

Royal vs. Colonial Control New England, Part I

- 1620 Pilgrims, separatists from Church of England who had removed to Amsterdam about 1607 for religious freedom, sail for New World in the Mayflower under command of Captain Myles Standish; 101 people, mostly non-Pilgrims, are aboard
- 1620 December only after a Mayflower Compact is signed by 41 adults to establish “a civil body politic” to make “just and equal laws” to the Pilgrims and others land at Plymouth Rock
- 1621 William Bradford II becomes Governor of Plymouth Colony and remains in office except for 5 years until 1656; each person receives a grant of 100 acres as well as 1,500 acres for public use at a yearly quitrent of 2 shillings per 100 acres
- 1626 the Pilgrims buy out their London investors
- 1629 meanwhile, a Royal charter is granted to the Massachusetts Bay Company to set up a self-governing commonwealth, first at Salem; 12 Puritans, fearing religious oppression in England, make the Cambridge Agreement to organize emigration to America
- 1630 11 ships eventually sail for Massachusetts Bay followed over the next decade by many others; eventually, 20,000 settlers participate in the Great Migration
- 1630 September-October2; having been chosen the first Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, John Winthrop I holds his first meeting with the assembly followed by the first meeting of the Massachusetts General Court; there are 130 freemen; in violation of the Royal charter, the General court is illegally limited to church members until 1664
- 1630 to better define the boundaries of the Plymouth Colony, a New Plymouth Patent (later called the Old Charter) is granted by the Council for New England back in London
- 1632 May 19; after a protest by colonists at Watertown, Massachusetts over a tax levied by the colony’s Court of Assistants, the General Court regains the right of electing the governor and his deputy
- 1634 freemen of each Massachusetts town now send deputies to the General Court; deputies and assistants elected by freemen in a court of election sit in one House only until 1644
- 1635 Roger Williams, a pastor, is banished from Massachusetts for rejecting the right of authorities to legislate matters of conscience and for urging the Salem Church to separate from the rest; the General Court only seats Salem deputies after they reject Williams’ plea; Williams flees to the protection of friendly Indians
- 1636 a Great Fundamentals code establishes a Plymouth Colony General Court made up of two deputies from each town to be chosen by freemen as well as a Governor with assistants to make up a governing council
- 1636 Anne Hutchinson, wife of a member of the Massachusetts General Court, is tried for sedition for Antinomianism, or stressing grace, rather than works, as the means to Salvation, and as well emphasizing personal revelation from God without need for an orthodox clergy role; she has influenced the new governor, Sir Henry V but is denounced by her brother-in-law the Reverend John Wheelwright in Boston; although tried and convicted, her sentence of death is postponed
- 1636 June; Roger Williams founds the settlement of Providence in what later becomes Rhode Island; his guiding principle is toleration of dissent and co-existence with Indian tribes
- 1636 John Winthrop II the Younger becomes governor of settlements at the mouth of the Connecticut River; a plan of government is drawn up by the Massachusetts General Court; a principle is established that authority should arise from the free consent of the people
- 1637 John Winthrop I the Elder defeats Vane for the governorship; 25 ministers gather at Newtown to define orthodox Puritan doctrine; the General Court formally banishes Wheelwright and Hutchinson; she joins Roger Williams on Narragansett Bay 1638, then founds Pocasset (later renamed Portsmouth), and is eventually in 1643 killed by Indians on Long Island, New York
- 1637 a colony is founded at New Haven (Quinnipiac) by the Reverend John Davenport, Theophilus Eaton, a London

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ACTIVE LINKS IN RED

Andros, Sir Edmund	biography	family tree
Bradford II, William	biography	family tree
Cranfield, Edward	biography	family tree
Davenport I, John	biography	family tree
Dudley, Joseph	biography	family tree
Eaton, Theophilus	biography	family tree
Hutchinson, Anne	biography	family tree
Mather, Cotton	biography	family tree
Mather, Increase	biography	family tree
Randolph, Edward	biography	family tree
Standish, Myles	biography	family tree
Vane V, Sir Henry	biography	family tree
Wheelright, John	biography	family tree
Williams, Roger	biography	family tree
Winthrop I, John	biography	family tree
Winthrop II, John	biography	family tree

- merchant, and others
- 1637 conflict with Pequots is decided by a war in which the Mohegans, Narragansetts, and Niantic Indians side with the United Colony of New England and other tribes remain inactive; confederation forces under command of Captain John Mason of Connecticut kill over 600 Pequots in one attack and virtually expunge the tribe
- 1638 Wheelwright founds Exeter (later part of the colony of New Hampshire); an Exeter Compact is based on the Mayflower Compact; but Exeter and other towns eventually recognize Massachusetts authority
- 1639 in what becomes the colony of Connecticut, a Fundamental Orders frame of government is adopted by the towns of Hartford, Windsor, and Wethersfield, but Springfield opts out and eventually sits with the Massachusetts General Court; the Connecticut governor is to be approved by the congregation, magistrates are to be elected “by the vote of the country” (in other words freemen), and voting for town officials is open to “admitted inhabitants” (that is Trinitarian male householders; after 1657 in possession of 30 pounds estate)
- 1640s Massachusetts tries to annex Maine
- 1641 the Massachusetts General Court adopts a Body of Liberties code drawn up by Nathaniel Ward and based on the Pentateuch; protests over civil and religious discrimination against non-Puritans and ignoring the laws of England become more frequent
- 1641 however, back in England, the strain between on the one hand King Charles I and his supporters, including many Catholic sympathizers, and on the other Protestants in Parliament dedicated to the Anglican religion as well as Puritanism becomes worse; the situation will deteriorate into open Civil War
- 1643 a Connecticut General Court is founded with two deputies each from the towns of New Haven, Stamford, Guilford, and Milford; a Connecticut Frame of Government uses Mosaic law as the basis for the legal system; there is no trial by jury
- 1643 trouble with Pequot Indians and rivalry with the Dutch of New Netherlands (later New York) causes the colonies of Massachusetts, Plymouth, Connecticut, and New Haven to form a United Colonies of New England confederation; delegates in Boston draw up 12 articles of confederation which preserve the territorial integrity of the four colonies but establish a confederation government led by eight commissioners, two from each colony, to be chosen annually by the General Courts of each; commissioners can declare war and apportion the cost of same by population; additionally, they have authority over inter-colonial quarrels, Indian affairs, and dealing with run-away servants and fugitives from justice; six votes, or in other words a two-thirds majority, are needed for a decision; the confederation continues to hold annual meetings until 1664 and is not formally disbanded until 1684
- 1644 in an attempt to head off war with Native Americans, the Massachusetts General Court orders efforts to convert and settle Indians
- 1644 the Massachusetts General Court is split into two houses
- 1644 traveling to London, Roger Williams receives a charter to establish the colony of Rhode Island, now including settlements at Providence, Portsmouth, Newport, and Warwick
- 1645 through the exertions of Williams, war with the Narragansett Indians is avoided
- 1647 a Rhode Island general assembly composed of freemen from towns meets at Portsmouth; they establish freedom of conscience, the principle of separation of church and state, town referrals on laws passed by the assembly, and the right of towns as well as the assembly to initiate laws; all these provisions are based on English Common Law
- 1649 ironically, in England the victory of Parliamentary forces over royal forces results in the execution of King Charles I; soon, Oliver Cromwell will dissolve Parliament and establish a Protectorate
- 1650s although the Massachusetts Body of Liberties have been expanded, intolerance toward religious minorities, in particular Baptists and Quakers, increases with the domination of Puritans back in England; there are hangings and expulsions in Boston; fortunately, similar repressive laws in Plymouth and New Haven are not so aggressively enforced
- 1652 Massachusetts defies Parliament in London to declare itself an independent commonwealth
- 1660 after King Charles II is restored to the throne of England, Puritans of New England harbor some Protectorate refugees
- 1661-62 although King Charles II orders an end to persecution of Quakers and all such persons held for trial in New England are permitted to sail for the mother country, Massachusetts soon re-enacts a corporal punishment law
- 1664 Rhode Island, newly re-chartered, repeals a law requiring the sanction by towns of laws passed in the Rhode Island General Court
- 1664 as Royal authority in England tightens and war with the Dutch brings English military forces to conquer New Netherlands, Massachusetts alone defies the Crown on four demands: 1) that all householders take an oath of

- allegiance to the King, 2) that all men of competent estates be freemen, 3) that all men of orthodox belief be admitted to existing churches or churches of their choosing, and 4) that all laws derogatory to the Crown be repealed; furthermore, the Massachusetts General Court refuses to send representatives to London to explain
- 1665 the colony of New Haven agrees to be annexed by Connecticut to avoid coming under the authority of James, the Duke of York, the King's brother and future King of England, who is rumored to be a secret Catholic; the Duke's forces have defeated the Dutch in war and in his honor rename New Netherlands as New York
- 1668 Massachusetts finally annexes Maine and keeps control of that territory until after the Revolution in 1820 when Maine is admitted to the Union as a separate State
- 1674 James, the Duke of York sends Sir Edmund Andros to be Governor General of New York
- 1675-78 another major war breaks out with the Indians of New England; this time around, the United Colonies of New England pool their resources and have the aid of Mohegans and a few surviving Pequots to defeat Wampanoags, Narragansetts, and others led by Indian leader King Philip; thereafter, the region is only vexed by Native Indians raiding from outside and backed by the French
- 1676 meanwhile, Crown commissioner Edward Randolph is sent from London to investigate charges that the Colony of Massachusetts is failing to enforce Navigation Acts passed by Parliament and as well is executing English subjects for religious views, denying the right of appeal to the English Privy Council, and refusing to take the oath of allegiance to the Crown
- 1679-80 as a consequence of Randolph's report condemning Massachusetts to the Lords of Trade and London authorities trying to tighten control of New England, the territory of New Hampshire is made into a colony separate from Massachusetts
- 1683 when the New Hampshire assembly refuses to pass revenue bills, Governor of New Hampshire Edward Cranfield rules without the assembly's cooperation
- 1683-84 Randolph uses his position to push for annulling of Massachusetts's charter; although the colonists refuse to surrender the charter, it is annulled by the English Court of Chancery
- 1685-86 ascending to the throne of England, King James II creates the Dominion of New England, which is at first composed of Massachusetts, Maine, and New Hampshire and is governed by Andros; soon, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Connecticut come under Andros' sway
- 1687 to firm up Royal control of the Dominion of New England, Andros supports Anglican religious rights, insists that property titles be re-examined and re-granted after payment of quitrents, imposes new property tax assessments followed by arrests, fines, and disqualifications from office for those (such as in Ipswich, Massachusetts) who oppose the law, limits town meetings to one annually, and places colonial militia under the direct control of himself as Governor
- 1688 Aug 10; outraged at the loss of autonomy, New England colonists send the Reverend Increase Mather, the president of Harvard College, to place their grievances against Andros before the Lords of Trade
- 1688-89 however, a greater upheaval radically alters the situation; most members of Parliament rebel a second time against unchecked Royal authority and Catholic influence in what becomes known as a Glorious or Bloodless Revolution; they oust King James II and instead of establishing another Protectorate invite Mary, daughter of James II, to become Queen Mary II with her husband William of Orange in the Netherlands as co-ruler as King William III
- 1689 Spring; News of Glorious Revolution in England causes an armed uprising in Boston; Andros takes refuge in a fort; the Reverend Cotton Mather, son of Increase, and others issue a manifesto supporting the uprising, using as a pretext a report that James II is allying with the French and the Papacy; soon, Andros surrenders and is jailed with Randolph, former Governor of New Hampshire Joseph Dudley, and other supporters of the ousted King; a Council for the Safety and the Conservation of the Peace is set up and its deputies elect a new General Court on June 6; Andros is eventually ordered back to London for trial by England's new authorities but is acquitted and later sent as Governor to Virginia
- 1691 a new Royal Charter incorporates both Maine and Plymouth as part of Massachusetts; now, a Royal Governor is appointed by London to be advised by a council elected by the General Court, whose laws are subject to a governor's veto as well as Royal review; instead of religious qualification for voting, men must have a minimum property; convictions can be appealed to the King in his council
- 1692-93 ironically, just as the Crown is moving to end religious strife at home and in the colonies, several women are accused in Salem, Massachusetts of being witches; the Salem Witch Trials, 19 hangings, and five other deaths result
- 1690s the Salem Witch Trials are proof in a negative fashion that the authorities of the colonies of New England have regained considerable autonomy to carry on internal affairs as they will, but a new century is looming in which

external events, in particular the contest with the French for supremacy in North America, will sorely test the fidelity of American colonists to the mother country