

The Mid-Atlantic Colonies



Also known as the Breadbasket colonies, the Mid-Atlantic colonies include New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, New York. The first settlers of the Mid-Atlantic colonies soon discovered that the land was good for farming, once the trees and rocks were cleared. The weather was also perfect for agriculture with its moderate climate. The Mid-Atlantic Colonies are located along the Appalachian Mountains and the areas of consists of coastal lowlands, harbors, bays, and many wide rivers.

Because the area is perfect for growing crops such as wheat, corn, and rye, these colonies became to be known as the "Breadbasket Colonies." Not only did they make money through agriculture, but they also made money through trading goods in the major market towns. Found throughout the middle colonies and through the work that unskilled and skilled workmen as well as fishermen did for the economy. The regions rich resources attracted people from many different countries in Europe and many people from varying religious backgrounds. William Penn, who founded the colony of Pennsylvania in 1682, attracted immigrants from many countries with his policies of religious liberty and freehold ownership, which meant that framers owned their land free and clear from leases and dues to landlords. The great majority of settlers who came to Pennsylvania and New Jersey before 1700 were English or Welsh Quakers and they remained the dominant social and political group unit the 1750's.

Shopkeepers and artisans-shipwrights, butchers, coopers (barrelmakers), seamstresses, shoemakers, bakers, carpenters, masons, and many other specialized producers- constituted the middle ranks of seaport society. Wives and husbands often worked as a team and passed their craft onto their children. Most of these artisans and traders earned enough income to maintain a modest but dignified existence. Farmers depended on market towns as places to trade their livestock and their crops such as grains, fruits, and vegetables. Along with the market towns, the Mid-Atlantic colonies included small towns and villages as well as big cities such as Philadelphia. Philadelphia became the largest and wealthiest city in the English colonies.

The New England Colonies



By 1636 four New England Colonies were founded: New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. The region is bordered on the west by New York State, on the north by Canada, on the east by the Atlantic Ocean, and the south by Long Island Sound; the land rises in the north and west to the New England system of the Appalachian Mountains. The coast is the most important commercial area, although during the 20th century industry and tourism have largely overrun the traditionally important activities of fishing and shipbuilding. Many of the major events of America's colonial period, including the start of the Revolution, took place in New England. New England colonists faced very cold winters and mild summers in a very rocky area which was not very good for farming. Because of this, their homes were smaller to help keep it warm. They were also closer together in small villages with small farms on each families land.

During the 17th century, New England became a religious refuge for Protestant followers of John Calvin, whose beliefs differed from those of the Church of England. One such group, the Pilgrims, established the Plymouth Colony in 1620 to escape persecution in England. The Puritans, another Calvinist sect, arrived nine years later in Massachusetts. The Puritans wanted to "purify" the Church of England. They simply wanted to change some of it ways as opposed to the Pilgrims who wanted to move away from the church. The Puritans were treated badly in England because of their beliefs. The Puritans eventually absorbed the Pilgrims and spread into Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, upstate New York, and eastern Ohio. The church was the social center where everyone could go for town meetings and celebrations. Sometimes school was actually held in the same place as church.

Other New England merchants exploited the rich fishing areas along the northeastern coast of North America, financing a large fishing fleet and transporting its catch of mackerel and cod to markets in southern Europe and the West Indies. Still other entrepreneurs took advantage of the abundant supplies of timber along the coasts and rivers of northern New England. They financed sawmills that provided low-cost wood for houses and shipbuilding. Hundreds of New England shipbuilders, sail makers, blacksmiths and other skilled craftsmen built oceangoing ships, which they sold to British and American merchants. They also carried on much of the slave trade which made New Englanders a lot of money.

The Southern Colonies



In 1607, King James granted the Virginia Company a charter establishing the first English settlement Virginia giving art to the Southern Colonies. In addition to Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, and South Carolina all make up the southern region of the English colonies. The Southern Colonies are located east of the Appalachian Mountains including the Piedmont region. It makes up part of the Atlantic Coastal plains landform which consists of good

harbors and many rivers. The climate of the Southern region is very much different than that of the New England and Mid- Atlantic region in that it is very humid. This humidity allows for great farming

Because farming in the Southern region is so wide- spread, many large plantations blanket the entire area. The plantation owners, also known as planters, were able to grow large amounts of cash crops such as tobacco, indigo, and rice. The plantations included many buildings such as the mansion or the house in which the planter's family lived in as well as the slave's cabins, cattle pen, overseer's house, stable, tobacco barn, kitchen, office, and smokehouse to start. If a family could not afford a plantation, then that family would make a living by operating a small farm. In addition to farming, the Southern Colonies economy depended on the buying and selling of the wood products used from the vast amounts of trees as well as through slavery. Because each plantation was overwhelmed with a huge amount of work to keep the fields going, the planters had to depend on slaves and indentured servants to ensure his success. The overseer's would often times watch the slaves to see if they were doing their work. Slaves were treated well or cruelly depending on their owners. Because life centered on farming, there was little time for education. Also, due to the fact that the plantations were very apart, there were hardly any formal schools. Children were often tutored at home. Very wealthy plantation owners might even pay to have a personal teacher or they might even send their children to England to receive formal training.

There were also very minimal towns and cites located in the South. Most life centered on the plantation life. Instead of using the land for building cities, they decided to use it for farming. As more and more people moved in-land to find more farmland, small towns did start to develop. Most of the towns were county seats which was a main town for a county. A county is a large part of a colony. As time went on, planters started to depend on their county seats as a place to trade their crops. Many times during a year, a family would pack their bags and travel to the county seat. People went to church, held dances, and traded for crops for goods there. Slaves were oftentimes bought and sold at the county seats as well. Most Southerners belonged to the Church of England.