**The Establishment of the 13 English Colonies**

England began to venture out into North Atlantic in the latter half of the 15th century in search of gold and other precious metals, better fishing areas and a short route to Asia, the mythical Northwest Passage.

The English were also interested in acquiring wealth, but preferred to do so by setting up permanent settlements. They wanted colonies where people would farm, fish, cut timber, and harvest the other resources of the region.Building colonial settlements was expensive. The English kings and queens did not want to spend the money. Instead, they gave grants of land to well-to-do people or businesses, called joint-stock companies, to build the colonies.Queen Elizabeth granted charters to Sir Humphrey Gilbert and Sir Walter Raleigh to colonize America. Gilbert headed two trips to the New World. He landed on Newfoundland but was unable to carry out his intention of establishing military posts. A year later, Raleigh sent a company to explore the east coast of North America; He called the land Virginia to honor England's unmarried Queen Elizabeth.

In 1587 Sir Walter Raleigh established the first English colony in North America off the coast of North Carolina in Roanoke Island off the coast of what is now North Carolina. A group of 117 weary men, women and children waded ashore and made history on Roanoke Island in July 1587, establishing the first attempted settlement of its kind in the Americas. The settlement would have been the first permanent English colony in the New World, had the settlers not disappeared owing to unknown circumstances

After a harsh winter on the island, its mayor, John White, left for England to request resources and manpower. He returned three years later only to find the settlement empty—his wife, child, and grandchild, the first English child born in the Americas, having vanished. The word *CROATOAN* and the letters *CRO*, carved into trees within the colony’s borders, were the only signs pointing to an explanation. White took the carving as a sign that the colonists had moved inland to Croatoan, the home of Chief Manteo’s people south of Roanoke in the Outer Banks in present-day Hatteras Island.

Before he could make further exploration, however, a great hurricane arose, damaging his ships and forcing him back to England. Despite repeated attempts, he was never able to raise the funding and resources to make the trip to America again. Raleigh had given up hope of settlement, and White died many years later on one of Raleigh’s estates, ignorant to the fate of his family and the colony. The 117 pioneers of Roanoke Island had vanished into the great wilderness and into folklore. Their collective fate subject to many theories and controversies, and their story reenacted every summer during performances of The Lost Colony, the nation’s longest symphonic drama.

**New England Colonies or Northern Colonies:**

1. ***Massachusetts*** 
   1. **Plymouth Colony:**In the 1500s, England established the Church of England and separated from the Roman Catholic Church. Some individuals, known as separatists, desired to break away from the Church of England. In the early 17th century, during the reign of King James I, these separatists, later known as the Pilgrims, requested permission from the Virginia Company to establish a new colony in Virginia. The Virginia Company granted permission, and in 1620, a group of 102 passengers and crew boarded the Mayflower in Plymouth, England, to embark on a long and difficult voyage to the New World. After 65 days at sea, the Mayflower finally reached the coast of Massachusetts near Cape Cod. The Pilgrims had intended to settle in Virginia but due to bad weather and the ship's damage, they landed in Plymouth, which they named after the port in England from which they had departed. The Pilgrims faced a harsh winter and almost half of the original group died due to illness and starvation. However, with the help of friendly Native Americans, they were able to establish a successful colony. They signed the ‘Mayflower Compact,' an agreement that all forty-one men on board the Mayflower signed, to establish a government and make just and equal laws. Some tribes were friendly and helped the Pilgrims while others were hostile and fought against them. The Pilgrims' legacy lives on today as a symbol of the American spirit of freedom and perseverance.

Every year on the 4th Thursday in November, Americans celebrate a holiday called Thanksgiving. The first people to celebrate this day were the pilgrims. In November 1621, they sat down to eat together and to give thanks to God for enabling them to survive the hardship of their first year in America.

**1.2 Massachusetts Bay Colony:**In 1630, a group of Puritans led by John Winthrop left England in search of religious freedom. They had grown dissatisfied with the Church of England and wanted to establish a community where they could practice their beliefs without interference. In 1629, the king of England, Charles I, granted a charter to the Massachusetts Bay Company, which was controlled by the Puritans. They elected Winthrop as their governor, and he led approximately 1,000 Puritans to America to establish the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

After a difficult voyage, the settlers arrived in Salem, Massachusetts in June 1630. They immediately set about establishing a government and a community. The colonists founded the town of Boston, which became the capital of the colony, and built other settlements along the coast. Their economy was based on fishing, fur trading, and agriculture, which allowed them to thrive.

The Puritan church played a central role in the colony. The Puritans believed in a strict interpretation of the Bible, and they placed great importance on personal piety and religious discipline. The church became the center of the community, and the clergy played a key role in shaping the political and social life of the colony.The Massachusetts Bay Colony also placed a high value on education. The Puritans believed that everyone should be able to read the Bible, so they established schools to teach reading and writing. Harvard, the colony's first college, was founded in 1636 and became one of the leading institutions of higher learning in the English-speaking world.The relationship between the colony and the Native Americans was complicated. The Puritans initially tried to establish peaceful relations with the local tribes, but tensions soon arose over land ownership and cultural differences.

1. **Rhode Island:** it was established in 1636 because of dissent within the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Roger Williams, a Puritan minister who was banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony for his religious beliefs and his advocacy of the separation of church and state, went south to the Narragansett Bay, bought land from the Indians, and settled there. He named the settlement Providence, after the "divine providence" he believed had guided him to the site. Two years later, in 1638, Anne Hutchinson, another famous person expelled from Massachusetts, joined him with her family and followers. The exiles came together to form the colony of Rhode Island.In 1644, Williams secured a charter from the English Parliament that created the colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. The charter guaranteed religious freedom and separation of church and state, making Rhode Island the first colony to adopt such principles. The colony was characterized by two important principles. Firstly, the Indians were treated more respectfully, and they were paid for lands they gave to the settlers. Secondly, people were able to practice their religion freely without fear of persecution or church intervention.Over the years, Rhode Island continued to attract religious dissenters, including Quakers and Baptists, who were also seeking refuge from persecution.
2. **Connecticut:** The colony was founded by Thomas Hooker, a Puritan minister, in 1636. Hooker was dissatisfied with the leadership and religious practices of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and sought to establish a new colony that would allow for greater religious and political freedom. In 1635, Hooker left Massachusetts to eventually establish another colony at Hartford, west of Rhode Island a. The colony of Connecticut was officially established in 1636, with the adoption of the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut. This document, which has been described as the first written constitution in history, established a system of government that was democratic and representative. Under the Fundamental Orders, each town was allowed to send two representatives to a general assembly, which was responsible for making laws and governing the colony. This system of government was a departure from the authoritarian rule of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and was seen as a model of democratic governance.
3. **New Hampshire**: It was founded in 1638 by John Mason who obtained a land grant north of Massachusetts. Mason named the new settlement after his homeland in Hampshire County, England. He sent settlers to the new territory to create a fishing colony. Fish, whales, fur, and timber were important natural resources for the New Hampshire colony. Much of the land was rocky and not flat, so agriculture was limited. Many of the first settlers came to New Hampshire, not in search of religious freedom but rather to seek their fortunes through trade with England, primarily in fish, fur, and timber. New Hampshire was a Royal Province prior to 1641 when it was claimed by the Massachusetts Bay Colony and was named the Upper Province of Massachusetts. In 1680, New Hampshire returned to its status as a Royal Province.