble, and gave far better content. The women now went willingly into the field and took their little ones with them to set corn, which before would allege weakness and inability, whom to have compelled would have been thought great tyranny and oppression.

The experience that was had in this common course and condition, tried sundry years and that amongst godly and sober men, may well evince the vanity of that conceit of Plato's and other ancients, applauded by some of later times, that the taking away of property and bringing in community [communism] into a commonwealth would make them happy and flourishing, as if they were wiser than God. For this community (so far as it was) was found to breed much confusion and discontent and retard much employment that would have been to their benefit and comfort. For the young men that were most able and fit for labor and service did repine that they should spend their time and strength to work for other men's wives and children, without any recompense. The strong, or man of parts, had no more in division of victuals and clothes than he that was weak and not able to do a quarter the other could; this was thought injustice. The aged and graver men to be ranked and equalized in labors and victuals, clothes, etc., with the meaner and younger sort, thought it some indignity and disrespect unto them. And for men's wives to be commanded to do service for other men, as dressing their meat, washing their clothes, etc., they deemed it a kind of slavery, neither could many husbands well brook it.

³From *Of Plymouth Plantation 1620–1647* by William Bradford, edited by Samuel Eliot Morison. Copyright 1952 by Samuel Eliot Morison and renewed 1980 by Emily M. Beck. Reprinted by permission of Alfred A. Knopf Inc., a division of Random House, Inc.

B. Conformity in the Bay Colony

I. John Cotton Describes New England's "Theocracy" (1636)

Already a prominent Puritan minister in England, John Cotton arrived in Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1633 to become the principal preacher to the Boston Puritans. Something of a liberal in old England, he became an increasingly conservative defender of orthodoxy in the New World, as shown by his role in the banishment of Anne Hutchinson. Shortly after Cotton's arrival, he was asked by his fellow colonists to respond to inquiries (or "demands") from a group of English Puritan noblemen who desired to settle in Massachusetts, on the condition that the colony alter its form of government. Cotton's response constitutes a succinct statement of Puritan political theory. What social elements or interest did Cotton think government should represent? How did he define the relation of church and state? What did he think of "democracy"?

Demand 1. That the common-wealth should consist of two distinct ranks of men, whereof the one should be for them and their heirs, gentlemen of the country, the other for them and their heirs, freeholders.

Answer. Two distinct ranks we willingly acknowledge, from the light of nature and scripture; the one of them called Princes, or Nobles, or Elders (amongst whom gentlemen have their place), the other the people. Hereditary dignity or honours we willingly allow to the former, unless by the scandalous and base conversation of any of them, they become degenerate. Hereditary liberty, or estate of freemen, we willingly allow to the other, unless they also, by some unworthy and slavish carriage, do disfranchise themselves.

Demand 2. That in these gentlemen and freeholders, assembled together, the chief power of the common-wealth shall be placed, both for making and repealing laws.

Answer. So it is with us.

Demand 3. That each of these two ranks should, in all public assemblies, have a negative voice, so as without a mutual consent nothing should be established.

Answer. So it is agreed among us. . . .

Demand 9. That, for the present, the Right Honorable the Lord Viscount Say and Seale, the Lord Brooke, who have already been at great disbursements for the public works in New-England, and such other gentlemen of approved sincerity and worth, as they, before their personal remove, shall take into their number, should be admitted for them and their heirs, gentlemen of the country. But, for the future, none shall be admitted into this rank but by the consent of both houses.

Answer. . . . Though we receive them with honor and allow them pre-eminence and accommodations according to their condition, yet we do not, ordinarily, call them forth to the power of election, or administration of magistracy, until they be

¹Thomas Hutchinson, *The History of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay*, 2nd ed. (London: M. Richardson, 1765), pp. 490–501.

received as members into some of our churches, a privilege, which we doubt not religious gentlemen will willingly desire (as David did in Psal. xxvii. 4.) and christian churches will as readily impart to such desirable persons. . . .

Demand 10. That the rank of freeholders shall be made up of such, as shall have so much personal estate there, as shall be thought fit for men of that condition, and have contributed, some fit proportion, to the public charge of the country, either by their disbursements or labors.

Answer. We must confess our ordinary practice to be otherwise. . . . [N]one are admitted freemen of this commonwealth but such as are first admitted members of some church or other in this country, and, of such, none are excluded from the liberty of freemen. And out of such only, I mean the more eminent sort of such, it is that our magistrates are chosen. Both which points we should willingly persuade our people to change, if we could make it appear to them, that such a change might be made according to God; for, to give you a true account of the grounds of our proceedings herein, it seemeth to them, and also to us, to be a divine ordinance (and moral) that none should be appointed and chosen by the people of God, magistrates over them, but men fearing God. . . .

Now, if it be a divine truth, that none are to be trusted with public permanent authority but godly men, who are fit materials for church fellowship, then from the same grounds it will appear, that none are so fit to be trusted with the liberties of the commonwealth as church members. For, the liberties of the freemen of this commonwealth are such, as require men of faithful integrity to God and the state, to preserve the same. Their liberties, among others, are chiefly these. 1. To chuse all magistrates, and to call them to account at their general courts. 2. To chuse such burgesses, every general court, as with the magistrates shall make or repeal all laws. Now both these liberties are such, as carry along much power with them, either to establish or subvert the commonwealth, and therewith the church, which power, if it be committed to men not according to their godliness, which maketh them fit for church fellowship, but according to their wealth, which, as such, makes them no better than worldly men, then, in case worldly men should prove the major part, as soon they might do, they would as readily set over us magistrates like themselves, such as might hate us according to the curse . . . and turn the edge of all authority and laws against the church and the members thereof, the maintenance of whose peace is the chief end which God aimed at in the institution of Magistracy. . . .

It is better that the commonwealth be fashioned to the setting forth of God's house, which is his church: than to accommodate the church frame to the civill state. Democracy I do not conceive that ever God did ordeyne as a fitt government eyther for church or commonwealth. If the people be governors, who shall be governed? As for monarchy, and aristocracy, they are both of them clearely approved, and directed in scripture, yet so as referreth the soveraigntie to himselfe, and setteth up Theocracy in both, as the best forme of government in the commonwealth, as well as in the church.

2. Anne Hutchinson Is Banished (1637)

The powerful Massachusetts Bay Colony soon became a Bible commonwealth, centered at Boston, and the clergymen who dominated it could not permit heretics to undermine their authority. Mistress Anne Hutchinson, who bore her husband fourteen children, was a kindly woman of nimble wit and even more nimble tongue. Gathering a select group at her home, she would review and even reinterpret the ministers' sermons in the light of her own brand of Calvinism. Haled before the General Court, she was subjected to a rigid cross-examination. The case against her seemed to be breaking down when her voluble tongue revealed that she was in direct communication with God—a heresy that the religious leaders could not tolerate. What does this record of the court reveal about the Puritan way of thinking and the justice or injustice of these proceedings?

. . . [Anne Hutchinson.] Therefore take heed what ye go about to do unto me. You have power over my body, but the Lord Jesus hath power over my body and soul; neither can you do me any harm, for I am in the hands of the eternal Jehovah, my Saviour. I am at his appointment, for the bounds of my habitation are cast in Heaven, and no further do I esteem of any mortal man than creatures in his hand. I fear none but the great Jehovah, which hath foretold me of these things, and I do verily believe that he will deliver me out of your hands. Therefore take heed how you proceed against me; for I know that for this you go about to do to me, God will ruin you and your posterity, and this whole state.

Mr. Nowell. How do you know that it was God that did reveal these things to you, and not Satan?

Mrs. Hutchinson. How did Abraham know that it was God that bid him offer [sacrifice] his son, being a breach of the sixth commandment?

Deputy-Governor Dudley. By an immediate voice.

Mrs. Hutchinson. So to me by an immediate revelation.

Deputy-Governor. How! an immediate revelation?

Mrs. Hutchinson. By the voice of his own spirit to my soul.

Governor Winthrop. Daniel was delivered by miracle; do you think to be delivered so too?

Mrs. Hutchinson. I do here speak it before the Court. I look that the Lord should deliver me by his providence. . . .

Governor Winthrop. The Court hath already declared themselves satisfied concerning the things you hear, and concerning the troublesomeness of her spirit, and the danger of her course amongst us, which is not to be suffered. Therefore, if it be the mind of the Court that Mrs. Hutchinson, for these things that appear before us, is unfit for our society, and if it be the mind of the Court that she shall be banished out of our liberties, and imprisoned till she be sent away, let them hold up their hands.

All but three held up their hands.

[*Governor Winthrop.*] Those that are contrary minded, hold up yours.

²C. F. Adams, *Three Episodes of Massachusetts History* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin and Company, 1892), vol. 1, pp. 501–502, 507–508.

Mr. Coddington and Mr. Colburn only.

Mr. Jennison. I cannot hold up my hand one way or the other, and I shall give my reason if the Court require it.

Governor Winthrop. Mrs. Hutchinson, you hear the sentence of the Court. It is that you are banished from out our jurisdiction as being a woman not fit for our society. And you are to be imprisoned till the Court send you away.

Mrs. Hutchinson. I desire to know wherefore I am banished.

Governor Winthrop. Say no more. The Court knows wherefore, and is satisfied.

3. John Winthrop's Concept of Liberty (1645)

Governor John Winthrop, who pronounced Anne Hutchinson's banishment, was the most distinguished lay leader in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Cambridge educated and trained in the law, he was modest, tender, self-sacrificing, and deeply religious. After a furious quarrel had broken out at Hingham over the election of a militia leader, he caused certain of the agitators to be arrested. His foes brought impeachment charges against him, but they instead were fined. After his acquittal, Winthrop delivered this famous speech to the court. It illustrates the close connection between the aristocratic lay leaders of the Bay Colony and the leading clergymen. Would the kind of liberty that Winthrop describes be regarded as liberty today?

There is a twofold liberty: natural (I mean as our nature is now corrupt) and civil or federal. The first is common to man with beasts and other creatures. By this, man, as he stands in relation to man simply, hath liberty to do what he lists. It is a liberty to evil as well as to good. This liberty is incompatible and inconsistent with authority, and cannot endure the least restraint of the most just authority. The exercise and maintaining of this liberty makes men grow more evil, and in time to be worse than brute beasts. . . .

The other kind of liberty I call civil or federal. It may also be termed moral, in reference to the covenant between God and man in the moral law, and the politic covenants and constitutions amongst men themselves. . . . Whatsoever crosseth this, is not authority, but a distemper thereof. This liberty is maintained and exercised in a way of subjection to authority. It is of the same kind of liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.

The woman's own choice makes such a man her husband; yet being so chosen, he is her lord, and she is to be subject to him, yet in a way of liberty, not of bondage. And a true wife accounts her subjection her honor and freedom, and would not think her condition safe and free, but in her subjection to her husband's authority.

Such is the liberty of the church under the authority of Christ, her king and husband. His yoke is so easy and sweet to her as a bride's ornaments; and if through forwardness or wantonness, etc., she shake it off at any time, she is at no rest in her spirit until she take it up again. And whether her lord smiles upon her, and embraceth her in his arms, or whether he frowns, or rebukes, or smites her, she apprehends the sweetness of his love in all, and is refreshed, supported, and instructed by

³John Winthrop, *The History of New England from 1630 to 1649* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1853), vol. 2, pp. 281–282.

every such dispensation of his authority over her. On the other side, ye know who they are that complain of this yoke and say, let us break their bands, etc., we will not have this man to rule over us.

Even so, brethren, it will be between you and your magistrates. If you stand for your natural corrupt liberties, and will do what is good in your own eyes, you will not endure the least weight of authority, but will murmur, and oppose, and be always striving to shake off that yoke. But if you will be satisfied to enjoy such civil and lawful liberties, such as Christ allows you, then will you quietly and cheerfully submit unto that authority which is set over you, in all the administrations of it, for your good. Wherein if we [magistrates] fail at any time, we hope we shall be willing (by God's assistance) to hearken to good advice from any of you, or in any other way of God. So shall your liberties be preserved, in upholding the honor and power of authority amongst you.

4. Puritan Mistreatment of Quakers (1660)

The peace-loving Quakers, who opposed a paid clergy and a tax-supported church, likewise felt the restraining hand of Massachusetts authority. The Reverend Increase Mather wrote in 1684 that they were "under the strong delusion of Satan." Their stubborn devotion and courage under punishment were so exasperating as to provoke increasingly severe measures. Edward Burrough, one of their coreligionists in England, presented the following appeal on their behalf to the king, who thereupon sent orders to Massachusetts to end the persecutions. What were alleged to be the chief offenses of the Quakers? What were the most serious injustices, aside from physical abuse, that they suffered?

1. Two honest and innocent women stripped stark naked, and searched after such an inhumane manner, as modesty will not permit particularly to mention.

2. Twelve strangers in that country [Massachusetts], but free-born of this [English] nation, received twenty-three whippings, the most of them being with a whip of three cords, with knots at the ends, and laid on with as much strength as they could be by the arm of their executioner, the stripes amounting to three hundred and seventy. . . .

3. Eighteen inhabitants of the country, being free-born English, received twenty-three whippings, the stripes amounting to two hundred and fifty.

4. Sixty-four imprisonments of the Lord's people, for their obedience to his will, amounting to five hundred and nineteen weeks, much of it being very cold weather, and the inhabitants kept in prison in harvest time. . . .

5. Two beaten with pitched ropes, the blows amounting to an hundred thirty-nine. . . .

6. Also, an innocent man, an inhabitant of Boston, they banished from his wife and children, and put to seek a habitation in the winter. And in case he returned again, he was to be kept prisoner during his life; and for returning again, he was put in prison, and hath been now a prisoner above a year.

⁴[Edward Burrough], *A Declaration of the Sad and Great Persecution and Martyrdom of the People of God, Called Quakers, in New England . . .* (1660), pp. 17–19.

7. Twenty-five banishments, upon the penalties of being whipped, or having their ears cut; or branded in the hand, if they returned.

8. Fines laid upon the inhabitants for meeting together, and edifying one another, as the saints ever did; and for refusing to swear [take oaths], it being contrary to Christ's command, amounting to about a thousand pound. . . .

9. Five kept fifteen days (in all) without food, and fifty-eight days shut up close by the jailor. . . .

10. One laid neck and heels in irons for sixteen hours.

11. One very deeply burnt in the right hand with the letter H [for *heretic*], after he had been whipped with above thirty stripes.

12. One chained the most part of twenty days to a log of wood in an open prison in the winter-time.

13. Five appeals to England, denied at Boston.

14. Three had their right ears cut by the hangman in the prison, the door being barred, and not a friend suffered to be present while it was doing, though some much desired it. . . .

15. One of the inhabitants of Salem, who since is banished upon pain of death, had one half of his house and land seized on while he was in prison, a month before he knew of it.

16. At a General Court in Boston, they made an order, that those who had not wherewithal to answer the fines that were laid upon them (for their consciences) should be sold for bond-men and bond-women to Barbados, Virginia, or any of the English plantations. . . .

17. Eighteen of the people of God were at several times banished upon pain of death. . . .

18. Also three of the servants of the Lord they put to death [hanged], all of them for obedience to the truth, in the testimony of it against the wicked rulers and laws at Boston.

19. And since they have banished four more, upon pain of death. . . .

These things, O King, from time to time have we patiently suffered, and not for the transgression of any just or righteous law, either pertaining to the worship of God or the civil government of England, but simply and barely for our consciences to God. . . .

C. The Rule of Biblical Law

1. *The Blue Laws of Connecticut (1672)*

Blue laws—statutes governing personal behavior—were to be found both in Europe and the American colonies. They obviously could not be enforced with literal severity, and they generally fell into disuse after the Revolution. Connecticut's blue laws received unpleasant notoriety in the Reverend Samuel Peters's General History of Connecticut (1781), which fabricated such decrees as, "No woman shall kiss her

¹George Brinley, ed., *The Laws of Connecticut* (Hartford: printed for private distribution, 1865), pp. 9–10.

child on the Sabbath or fasting-day.” But the valid laws of Connecticut, some of which are here reproduced with biblical chapter and verse, were harsh enough. How did the punishment fit the crime? Which offenses would still be regarded as criminal today?

1. If any man or woman, after legal conviction, shall have or worship any other God but the Lord God, he shall be put to death. (Deuteronomy 13.6. Exodus 22.20.)

2. If any person within this colony shall blaspheme the name of God, the Father, Son, or Holy Ghost, with direct, express, presumptuous, or high-handed blasphemy, or shall curse in the like manner, he shall be put to death. (Leviticus 24.15, 16.)

3. If any man or woman be a witch, that is, has or consults with a familiar spirit, they shall be put to death. (Exodus 22.18. Leviticus 20.27. Deuteronomy 18.10, 11.)

4. If any person shall commit any willful murder, committed upon malice, hatred, or cruelty, not in a man’s just and necessary defense, nor by casualty [accident] against his will, he shall be put to death. (Exodus 21.12, 13, 14. Numbers 35.30, 31.)

5. If any person shall slay another through guile, either by poisoning or other such devilish practices, he shall be put to death. (Exodus 21.14.) . . .

10. If any man steals a man or mankind and sells him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall be put to death. (Exodus 21.16.)

11. If any person rise up by false witness wittingly and of purpose to take away any man’s life, he or she shall be put to death. (Deuteronomy 19.16, 18, 19.) . . .

14. If any child or children above sixteen years old, and of sufficient understanding, shall curse or smite their natural father or mother, he or they shall be put to death, unless it can be sufficiently testified that the parents have been very unchristianly negligent in the education of such children, or so provoked them by extreme and cruel correction that they have been forced thereunto to preserve themselves from death or maiming. (Exodus 21.17. Leviticus 20.9. Exodus 21.15.)

15. If any man have a stubborn or rebellious son, of sufficient understanding and years, viz. sixteen years of age, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that when they have chastened him, he will not harken unto them; then may his father or mother, being his natural parents, lay hold on him, and bring him to the magistrates assembled in court, and testify unto them that their son is stubborn and rebellious, and will not obey their voice and chastisement, but lives in sundry notorious crimes, such a son shall be put to death. (Deuteronomy 21.20, 21.) . . .

2. *A Defense of Buying Indian Land (1722)*

The Reverend Solomon Stoddard, for fifty-six years pastor of the Congregational church in Northampton, was easily the most influential figure of his day in western Massachusetts. Tall, dignified, and domineering, he was dubbed by his critics “the Pope.” He advocated the frequent preaching of hellfire as a restraint against sin, and he bitterly opposed long hair and wigs for men, extravagance in dress, and

²Solomon Stoddard, *An Answer to Some Cases of Conscience Respecting the Country* (Boston: B. Green, 1722; reprinted Tarrytown, N.Y.: W. Abbott, 1917), pp. 14–15.

intemperance in drink. The following is part of a tract that he published in 1722 entitled An Answer to Some Cases of Conscience Respecting the Country. Which of his arguments is the most convincing? In what sense could the land be said to have “belonged” to the Indians in the first place?

... *Question VIII.* Did we any wrong to the Indians in buying their land at a small price?

Answer. 1. There was some part of the land that was not purchased, neither was there need that it should; it was *vacuum domicilium* [a vacant dwelling place]; and so might be possessed by virtue of God’s grant to mankind, Genesis 1.28: “And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.” The Indians made no use of it but for hunting. By God’s first grant men were to subdue the earth. When Abraham came into the land of Canaan, he made use of vacant land as he pleased; so did Isaac and Jacob.

2. The Indians were well contented that we should sit down by them. And it would have been for great advantage, both for this world and the other, if they had been wise enough to make use of their opportunities. It has been common with many people, in planning this world since the Flood, to admit neighbors, to sit down by them.

3. Though we gave but a small price for what we bought, we gave them their demands. We came to their market, and gave them their price. And, indeed, it was worth but little; and had it continued in their hands, it would have been of little value. It is our dwelling on it, and our improvements, that have made it to be of worth.

D. Indian-White Relations in Colonial New England: Three Views of King Philip’s War

1. Mary Rowlandson Is Captured by Indians (1675)

Mary Rowlandson was taken prisoner in February 1675 by Indians who raided her home on the Massachusetts frontier some thirty miles west of Boston. Her account became one of the most popular “captivity narratives” that fascinated readers in England and America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, providing a model for such later works as James Fenimore Cooper’s The Last of the Mohicans. What are the most harrowing aspects of Rowlandson’s experience? What religious meaning did she find in the Indian attack and in her captivity?

On the tenth of February 1675, came the Indians with great numbers upon Lancaster: their first coming was about sunrising; hearing the noise of some guns, we looked out; several houses were burning, and the smoke ascending to heaven.

¹From C. H. Lincoln, ed., *Original Narratives of Early American History: Narratives of Indian Wars, 1675–1699*, vol. 14 (New York: 1952).

There were five persons taken in one house; the father, and the mother and a sucking child, they knocked on the head; the other two they took and carried away alive. There were two others, who being out of their garrison upon some occasion were set upon; one was knocked on the head, the other escaped; another there was who running along was shot and wounded, and fell down; he begged of them his life, promising them money (as they told me) but they would not hearken to him but knocked him in head, and stripped him naked, and split open his bowels. . . . Thus these murderous wretches went on, burning, and destroying before them.

At length they came and beset our own house, and quickly it was the dolefullest day that ever mine eyes saw. . . . Some in our house were fighting for their lives, others wallowing in their blood, the house on fire over our heads, and the bloody heathen ready to knock us on the head, if we stirred out. Now might we hear mothers and children crying out for themselves, and one another, "Lord, what shall we do?" Then I took my children (and one of my sisters', hers) to go forth and leave the house: but as soon as we came to the door and appeared, the Indians shot so thick that the bullets rattled against the house, as if one had taken an handful of stones and threw them, so that we were fain to give back. We had six stout dogs belonging to our garrison, but none of them would stir, though another time, if any Indian had come to the door, they were ready to fly upon him and tear him down. The Lord hereby would make us the more to acknowledge His hand, and to see that our help is always in Him. But out we must go, the fire increasing, and coming along behind us, roaring, and the Indians gaping before us with their guns, spears, and hatchets to devour us. No sooner were we out of the house, but my brother-in-law (being before wounded, in defending the house, in or near the throat) fell down dead, whereat the Indians scornfully shouted, and hallowed, and were presently upon him, stripping off his clothes, the bullets flying thick, one went through my side, and the same (as would seem) through the bowels and hand of my dear child in my arms. One of my elder sisters' children, named William, had then his leg broken, which the Indians perceiving, they knocked him on [his] head. . . . [T]he Indians laid hold of us, pulling me one way, and the children another, and said, "Come go along with us"; I told them they would kill me: they answered, if I were willing to go along with them, they would not hurt me. . . .

I had often before this said that if the Indians should come, I should choose rather to be killed by them than taken alive, but when it came to the trial my mind changed; their glittering weapons so daunted my spirit, that I chose rather to go along with those (as I may say) ravenous beasts, than that moment to end my days; and that I may the better declare what happened to me during that grievous captivity, I shall particularly speak of the several removes we had up and down the wilderness. . . .

But before I go any further, I would take leave to mention a few remarkable passages of providence, which I took special notice of in my afflicted time.

1. Of the fair opportunity lost in the long march, a little after the fort-fight, when our English army was so numerous, and in pursuit of the enemy, and so near as to take several and destroy them, and the enemy in such distress for food that our men might track them by their rooting in the earth for ground-nuts, whilst they were flying for their lives. I say, that then our army should want provision, and be forced to leave their pursuit and return homeward; and the very next week the enemy came upon our town, like bears bereft of their whelps, or so many ravenous wolves, rending

us and our lambs to death. But what shall I say? God seemed to leave his People to themselves, and order all things for his own holy ends. . . .

2. I cannot but remember how the Indians derided the slowness, and dullness of the English army, in its setting out. . . .

3. . . . [W]hen the English army with new supplies were sent forth to pursue after the enemy, and they understanding it, fled before them till they came to Baquaug river, where they forthwith went over safely; that that river should be impassable to the English. I can but admire to see the wonderful providence of God in preserving the heathen for further affliction to our poor country. They could go in great numbers over, but the English must stop. God had an over-ruling hand in all those things.

4. It was thought, if their corn were cut down, they would starve and die with hunger, and all their corn that could be found, was destroyed, and they driven from that little they had in store, into the woods in the midst of winter; and yet how to admiration did the Lord preserve them for his holy ends, and the destruction of many still amongst the English! strangely did the Lord provide for them; that I did not see (all the time I was among them) one man, woman, or child, die with hunger.

Though many times they would eat that, that a hog or a dog would hardly touch; yet by that God strengthened them to be a scourge to his people.

The chief and commonest food was ground-nuts. They eat also nuts and acorns, artichokes, lilly roots, ground-beans, and several other weeds and roots, that I know not.

They would pick up old bones, and cut them to pieces at the joints, and if they were full of worms and maggots, they would scald them over the fire to make the vermine come out, and then boil them, and drink up the liquor, and then beat the great ends of them in a mortar, and so eat them. They would eat horse's guts, and ears, and all sorts of wild birds which they could catch. . . . I can but stand in admiration to see the wonderful power of God in providing for such a vast number of our enemies in the wilderness, where there was nothing to be seen, but from hand to mouth. Many times in a morning, the generality of them would eat up all they had, and yet have some further supply against they wanted. It is said, "Oh, that my People had hearkened to me, and Israel had walked in my ways, I should soon have subdued their Enemies, and turned my hand against their Adversaries" (Psalm 81.13–14). But now our perverse and evil carriages in the sight of the Lord, have so offended Him, that instead of turning His hand against them, the Lord feeds and nourishes them up to be a scourge to the whole land.

5. Another thing that I would observe is the strange providence of God, in turning things about when the Indians was at the highest, and the English at the lowest. . . . [W]hen the heathen begins to think all is their own, and the poor Christian's hopes to fail (as to man) and now their eyes are more to God, and their hearts sigh heaven-ward; and to say in good earnest, "Help Lord, or we perish." When the Lord had brought his people to this, that they saw no help in anything but Himself; then He takes the quarrel into His own hand; and though they had made a pit, in their own imaginations, as deep as hell for the Christians that summer, yet the Lord hurled themselves into it. And the Lord had not so many ways before to preserve them, but now He hath as many to destroy them.

2. Plymouth Officials Justify the War (1675)

The officials of Plymouth Colony offered the following explanation for their actions in taking up arms against the Wampanoag chief Metacom (called King Philip by the English) in 1675. What do they see as the principal offenses by the Indians? Should John Sassamon be regarded as “a faithful Indian” or as an English spy? Did the Puritan settlers go to war reluctantly or enthusiastically?

Anno Domini 1675

Not to look back further than the troubles that were between the Colony of New Plymouth and Philip, sachem [chieftain] of Mount Hope, in the year 1671, it may be remembered that . . . [he] was the peccant and offending party; and that Plymouth had just cause to take up arms against him; and it was then agreed that he should pay that colony a certain sum of money, in part of their damage and charge by him occasioned; and he then not only renewed his ancient covenant of friendship with them; but made himself and his people absolute subjects to our Sovereign Lord King Charles the Second. . . .

But sometime last winter the Governor of Plymouth was informed by Sassamon, a faithful Indian, that the said Philip was undoubtedly endeavoring to raise new troubles, and was endeavoring to engage all the sachems round about in a war against us; some of the English also that lived near the said sachem, communicated their fears and jealousies concurrent with what the Indian had informed. About a week after John Sassamon had given his information, he was barbarously murdered by some Indians for his faithfulness (as we have cause to believe) to the interest of God and of the English; some time after Sassamon's death Philip, having heard that the Governor of Plymouth had received some information against him and purposed to send for or to him to appear at their next Court that they might inquire into those reports, came down of his own accord to Plymouth a little before their Court, in the beginning of March last; at which time the Council of that colony upon a large debate with him, had great reason to believe, that the information against him might be in substance true, but not having full proof thereof and hoping that the discovery of it so far would cause him to desist they dismissed him friendly; giving him only to understand that if they hear further concerning that matter they might see reason to demand his arms to be delivered up for their security; which was according to former agreement between him and them; and he engaged [pledged] on their demand they should be surrendered unto them or their order.

At that Court we had many Indians in examination concerning the murder of John Sassamon but had not then testimony in the case but not long after, an Indian appearing to testify; we apprehended three by him charged to be the murderers of Sassamon; and secured them to a trial at our next Court (held in June) at which time, a little before the Court, Philip began to keep his men in arms about him and to gather strangers unto him and to march about in arms towards the upper end of

²David Pulsifer, ed., “Acts of the Commissioners of the United Colonies of New England,” in *Plymouth Colonial Records* (1675), vol. 10, pp. 362–364.

the neck on which he lived and near to the English houses; who began thereby to be somewhat disquieted, but took as yet no further notice but only set a military watch in the next towns; as Swansea and Rehoboth some hints we had that Indians were in arms while our Court was sitting but we hoped it might arise from a guilty fear in Philip; that we would send for him and bring him to trial with the other murderers; and that if he saw the Court broken up and he not sent for, the cloud might blow over; and indeed our innocency made us very secure and confident it would not have broken out into a war.

But no sooner was our Court dissolved but we had intelligence from Lieut. John Brown of Swansea that Philip and his men continued constantly in arms, many strange Indians from several places flocked in to him & that they sent away their wives to Narragansett; and were giving our people frequent alarms by drums and guns in the night and invaded their passage towards Plymouth; and that their young Indians were earnest for a war; on the 7th of June Mr. Benjamin Church being on Rhode Island, Weetamoo and some of her chief men told him that Philip intended a war speedily with the English, some of them saying that they would help him; and that he had already given them leave to kill Englishmen's cattle and rob their houses; about the 14th and 15th of June Mr. James Brown went twice to Philip to persuade him to be quiet but at both times found his men in arms and Philip very high and not persuadable to peace; on the 14th June our Council wrote an amicable friendly letter to Philip therein showing our dislike of his practices; and advising him to dismiss his strange Indians and command his own men to fall quietly to their business that our people might also be quiet; and not to suffer himself to be abused by reports concerning us, who intended no wrong, nor hurt towards him; but Mr. Brown could not obtain an answer from him; on the 17th June Mr. Paine of Rehoboth and several others of the English going unarmed to Mount Hope to seek their horses at Philip's request, the Indians came and presented their guns at them and carried it very insolently though no way provoked by them; on the 18th or 19th Job Winslow his house was broken up and rifled by Philip's men; June the 20th being our Sabbath, the people at Swansea were alarmed by the Indians, two of our inhabitants burned out of their houses and their houses rifled; and the Indians were marching up as they judged to assault the town; and therefore entreated speedy help from us; we hereupon the 21 of June sent up some forces to relieve that town and dispatched more with speed; on Wednesday the 23 of June a dozen more of their houses at Swansea were rifled; on the 24th Thomas Layton was slain at the Fall River; on the 25th of June divers of the people at Swansea slain; and many houses burned until which time, and for several days, though we had a considerable force there both of our own and of the Massachusetts (to our grief and shame), they took no revenge on the enemy; thus slow were we and unwilling to engage ourselves and neighbors in a war; having many insolencies almost intolerable from them, of whose hands we had deserved better;

Josiah Winslow

Thomas Hinckley

[Plymouth Commissioners to the United Colonies]

3. A Rhode Island Quaker Sympathizes with the Indians (1675)

John Easton, lieutenant governor of Rhode Island and a Quaker, took a different view of the war's causes than did the officials from Plymouth, as described in the preceding selection. In what ways does he disagree with them? What does he cite as the Indians' primary grievances against the English settlers?

... We said we knew the English said the Indians wronged them and the Indians said the English wronged them, but our desire was [that] the quarrel might rightly be decided in the best way, and not as dogs decide their quarrels. The Indians owned that fighting was the worst way, then they propounded how right might take place, we said by arbitration. They said all English agreed against them, and so by arbitration they had had much wrong, many miles square of land so taken from them, for English would have English arbitrators, and once they were persuaded to give in their arms, that thereby jealousy might be removed, [then] the English having their arms would not deliver them as they had promised, until they consented to pay 100 pounds, and now they had not so much land or money, that they were as good be killed as leave all their livelihood. We said they might choose an Indian king, and the English might choose the Governor of New York, that neither had cause to say either were parties in the difference. They said they had not heard of that way and said we honestly spoke, so we were persuaded if that way had been tendered they would have accepted. We did endeavor not to hear their complaints, said it was not convenient for us now to consider of, but to endeavor to prevent war, said to them when in war against English, blood was spilt that engaged all Englishmen, for we were to be all under one king. We knew what their complaints would be, and in our colony [Rhode Island] had removed some of them in sending for [Narragansett] Indian rulers in so far as the crime concerned Indians' lives, which they very lovingly accepted and agreed with us to their execution and said so they were able to satisfy their subjects when they knew an Indian suffered duly, but said that was only between their Indians and not in townships that we had purchased, they would not have us prosecute and that they had a great fear lest any of their Indians should be called or forced to be Christian Indians. They said that such were in everything more mischievous, only dissemblers, and then the English made them not subject to their kings, and by their lying to wrong their kings.

We knew it to be true, and we promising them that however in government to Indians all should be alike and that we knew it was our King's will it should be so, that although we were weaker than other colonies, they having submitted to our King to protect them, others dared not otherwise to molest them, so they expressed they took that to be well, that we had little cause to doubt but that to us, under the King, they would have yielded to our determinations in what any should have complained to us against them, but Philip charged it to be dishonesty in us to put off the hearing [of] the complaints.

³John Easton, "A Relation of the Indian War," in Charles H. Lincoln, ed., *Narratives of the Indian Wars, 1675-1699* (New York: 1913), p. 11. Some of the punctuation in this document has been edited to conform to modern usage.

Therefore we consented to hear them. They said they had been the first in doing good to the English, and the English the first in doing wrong, said when the English first came their king's father [Massasoit] was as a great man and the English as a little child, he constrained other Indians from wronging the English and gave them corn and showed them how to plant and was free to do them any good and had let them have a 100 times more land than now the king had for his own people, but their king's brother when he was king came miserably to die by being forced to court, as they judged poisoned, and another grievance was if 20 of their own Indians testified that an Englishman had done them wrong, it was as nothing, and if but one of their worst Indians testified against any Indian or their king, when it pleased the English that was sufficient.

Another grievance was when their kings sold land, the English would say it was more than they agreed to and a writing must be proof against all them, and some of their kings had done wrong to sell so much. He left his people none, and some being given to drunkenness the English made them drunk and then cheated them in bargains, but now their kings were forewarned not to part with land for nothing in comparison to the value thereof. Now whom the English had owned for king or queen they [the English] would disinherit, and make another king that would give or sell them their land, that now they had no hopes left to keep any land. Another grievance the English cattle and horses still increased, that when they removed 30 miles from where English had anything to do, they could not keep their corn [there] from being spoiled, they never being used to fence, and thought when the English bought land of them that they [the English] would have kept their cattle upon their own land.

Another grievance, the English were so eager to sell the Indians liquor that most of the Indians spent all in drunkenness and then ravened upon the sober Indians and, they did believe, often did hurt the English cattle, and their kings could not prevent it. We knew before [that] these were their grand complaints, but then we only endeavored to persuade that all complaints might be righted without war, but could have no other answer but that they had not heard of that way for the Governor of York and an Indian king to have the hearing of it. We had cause to think if that had been tendered it would have been accepted. We endeavored that, however, they should lay down their arms, for the English were too strong for them. They said then the English should do to them as they did when they were too strong for the English. . . .

E. *Founding the Middle Colonies* _____

1. *The Misrule of "Peter the Headstrong" (1650)*

Henry Hudson's famous voyage in 1609 laid the foundations for the formal establishment of New Netherland (New York) in 1624. Hotheaded Peter Stuyvesant, who

¹*The Representation of New Netherland* (1650), in New-York Historical Society, *Collections*, Second Series (1849), vol. 2, pp. 298, 308, 309, 319.

had lost a leg in the service of the Dutch West India Company, became governor in 1647, following several inept predecessors. Stuyvesant announced at the outset that he would be "as a father over his children." He proved to be covetous, dictatorial, and tyrannical. But he did attempt to curb drunkenness and knife-wielding in the streets, and ultimately instituted some overdue reforms. After three years of his misrule, eleven prominent members of the colony protested as follows over the head of the Dutch West India Company to the "High Mightinesses" of the Dutch government in Holland. What was the condition of "democracy" in the colony at this stage?

The fort under which we shelter ourselves, and from which as it seems all authority proceeds, lies like a mole-heap or a tottering wall, on which there is not one gun carriage or one piece of cannon in a suitable frame or on a good platform. . . .

His [Stuyvesant's] first arrival . . . was like a peacock, with great state and pomp. The declaration of His Honor that he wished to stay here only three years, with other haughty expressions, caused some to think that he would not be a father. The appellation of Lord General, and similar titles, were never before known here. Almost every day he caused proclamations of various import to be published, which were for the most part never observed, and have long since been a dead letter, except the wine excise, as that yielded a profit. . . .

At one time, after leaving the house of the minister, where the consistory had been sitting and had risen, it happened that Arnoldus Van Herdenbergh related the proceedings relative to the estate of Zeger Teunisz, and how he himself, as curator, had appealed from the sentence. Whereupon the Director [Stuyvesant], who had been sitting there with them as an elder, interrupted him and replied, "It may during my administration be contemplated to appeal, but if any one should do it, I will make him a foot shorter, and send the pieces to Holland, and let him appeal in that way." . . .

In our opinion this country will never flourish under the government of the Honorable [West India] Company, but will pass away and come to an end of itself, unless the Honorable Company be reformed. And therefore it would be more profitable for them, and better for the country, that they should be rid thereof, and their effects transported hence.

To speak specifically. Care ought to be taken of the public property, as well ecclesiastical as civil, which, in beginnings, can be illy dispensed with. It is doubtful whether divine worship will have to cease altogether in consequence of the departure of the minister and the inability of the Company.

There should be a public school, provided with at least two good masters, so that first of all in so wild a country, where there are many loose people, the youth be well taught and brought up, not only in reading and writing, but also in the knowledge and fear of the Lord. As it is now, the school is kept very irregularly, one and another keeping it according to his pleasure and as long as he thinks proper. There ought also to be an almshouse, and an orphan asylum, and other similar institutions. The minister who now goes home can give a much fuller explanation thereof. The country must also be provided with godly, honorable, and intelligent rulers who are not very indigent, or, indeed, are not too covetous. . . .

[In 1664, fourteen years after this remonstrance, an English fleet, without firing a shot, forced a fuming Stuyvesant to surrender his flimsily fortified colony.]

2. Early Settlers in Pennsylvania (1682)

Richard Townsend, a Quaker who had come from England with William Penn on the ship Welcome, remembered through the haze of the years the founding of the colony. He set down his recollections about 1727, when he was eighty-three years old. What peculiar advantages did this colony have that the others had not enjoyed?

At our arrival [in Pennsylvania] we found it a wilderness. The chief inhabitants were Indians, and some Swedes, who received us in a friendly manner. And though there was a great number of us, the good hand of Providence was seen in a particular manner, in that provisions were found for us, by the Swedes and Indians, at very reasonable rates, as well as brought from divers other parts that were inhabited before.

Our first concern was to keep up and maintain our religious worship; and, in order thereunto, we had several meetings in the houses of the inhabitants; and one boarded meeting-house was set up, where the city was to be, near Delaware. And, as we had nothing but love and good will in our hearts, one to another, we had very comfortable meetings from time to time; and after our meeting was over, we assisted each other in building little houses, for our shelter.

After some time I set up a mill, on Chester creek, which I brought ready framed from London; which served for grinding of corn and sawing of boards, and was of great use to us. Besides, I with Joshua Tittery made a net and caught great quantities of fish, which supplied ourselves and many others; so that, notwithstanding it was thought near three thousand persons came in the first year, we were so providentially provided for that we could buy a deer for about two shillings, and a large turkey for about one shilling, and Indian corn for about two shillings and sixpence per bushel.

And, as our worthy Proprietor [Penn] treated the Indians with extraordinary humanity, they became very civil and loving to us, and brought in abundance of venison. As in other countries the Indians were exasperated by hard treatment, which hath been the foundation of much bloodshed, so the contrary treatment here hath produced their love and affection.

About a year after our arrival, there came in about twenty families from high and low Germany, of religious, good people; who settled about six miles from Philadelphia, and called the place Germantown. The country continually increasing, people began to spread themselves further back. . . .

About the time in which Germantown was laid out, I settled upon my tract of land, which I had purchased of the Proprietor in England, about a mile from thence; where I set up a house and a corn mill, which was very useful to the country for several miles round. But there not being plenty of horses, people generally brought their corn on their backs many miles. . . .

As people began to spread and improve their lands, the country became more fruitful; so that those who came after us were plentifully supplied; and with what we abounded we began a small trade abroad. And as Philadelphia increased, vessels were built, and many employed. Both country and trade have been wonderfully in-

²Robert Proud, *The History of Pennsylvania* . . . (1797), vol. 1, pp. 229–231.

creasing to this day; so that, from a wilderness, the Lord, by his good hand of Providence, hath made it a fruitful field. . . .

Thought Provokers

1. In regard to the Plymouth Pilgrims, what support does one find for this statement: "The cowards never started; the weak died on the way"? An English writer claims that the brave ones were actually those who stayed at home and fought the authorities for religious freedom instead of fleeing from them. Comment.
2. How can one justify the so-called intolerance of the Puritans, especially since they were the victims of intolerance at home? What light does this statement of Pope Leo XIII in 1885 throw on the problem: "The equal toleration of all religions . . . is the same thing as atheism"?
3. It has been said that the Puritans were misguided in following biblical law, which did not fit conditions of the seventeenth century. Comment. The blacks of South Africa have this proverb: "At first we had the land and the white man had the Bible. Now we have the Bible and the white man has the land." Comment with reference to Indian-white relations in North America.
4. In which of the colonies from Pennsylvania to Massachusetts would you have preferred to be a settler? Explain fully why.