

# John Winthrop (1588-1649) - The History of New England from 1630 to 1649. The Puritan Legacy.



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# Life

- John Winthrop was famous as the leader and founder of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. (*The Puritans who settled the **Massachusetts Bay Colony** intended to set up a society that would accord with what they believed to be God's wishes.*)
- He was born on 12 January 1588 in Edwardstone, Suffolk, England.
- John Winthrop had an excellent education, tutored at home, attending a grammar school and was admitted to Trinity College in December 1602.

# Life

- Whilst attending Trinity he met two other Puritans who would feature in the history of the colonization of America and New England. The first was John Cotton, the grandfather of Cotton Mather who played a major role in the Salem Witchcraft Trials and the other was John Wheelwright, who was banished from Massachusetts along with Anne Hutchinson.
- John Winthrop was instrumental in developing the Cambridge Agreement allowing the immigration of Puritans, who would control the government and the charter of the Massachusetts Bay company and its trading potential. He secretly planned to develop a religion based government.

# Life

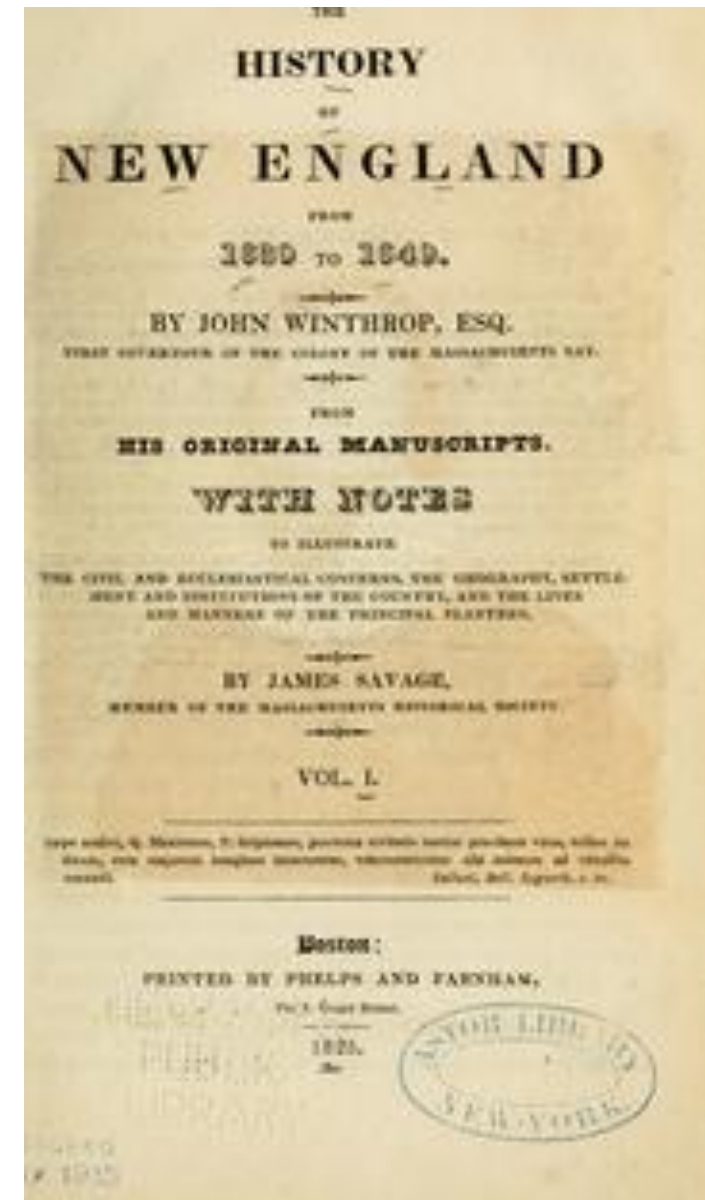
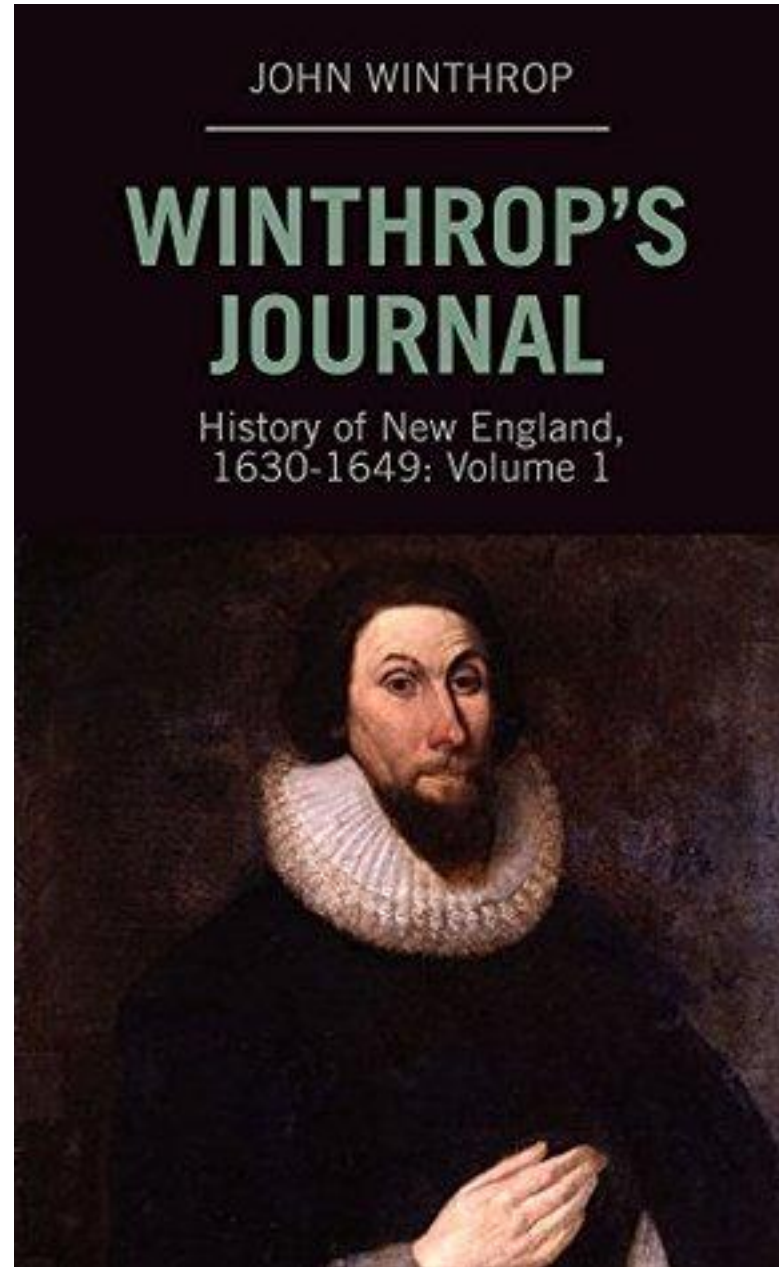
- The Cambridge Agreement was signed 26 August 1629 and provided means for emigrating shareholders to buy out non-emigrating shareholders of the Massachusetts Bay Company.
- In the spring of 1630, Winthrop led a fleet of 11 vessels and 700 passengers to the Massachusetts Bay Colony
- John Winthrop was one of 20,000 Puritans who journeyed to America between 1620 and 1640.
- He travelled on the ship called the Arbella on which he made his famous 'City upon a hill' sermon

# Life

- John Winthrop settled in Boston, which quickly became the capital and chief port of Massachusetts.
- He served as governor of Massachusetts for 12 terms
- In 1645 Winthrop became the first president of the Confederation of New England.
- He had been married four times.
- John Winthrop died on March 26, 1649 in Boston, MA. The cause of death: unspecified.

# The History of New England

*Winthrop* kept a journal of his life and experiences, starting with the voyage across the Atlantic and continuing through his time in Massachusetts, originally written in three notebooks.



The Journal of John Winthrop, founder of the colony of Massachusetts Bay in New England, recording the story of that colony during the first nineteen years of its existence, must always have an interest not only for New England but for America in general, and indeed for the world at large.

Winthrop wrote primarily of his private accounts: his journey from England, the arrival of his wife and children to the colony in 1631, and the birth of his son in 1632. He also wrote profound insights into the nature of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and nearly all important events of the day.

Gradually, the focus of his writings shifted from his personal observations to broader spiritual ideologies and behind-the-scenes views of political matters.

# The History of New England

# The Puritan Legacy

- The Pilgrims were part of a group of English Puritans called the Separatists who fled persecution in England.
- The Pilgrims travelled to America aboard the *Mayflower* and landed at Plymouth in 1620.
- Puritans is a general term for English Protestants who wanted to purify the Church of England.



# Grace: The Puritan Ideal

- Grace—God’s special favor—was the only way to escape an eternity in Hell.
- People did not know for certain if they had grace, but they could feel the arrival of grace as an intense emotion.
- People who had grace were among the “elect” (saved).
- People who did not have grace were among the “unregenerate”

# Puritan Literature

## What the Puritans Read

- The Bible and other religious texts

## Why They Read

- Puritans stressed individual responsibility for spiritual development.
- Every person was responsible for reading and understanding the Bible.

# Puritan Literature

## What the Puritans Wrote

- Sermons, essays, and poems on spiritual and religious subjects
- Diaries and stories that recorded inner and outer events of their lives

## Why They Wrote

- Puritans used writing to explore their lives for signs of grace and to describe the workings of God in their communities.

# Plain Style

Puritans favored a plain style of writing. Plain style is a way of writing that stresses simplicity and clarity of expression.

## Plain style

- emphasizes uncomplicated sentences and the use of every day words from common speech
- avoids elaborate figures of speech and imagery

# What Happened to the Puritans?

- The Age of Faith gradually gave way to the Age of Reason.

Philosophers and scientists stressed the importance of using reason, rather than religion, to explain how the world operates.

- The Puritans didn't disappear—their culture was absorbed into the colonial mainstream.