Colonies Take Root
1587 – 1752
Part I
Terms and People

• **charter** – a document issued by a government that grants specific rights to a person or company

• **John Smith** – Englishman sent in 1608 to lead Jamestown

• **representative government** – the form of government in which voters elect people to make laws for them

• **pilgrim** – a person who takes a religious journey

• **Squanto** – a Native American who helped the Pilgrims in Plymouth by showing them how to grow native plants for food
An English geographer named Richard Hakluyt urged England to start a colony in America. He thought **colonies would provide valuable raw materials and a market for English exports**. He argued that increased trade would help to build up England’s gold supply.
In 1585, Sir Walter Raleigh started a colony on Roanoke Island. The colonists relied on Native Americans for food and this first attempt at colonization failed. In 1587, John White tried to reestablish the Roanoke colony. Unable to re-supply the colonists for nearly three years because of the Spanish Armada, White returned in 1590 and found that the Roanoke colony had mysteriously disappeared.

The colonists carved the word Croatoan into a tree. When other Englishmen found it, they recognized Croatoan as the homeland of some friendly Indians. Since there was no distress symbol carved on the tree, they assumed the Roanoke colony went to the Croatans for help.
Your team has been chosen to investigate what happened to the colonists at Roanoke.

Use the Documents, Artifacts, and the Historical and Geographic Evidence to determine:

1. What happened?
2. When it happened?
3. Why it happened?
4. What evidence helps prove your theory?
Theories:
1. They left Roanoke Island and went to live with the Native Americans.
2. They left Roanoke Island and went to live in some other place.
3. They left Roanoke Island and were lost at sea.
4. They were attacked and killed by the Native Americans.
5. They were killed or taken hostage by the Spanish.

So what happened to the over 100 colonists of the Roanoke Colony?
Early Colonies Fail

In 1607, the English made another attempt to colonize America at Sagadahoc, aka Popham Colony, in modern day Maine. Harsh winters, shortages of food, and fights with Native Americans doomed the colony and forced most of the colonists back to England.
In 1607, the Virginia Company of London, a joint-stock-company, financed an expedition of over 100 colonists to the Chesapeake Bay. They sailed up the James River and founded the first permanent English colony in America. They called their settlement Jamestown in honor of King James.

The colonists suffered terrible hardships including lack of food and water, disease, Native American Attacks, and an unexpectedly extreme climate. In fact, Virginia was in the middle of a long period of drought. By January 1608, only 38 colonists remained alive.
Difficult Times

John Smith, a mercenary soldier, took command of the settlement and brought some order to the chaotic situation. With the help of a young native girl called Pocahontas, Smith persuaded Powhatan (Wahunsenacawh), a powerful native chief, to trade corn to the colonists. Smith also convinced the colonists to dig a proper well for fresh water. The colony was saved.

However, Smith’s authoritative style and low social rank rubbed some colonists the wrong way and a number of attempts were made on his life. In 1609, Smith was injured when his gunpowder exploded and he was forced to return to England.
In 1608, 800 more settlers arrived in Jamestown. Growing tensions between the colonists and the Native Americans caused Powhatan to cut off the trading of food and attack the colony. The settlers were trapped in the fort with very little food or water. The winter of 1609-1610 became known as the starving time. Colonists were forced to eat rats, mice, and snakes. Some even resorted to cannibalism in order to survive.

By the time the new governor, Lord De La Warr arrived with two supply ships in the spring of 1610, only 60 settlers were still alive.

In 1612, John Rolfe developed a high-grade tobacco which became Jamestown’s main cash crop and saved the colony.
In 1619, a Dutch ship arrived from the West Indies and sold 20 Africans to the Virginia colonists as slaves.

In the early days of the colony, enslaved people had a chance to earn their freedom after working a certain number of years.

Permanent slavery for Africans was not established in Virginia until the late 1600s.
The colonists in Virginia were growing annoyed by the strict rules of their governor, who represented the interests of the Virginia Company back in London. To provide for more local control, the company decided that burgesses, or elected representatives, of the colonists would meet once a year in an assembly.

The **House of Burgesses** created in 1619, became **the first representative assembly in the American colonies**. Located in Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia you can visit this historic building today.
In 1622, a coordinated series of surprise attacks by the Powhatan Confederacy killed 347 English settlers, a quarter of the population of Jamestown.

The surviving English settlers were in shock after the attacks. As they began to recover, the men worked on a plan of action. “By unanimous decision of both the council and planters it was agreed to draw people together into fewer settlements” for better defense. The English took revenge against the Powhatan by “the use of force, surprise attacks, famine resulting from the burning of their corn”.

The next major confrontation with the Powhatan Confederacy occurred in 1644, resulting in the deaths of about 500 colonists. This time the Powhatan Chief Opechancanough, was captured by the colonists, imprisoned at Jamestown, and killed by one of his guards.
Matowaka - Pocahontas - Lady Rebecca Rolfe

Pocahontas met John Smith when she was 12 years old. She was the favorite daughter of Chief Powhatan, leader of a powerful Native American confederacy.

According to Smith, Pocahontas saved his life twice and helped convince her father to give food to the starving Jamestown colonists.

In 1614, she married a widowed colonist named John Rolfe. She soon gave birth to a son, Thomas.

In 1616, they traveled to England to raise money for the Jamestown colony. She met King James and the royal family and was called Lady Rebecca.

In 1617, Pocahontas died of pneumonia or possibly tuberculosis in England, she was just 22 years old.

In 1622, John Rolfe was killed during the Powhatan uprising. Thomas Rolfe served in the English Military, married, had a child, and died in 1675. His daughter Jane had two children.
Why do some individuals in history, such as Pocahontas, become a part of pop culture (e.g., movies, children’s books, cartoons), while others are all but forgotten?
The Voyage of the *Mayflower*

In the early 1500s, England’s King Henry VIII broke the country’s ties to the Catholic Church and established the Church of England. By the early 1600s religious separatist groups felt the Church of England had become too much like the Catholic Church and tried to break away.

King James attacked the Separatists for rejecting England’s official church and subjected them to harsh treatment and persecution. A Separatist group we now call the Pilgrims left England to escape religious persecution.

The Pilgrims first fled to Holland but grew dissatisfied with life in that country. Then they asked the Virginia Company if they could settle in America.
The Pilgrims set sail on a ship called the *Mayflower* and arrived off the Cape Cod coast in November of 1620. Because they landed outside the limits of the Virginia Company’s charter, the men aboard the *Mayflower* signed an agreement to govern themselves called the **Mayflower Compact**. The Mayflower Compact established the idea of majority rule for the good of the colony.
Plymouth
Plymouth's site, on high ground in a protected harbor, was chosen after the Pilgrims spent months searching the shores of Cape Cod Bay.

Coastal Farms  In 1627, settlers were given farmland along the coast. As the population grew, settlers formed separate communities such as this one at Duxbury.

Indian Trail  Plymouth's location near an Indian village proved vital. The Wampanoag Indians showed colonists how to grow crops adapted to the local environment, as well as where to trap beaver and catch fish. This helped the newcomers survive the first harsh winters.

Abandoned Indian Village

Furs  Plymouth's rocky, sandy soil meant that colonists could not grow enough crops for export. Instead, they supplied England with beaver fur for hatmaking.
Plymouth Colony

Formed by a group of Pilgrims seeking religious freedom, Plymouth Colony was the first permanent English settlement in New England. Life in Plymouth was often difficult. The colonists had to grow their own food and build everything they needed by hand.

- Plymouth houses had steeply sloped thatched roofs and small windows.
- The colonists kept weapons in a central stockade in order to protect the colony.
- Pilgrims wore clothing in bright, solid colors.
- Plymouth had trade relations, military agreements, and some social interaction with the nearby Wampanoag Indians.
- Women baked bread in outdoor ovens. They also grew food in gardens.

Like the settlers at Jamestown, the Pilgrims at Plymouth endured a starving time. The first winter in the colony was difficult and half the group had died by spring.

The Pilgrims got some unexpected help from local Native Americans who showed them how to plant, hunt, and fish. With a Native American named Squanto acting as an interpreter, the Pilgrims negotiated a treaty with Chief Massasoit.
The First Thanksgiving

Turkey may not have been on the menu at the first Thanksgiving. Edward Winslow wrote only that four men went hunting and brought back large amounts of “fowl”. The Pilgrims and Native Americans probably ate venison (deer), roast duck, roast goose, clams, shellfish, and eel. They also had white bread, corn bread, leeks, watercress, and salad herbs. For dessert they had wild plums and dried berries.
Question: Do you think the painting *The First Thanksgiving 1621* could help historians understand the relationship between the Wampanoag Indians and the Pilgrim settlers in 1621?

Title: *The First Thanksgiving 1621*

By: J.L.G. Ferris

Date: 1932
Terms and People

- **John Winthrop** – leader of the Puritans who founded the Massachusetts Bay Colony

- **toleration** – recognition that other people have the right to different opinions

- **Roger Williams** – a minister who founded the town of Providence, Rhode Island

- **Anne Hutchinson** – a Boston woman who established a settlement on an island that is part of present-day Rhode Island

- **Thomas Hooker** – a minister who founded the town of Hartford, Connecticut

- **town meeting** – an assembly of townspeople that decides local issues
The Great Migration

In 1629, the Massachusetts Bay Company received a royal charter to settle land in New England. In 1630, 11 well-supplied ships carried about 1,000 passengers to the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Unlike earlier groups, these colonists were well prepared and did not suffer through a starving time.

Between 1630 and 1640, a religious group called the Puritans left England to escape religious persecution and bad treatment by King James I. By the thousands, Puritan families left for the Americas. This movement of people is known as the Great Migration. More than 20,000 Puritans crossed the Atlantic and settled in New England.
The Puritans established several settlements in their colony, including Boston.

By 1643, about 20,000 people lived in the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

By the mid-1630s, Massachusetts Bay had an elected governor and an elected assembly—the General Court—but only adult male Puritans could vote.
Although they founded their own colony so they could have religious freedom, the Puritans did not believe in religious toleration for others.

Disagreements about religion led to the founding of other colonies in New England.
The New England Way describes both the beliefs of Puritans and their society, which emphasized duty, godliness, hard work, and honesty.

- Everyone attended church services.
- Education was emphasized.
- Amusements were frowned upon.
- Puritans had a strong work ethic.
The Puritan work ethic helped contribute to the rapid growth and success of the New England colonies. Because the Puritans wanted everyone to be able to read the bible, education also became very important in New England. Laws were passed that required that all children learn to read.

In 1636, Thomas Hooker, a Puritan minister, moved his congregation to the Connecticut Valley. Three years later they wrote and adopted the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut. In effect, these laws were a constitution. The Fundamental Orders extended voting rights to non-church members and limited the power of the governor. They also expanded the idea of representative government.
Not everyone agreed with the Puritan leaders of New England. **Roger Williams**, a minister from Salem, Massachusetts, opposed forced attendance at church. He also opposed taking Native American lands by force. Because of his beliefs, the General Court forced him to leave the Massachusetts Bay Colony. In 1636, he fled south and founded the colony of **Rhode Island**, which guaranteed religious freedom and separation of church and state.

**Anne Hutchinson** believed that a person could worship God without the help of a church, minister, or Bible. She was also brought to trial and forced to leave Massachusetts. In 1638, she fled to Rhode Island. Her family eventually moved to New York where they were massacred by Mahican Indians in September, 1643.
The New England colonies had a great variety of resources.

**Seas, forests, and farms provided a good living for colonists.**
By 1670, there were only 12,000 Native Americans in New England, one-tenth of their population 100 years earlier. The main cause of this decline was diseases Native Americans caught from Europeans.

While the colonies prospered, Native Americans in New England struggled.
King Philip’s War
The growing population of English colonists in Massachusetts began to force the Native Americans from their land. **Conflicts over land ownership resulted in warfare.**

In 1675-1676, Puritan colonists and Native Americans fought a brutal war. This was known as **King Philip’s War**. King Philip was the English name of Metacom, the leader of the Wampanoag. After widespread violence the English won the war. Many Wampanoag were killed and many others were sold into slavery in the West Indies.
The Salem Witchcraft Trials

In 1692, several girls from Salem village were said to be bewitched. Hysteria spread through the extremely religious puritan village. The girls falsely accused others of witchcraft and witch-hunts soon began. More than 100 people were arrested and tried. **Twenty people were found guilty and put to death**, 19 hanged and one pressed to death. Fortunately, the panic was short-lived.
By the late 1600s, a new generation of colonists had been born in North America.

This new generation had lost some of the older Puritans’ religious fervor.

Successful merchants were becoming the new community leaders.