



England and Its Colonies

MAIN IDEA

England and its largely self-governing colonies prospered under a mutually beneficial trade relationship.

WHY IT MATTERS NOW

The colonial system of self-governing colonies was the forerunner of our modern system of self-governing states.

Terms & Names

- mercantilism
- Parliament
- Navigation Acts
- Dominion of New England
- Sir Edmund Andros
- Glorious Revolution
- salutary neglect

One American's Story

With her father fighting for Britain in the West Indies and her mother ill, 17-year-old Eliza Lucas was left to manage the family's South Carolina plantations. On her own, the enterprising Eliza became the first person in the colonies to grow indigo and developed a way of extracting its deep blue dye. Eliza hoped that her indigo crops would add not only to her family's fortune but to that of the British empire.

A PERSONAL VOICE ELIZA LUCAS PINCKNEY

“We please ourselves with the prospect of exporting in a few years a good quantity from hence, and supplying our mother country [Great Britain] with a manufacture for which she has so great a demand, and which she is now supplied with from the French colonies, and many thousand pounds per annum [year] thereby lost to the nation, when she might as well be supplied here, if the matter were applied to in earnest.”

—quoted in *South Carolina: A Documentary Profile of the Palmetto State*



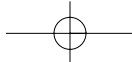
▲ African slaves working on an indigo plantation in the West Indies; fresh water in a series of leaching basins extracts the dye from the plant.

English settlers like the Lucases exported raw materials such as indigo dye to England, and in return they imported English manufactured goods. This economic relationship benefited both England and its colonies.

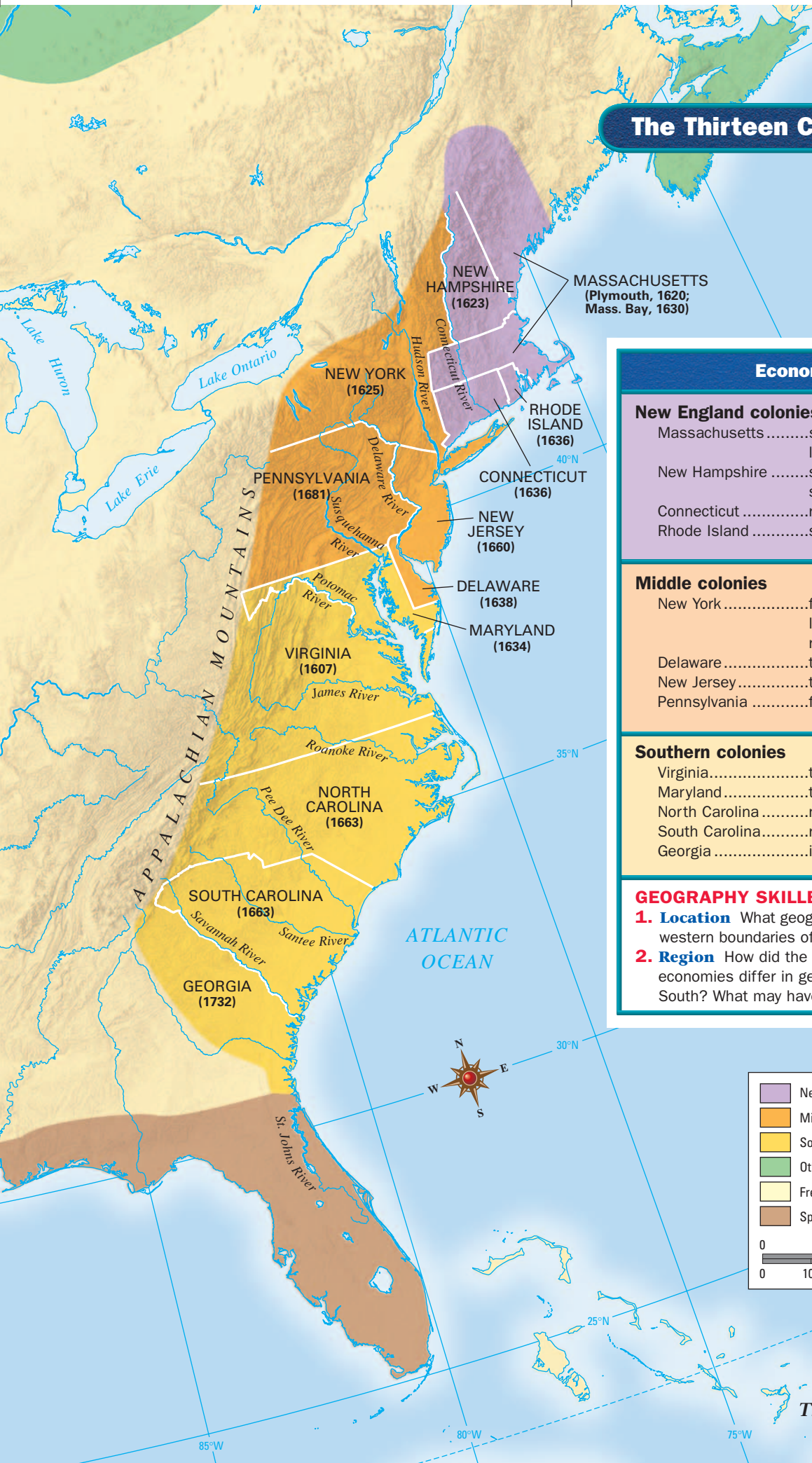
England and Its Colonies Prosper

Although many colonists benefited from the trade relationship with the home country, the real purpose of the colonial system was to enrich Britain.

MERCANTILISM The British interest in establishing colonies was influenced by the theory of **mercantilism**, which held that a country's ultimate goal was self-sufficiency and that all countries were in a competition to acquire the most gold and silver.



The Thirteen Colonies to the 1700s



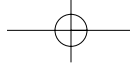
Economic Activities	
New England colonies	
Massachusetts	shipbuilding, shipping, fishing, lumber, rum, meat products
New Hampshire	ship masts, lumber, fishing, trade, shipping, livestock, foodstuffs
Connecticut	rum, iron foundries, shipbuilding
Rhode Island	snuff, livestock
Middle colonies	
New York	furs, wheat, glass, shoes, livestock, shipping, shipbuilding, rum, beer, snuff
Delaware	trade, foodstuffs
New Jersey	trade, foodstuffs, copper
Pennsylvania	flax, shipbuilding
Southern colonies	
Virginia	tobacco, wheat, cattle, iron
Maryland	tobacco, wheat, snuff
North Carolina	naval supplies, tobacco, furs
South Carolina	rice, indigo, silk
Georgia	indigo, rice, naval supplies, lumber

GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER

- Location** What geographical feature determined the western boundaries of the Southern and Middle colonies?
- Region** How did the New England and Middle colonies' economies differ in general from the economy of the South? What may have accounted for this difference?

	New England colonies
	Middle colonies
	Southern colonies
	Other British possessions
	French possessions
	Spanish possessions

0 100 200 miles
0 100 200 kilometers



Inspired by mercantilism, nations concentrated on the balance of trade—the amount of goods sold compared to the amount bought—since a favorable balance meant that more gold was coming in than going out. Thus Britain looked to its American colonies as a market for British goods, a source of raw materials that were not native to Britain, and as a producer of goods and materials to be sold to other nations.

THE NAVIGATION ACTS By the mid-1600s, the American colonies were fulfilling their role, at least partially. The colonists exported to England large amounts of raw materials and staples—lumber, furs, fish, and tobacco. In addition, the colonists bought manufactured English goods such as furniture, utensils, books, and china.

However, not all the products the colonists produced for export ended up on English docks. Some of the colonists' lumber and tobacco made its way into the harbors of Spain, France, and Holland. With the nations of Europe clamoring for their goods, many colonial merchants could not resist the opportunity to increase their wealth.

England viewed the colonists' pursuit of foreign markets as an economic threat. According to mercantilist theory, any wealth flowing from the colonies to another nation came at the expense of the home country. As a result, beginning in 1651, England's **Parliament**, the country's legislative body, passed the **Navigation Acts**, a series of laws restricting colonial trade (see chart at left).

The system created by the Navigation Acts benefited England and proved to be good for most colonists as well. Passing all foreign goods through England yielded jobs for English dockworkers and import taxes for the English treasury. Also, by restricting trade to English or colonial ships, the acts spurred a boom in the colonial shipbuilding industry. **A**

The Navigation Acts

- No country could trade with the colonies unless the goods were shipped in either colonial or English ships.
- All vessels had to be operated by crews that were at least three-quarters English or colonial.
- The colonies could export certain products only to England.
- Almost all goods traded between the colonies and Europe first had to pass through an English port.

MAIN IDEA

Analyzing Effects

A What effects did the Navigation Acts have on both Britain and its colonies?

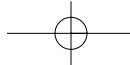
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Tensions Emerge

The Navigation Acts, however, did not sit well with everyone. A number of colonial merchants resented the trade restrictions, and many continued to smuggle, or trade illegally, goods to and from other countries. For years England did little to stop these violations. Finally, in 1684, King Charles II acted, punishing those colonists whom he believed most resisted English authority: the leaders and merchants of Massachusetts.

CRACKDOWN IN MASSACHUSETTS Charles certainly had evidence to support his belief. The Puritan leaders of Massachusetts had long professed their hostility to royal authority and even suggested that their corporate charter did not require them to obey Parliament.

In 1684, after failing to persuade Massachusetts to obey English laws, England revoked the colony's corporate charter.


MAIN IDEA
**Developing
Historical
Perspective**

B Why did England take action against Massachusetts?

Massachusetts, the “Puritan utopia,” was suddenly a royal colony, under strict control of the crown. **B**

THE DOMINION OF NEW ENGLAND When King James II succeeded his brother Charles in 1685, he immediately aggravated the situation. Seeking to make the colonial governments more obedient, he placed the Northern colonies under a single ruler in Boston. Within three years, the land from southern Maine to New Jersey was united into one vast colony, the **Dominion of New England**.

To rule New England, James picked **Sir Edmund Andros**, a veteran military officer from an aristocratic English family. Andros made his hard-line attitude toward the colonists clear: “You have no more privileges left you, than not to be sold for slaves.” Within weeks of arriving in Boston, Andros managed to make thousands of enemies. He angered Puritans by questioning the lawfulness of their religion. He made it clear that the Navigation Acts would be enforced and smugglers prosecuted. Furthermore, he restricted local assemblies and levied taxes without any input from local leaders.

Andros’s behavior outraged the Northern colonists. In 1688, the colonists of Massachusetts sent their most prominent minister, Increase Mather, to London to try to get their old charter restored and Andros recalled. However, before Mather could put his diplomatic skills to work, a bloodless revolution in England changed the entire political picture.

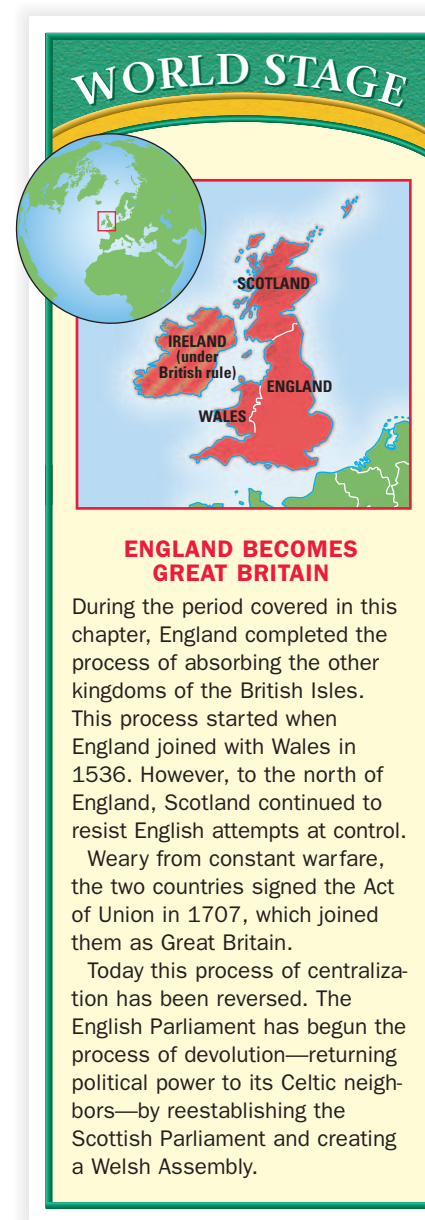
THE GLORIOUS REVOLUTION While King James’s actions had made him few friends in the colonies, his religious leanings made him even less popular back home. A Roman Catholic who ruled with little respect for Parliament, James had no idea how much his subjects valued their Protestantism and their parliamentary rights. When James fathered a son in 1688, England suddenly faced the possibility of a dynasty of Roman Catholic monarchs.

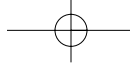
To head off that possibility, Parliament invited William of Orange, the husband of James’s Protestant daughter Mary, to England. William and his army sailed from Holland as James fled the country. In 1689 Parliament voted to offer the throne to William and Mary. In the aftermath of these events, which became known as the **Glorious Revolution**, Parliament passed a series of laws establishing its power over the monarch.

Upon learning of the events in England, the colonists of Massachusetts staged a bloodless rebellion of their own, arresting Andros and his royal councilors. Parliament rapidly restored to their original status the colonies that had been absorbed by the Dominion of New England. In restoring Massachusetts’s charter, however, the English government made several changes. The new charter, granted in 1691, called for the king to appoint the governor of Massachusetts and required more religious toleration and non-Puritan representation in the colonial assembly. The Puritans would no longer be able to persecute such groups as the Anglicans—members of the Church of England—and the Quakers.

Background

The Puritans were particularly cruel to Quakers, who were whipped, maimed, tortured, and executed as punishment for their religious customs.





English Rulers' Colonial Policies



Charles II (1660–1685)

Angered by Massachusetts's refusal to obey English law, he revoked the colony's charter in 1684 and brought Massachusetts under royal control.



James II (1685–1688)

He consolidated the Northern colonies into the Dominion of New England in 1686 and enlisted Sir Edmund Andros to rule the region.



William and Mary (1689–1702)


They succeeded James II after the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and helped establish the supremacy of Parliament. Parliament then dissolved the Dominion of New England and restored the colonies' charters.



England Loosens the Reins

After 1688, England largely turned its attention away from the colonies and toward France, which was competing with England for control of Europe. The home country still expected the colonies to perform their duties of exporting raw materials and importing manufactured goods. As long as they did this, Parliament saw little reason to devote large amounts of money and large numbers of soldiers to aggressively enforcing its colonial laws.


SALUTARY NEGLECT Ironically, England ushered in its new policy of neglect with an attempt to increase its control over the colonies. In the years immediately following the Glorious Revolution, Parliament strengthened the Navigation Acts in two ways. First, it moved smuggling trials from colonial courts—with juries composed of colonists who often found colonial smugglers innocent—to admiralty courts presided over by English judges. Second, it created the Board of Trade, an advisory board with broad powers to monitor colonial trade.

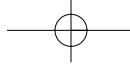
While England appeared to tighten its colonial grip, in reality it loosened its hold. English officials only lightly enforced the new measures as they settled into an overall colonial policy that became known as **salutary neglect**. Salutary—beneficial—neglect meant that England relaxed its enforcement of most regulations in return for the continued economic loyalty of the colonies. As long as raw materials continued flowing into the homeland and the colonists continued to buy English-produced goods, Parliament did not supervise the colonies closely. 

THE SEEDS OF SELF-GOVERNMENT This policy of salutary neglect had an important effect on colonial politics as well as economics. In nearly every colony, a governor appointed by the king served as the highest authority. The governor presided over a political structure that included an advisory council, usually appointed by the governor, and a local assembly, elected by eligible colonists (land-owning white males). The governor held a wide range of powers. He had the authority to call and disband the assembly, appoint and dismiss judges, and oversee all aspects of colonial trade.

MAIN IDEA

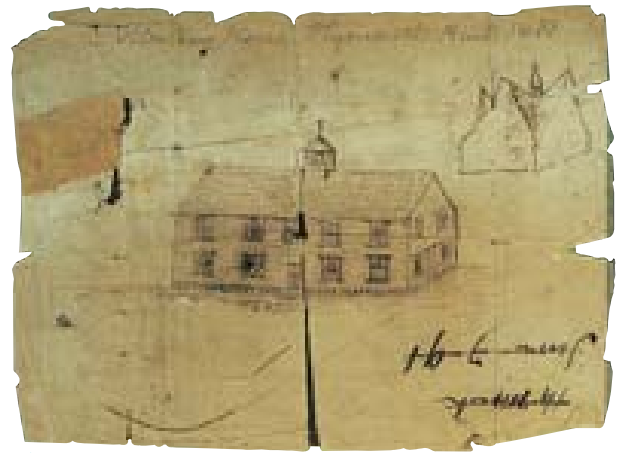
Synthesizing

 How did both the colonies and Great Britain benefit from the policy of salutary neglect?



However, just as England’s economic policies were stronger in print than in practice, its colonial governors were not as powerful as they might seem. The colonial assembly, not the king, paid the governor’s salary. Using their power of the purse liberally, the colonists influenced the governor in a variety of ways, from the approval of laws to the appointment of judges.

Under England’s less-than-watchful eye, the colonies were developing a taste for self-government that would eventually create the conditions for rebellion. Nehemiah Grew, a British mercantilist, voiced an early concern about the colonies’ growing self-determination. He warned his fellow subjects in 1707.



▲ The sketch above depicts a Puritan meetinghouse built at Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1683. Meetinghouses served a double purpose, as community halls where people voted on local issues and as religious buildings.

A PERSONAL VOICE NEHEMIAH GREW

“The time may come . . . when the colonies may become populous and with the increase of arts and sciences strong and politic, forgetting their relation to the mother countries, will then confederate and consider nothing further than the means to support their ambition of standing on their [own] legs.”

—quoted in *The Colonial Period of American History*

However, the policy of salutary neglect that characterized British and colonial relations throughout the first half of the 1700s worked in large part because of the colonists’ loyalty to Britain. The men and women of the colonies still considered themselves loyal British subjects, eager to benefit the empire as well as themselves. Aside from a desire for more economic and political breathing room, the colonies had little in common with one another that would unite them against Britain. In particular, the Northern and Southern colonies were developing distinct societies, based on sharply contrasting economic systems.



ASSESSMENT

1. TERMS & NAMES For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- mercantilism
- Navigation Acts
- Sir Edmund Andros
- salutary neglect
- Parliament
- Dominion of New England
- Glorious Revolution

MAIN IDEA

2. TAKING NOTES

Create a problem-solution chart similar to the one below. Fill it in with steps that England took to solve its economic and political problems with the colonists.

Problem	Solutions
Keeping the colonies under economic and political control	1. in 1651 2. in 1686 3. after 1688

Which policy might colonists have resented most and why?

CRITICAL THINKING

3. ANALYZING ISSUES

Reread Grew’s warning quoted above. Explain why the British did not want this to happen.

Think About:

- the goals of mercantilism
- what might happen to Great Britain’s economy if Grew’s prediction came true

4. SUMMARIZING

How did political events in England affect the lives of the colonists? Use evidence from the text to support your response.

5. PREDICTING EFFECTS

Britain established policies to control the American colonies but was inconsistent in its enforcement of those policies. What results might be expected from such inconsistency?