

EARLY SETTLERS

establish
(to start)

Many Europeans came to North America between the 1500's and 1700's. They came from Spain, France, the Netherlands, and England. The early explorers looked for gold and silver. Other people came to establish colonies.



Early settlers landing in North America.

The Spanish Colonies

Christopher Columbus brought the first Spanish ship to North America on October 12 1492. Some people say that he discovered America, but the Native Americans were in North America before Columbus. Leif Eriksson from Norway also came to North America before Columbus, but settlers did not follow Eriksson.

Many Spanish explorers came after Columbus. They looked for gold and silver. They traveled through the southern part of the United States and northern Mexico in the 1500's and 1600's. They called this land "New Spain". Many Spanish settlers came to New Spain. They established missions for the Catholic Church. They established important cities. One of these cities is St. Augustine, Florida.

The French Colonies

The French began to come to North America in the 1500's. The French came to Canada. They founded important cities like Montreal and Quebec. Quebec was the first French settlement in North America. Quebec was an important trading center located on the St. Lawrence River. The French were involved in fur trading. They traveled on the river and lakes. They trapped animals for their furs.

The French traveled down the Mississippi River. They established new **settlements** on the Mississippi River. These settlements included St. Louis, Missouri; Natchez, Mississippi and New Orleans, Louisiana.

The English Colonies

In 1607, a group of English settlers came to North America. They began a settlement at **Jamestown, Virginia**. Captain John Smith was their leader. The settlers learned to live and trade with the Indians.

In 1619, England allowed the people of Virginia to elect representatives. These representatives were called the **House of Burgesses**. They made new laws. In this year, the first black men and women came to North America. These Blacks were not slaves. They were **indentured servants**. People brought indentured servants to North America to work. The indentured servants were not paid for their work. After they worked for several years, they became free.

elect (to choose)

In 1620, a group of **Pilgrims** arrived in a ship called the Mayflower. They established a settlement at Plymouth, Massachusetts. The Pilgrims came to North America for religious freedom. They were Protestants. They did not agree with the religious practices and beliefs of the Church of England. The Puritan leaders decided to have their own government. They prepared the **Mayflower Compact**. This document had the rules and laws for the new settlement.

In 1630, more ships arrived from England. More than 1000 settlers came to America. These settlers were called **Puritans**. They came because they wanted religious freedom, too. They established the **Massachusetts Bay Colony**.

In 1634, Lord Baltimore founded **Maryland**. Many Catholics settled Maryland. They wanted religious freedom. Other settlers also came to Maryland for religious freedom. The settlers also had the right to help make the laws.

The Dutch Colonies

In 1609, Henry Hudson sailed into New York Bay. He claimed this land for his country, the Netherlands. Dutch settlers began to arrive in 1624. This colony was called **New Netherland**.

Summary

Many Europeans came to North America. Each group settled in a different place. Many settlers came for religious freedom. Many wanted to make their own laws.