New England Colonies New England was initially settled primarily by Puritans fleeing religious persecution. Roger Williams opposed Winthrop's treatment of Native Americans and religious intolerance, and established the colony of Providence Plantations, later Rhode Island, on the basis of freedom of religion. Like Jamestown, Plymouth suffered from disease and starvation, but local Wampanoag Indians taught the colonists how to farm maize. Other colonists established settlements in the Connecticut River Valley, and on the coasts of present-day New Hampshire and Maine. Plymouth was followed by the Puritans and Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630.

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