

The year 1626 saw Peter Minuit buy Manhattan from the Indians (it must be noted some place that the Indian nations in general did not understand land sales and it seems plain today that the Indians who made the sale to Minuit were not the real property holders of Manhattan in any proper sense. The Indians, a nomadic group by and large, saw land as a common property to whomever happened to be holding it...permanency of possession was not one of the understandings unless you had a large enough force of warriors to do it that way...Minuit made the famous trinket purchase from Indians who themselves were just stragglers on the island.) Dutch settlers quickly moved into the Hudson valley settling as far north as Albany and the Dutch Reformed church was established in 1629. While the Dutch held the patents, the merchants invited many others to settle and New Amsterdam quickly became a melting pot of many tongues...and most of them irreligious at that. The first reformed minister, Jonas Michaelius, came in 1628 and found his three year tour of duty almost too much and it is thought the religious settlement of New Amsterdam was better known as the irreligious settlement.

Peter Stuyvesant came in 1647 and offered an attempt at a stronger consolidation of the government and the religious services. He took over the Swedish colony in New Jersey and sought to enforce the Reformed Church establishment among the Swedes. The cause was lost, however, when the English forced the surrender of the Dutch possessions in 1664 although the Reformed church was permitted to continue as it served its constituents. The English brought the Anglican church and in 1697 Trinity Church was chartered as the first formal Anglican church in New York. But diversity was the rule and event the Jews obtained a reasonable foothold in New York although originally opposed by Stuyvesant. 1754 saw the founding of a college that in 1784 became Columbia college and later Columbia University.

The composite make-up of the colony did not help it in Scriptural matters and it is rather uniformly described as a rough and unspiritual territory. Religion seemed to have less to do with the general culture than in any of the other colonies. It was, in fact, almost a factor of no importance in New York.

(b) New Jersey...(New Sweden)

Briefly, the colony grew from another of Peter Minuit's expeditions when, sailing under the Swedish flag, he founded Fort Christian near the present site of Wilmington, Delaware. John Campanius, the first Lutheran clergyman in the colonies, arrived in 1643 and proceeded not only to instruct the colonials but also to reach out to the Indians by reducing their language and translating Luther's catechism. The Swedish work did not prosper and was taken by force by the Dutch in 1654. In the following century a great work was undertaken by the Dutch through Frelinghuysen and the help of the Presbyterian Tennants (1739 ff).