



Unit 3: Settling New Hampshire, 1600–1720

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Section 1: Introduction

The 17th century was a period of great change for New Hampshire. English settlers arrived and created communities that relied on gathering the natural resources around them and shipping them back to Europe.

Life for the Abenaki changed a great deal once the English arrived, as the Abenaki were pushed off their land by the English. Sometimes the Abenaki and the English worked together, and sometimes they fought one another as these two cultures met and clashed.

By the early 18th century, many of the Abenaki had left this area, and New Hampshire had become a colony of Great Britain, with four big settlements for the English migrants.



As you learn more about the settling of New Hampshire, think about the following questions:

- How were the Abenaki impacted by the arrival of the Europeans?
- What did the explorers find when they first encountered the land?
- Why did the English settle New Hampshire?
- What was life like in the early English settlements?



Section 2: European Explorers

Why did Europeans come to the New World in the 1500s and 1600s?

Starting in the late 15th century, people from Europe became very interested in what they called the “New World,” which meant the Americas. Europeans had not known these two continents even existed before then. Once they discovered the New World, explorers tried to claim the land for their home countries back in Europe. Soon, most of North America, Central America, and South America were colonies of other countries in Europe.

Explorers in New Hampshire

Who explored New Hampshire, and why did they come?

Sebastian Cabot. The first European explorer known to have visited New Hampshire was a man named Sebastian Cabot. He was Italian, but he worked for the British government. He sailed along the New England coastline in 1507 or 1508, but he did not get off his ship or actually explore the land. He later wrote that there were a lot of trees in the area that became New Hampshire.

No European explorers visited New England again for more than 100 years.

Martin Pring. In 1603, an expedition led by Martin Pring came to New Hampshire. He was just 23 years old at the time, but he commanded two ships and 44 men on this voyage to New England. Pring was looking for sassafras, which is a plant that people used as a medicine. He and his crew landed near what is now Portsmouth.

They explored the four rivers in that area, and they traveled a few miles inland. They didn’t find any sassafras in New Hampshire, so they left and sailed south to Cape Cod where they found lots of sassafras that they took home to England.



Just a few years after Martin Pring visited New England, a group of people founded the first English settlement in North America, far to the south in what is now known as Jamestown, Virginia.

John Smith. John Smith was already a famous explorer when he came to New England. John Smith was one of the first settlers of the Jamestown Colony in Virginia in 1607, which was the first permanent English settlement in North America. He took a voyage north from Virginia in 1614 to see what the land was like in this area.

Smith sailed all along the New England coastline from Cape Cod to Maine. He went past New Hampshire, but he didn't stop and look around, except for the Isles of Shoals, which are the small islands that lie 10 miles off the New Hampshire coast. He even named the islands Smith's Isles after himself! But the name didn't catch on, and the people who came to New Hampshire after him called these islands the Isles of Shoals.

What did the first explorers find?

Martin Pring and John Smith were impressed by how many natural resources they saw in New Hampshire. There were lots of trees that could be used to make lumber to build ships or houses, and many plants and animals. There were also lots and lots of fish in the ocean.

When they returned to England, Pring and Smith each wrote a book about what they had seen. They told people about all the natural resources in New England, which would allow settlers to build new lives there and maybe even get rich. Many people in England read these books and decided to come to the New World to make their fortunes.

The government in England also claimed New Hampshire as a British colony, along with Massachusetts and Connecticut. These three British colonies made New England part of Great Britain, which meant the British government claimed a right to govern this region.



English people settled in New England, and they brought with them customs and traditions from England. By claiming New England as part of the British Empire, the British government warned other European countries, like France or Holland, not to try to settle their own people there.

New Hampshire was a British colony for the next 150 years, until the American Revolution in 1776, when the American colonies declared their independence from Great Britain. This period, from the arrival of the first English explorers in 1603 until American independence in 1776, is called the colonial period of New Hampshire's history.

Let's Review!

What are the big ideas in this section?

1. The New World: In the late 15th century Europeans became interested in claiming land in the "New World," or the Americas, for their home countries in Europe. They did not know before then that the continents existed. Soon, most of the land was claimed by Europeans for their colonies.

2. Early Explorers: The three earliest explorers of New Hampshire were Sebastian Cabot, Martin Pring, and John Smith. Sebastian Cabot did not land but Martin Pring explored near what is now Portsmouth looking for sassafras. John Smith did not come to the mainland but named the Isles of Shoals after himself as he passed by.

3. New Hampshire's Natural Resources: The early explorers brought back word to Europe and wrote books about what they found. Martin Pring and John Smith especially wrote about the plentiful natural resources in New Hampshire, like fish and forests.

4. New Hampshire as a Colony: The government in England claimed New Hampshire as a British colony. Soon English people settled in the area. New Hampshire was a British colony for the next 150 years until the Revolutionary War.



Section 3: New Hampshire's Early Industries

Why did English settlers come to New Hampshire?

In the early 1620s, English investors organized groups of settlers to travel to New Hampshire and set up outposts here. Their goal was to make money from New Hampshire's many natural resources. There were three industries that New Hampshire became known for during this period, called the three F's: fish, fur, and forests.

Fish

The Atlantic Ocean off the coast of New England was full of huge schools of fish in the 1600s. English explorers wrote that they thought the area could never run out of fish. Some even said that there were so many fish that a person might be able to walk across the ocean on the backs of the fish! In reality, no one could really walk on fish that were swimming in the ocean, but the imagery the explorers used helped people understand how many fish there were in the waters of New England.

There were many different kinds of fish, but the most common was cod. Cod was an inexpensive food for people in Europe, and for most Europeans it was a staple of their diet. As cod became a popular food in Europe, more and more fishermen came to New England to catch cod and ship it back to Europe.

English fishermen set up the first settlements in New Hampshire along the coast and on the Isles of Shoals. These settlements were very simple, just a collection of small shacks where the fishermen could sleep and eat when they weren't out in boats catching fish.

The fishermen used giant nets to scoop the fish out of the ocean and bring them onto the boat. Once they had a full load of fish, they would land their boats and carry all the fish onshore. Then they would lay the fish out in the sun on racks so the fish would dry out. This process would preserve the fish



so they wouldn't go bad. Once the fish were dried out, they were loaded onto ships and taken to Europe where the fish was sold to people to eat.

The earliest and largest fishing operation in New Hampshire was at a place called Pannaway on the seacoast. We know it today as Odiorne Point in Rye. The settlement was started in 1623 by a man named David Thomson.

Thomson wanted to fish in New England all year long, not just during the warm months like other fishermen were doing. When he arrived in New Hampshire with 20 other men, they built a large stone house to provide shelter for them in the colder months, and they fished year round.

Many of the settlers who arrived with Thomson stayed in New Hampshire permanently.

Pannaway was not the only fishing operation in New Hampshire, though. Other fishing operations were set up on the Isles of Shoals and up and down the New Hampshire coastline. Most of them were seasonal, but many men came to work in them and then decided to remain in New Hampshire.

Fishing was one of New Hampshire's most important industries for the next 150 years.

Fur

New Hampshire was home to many kinds of animals during this period, including hundreds of thousands of beavers. Beavers lived in the many lakes and rivers in the area but mostly inland, away from the seacoast. They were small animals, but they had beautiful, warm fur that people turned into clothing like coats and hats.

As beaver pelts became more and more popular in Europe, the demand for beaver fur became greater. Investors realized they could make a lot of money supplying furs to people in Europe.



In 1629, an English investor named John Mason started a company that was based in New Hampshire and supplied beaver furs for sale in England. His business was called the Laconia Company.

Mason sent more than 100 English men and women to New Hampshire. He told the settlers to break into small groups and build outposts along the rivers in the area.

It was Mason who named this region New Hampshire because he came from the county of Hampshire in England.

The settlers followed Mason's instructions and started trapping thousands of beavers. After trapping beavers, the skins had to be removed quickly so the pelts didn't spoil. Once the pelts were cleaned and dried, they were packed up and shipped back to England.

The settlers also formed partnerships with the Abenaki to help them trap beavers. The Abenaki brought beaver pelts to the settlers, and in exchange the settlers gave the Abenaki metal tools and other English objects the Abenaki found useful.

The English settlers and the Abenaki trapped so many beavers that soon there weren't any left in that part of New Hampshire. In an effort to find more beavers, English settlers traveled far inland to places like the Lakes Region and the White Mountains.

By the middle of the 17th century, beavers were almost extinct in many parts of New Hampshire.

Forests

New Hampshire's other major industry during the colonial period were its trees. When the first English settlers arrived in New Hampshire, it was covered by thick forests that were full of many different types of trees like birch, maple, chestnut, oak, and pine.



Wood was very important for the English settlers. They needed timber to build houses, meeting houses, and bridges. They used it to make wagons and boats. They built boxes and barrels out of wood to store food and other supplies. They used wood to make tools. They also needed a lot of wood to cook their food and heat their houses.

As more English settlers arrived in New England, they quickly chopped down the trees around them, especially in places where lots of people settled, like Massachusetts. New Hampshire had lots of trees, though, and people in New Hampshire cut them down and sold the wood to people in Massachusetts to make money.

New Hampshire also supplied wood to build ships. Ships were very important to the early settlers because they had to ship all their products, like fish and furs, to England.

People also sailed on ships themselves to cross the Atlantic Ocean to Europe and back.

Many of the fishermen who came to New Hampshire had experience building ships. They set up shipbuilding operations along the seacoast, especially in a new settlement they built called Strawberry Banke, which we know today as Portsmouth.

Portsmouth had a deep harbor, which made it easier to build and launch ships that were big enough to sail the Atlantic Ocean. It was also at the mouth of four rivers that went inland.

Portsmouth became an important center for shipbuilding in America.

New Hampshire's forests also provided tall white pine trees used for masts on ships. Masts were used to hold the sails on a ship in place. At this time, all ships were sailing ships, which meant they were powered by wind in their sails pushing them forward.



The tall white pine trees used for ships' masts were sometimes more than 200 feet tall and so wide that they were strong enough not to break when the wind pushed against the sails. Most ships that sailed on the Atlantic Ocean at this time had three or four masts, and the masts had to be replaced every 15 or 20 years.

With all the English ships sailing in the 17th century, there was a lot of demand for mast trees. Luckily, New Hampshire had a big supply of them.

Most of the mast trees were used for the ships of the British navy. England had a long tradition of having a strong navy because England itself is an island. Having a strong navy was how England protected itself from other countries.

In the 17th century, the British navy was getting bigger, as English explorers traveled around the world claiming more places as British colonies.

The British navy also started building ships that were bigger than ever before. By the end of the 17th century, one ship in the British navy might have as many as 20 masts!

It was a lot of work to cut down these huge trees and move them out of the forest. Several men would use axes to chop through the trunk of the tree and bring it to the ground. Then they would cut off the branches so just the trunk was left. Once they had cut down several trees, they tied the trunks together and hitched them to a team of oxen.

The oxen pulled the trunks through the forest until they reached a river. The trunks were then moved into the river and floated downstream until they reached a harbor near the ocean. Then the trunks were either used to build ships right there in the harbor, or they were loaded onto specially built mast ships that could carry the giant trees in their holds. The ships sailed to England or a port where ships were built, and the trees were used to build or repair the sailing ships.



Once the mast trees were all used up in one area of New Hampshire, the English then pushed further inland to new parts of the colony to find more pine trees of the right height and strength to be ships' masts.

The paths that the oxen cut through the forests as they dragged the trees to the rivers became almost like roads. In fact, many towns in New Hampshire turned those paths into roads when the towns were settled. Some of those roads still exist today. They have names like Mast Road or Mast Street. These roads are hundreds of years old and were once used for this early New Hampshire industry.

Most of the trees used as ships' masts on English ships in the 17th century and 18th century came from New Hampshire. In fact, the colony became famous for its mast trees, and the British navy seemed to need more and more of them every year.

The British government started passing laws in the late 1600s to claim the mast trees for themselves. British officials carved a mark on all the mast trees they could find. The mark, called the King's Broad Arrow, meant only the British government could use those trees. The colonists in New Hampshire were not allowed to cut them down for themselves.

The people of New Hampshire didn't like this law, but they had to follow it or they would be in trouble with the government.

These three early industries brought many people to New Hampshire. Some of them came just to make money and then returned home. But many people grew to love New Hampshire and decided to make their homes here. They built more permanent settlements that over time grew to be towns, which still exist today.

Let's Review!

What are the big ideas in this section?



1. The Three F's: New Hampshire's three early industries were based on fish, fur, and forests. These three industries brought many people to New Hampshire. Some came to make money and then returned to England, but others decided to stay in New Hampshire and build settlements.
2. Fish: An important natural resource in New Hampshire were the many fish in the ocean, especially cod. Fisherman set up the first settlements in New Hampshire so that they could catch fish, dry the fish, and ship the fish to sell in Europe. Fishing was an important industry for the next 150 years in New Hampshire.
3. Fur: As beaver pelts became popular in Europe the industry around beaver fur grew. Beaver trappers collected pelts to ship back to England. They also developed partnerships with the Abenaki to help trap more beavers. However, soon they trapped so many beavers that by the middle of the 17th century beavers were almost extinct in parts of New Hampshire.
4. Forests: During the colonial period, a major industry was providing wood for people who used it to build structures and to burn for heat and cooking. Portsmouth used wood to become a center of shipbuilding. Most especially, New Hampshire's white pine trees were cut down for masts for warships for the British navy during this time.



Section 4: The Abenaki Response

How did the Abenaki react to the English settlers?

When Martin Pring visited New Hampshire in 1603, there were more than 20,000 Abenaki living here, many of them along the seacoast. They lived in small tribal groups, and their lives were shaped by the traditional practices that had developed over thousands of years. They had complex communities that interacted with one another throughout the region.

The Abenaki relied on the natural resources around them to make the things they needed to survive in New Hampshire. They were careful to protect the balance of the world, so they only hunted or fished as much as they needed to live. When they killed animals, they honored the animals for their sacrifice and made sure to use every part of the animals so nothing was wasted. They also grew crops and gathered berries and nuts to eat.

The Abenaki shared their culture through stories and music. They also made beautiful baskets and jewelry from quahog shells, which were called wampum.

The Abenaki who lived near the Atlantic Ocean sometimes interacted with fishermen from Europe, who sailed to New England to catch the huge schools, or groups, of fish in this part of the ocean.

These fishermen accidentally brought diseases with them and gave the diseases to the Abenaki. The fishermen had been exposed to these diseases in their home countries, so they had some immunity, or protection, from getting sick. But since the Abenaki had never encountered these diseases before, they got very, very sick, and many of them died.

Between 1616 to 1619, there was a pandemic among the Abenaki living near the seacoast, and thousands of them died from these European diseases. In all, less than 25% of the Abenaki in the seacoast region survived. The pandemic affected the Abenaki in the rest of New Hampshire



too, but it hit the seacoast area the hardest.

It was a terrible time for the Abenaki. Those who survived lost many family members and friends to the pandemic. They also grew unsure of how they should react to the English people who began arriving in New Hampshire to stay.

Should they welcome them and try to live in peace with them? Or should they fight them until they made the English leave?

The Abenaki looked to their sachem Passaconaway for guidance. Passaconaway told the Abenaki that he had dreamed the English settlers would stay in New Hampshire no matter what. He advised the Abenaki to accept the English and not fight against them. He hoped that they could all live peaceably together.

For most of the 1600s, the Abenaki and the English *did* get along with one another in New Hampshire, but the English brought many changes with them, including new industries that upset the balance of the natural world.

How did life change for the Abenaki after the English settlers arrived?

The Abenaki and the English lived in peace with one another for most of the 17th century. The arrival of the English settlers brought big changes to the Abenaki's traditional way of life, though.

The pandemic killed many Abenaki even before the English began to arrive in large numbers. Early English settlers wrote about finding empty Abenaki villages because all the people had died of disease. No one knows exactly how many Abenaki died, but some people believe it was more than 75% of the population. That means for every four people, three of them died in the pandemic.

The survivors had to organize themselves into new family groups and tribes.



Many of the Abenaki sachems died as well, so the Abenaki did not have leaders to guide them through these hard times.

When the English first arrived in New Hampshire in the 1620s and 1630s, the Abenaki helped them adapt to life in New Hampshire.

The Abenaki taught them what crops would grow in New Hampshire's soil and showed the English many different ways to use the natural resources available to them. The Abenaki shared with the English how to build both dugout canoes and birch bark canoes. They taught them how to use snowshoes to travel in winter. They showed them how to make maple syrup. They helped the English learn what plants were safe to eat and how to hunt the animals in New Hampshire. They told the English about the best places to trap beavers. The Abenaki also shared with the English what they knew about the land further away from the seacoast, where there were large lakes and great mountains.

Without the help of the Abenaki, the English might not have survived when they first came to New Hampshire.

In return, the English introduced the Abenaki to new tools and objects made from metal, like cooking pots, axes, knives, and guns. Metal was stronger and tougher than anything the Abenaki could find in nature.

The Abenaki saw how useful metal objects could be for them, so they traded with the English for things made out of metal.

The Abenaki also became trading partners with the English in trapping beavers and catching fish. The Abenaki knew the land better than the English did, and they had experience with the animals. But normally the Abenaki would only catch as many animals as they needed, and they would make sure to use all parts of the animal. This practice prevented them from killing too many animals at any one time because they cared about balancing what was good for nature as well as what was good for them.



The trade with the English changed this pattern because the English wanted so many beavers and so much fish all at once, as much as the Abenaki could catch. The animal population went down because more animals were dying than being born. For the beavers, the English wanted only the pelts, so the rest of the animal was wasted. Catching so many beavers and so many fish upset the balance of nature that the Abenaki valued.

As more English settlers arrived, the Abenaki were pushed off their lands. The Abenaki moved west to go further inland and join other tribes of Abenaki. But as the English pushed their settlements further inland, the Abenaki were again pushed even further west and north.

The English settlers believed they owned the land on which they built their communities, and they did not want the Abenaki to live near them. The Abenaki were used to sharing natural resources with others, so they did not understand why the English wanted them to leave. Many of the English settlers did not respect the Abenaki's culture or traditions either.

Let's Review!

What are the big ideas in this section?

1. Abenaki People: In 1600 the more than 20,000 Abenaki people who lived in New Hampshire had complex communities. They relied on natural resources to make what they needed. They protected the balance of the world by only taking as many natural resources from the earth as necessary. They shared their culture through stories, art, and music.
2. Pandemic among the Abenaki: In the 1600s fisherman from Europe brought diseases and accidentally gave them to the Abenaki. The Abenaki had never been exposed to these diseases before. More than 75% of the Abenaki in the seacoast region died as a result. Their communities were devastated.



3. Passaconaway, Abenaki Leader: In the early 1600s, the Abenaki's sachem Passaconaway advised them to live peaceably with the English. He thought the Abenaki needed to accept that the English explorers and settlers were staying even if they brought much change.

4. Abenaki and English Living Together: At first the English and Abenaki traded and shared information with each other. The Abenaki helped the English survive in New Hampshire, and the English gave the Abenaki tools and objects of metal. However, as more English settlers arrived the Abenaki were pushed off their lands, which led to conflict.



Section 5: The First Four Towns

Where did the English first settle in New Hampshire?

For the first 100 years of New Hampshire's colonial period, the English settled in the seacoast region and stayed within 40 miles of the coast. In these years, four communities of English settlers were created. These communities became New Hampshire's first four towns.

Dover

In 1623, two brothers named William and Edward Hilton founded a settlement on the Piscataqua River, which they named Hilton's Point. The Hilton brothers had come to New Hampshire to work on David Thomson's fishing operation, but once they got here they decided to head out on their own instead.

Hilton's Point changed its name many times, but most people called it by the Abenaki name for the area: Cocheco. It eventually became known as Dover.

Dover is the oldest permanent settlement in New Hampshire. At the time it was founded in 1623, there were only a few other permanent settlements in the British colonies in America.

At first, not many people settled in Cocheco, but in the 1640s, lots of people started to move to the area. They built big log houses, including a garrison house for protection from the Abenaki. The people who lived there trapped beavers, cut down mast trees, and farmed the land around them.

Portsmouth

The Laconia Company, the business run by John Mason, was based on the coast of New Hampshire in a small settlement known as Strawberry Banke because strawberries grew there. The Laconia Company went out of business after just a few years, but many of the people who lived at



Strawbery Banke decided to stay there instead of returning to England.

The settlement was in a good spot, near where the Atlantic Ocean met four rivers: the Saco River, the York River, the Kennebunk River, and the Piscataqua River. It also had a deep harbor that made it the best place for ships from other ports, like Boston or even England, to stop.

Many of the people who lived in Strawbery Banke became merchants. They would buy natural resources, like beaver pelts, fish, or mast trees, from people who lived further inland and then sell those items to people who shipped them to other places in the world. Some of the merchants even owned their own ships and made money by selling goods throughout America and Europe.

Strawbery Banke grew very quickly, especially as many of the merchants who lived there made a lot of money. They built big houses, churches, a meeting hall, and warehouses to store all the goods they were buying and selling.

John Mason planned to move there and ordered that a large house be built for him and his family. Unfortunately, he died before he could leave England and never saw New Hampshire.

Strawbery Banke became the largest town in New Hampshire, and in 1653 it changed its name to Portsmouth. The new name was a tribute to John Mason, who had lived in Portsmouth, England.

Hampton

South of Portsmouth and slightly inland was the community of Hampton. The people who settled at Hampton were English, but most of them had lived in Massachusetts before they came to New Hampshire. The colonial government in Massachusetts wanted to expand how much land Massachusetts controlled, so it encouraged people from Massachusetts to move to New Hampshire and build a new settlement.



These colonists from Massachusetts formed a community at Hampton in 1638, although the settlement was originally called Winnacunnet, which was based on an Abenaki word. Many more people from Massachusetts moved to Hampton in the 17th century. The people of Hampton were mostly fishermen and farmers. They kept close ties to the people of Massachusetts.

Exeter

The furthest inland of all four English communities was Exeter.

The 200 people who settled there in 1638 were also from Massachusetts, but they didn't get along with the government in Massachusetts very well. People in Massachusetts had to follow a lot more laws than the people in New Hampshire did, especially about religion. The Exeter settlers were looking for more freedom to practice their religion than the Massachusetts government would allow.

The leader of this community was a minister named John Wheelwright.

There were more Abenaki who lived in this area of New Hampshire than where the other English settlements were. The pandemic hadn't hit the Abenaki in the area around Exeter as hard as it hit those who lived on the seacoast.

Wheelwright didn't want any conflict with the Abenaki who lived near the new settlement. He made an agreement with the Abenaki sachem, Wehanownowit, to buy a piece of land so the English could build a town. Wheelwright wrote out a deed for the purchase of the land, and Wehanownowit signed his name by drawing a figure that represented him. The English and the Abenaki had different ideas about what the deed meant, though. The English thought the deed gave them ownership of the land and everything on it. The Abenaki thought it meant they would share the natural resources found on the land and that their communities would work together.



Exeter quickly grew to be the second largest community in New Hampshire. Most of the people who lived there were farmers.

Let's Review!

What are the big ideas in this section?

1. Dover: There were four settlements in New Hampshire in the first 100 years. Dover is the oldest permanent settlement. In 1623, Edward and William Hilton started it on the Piscataqua River. In the 1640s it grew as people developed industries and farms.
2. Portsmouth: Portsmouth was originally called Strawberry Banke, and the town sits where the Atlantic Ocean meets four rivers. Because of this location many of the people who lived there became merchants. They would take items from New Hampshire and ship them to other places. They also brought goods from elsewhere in the world to the people of New Hampshire.
3. Hampton: English people from Massachusetts settled in 1638 in Hampton. People who lived there were mostly fisherman and farmers and were closely connected to Massachusetts.
4. Exeter: Exeter was further inland than the other three towns. It was settled in 1638 by people from Massachusetts. They were looking for religious tolerance. They had to work with the Abenaki to get land for their town and made an agreement with a local Abenaki leader. However, the Abenaki and the English did not have the same view of their agreement.



Section 6: Towns Become a Colony

Government

How were the towns governed?

Each of the four towns had its own government run by the people of the town. These governments made all the decisions in each town.

There wasn't a government for the colony of New Hampshire yet. Even the British government didn't pay much attention to the English settlements in New Hampshire. Instead, each community was independent and could do what it wanted.

Church

Church was a very important part of life for most English settlers to New Hampshire. In fact, many of them left England and came to America because they wanted more freedom to practice their religion. In this early period of settlement, most towns only had one church, which was Protestant Christian.

The minister of a town's church was a very important person. Most people looked up to him for his wisdom and experience. The church was the center of town life. The church helped the poor and the sick, as well as being the social center of the town. Most people went to church on Sundays and spent the entire day there listening to the minister's sermons. He usually preached one in the morning and another one in the afternoon.

A town's church and its government were two different things, but they often worked together to provide leadership for a community.



Schools

Starting in the 1640s, New Hampshire communities had schools for children so they could learn how to read and write and do simple math. But schools did not meet every day as children had so much work to do on the farms.

Schools were mostly for boys. Girls attended school to learn the basics of how to read and write, but many people thought girls would learn most of what they needed to know at home from their mothers.

Farming

How did most people earn their living in these early New Hampshire communities?

Many people worked in those three main industries that were so important to early New Hampshire: fishing, furs, and forests. But there was a fourth industry that almost everyone worked in—farming.

All the English immigrants who came to New Hampshire had to produce their own food. Nearly everyone hunted animals like deer, fox, or rabbit to eat. Vegetable gardens were very common too, even in larger towns like Portsmouth.

What did farms produce in colonial New Hampshire?

Farming in New Hampshire was very hard. Many crops did not do well in New Hampshire's rocky soil. And there were so many rocks! Farmers had to dig up hundreds of thousands of rocks and move them out of the way to clear their fields for planting.

The growing season was also very short in New Hampshire compared to other places in America, especially further south. With a short growing season, crops did not grow very big or produce very much. Weather was a constant concern for farmers, as they needed just the right conditions to



grow things. Too much water or not enough water could destroy the crops. A windstorm or ice storm could damage the crops as well.

Farming in New Hampshire was known as subsistence farming because New Hampshire farms produced just enough to allow people to subsist, or survive.

New Hampshire farms also produced many different types of crops. Farmers grew crops like wheat, corn, or barley. They also adopted the Abenaki practice of growing the "three sisters," which was corn, beans, and squash all tangled up together.

They had orchards that produced apples, which did well in New Hampshire. They gathered berries and nuts, just like the Abenaki did.

They raised livestock like cows, sheep, and goats, which produced milk so the farmers could make dairy products like cheese and butter. The livestock also provided leather for shoes and clothing, and the animals could be killed to produce meat. The fleece from sheep was used to make thread that was woven into cloth that was used for clothing and bedding. They also raised chickens, who laid eggs, which was an important source of food.

They tapped trees in the late winter to produce maple syrup once the Abenaki showed them how to do it.

They also had to chop wood to keep the fires going for cooking and heating.

Farmers tried to produce everything they needed to live right there on their farms. Every member of a family had to learn helpful skills and crafts.

Women not only took care of the children and did all the cooking, but they made soap and candles, and turned fleece into thread and cloth so they could make clothing.

Men hunted and fished, made tools and other farm equipment, built



structures on the farm like barns, sheds, or chicken coops, and usually had other crafts or skills, like making shoes or furniture.

For most people living on farms, the day-to-day work kept them too busy to do anything else except go to church once a week and attend a few community events, like town meetings or weddings.

Neighbors helped each other when they could, and members of a town would work for the community sometimes, doing things like building a bridge or a meeting house.

Unsettled Government

How did New Hampshire become a British colony?

For most of the 17th century, the New Hampshire towns governed themselves without any kind of government that united all of them. Massachusetts often tried to claim that the New Hampshire towns were part of that colony, but most people in New Hampshire ignored them. For a while in the 1670s, though, the New Hampshire settlements officially became part of Massachusetts as Norfolk County.

In 1679, the British government decided that the New Hampshire towns should be their own colony with their own government overseeing all of them. The British government recognized New Hampshire as a separate colony from Massachusetts. By that time, there were about 2,000 English people living in New Hampshire.

Once New Hampshire was separate from Massachusetts, it needed its own government. It had grown too big not to have a colonial government for all the people living there.

In 1680, the people of New Hampshire elected representatives for its first colonial legislature, which was called the Assembly. New Hampshire still had



a lot of ties to Massachusetts, though. In fact, the two colonies shared the same governor, who was appointed by the British government.

By the early 1700s, the people of New Hampshire were ready to expand their colony. They had settlements spread throughout southeastern New Hampshire. They had industries that allowed people to earn money and drew more people to New Hampshire. They had a government that the people of New Hampshire had a say in running. And they were part of the British Empire, which had many colonies in North America.

Let's Review!

What are the big ideas in this section?

1. Government, Church, and Schools: Each of the four towns had its own government run by the people of the town, and the church was also very important in their lives. During this time, New Hampshire communities also began to have schools, although they were mostly for boys.
2. Farming: Farming in New Hampshire was called subsistence farming. New Hampshire was not a very easy place to grow crops. To survive, farmers learned from the Abenaki, raised livestock, and grew what they could, like wheat, fruit trees, or the "three sisters." Farming families worked hard to produce everything right on their farms that they needed to survive.
3. A British Colony: During the 17th century, the New Hampshire towns governed themselves separately, although the people of Massachusetts did try to claim the towns as part of their colony. In 1679 the British government recognized New Hampshire as its own colony. In 1680 the people of New Hampshire elected representatives for its first colonial legislature.
4. Looking Forward: By the early 1700s New Hampshire was established and looking expand. It had settlements, industries, and a government. It was



part of the British Empire and was one of the British colonies in North America.



Section 7: Conflict Between Cultures

How did the relationship between the Abenaki and the English change in the late 1600s?

In the 1660s and 1670s, the Abenaki and the English started to clash more. Passaconaway, who was a very old man by then, stopped guiding his people and turned leadership over to his son Wonalancet and his grandson, Kancamagus.

Wonalancet tried to keep the peace between the Abenaki and the English, but Kancamagus was very unhappy with the way the English treated the Abenaki. There were many English settlers in New Hampshire by then, and Kancamagus realized that there would soon be more English than Abenaki in New Hampshire.

King Philip's War

The Abenaki also had to make room for indigenous people from southern New England. In 1675–76, there was a war in Massachusetts and Rhode Island between the English settlers and Native Americans in the Wampanoag tribe. This war was called King Philip's War because the English called the leader of the Wampanoags King Philip. His real name was Metacom.

King Philip was killed in the war, and the Wampanoags lost the fight against the English settlers in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Some of the Wampanoags who survived moved north to New Hampshire to live among the Abenaki.

The English settlers in New Hampshire were not happy that the Wampanoags came here. They worried that the Wampanoags would convince the Abenaki to start a war with the English in New Hampshire.

In 1676, some English settlers in Dover decided to trick the Native Americans so they could get rid of the Wampanoags. They were led by a



man named Richard Waldron, who was an important man in Dover. Waldron and his friends organized a big party for the Native Americans with food and games.

Once the party had been going on for a while and everyone was getting tired, Waldron and the local soldiers surrounded the Native Americans and captured them. They sent them all to Boston, where the Abenaki were separated from the Wampanoags. The Abenaki returned to New Hampshire, but most of the Wampanoags were treated very badly. Many were sold into slavery and sent to work in far away places where they died. Even though the Abenaki went back to New Hampshire, they were very angry at the way they had been treated and at what had happened to the Wampanoags.

A few years later Kancamagus advised the Abenaki in the southern part of New Hampshire to move far north to what is today the North Country so that they could continue their way of life away from the English. Some of the Abenaki went all the way to Canada where they created new settlements. Others joined Abenaki communities in Vermont or Maine.

Colonial Wars

The Abenaki were still angry with the English colonists in New Hampshire. Sometimes they attacked English settlements in New Hampshire, and there were terrible fights between the Abenaki and the English. Many people died in the fighting during this period.

These battles between the Abenaki and the English were part of larger wars between the French and the English. Both France and England had colonies in North America, so when war broke out between them, fighting occurred in their American colonies. The Abenaki were allies with the French, so when they attacked English settlements in New Hampshire they were helping their French allies.

The English town of Dover was often attacked by the Abenaki because it was on the edges of the territory the English had settled in New Hampshire.



During one of these attacks, Richard Waldron, who had tricked the Abenaki many years earlier, was killed.

Oyster River Massacre

The biggest Abenaki attack happened in a settlement called Oyster River in 1694. Oyster River was part of Dover. The Abenaki burned many of the English colonists' homes, and more than 20 people were killed in the fighting.

When word spread throughout New Hampshire of the Oyster River Massacre, the English were afraid to leave their towns. They stopped building new settlements for many years and instead stayed close to home.

Finally, in 1713, the English signed a treaty with the Abenaki, which ended the fighting. By then, though, most of the Abenaki in New Hampshire lived far to the north because they had been pushed off their land in southern New Hampshire for so many years.

Let's Review!

What are the big ideas in this section?

1. Changing Relationship: In the 1660s and 1670s the Abenaki and English had more conflict. Passaconaway turned over leadership to his son and grandson. His grandson Kancamagus realized that there would soon be more English than Abenaki in the area.
2. King Philip's War: Indigenous people from Massachusetts and Rhode Island came to New Hampshire after King Philip's War pushed them off their lands. The English in New Hampshire did not want indigenous people who had been part of a war to live here. They tricked the new people and attacked them, which angered the Abenaki.



3. Moving Away: After this time Kancamagus advised the Abenaki to move away from the southern part of New Hampshire so that they could live the way they wanted. Some Abenaki did not leave, but many did. During this time there was a lot of anger leading to terrible fights between the Abenaki and the English.

4. The Treaty of 1713: There were many fights between the Abenaki and the English in these years, but the biggest one was in 1694, called the Oyster River Massacre. To end the fighting, the English agreed to a treaty with the Abenaki in 1713, although by this time most Abenaki had been pushed off their lands.