



A Diverse Colony

“On the island of Manhattan, . . . there may well be four or five hundred men of different sects and nations: the Director General told me that there were men of eighteen different languages.”

—Father Isaac Jogues, describing the Dutch settlement of New Amsterdam, 1646

◀ Dutch settlement of New Amsterdam, 1670s

The Middle Colonies

Objectives

- Describe the geography and climate of the Middle Colonies.
- Describe the early history of New York and New Jersey.
- Explain how Pennsylvania and Delaware were founded.
- Explain how the Middle Colonies changed in the 1600s and early 1700s.

🔍 Reading Skill

Identify Signal Words Signal words help readers spot comparisons and contrasts. For example, when we say, “Kentucky is warm. New York is *also* warm,” the word *also* suggests that the two states and climates are similar. If the text reads, “Kentucky is warm. *Instead*, New York is cool,” the word *instead* suggests that the two states and climates are different. Look for comparison and contrast signal words as you read this section.

Key Terms and People

proprietary colony
royal colony

William Penn
backcountry

Why It Matters While the New England colonies were growing, important developments were taking place in the region south of New England, known as the Middle Colonies.

🔗 **Section Focus Question: How did the diverse Middle Colonies develop and thrive?**

Geography of the Middle Colonies

Four states made up the Middle Colonies: New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. New York, now the largest of these states, also is the farthest north. The scenic Hudson River flows south through eastern New York before reaching the sea at New York City. Long Island, the easternmost piece of New York, extends into the Atlantic Ocean for more than 100 miles. Today, New York City is the most populous city in the country.

Pennsylvania is the region’s second-largest state. The southeastern section is a lowland. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania’s largest city, is located there, on the Delaware River.

Most of New Jersey is a lowland along the Atlantic coast. Delaware, the region’s smallest state, is on the coast directly south of New Jersey.

Middle Colony farmers had an easier time than farmers in New England. The climate was warmer, with a longer growing season. The fertile soil was well suited for crops like wheat, fruits, and vegetables.

✅ **Checkpoint** What conditions in the Middle Colonies favored farming?

New York and New Jersey

New York began as the Dutch colony of New Netherland. By 1660, it was an economic success. Farmers in the Hudson River valley were prosperous. The colony was the base for a profitable fur trade between the Dutch and Native Americans. The Dutch also made money trading with merchants in the British colonies. This trade violated Britain's mercantile laws and angered the government.

One of New Netherland's major problems was its small Dutch population. Many of the colonists came from Sweden, France, and Portugal. There also were some English Puritans who had settled on Long Island. These people often were hostile to Dutch rule.

Tension also existed between England and the Netherlands. New Netherland separated England's northern colonies from its colonies farther south. Furthermore, England and Holland were rivals at trade.



James, Duke of York

New Netherland Becomes New York In 1664, England's King Charles II granted the right to all the Dutch lands in North America to his brother James. All that James had to do was conquer the territory. James sent a few warships to do the job, and the Dutch surrendered immediately. The colony was renamed New York, after James, the Duke of York. New Amsterdam, its capital, became New York City. The colony grew slowly. At the end of the 1600s, New York City was still a village on the southern end of Manhattan.

New Jersey New Jersey was established in 1665, when part of southern New York was split off to form a new colony. Like New York and several other English colonies, New Jersey at first was a **proprietary colony**—a colony created by a grant of land from a monarch to an individual or family. In 1702, New Jersey received a new charter as a **royal colony**—a colony controlled directly by the English king. New York had become a royal colony in 1685.

 **Checkpoint** How did New Jersey become a separate colony?

Pennsylvania and Delaware

In the 1640s and 1650s, the Quakers were one of a number of new religious groups in England. Their ideas set them apart from most groups, including the Puritans.

The Quakers believed that all people had a direct link, or "inner light," with God. Groups of Quakers, therefore, did not need ministers. Another **fundamental** Quaker belief was that all people were equal in God's eyes. Thus, they were among the first in England to speak out against slavery. Women were considered equal to men in spiritual matters and often were leaders in Quaker meetings.

By the 1660s, there were thousands of Quakers in England. Many of them refused to pay taxes to support the Church of England. Because of their views, they often suffered from persecution. One Quaker leader was **William Penn**, a wealthy man who personally knew King Charles II. Penn wanted to find a place for Quakers to live

Vocabulary Builder

fundamental (fuhn duh MEHN tahl)

adj. most important part

where they would be safe from persecution. He used his connections to get a charter from the king for a new colony in North America. In 1681, he received an area almost as large as England itself, mainly in what is now Pennsylvania.

Penn's "Holy Experiment" Penn arrived in his colony in 1682. For his capital, Penn established a city named Philadelphia, which means "City of Brotherly Love." To attract settlers, he printed pamphlets in several languages and distributed them in England and on the European continent. Soon, new settlers began arriving from many places—England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland. Still others came from Germany, Holland, and Switzerland.

Penn considered his colony to be a "holy experiment." His goal was to create a colony in which people from different religious backgrounds could live peacefully. In 1682, Penn wrote his Frame of Government for Pennsylvania. It granted the colony an elected assembly. It also provided for freedom of religion.

Penn tried to deal fairly with Native Americans. He did not allow colonists to settle on land until the Native Americans sold it to them. Relations between settlers and Native Americans in Pennsylvania were far from perfect. However, during Penn's lifetime they were much better in Pennsylvania than in other colonies.

Delaware: A Separate Colony People from Sweden were the first European settlers in Delaware. The Dutch took control of the territory in the 1650s, but they lost it to the English when they lost New York.

Penn's charter for Pennsylvania included Delaware. Because Delaware settlers did not want to send delegates to a distant assembly in Philadelphia, Penn gave the area its own representative assembly. In 1704, Delaware became a separate colony.

 **Checkpoint** Why did Penn call Pennsylvania "a holy experiment"?

Growth and Change

By the early 1700s, more than 20,000 colonists lived in Pennsylvania. Fertile soil and hard work made its farms productive. Farmers grew more than they could use and sold the balance. The top cash crop, wheat, was sold to customers in New England and abroad. Because of all its wheat, Pennsylvania was called America's breadbasket. New Jersey also produced large amounts of wheat.

Manufacturing was just beginning in the Middle Colonies during the 1700s. The largest manufacturers produced iron, flour, and paper. Meanwhile, artisans in towns worked as shoemakers, carpenters, masons, weavers, and in many other trades. Among the most important artisans were coopers, who made the barrels used to ship and store flour and other foods.



Identify Signal Words

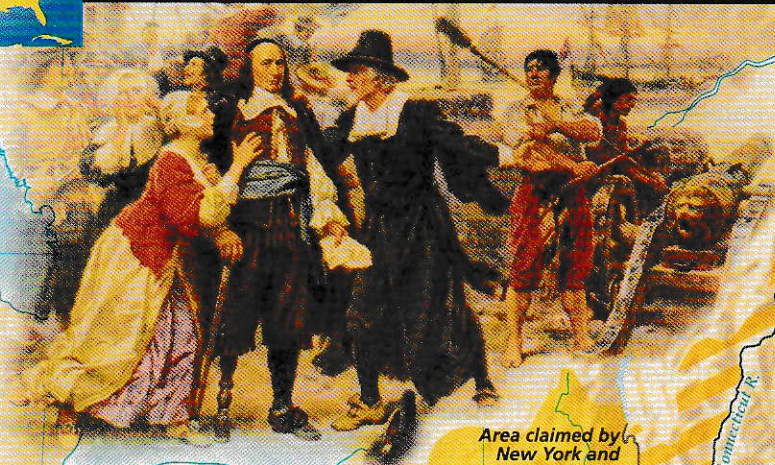
What signal words suggest a contrast between Pennsylvania and the other colonies? What contrast is suggested?

William Penn and other leading Quakers make a peace treaty with Native Americans.





The Middle Colonies

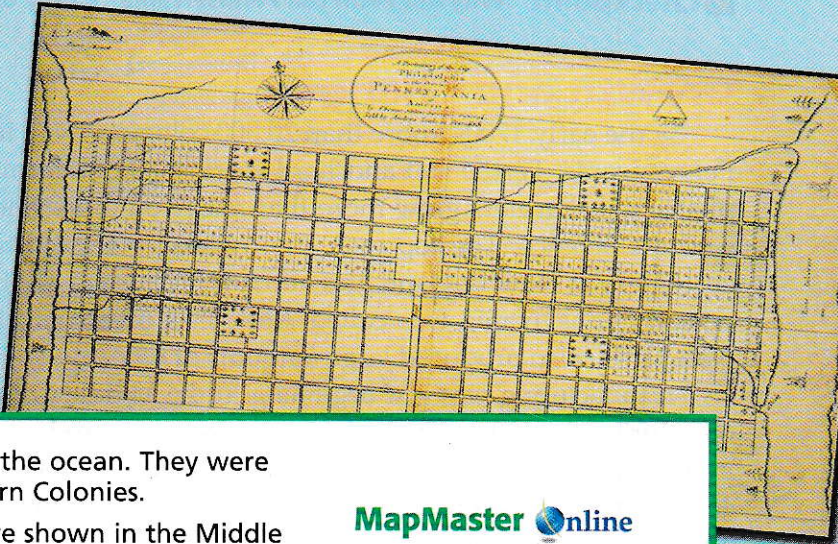


◀ The Dutch colonial governor surrenders to the English.



▲ A colonial family harvests its crop.

▼ William Penn planned Philadelphia to include wide streets and parks.



MAP MASTER

Skills Activity

The Middle Colonies extended far inland from the ocean. They were located between New England and the Southern Colonies.

- (a) **Read a Map** What three important rivers are shown in the Middle Colonies?
- (b) **Interpret Maps** What role do you think rivers played in the Middle Colonies' economy?

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The Backcountry The western section of Pennsylvania was part of a region called the backcountry. The **backcountry was a frontier region extending through several colonies, from Pennsylvania to Georgia.**

Many of the people who settled in the backcountry were not English. Thousands were Scotch-Irish. Originally from Scotland, they had settled in Ireland before coming to North America. Large numbers of German immigrants began arriving early in the 1700s. The word these German newcomers used to describe themselves was *Deutsch*, for “German.” Americans thought they were saying “Dutch.” As a result, German immigrants in Pennsylvania were called the Pennsylvania Dutch.

By the middle of the 1700s, many settlers were pushing south and west along a route that led from Pennsylvania to Georgia. Because they often traveled in covered wagons, the route was called the Great Wagon Road. These backcountry settlers often fought with Native Americans.

Diverse and Thriving Colonies By 1750, the non-English immigrants had made the Middle Colonies the most diverse part of English North America. Philadelphia and New York were **accumulating** people at such a rate that they had become the largest cities and busiest ports in the colonies. All of the colonies had thriving economies.

 **Checkpoint** How was Pennsylvania a breadbasket?

 **Looking Back and Ahead** Both the New England and Middle Colonies had many small family farms. In the next section, you will read that parts of the Southern Colonies developed a plantation economy that was far different.

Vocabulary Builder

accumulate (uh KYOOM yoo layt)

v. to increase in amount over time

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Comprehension and Critical Thinking

- (a) Recall** What was the geography and climate of the Middle Colonies?

(b) Identify Economic Benefits What advantages did the geography and climate give to people living in the Middle Colonies?
- (a) Summarize** What were William Penn’s goals for his colony?

(b) Compare How did Penn’s “holy experiment” differ from the Puritans’ “city on a hill”?

Reading Skill

- Identify Signal Words** What word in the sentence that follows suggests a comparison? What similarity is being identified?

Sentence: Both Pennsylvania and New Jersey produced a lot of wheat.

Key Terms

- Answer the following questions in complete sentences that show your understanding of the key terms.
- How was New Jersey different after it became a **royal colony** in 1702?

- Why did settlers and Native Americans clash in the **backcountry**?

Writing

- Imagine that you are a Pennsylvania farmer. Write a letter to a fellow farmer in New England telling him about your life in your new home. Then, write a letter that the New England farmer might send back describing his life in New England.