Chapter 2  
*European Footholds on the Fringes of North America, 1600–1660*

**Learning Objectives:**

*After reading Chapter 2, you should be able to:*

1. Discuss early Spanish incursions into the New World through the use of missions and forts.
2. Understand the aims of early Spanish explorers and how they encountered competition from the French and the Dutch.
3. Explain the motivations behind England’s exploration of the Atlantic coast.
4. Describe the various Spanish, French, Dutch, and English settlements and understand some of the difficulties and successes encountered.
5. Discuss European and Native American contacts throughout this period.
6. Understand the Puritan Experiment and its aims.
7. Describe the Massachusetts Bay and Virginia Companies.
8. Discuss the unique character of the Maryland colony.

**Time Line**

1580
Spain’s King Philip II claimed the throne of Portugal as his own, thus uniting the two great seafaring countries

1602
Dutch East India Company established

1606
Virginia Company chartered by James I

1607
Philip commanded an outpost be created on the coast of California as a way-station for Spanish galleons crossing the Pacific from the Philippines
1608
Samuel de Champlain established the outpost of Quebec in a narrow strait of the St. Lawrence River

1610
Henry Hudson, working for the English crown, explored the strait and bay in northern Canada that still bears his name

1624
King James annulled the Virginia Company’s charter, creating in its stead a royal colony

1632
George Calvert granted 10 million acres of land adjacent to Virginia by Charles I to establish the royal colony of Maryland

1660
All four great European naval powers (Spain, France, Holland, and England) had established lasting footholds on the coast of the new continent

Chapter Overview

Envious of Spain's wealth, other European countries were soon competing for colonial spoils. This chapter looks at French, Dutch, and English programs for colonization in North America, as well as the motivations of the colonists in New England and the Chesapeake colonies.

I. Spain’s Ocean-Spanning Reach

A. Vizcaino in California and Japan

Spain’s imperial objectives included global markets in the East. Instructions from the Crown ordered the viceroy to create a Spanish settlement at Monterey Bay in California as a protective port for merchant ships returning from the Philippines and Japan. The viceroy engaged Sebastian Vizcaíno to do the job but soon after diverted needed funds to search for the fabled North Pacific islands of gold and silver. Vizcaíno, powerless to complete the king’s outpost, was soon directed to Japan in search of the legendary islands. He brought back to Spain a delegation of Japanese, but no gold. Spain’s plans to colonize California were postponed.
B. Onate Creates a Spanish Foothold in the Southwest

While Spanish officials (peninsulares) debated over the wisdom of maintaining outposts like Fort Augustine, Florida, wealthy individuals like Juan de Onate secured permission from Mexican officials to establish a settlement in the northern Pueblo lands of New Mexico. He predicted New Mexico would outshine the rest of New Spain, but the native peoples, climate, and geography failed to cooperate with Onate’s grand schemes. Brutal repression was necessary to secure aid from local villages, while settlers gave up and returned to central Mexico, convinced that nothing could grow in the harsh landscape. Onate’s explorations did not find the Atlantic Ocean to the north or the Pacific Ocean within easy reach on the west. Franciscan friars converted several hundred Pueblo peoples, and pleaded with the Crown for the right to continue their harvest of souls in the region. Alerted to growing English and French interests in territories claimed by Spain, the Crown committed itself to maintaining the region but changed its governor. The small colony at the village of Santa Fe received news from central Mexico only once every three years. Unlike the French, Dutch, or English tradition of allotting citizenship, all townspeople were counted as Spanish citizens, whether Spanish, Mexican Indians, Africans, or mixed-race children (mestizos).

C. New Mexico Survives: New Flocks among Old Pueblos

The Spanish decision to retain and grow its settlements in New Mexico meant a reshaping of life for every ethnic type in the region. Missions proliferated, but converts were reluctant and few. Friars forbade traditional celebrations, destroyed sacred objects, and punished any backsliding severely. Soldiers from the presidios (forts) enforced these policies of the friars, as well as taxing local Pueblos for food, clothing, and servants. Despite these problems, Pueblo peoples found Spanish plants and animals useful and incorporated them into their lifestyle. Cattle were a problem, but horses, sheep, and donkeys were a benefit, as were plants like wheat, onions, chilies, peas, peaches, plums, and cherries. Metal tools and axes improved cultivation, and wool became part of the rich spinning and weaving traditions of the Pueblo peoples.

D. Conversion and Rebellion in Spanish Florida

In Florida, Spanish cattle ranches were more successful than Spanish missions. Native population counts, assaulted by crushing diseases as well as corvee labor (required work hours on Spanish projects) and lack of food, began to plummet, and entire villages ceased to exist. Indian rebellions were quickly and firmly stamped out, with an eye to European competition for Spanish Florida.
II. France and Holland: Overseas Competition for Spain

A. The Founding of New France

England, Holland, and France secured islands and challenged Spanish control of the Caribbean. Having established a firm presence in the region, France concentrated on developing lands to the north in Canada. Their yearly fishing trips became even more lucrative with the realization that native peoples would trade beaver robes for cheap iron pots, with both parties feeling they received the best bargain. Explorations led to temporary settlements that had little lasting impact. However, Samuel de Champlain’s use of his gun in support of his Algonquian neighbors’ war against their Iroquois enemies produced a surprise victory and strong alliance with the Algonquians, as well as the lasting enmity of the Iroquois Confederation.

B. Competing for the Beaver Trade

While the French expanded their influence on the fur trade throughout the northern extent of the Great Lakes, trading and arming the native populations with guns, Dutch fur traders founded Fort Orange on the Hudson River, trading with and arming the Iroquois League. Contagious disease and warfare as always took a dreadful toll, and resulted in a continuous round of “mourning wars” (a.k.a. Beaver Wars). Attempts by French Jesuit priests to convert the Indians finally settled on the four major villages of Huronia; they later moved their converts to praying missions close to French forts.

C. A Dutch Colony on the Hudson River

In 1608, the Dutch East India Company hired Henry Hudson, English-born navigator and arctic explorer, to attempt to locate a potential connecting waterway from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Confounded by snowstorms in Scandinavia, Hudson and his crew sailed down the American coast, visiting Chesapeake and Delaware Bays and New York harbor. Here, flying the Dutch flag, Hudson sailed up the river that still bears his name. Subsequent explorations claimed the land between the Delaware and Connecticut Rivers as New Amsterdam, to be administered by the new Dutch West India Company, created in 1621. The Company sponsored numerous settlements along the Connecticut and Delaware Rivers and the Atlantic coast. Dutch settlements successfully attracted colonizers and Crown support.

D. “All Sorts of Nationalities”: Diverse New Amsterdam

The Dutch Colony of New Amsterdam quickly became the most cosmopolitan of European colonies in the Americas, with settlers from Holland, Belgium, Sweden, Finland, Switzerland, and England and religious convictions as diverse as Walloon Protestants, Quakers, and European Jews (who were segregated in a specific neighborhood called a ghetto). By 1664, African arrivals,
granted “half-freedom” status, made up more than ten percent of New Netherland’s population, and at least half of them lived in Lower Manhattan.

III. English Beginnings on the Atlantic Coast

A. The Virginia Company and Jamestown

The failed Roanoke experiment warned individual investors that developing the wealth of America could be a costly venture. The next effort, chartered by James I in 1606, was the Virginia Company on the Chesapeake Bay under the direction of a governor and council. The local Indian confederacy led by Powhatan chose an unequal diplomatic friendship, and the stronger “father” provided food and assistance to the weaker English “children,” fostering expectations that the future would include mutually beneficial trade, as it had for tribes dealing with the French and Dutch. The Jamestown settlers included a large number of gentlemen unused to physical labor, who expected immediate riches and found none.

B. “Starving Time” and Seeds of Representative Government

When hard work and starvation ensued, only the arrival of additional settlers kept the colony alive. Even so, they had to rely heavily on the native population for food. Unable to find readily exploitable precious metals, the quest to find a stable and profitable cash crop began. It took a decade to refine West Indian tobacco plants into an exportable crop. With labor, rather than land, at a premium, the majority of workers were English indentured servants, attracted by the promise of sizeable acreage at the end of their contract period. The high cost of African slaves meant that they would only gradually become key elements of the successful tobacco plantation society.

C. Launching the Plymouth Colony

To gather capital and labor, the Virginia Company began distributing legal charters to various groups to erect towns for settlement and cultivation. Between 1619 and 1623, the company granted more than 40 of these charters. Two such charters came to the ownership of members within a band of English Protestants exiled to Holland for religious differences with the king. One of these groups of separatists set sail from Plymouth in 1620 on the Mayflower. Storms and faulty navigation caused the settlers to make landfall at Cape Cod in modern-day Massachusetts.
IV. The Puritan Experiment

A. Formation of the Massachusetts Bay Company

In the northeast, religiously motivated settlements began at Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay. At Plymouth, the Pilgrims developed a small farming community, depending on the charity of the Wampanoag tribe led by Massasoit. In 1629, the Massachusetts Bay area became the site of a better-organized settlement of English Puritans who, under a new charter, sought to create a social experiment called the Massachusetts Bay Company. Their aim was to show the English an example of how to be piously religious as well as financially successful.

B. “We Shall Be As a City upon a Hill”

Over the next decade, 70,000 people left England for America. Many sailed to the West Indies, but a large contingent of Puritans arrived in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, enlarging the population and providing more labor to turn out the basic needs for survival. They brought with them the Calvinist ideals that embodied their religion and work ethic. These earlier settlers traded food, lodging, and raw building materials to the newest arrivals in return for textiles, tools, money, and labor. By 1640, English settlements had sprung up along the coast and up the Connecticut River where earlier smallpox infestations had removed the native menace. This rapid expansion put a quick strain on limited resources and caused church fathers to impose civic order.

C. Dissenters: Roger Williams and Ann Hutchinson

The Puritans were self-appointed saints, and as such believed God had chosen them for a special mission in this world. Not everyone, however, believed in the idea that a mandate from God required dominance of the Indians or subjugation of women by men. Roger Williams, a new arrival in the Boston area of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, angered local clerics with his views on separation of church and state and the invalidity of the king’s land grants. Williams felt that Native Americans had the only right to sell land to the Puritans. Unwilling to listen, angry magistrates banished Williams from Massachusetts. He moved south and set up a township for other dissenters called Providence and sometime later sailed back to England to secure his own charter for the colony of Rhode Island.

Ann Hutchinson, an English native, had a vision of God telling her to follow her long-time minister to the New World. She did so in 1634, migrating to Boston with husband and 15 children. Soon after, she began hosting religious discussions in her home, which troubled the authorities. Accused of anarchy and dangerous anti-Puritan ideas about the nature of divine forgiveness, she and her growing number of followers were labeled Antinomians. Hutchinson herself was convicted of contempt and sedition in a two-day hearing and forced into exile. She moved first to Williams’ Rhode Island and then to the Hudson Valley, where she and most of her family were killed by Indians.
D. Expansion and Violence: The Pequot Wars

Increasing power among Puritans in England resulted in an English Civil War that overthrew the monarchy and established in its place the English Commonwealth. In America, expanding Puritan settlements provoked a war with the Pequot tribe living along the Connecticut River. Fearing Pequot intentions, the Massachusetts Bay Colony recruited Narragansett and Mohegan Indians and waged a war so brutal that the Indian allies were shocked at the destruction and slaughter. The Mystic village massacre served as an effective threat to neighboring tribes, who reluctantly ceded lands to the English settlers.

V. The Chesapeake Bay Colonies

The successful tobacco experiment meant increasing tensions with the Powhatan Confederacy, as land-hungry Englishmen began to seize corn supplies and burn villages thought to harbor English runaways. Their aim was to convince the Indians to abide by English laws.

A. The Demise of the Virginia Company

The arrival of 3,500 additional settlers created so much tension that the remnants of the Powhatan Confederacy finally retaliated with a ten-year war that almost destroyed the Chesapeake colonies. In London, tales of the disaster fanned the flames of opposition to the Virginia Company, leading King James to annul the company’s charter in 1624, making Virginia a royal colony controlled and taxed by the Crown. Barely surviving and rebuilding with newly arriving Englishmen, the colony of Virginia once again grew to become a major force in the area. A second major Indian war, begun a decade later, resulted in the defeat of the Indian Confederacy. Land-hungry colonists swarmed into territory once held by the tribes.

B. Maryland: The Catholic Refuge

The second colony that emerged in the Chesapeake Bay area, Maryland, began in 1634 as a Catholic haven with laws protecting freedom of religion. Within 15 years, the majority of Protestants who moved to the colony took control and repealed these laws. In Maryland, as in the northern colonies, strong religious conviction did not result in respect for the religious convictions of others, but by 1660, with the reestablishment of the English monarchy, tolerance returned to the colony.
C. The Dwellings of English Newcomers

Virginia and Maryland had perhaps 35,000 settlers by 1660, while New England contained maybe 25,000. From the start, housing was a prime concern. Different climates led to contrasting architectural styles. In New England, harsher weather and longer winters caused houses to be larger, with a central fireplace. Early Chesapeake houses were less solid and smaller, with a dirt or plank floor.

D. The Lure of Tobacco

After a series of failed export products, Chesapeake resident hit upon the cultivation of tobacco. Virginia’s export of the weed grew from 2,000 pounds in 1615 to 500,000 pounds by 1626. In 1620, the British government gave Bermuda and Virginia a near monopoly on tobacco production. Even when prices were low, tobacco remained the life blood of the region.

Identification

Explain the significance of each of the following:

1. Mayflower:

2. Sebastian Vizcaino:

3. Tokugawa Dynasty:

4. Straits of Anian:

5. Juan de Onate:

6. Franciscans:

7. Florida:
8. Dutch East India Company:

9. Samuel de Champlain:

10. Cardinal Richelieu:

11. Ignatius Loyola:

12. The Beaver Wars:

13. Henry Hudson:

14. New Netherland:

15. Waloons:

16. Peter Stuyvesant:

17. “half-freedom”:

18. enclosure movement:

19. The Virginia Company:

20. Powhatan:

21. Tobacco:

22. The Massachusetts Bay Company:
23. Puritanism:

24. Roger Williams:

25. Anne Hutchinson:

26. The Pequot War:

27. Opechancanough:

28. George Calvert:

29. Maryland:

30. Anne Bradstreet:

**Multiple Choice Questions:**

1. When the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth in 1620, the English-speaking Indian they encountered was:
   A. Leif Erikson.
   B. Tecumseh.
   C. Tonto.
   D. Squanto.
   E. Metacom.

2. In 1580, in order to consolidate his power, Spain's Philip II laid claim to the throne of:
   A. Holland.
   B. Spain.
   C. England.
   D. Sweden.
   E. Portugal.
3. In 1611, Sebastian Vizcaino began a search for islands fabled for their
   A. silk.
   B. furs.
   C. gold and silver.
   D. spices.
   E. fountain of youth.

4. By 1660, England had established a colonial foothold in the Caribbean at
   A. Trinidad.
   B. St. Maarten.
   C. St. Lucia.
   D. Barbados.
   E. Haiti.

5. Religious warfare in France was ended in 1598 by the
   A. Treaty of Tordesillas.
   B. Edict of Nantes.
   C. Treaty of Utrecht.
   D. Peace of Westphalia.
   E. Treaty of Versailles.

6. The Dutch commander who seized New Sweden was
   A. Samuel de Champlain.
   B. Peter Minuit.
   C. Ronald Van Raak.
   D. Peter Stuyvesant.
   E. John Cabot.

7. The English leader of the Jamestown colony was
   A. Peter Stuyvesant.
   B. John Winthrop.
   C. John Locke.
   D. Sir Francis Drake
   E. William Bradford.

8. The Virginia colony was a financial disaster until the introduction of
   A. yams.
   B. indigo.
   C. tobacco.
   D. cotton.
   E. oranges.
9. The leader of the Massachusetts Bay Colony was the Puritan
   A. John Winthrop.
   B. Thomas Hooker.
   C. Roger Williams.
   D. William Bradford.
   E. Lord Baltimore.

10. Religious dissenter Roger Williams founded the
    A. Massachusetts colony.
    B. Rhode Island colony.
    C. Connecticut colony.
    D. Georgia colony.
    E. Kentucky colony.

**MAP QUESTION:**

Examine the hand-drawn maps of North America provided in the second chapter. How would these primitive maps, which inaccurately show land areas, affect exploration or settlement?

**CONNECTING HISTORY**

Some people conjecture that space colonization may be in the near future. Under what circumstances do you think this could be successful? Who would go?

**INTERPRETING HISTORY**

Why was Anne Bradstreet an unusual poet for the times?

**Answers to Multiple Choice Questions**

1. D
2. E
3. C
4. A
5. B
6. D
7. E
8. C
9. A
10. B