

Squanto and company. While on the Mayflower they had originated a governmental compact...the famous Mayflower Compact...under which they agree to live recognizing providence as the real force and human understanding as the necessary connective. William Brewster was the ruling elder and the religious motif was that of fervent congregationalism. The Compact, incidentally, would be the bond of union for the colony until 1691.

But in 1628 the Massachusetts Bay Company sponsored a colony of non-separatist Puritans. They quickly became congregational in form and separated from Anglicanism after coming to the new land. The drawing pot for this group in England was far larger than was true for the separatists so their numbers quickly grew. By 1640 there was in excess of 20,000 of them in New England.

In both Plymouth and Salem the church and the government were fused. Only members of the establishment could vote (they needed to be land holders). The established church was the only approved religious body and the legislation enacted in the legal houses was fraternal and binding. Freedom as we think of it was not in view. 1636 saw the founding of Harvard..for ministerial training. Fifty years later it counted 122 men preparing for the ministry.

In general the New England community saw it self as an experiment of God at work in history. This can be seen in t he negaive movements of the "witch trials" and the tight legislative structures put on the body. A good literature source for this is Cotton Mather's THE GREAT WORKS OF CHRIST IN AMERICA.

There was some Gospel outreach to the Indians in spite of some skirmishes and such events as King Philip's war. Thomas Mayhew began an Indian work in 1643 on Martha's Vineyard and about 1646 John Eliot began a life long work in Indian outreach. He reduced the Algonquin language to writing and published the Bible in that language while setting up schools to teach both literacy and Christianity. By 1675 there were 24 native Algonquin congregations and in the next century several Indian tribes through conversion and social amalgamation would just melt into the core dof the New England social structure and churches. In 1649 the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New Wngland was formed and this society raised funds, workers, and supplies for Christian outreach in that territory.

Nevertheless there came a general declension in the Massachusetts churches. The acts of the Halfway Covenant of 1662 and later developments in the Hopkinsian school marked low points in spiritual vitality (both of these are noted under figure "h", I think...just a few reams of paper from now). The landholders became the real political powers in the churches and spirituality had little to do with the government of the local body.