

THE WHITE PINE TREE

One of New Hampshire's most valuable natural resources was the white pine tree. The colonists and the king disagreed over who should be able to use them. What was so special about the white pine tree?

THE SIZE

In the 1700s, there were very old white pines that had grown 240 feet tall and 8 feet across! Most white pines in New Hampshire today are less than 140 feet tall.

THE LAW



People living in the colonies could not cut down trees wider than 2 feet across. If you got caught with boards wider than 23 inches in your house or barn, you'd be in trouble!

THE USES

These trees made perfect masts for sailing ships. England had the most ships in the world, so that was a lot of masts! Colonists wanted to build with the trees and sell the wood.



THE IMPACT

Colonists would try to sneak around and cut down the marked trees without getting caught. It made them angry that the king was keeping something worth so much money for himself.

240 FEET

THEN

THE MARK

Trees that had to be saved for the king were carved with a mark called the King's Broad Arrow. If someone cut down that tree, they could be fined 100 pounds, which was a lot of money.

— 8 FEET —

NOW



1. Why were white pines so valuable in the 1700s?
2. Why did the king think that he had the right to own and use the white pines? Why did the colonists think they should be able to own and use the white pines?
3. If one story of a building is about 14 feet, how many stories are pine trees today? How many stories were the white pines in the 1700s?