

United States History for Family Historians

Part One Colonial Era

- I. Importance of Colonial policies on New World immigration
 - A. Spanish and French restriction of dissident immigration.
 - B. English decision to encourage dissident immigration.
 - C. Spanish encomienda system.
 - D. French intendant system.
 - E. Pre-eminence of Peninsular Spaniards in colonial Spanish society.
 - F. Spanish utilization of its great New World wealth.
 - G. Headrights and indentures in the English colonies.
 - H. “Salutary Neglect” and the English colonies.
 - I. Indian policy, land policy and trade restrictions as factors influencing colonial settlement.
 - J. Assumptions and “conventional wisdom” influencing settlement techniques, land selection, farming procedures, migration patterns, methods and timing.

1. "Rule of the Harvest."
2. Hardwood trees as an indicator of soil quality.
3. New England fathers' reluctance to give property titles to their sons.
4. Usually, families did not move unless they had enough money to sustain the family for two years, or an assurance that someone else would sustain them.
5. Most families rarely moved more than twenty miles at a time.
6. The importance of "Pioneer Farmers."
7. What time of the year did most families move? Why?

II. Migration Patterns

A. Groups

1. Spanish settle Eastern and Gulf coastal areas south of Georgia beginning in 1500s, even more permanent settlement of Southwest after 1600.
2. English remain almost entirely in the Tidewater region during the Colonial Era.
3. Blacks, mostly in Tidewater after 1619.

4. Huguenots meld with English beginning in 1640s
5. "Pennsylvania Dutch" (Germans) in Piedmont, Appalachians after 1700.
6. "Scotch-Irish" (mostly lowland Scots) in same area and time as #5.
7. Highland Scots in same area as #5 and #6 after 1750.
8. French Canadians in the Illinois country and elsewhere as a result of the Treaty of Paris of 1763 and of 1783.
9. Some significant Native American migration (Tuscarora, Iroquois Confederation, emergence of Seminole, exiling of failed leaders of Civilized Tribes of the South, dislocation or annihilation of many Algonquin tribes, Siouxian migration from east to Great Plains)..

B. Settlement method

1. Common practices shared by most settlers, such as claim associations, assumptions about land selection, importance of local markets for farm products
2. Contrasting customs such as metes and bounds, in the South, very organized group settlement in New England.