

MAJOR PROBLEMS IN AMERICAN HISTORY SERIES

GENERAL EDITOR  
THOMAS G. PATERSON

*Major Problems in  
American Environmental History*



DOCUMENTS AND ESSAYS

EDITED BY  
CAROLYN MERCHANT  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

D.C. HEATH AND COMPANY  
Lexington, Massachusetts Toronto

1993

- J. Baird Callicott and Thomas W. Overholt, *Clothed-in-Fur and Other Tales: An Introduction to an Ojibwa World View* (1982)
- Maria Chona (Papago), *Papago Woman*, ed. Ruth Underhill (1936)
- Harold Courlander, *The Fourth World of the Hopis* (1971)
- Richard Erdoes and Alfonso Ortiz, eds., *American Indian Myths and Legends* (1984)
- Mona Etienne and Eleanor Leacock, eds., *Women and Colonization* (1980)
- Jack Forbes, *Apache, Navaho, and Spaniard* (1963)
- Geronimo (Apache), *Geronimo: His Own Story*, ed. S. M. Barrett (1966)
- Ramon A. Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico* (1990)
- J. Donald Hughes, *American Indian Ecology* (1983)
- Harry C. James, *Pages from Hopi History* (1974)
- Shepard Kreech III, ed., *Indians, Animals, and the Fur Trade: A Critique of Keepers of the Game* (1981)
- Left Handed (Navajo), *Left Handed, Son of Old Man Hatt: A Navaho Autobiography*, ed. Walter Dyk (1938)
- Calvin Martin, *Keepers of the Game: Indian-Animal Relationships and the Fur Trade* (1978)
- \_\_\_\_\_, ed., *The American Indian and the Problem of History* (1987)
- Carolyn Niethammer, *Daughters of the Earth: The Lives and Legends of American Indian Women* (1977)
- Alfonso Ortiz, *The Tewa World: Space, Time, Being and Becoming in a Pueblo Society* (1969)
- Polingaysi Qoyawayma, *No Turning Back: A Hopi Indian Woman's Struggle to Live in Two Worlds* (1964)
- Helen Sekaquaptewa (Hopi), *Me and Mine: The Life Story of Helen Sekaquaptewa as Told to Louise Udall* (1969)
- Leslie Marmon Silko (Laguna), *Storyteller* (1981)
- Edward Holland Spicer, *Cycles of Conquest: The Impact of Spain, Mexico, and the United States on the Indians of the Southwest, 1533-1960* (1962)
- Don C. Talayesva (Hopi), *Sunchief: The Autobiography of a Hopi Indian* (1974)
- John Upton Terrel, *Pueblos, Gods, and Spaniards* (1973)
- Christopher Vecsey and Robert W. Venables, eds., *American Indian Environments: Ecological Issues in Native American History* (1980)
- Frank Waters, *Book of the Hopi* (1963)
- Richard White, "Native Americans and the Environment," in W. R. Swagerty, ed., *Scholars and the Indian Experience* (1984), 179-204
- \_\_\_\_\_, *The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change Among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos* (1983)
- Alber Yava (Tewa-Hopi), *Big Falling Snow: A Tewa-Hopi Indian's Life and Times and the History and Traditions of His People*, ed. Harold Courlander (1978)

## CHAPTER

## 3

## The New England Forest in the Seventeenth Century

After several abortive attempts, English settlers established the Plymouth colony in New England in 1620 and the Massachusetts Bay Colony at Boston in 1629. Seventeenth-century New England had a resource-extractive economy based on the four Fs: forests, furs, fish, and farms. England provided investors and manufactures; the colonies, a rich reserve of natural resources.

The southern New England Indians whom the English settlers encountered used cleared patches in the lowland forests to plant corn, beans, and squash and depended on the upland forests for hunting the animals they needed for meat and clothing. They "managed" the forests by burning them to accommodate hunting and travel and to create grassy pastures for deer. The colonists, in contrast, established settled agriculture, extracting forest resources for subsistence and trading them for much needed manufactured goods and staples—iron tools, kettles, nails, guns, ammunition, clothing, windows, paper, coffee, tea, and sugar.

From the perspectives of the beaver and the white pine tree, each extraction transformed a forest home. Beaver created complex pond ecosystems in the forests that left tree stumps and brush for grouse, rabbits, and cavity-nesting birds; watering spots for deer and moose; and foraging sites for foxes, raccoons, bears, and wildcats. The spruce-hemlock forests of northern New England and the white pine-oak forests of the region's southern reaches sustained a variety of tree and bush species, wildflowers, mammals, insects, and birds. The colonists simplified these ecosystems by trapping beaver for the fur trade and breaking down their dams for tillage and pasture sites. They converted the forests into farms and extracted pines for masts, oak for barrel staves, and ash for farm implements.

The colonists added to the complexity of this ecosystem by introducing European crops (wheat, barley, oats, and rye), livestock (cows, oxen, sheep, pigs, goats, and chickens), herbs, weeds, varmints, and diseases. These all affected the composition of the forest. Colonial settled agriculture, moreover, competed with the Indians' use of forest clearings for horticulture and with the native peoples' meat and clothing reserves. The arrival of Europeans

dramatically changed New England's ecology, in turn undercutting the resources that Indians required for subsistence. By the late seventeenth century, the region's Indians, colonists, beaver, and forests all had participated in an ecological revolution that transformed ecology and human production, reproduction, and consciousness.

## DOCUMENTS

The following documents relate the environmental history of the New England forest from several points of view. In the first selection, William Bradford, governor and historian of Plymouth colony, captures the Pilgrims' concept of the forest as a vast wilderness and describes its transformation through trade and farming. Bradford also provides graphic evidence of the devastating effects of smallpox on the Indians of the Connecticut River Valley in 1634. The next two documents illuminate the Puritans' use of biblical ideas to justify transforming the forest environment. John Winthrop, governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, in the second selection cites Genesis 1:28 as a mandate for subduing the new lands, replenishing them with English people, and improving them through agriculture and trade. Thomas Morton, in his 1632 *New English Canaan*, excerpted in the third document, employs the biblical view of Canaan as a promised land, along with the image of nature as female—a virgin whose fruits could be enjoyed when Puritan industry and art transformed the resources of the New World forests. He also describes Indian burning of the forests for better hunting and traveling.

The fourth and fifth documents depict the ways in which Indian women and men used the forest for subsistence. Colonist William Wood's *New England's Prospect*, published in 1634, portrays Indian women's construction of houses and tending of forest garden patches as successful subsistence techniques. Roger Williams, the founder of the Rhode Island colony and an astute observer of the Narragansett Indians, discusses Native Americans' uses of the forest for hunting, their myths concerning trees, and their hypotheses concerning colonial needs for firewood as a motive for settlement.

The sixth and seventh documents look at the New England forest from the perspectives of a wealthy colonial timber merchant and of England's need for white pines for ship masts. Nicholas Shapleigh's 1682 estate, the subject of the sixth document, reveals large profits obtained from lumbering, fur trading, and farming. In the final excerpt, New Hampshire governor Jonathan Belcher, responding to the timber crisis in England, summarizes the British Broad Arrow policy, reserving white pines for the king's use, and warns the colonists not to exploit New England's timber for their private gain.



Source: From *Abandoned New England*, by William F. Robinson. Copyright © 1975 by William F. Robinson. By permission of Little, Brown and Company in association with The New York Graphics Society.

### William Bradford Faces

#### a "Hideous and Desolate Wilderness," 1620-1635

After long beating at sea they fell with that land which is called Cape Cod; the which being made & certainly known to be it, they were not a litle joyful. After some deliberation had amongst themselves & with the master of the ship, they tacked about and resolved to stand for the southward (the wind & weather being fair) to find some place about Hudsons river for their habitation. But after they had sailed that course about half the day, they fell amongst dangerous shoals and roaring breakers, and they were so far intangled there with as they conceived themselves in greater danger; & the wind shrinking upon them withall, they resolved to bear up again for the Cape, and thought themselves happy to get out of those dangers before night overtook them, as by Gods providence they did. And the next day they got into the Cape-harbor where they rode in safety. . . .

Being thus arived in a good harbor and brought saf to land, they fell upon their knees & blessed the God of heaven, who had brought them over the vast & furious ocean, and delivered them from all the perils & miseries thereof, again to set their feet on the firm and stable earth, their proper element. . . . Being thus past the vast ocean, and a sea of troubles before in their preparation (as may be remembered by that which went before), they had now no friends to welcome them, nor inns to entertain or refresh their weatherbeaten bodies, no houses or much less towns to repair to, to seek for succor. It is recorded in scripture as a mercy to the apostle & his shipwrecked company, that the barbarians showed them no small kindness in refreshing them, but these savage barbarians, when they met with them (as after will appear) were readier to fill their sides full of arrows then otherwise. And for the season it was winter, and they that know the winters of that country know them to be sharp & violent, & subject to cruel & fierce storms, dangerous to travel to known places, much more to search an unknown coast. Besides, what could they see but a hideous & desolate wilderness, full of wild beasts & wild men? and what multitudes there might be of them they knew not. Neither could they, as it were, go up to the top of Pisgah, to view from this wilderness a more goodly country to feed their hopes; for which way soever they turned their eyes (save upward to the heavens) they could have litle solace or content in respect of any outward objects. For summer being done, all things stand upon them with a weather-beaten face; and the whole country, full of woods & thickets, represented a wild & savage hue. If they looked behind them, there was the mighty ocean which they had passed, and was now as a main bar & gulf to separate them from all the civil parts of the world. . . . What could now sustain them but the spirit of God & his grace? May not & ought not the children of these fathers, rightly say: *Our fathers were Englishmen which came over this great ocean, and were ready to perish in this wilderness.* . . .

But that which was most sad & lamentable was, that in 2. or 3. months' time half of their company died, especially in Jan: & February, being the depth of winter, and wanting houses & other comforts; being infected with the scurvy & other diseases, which this long voyage & their inaccomodate condition had

brought upon them; so as there died some times 2. or 3. of a day, in the foresaid time; that of 100. & odd persons, scarce 50. remained. And of these in the time of most distress, there was but 6. or 7. sound persons, who, to their great commendations be it spoken, spared no pains, night nor day, but with abundance of toil and hazard of their own health, fetched them wood, made them fires, dressed them meat, made their beds, washed their loathsome clothes, clothed & unclothed them; in a word, did all the homely and necessary offices for them which dainty and queasy stomachs cannot endure to hear named; and all this willingly and cheerfully, without any grudging in the least, showing herein their true love unto their friends and brethren.

\* \* \* \*

All this while the Indians came skulking about them, and would sometimes show themselves aloof of, but when any approached near them, they would run away. And once they stole away their tools where they had been at work, & were gone to dinner. But about the 16. of March a certain Indian came boldly amongst them, and spoke to them in broken English, which they could well understand, but marvelled at it. . . . His name was *Samaset*; he told them also of another Indian whose name was *Squanto*, a native of this place, who had been in England & could speak better English then himself. Being, after some time of entertainment & gifts, dismissed, a while after he came again, & 5. more with him, & they brought again all the tools that were stolen away before, and made way for the coming of their great Sachem, called *Massasoyt*; who, about 4. or 5. days after, came with the chief of his friends & other attendants, with the aforesaid *Squanto*. With whom, after friendly entertainment, & some gifts given him, they made a peace with him (which hath now continued this 24. years). . . . *Squanto* continued with them, and was their interpreter, and was a special instrument sent of God for their good beyond their expectation. He directed them how to set their corn, where to take fish, and to procure other commodities, and was also their pilot to bring them to unknown places for their profit, and never left them till he died. He was a *native of this place*, & scarce any left alive besides himself. He was caried away with divers others by one *Hunt*, a master of a ship, who thought to sell them for slaves in Spain; but he got away for England, and was entertained by a merchant in London, & employed to New-foundland & other parts, & lastly brought hither into these parts by one Mr. *Dermer*, a gentle-man employed by Sr. Ferdinando Gorges & others, for discovery, & other designs in these parts.

\* \* \* \*

Anno: 1621

[April] Afterwards they (as many as were able) began to plant ther corn, in which service *Squanto* stood them in great stead, showing them both the manner how to set it, and after how to dress & tend it. Also he told them except they got fish & set with it (in these old grounds) it would come to nothing, and

he showed them that in the middle of April they should have store enough come up the brook, by which they began to build, and taught them how to take it, and where to get other provisions necessary for them; all which they found true by trial & experience. Some English seed they sew, as wheat & peas, but it came not to good, either by the badness of the seed, or lateness of the season, or both, or some other defect.

\* \* \* \*

[September] They began now to gather in the small harvest they had, and to fit up their houses and dwellings against winter, being all well recovered in health & strength, and had all things in good plenty; for as some were thus employed in affairs abroad, others were exercised in fishing, about cod, & bass, & other fish, of which they took good store, of which every family had their portion. All the summer there was no want. And now began to come in store of fowl, as winter approached, of which this place did abound when they came first (but afterward decreased by degrees). And besides water fowl, there was great store of wild Turkeys, of which they took many, besides venison, &c. Besides they had about a peck a meal a week to a person, or now since harvest, Indian corn to that proportion. Which made many afterwards write so largely of their plenty here to their friends in England, which were not feigned, but true reports.

In November, about that time twelfth month that themselves came, there came in a small ship to them unexpected or looked for, in which came Mr. Cushman (so much spoken of before) and with him 35. persons to remain & live in the plantation; which did not a little rejoice them. And they when they came a shore and found all well, and saw plenty of victuals in every house, were no less glad. . . . So they were all landed; but there was not so much as biscuit-cake or any other victuals for them, neither had they any bedding, but some sorry things they had in their cabins, not pot, nor pan, to dress any meat in; nor overmany clothes, for many of them had brushed away their coats & cloaks at Plymouth as they came. But there was sent over some burching-lane suits in the ship, out of which they were supplied. The plantation was glad of this addition of strength, but could have wished that many of them had been of better condition, and all of them better furnished with provisions; but that could not now be helped. . . .

This ship (called the Fortune) was speedily dispatched away, being laden with good clappbord as full as she could stow, and 2. hogsheds of beaver and otter skins, which they got with a few trifling commodities brought with them at first, being altogether unprovided for trade; neither was there any amongst them that ever saw a beaver skin till they came here, and were informed by Squanto. The freight was estimated to be worth near 500. pounds. . . .

#### Anno Dom: 1634

I am now to relate some strange and remarkable passages. There was a company of people lived in the country, up above in the river of Connecticut, a great way from their trading house there, and were enemies to those Indians

which lived about them, and of whom they stood in some fear (being a stout people). About a thousand of them had inclosed them selves in a fort, which they had strongly palisaded about. 3. or 4. Dutch men went up in the beginning of winter to live with them, to get their trade, and prevent them for bringing it to the English, or to fall into amity with them; but at spring to bring all down to their place. But their enterprise failed, for it pleased God to visit these Indians with a great sicknes, and such a mortality that of a 1000. above 900. and a half of them died, and many of them did rot above ground for want of burial, and the Dutch men almost starved before they could get away, for ice and snow. But about Feb: they got with much difficulty to their trading house; whom they kindly relieved, being almost spent with hunger and cold. Being thus refreshed by them divers days, they got to their own place, and the Dutch were very thankful for this kindness.

This spring, also, those Indians that lived about their trading house there fell sick of the small pox, and died most miserably; for a sorer disease cannot befall them; they fear it more than the plague; for usually they that have this disease have them in abundance, and for want of bedding & lining and other helps, they fall into a lamentable condition, as they live on their hard mats, the pox breaking and mattering, and running one into another, their skin cleaving (by reason thereof) to the mats they lie on; when they turn them, a whole side will fly of at once, (as it were,) and they will be all of a gore blood, most fearful to behold; and then begin very sore, what with cold and other distempers, they die like rotten sheep. The condition of this people was so lamentable, and they fell down so generally of this disease, as they were (in the end) not able to help one another; no, not to make a fire, nor to fetch a little water to drink, nor any to bury the dead; but would strive as long as they could, and when they could procure no other means to make fire, they would burn the wooden trays & dishes they ate their meat in, and their very bows & arrows; & some would crawl out on all four to get a little water, and some times die by the way, & not be able to get in again. But those of the English house, (though at first they were afraid of the infection,) yet seeing their woeful and sad condition, and bearing their pitifull cries and lamentations, they had compassion of them, and daily fetched them wood & water, and made them fires, got them victuals whilst they lived, and buried them when they died. For very few of them escaped, notwithstanding they did what they could for them, to the hazard of themselves. The chief Sachem him self now died, & almost all his friends & kindred. But by the marvelous goodness & providence of God not one of the English was so much as sick, or in the least measure tainted with this disease, though they daily did these offices for them for many weeks together. And this mercy which they showed them was kindly taken, and thankfully acknowledged of all the Indians that knew or heard of the same; and their masters here did much commend & reward them for the same. . . .

#### John Winthrop Quotes Genesis on Subduing the Earth, 1629

First, it will be a service of great consequence to the Church to carry the Gospel into that part of the world, to encourage the conversion of the heathens and to

raise a bulwark against the kingdom of Anti-Christ that the Jesuits are laboring to establish in those countries.

2. All the other true churches of Europe are *brought to desolation*; . . . and it may be that God has provided this place as a refuge for many people whom he means to save from the general calamity. . . .

3. *This land [England] growes weary of her Inhabitants*, so much so that man, the most precious of all creatures, is here treated as viler and baser than the earth we walk upon. Masters have to be forced by the authorities to support their servants and parents to maintain their own children. All towns complain of the burden of their poor. . . .

4. The whole earth is the Lord's garden, and he has given it to the sons of man upon a condition (Genesis 1:28): Increase and multiply, replenish the earth and subdue it. . . . Why, then, should we stay here striving for places to live (many men sometimes spending as much labor and money to recover or keep an acre or two of land as would secure them many hundred acres of equally good or better land in another country), and meanwhile allow a whole continent . . . to lie empty and unimproved?

5. We have risen to such a height of intemperance and such an excess of extravagance that hardly any man's property is sufficient to enable him to keep up with his equals, and he who falls behind must live in scorn and contempt. . . .

6. The fountains of learning and religion are so corrupted (in addition to the impossible cost of education) that most children . . . are perverted, corrupted, and utterly demoralized by the multitude of evil examples and the wicked government in those schools and universities.

### Thomas Morton Praises the New English Canaan, 1632

#### The Authors Prologue.

If art & industry should doe as much  
As Nature hath for Canaan, not such  
Another place, for benefit and rest,  
In all the universe can be possest,  
The more we proove it by discovery,  
The more delight each object to the eye  
Procures, as if the elements had here  
Bin reconcil'd, and pleas'd it should appeare,  
Like a faire virgin, longing to be sped,  
And meete her lover in a Nuptiall bed,  
Deck'd in rich ornaments t' advance her state  
And excellence, being most fortunate,  
When most enjoy'd, so would our Canaan be  
If well employ'd by art and industry  
Whose offspring, now shewes that her fruitfull wombe  
Not being enjoy'd, is like a glorious tombe,  
Admired things producing which there dye,

And ly fast bound in darck obscurity,  
The worth of which in each particuler,  
Who list to know, this abstract will declare.

**In the Moneth of June, Anno Salutis: 1622.** It was my chauce to arrive in the parts of New England with 30. Servants, and provision of all sorts fit for a plantation: And whiles our howses were building, I did endeavour to take a survey of the Country: The more I looked, the more I liked it.

And when I had more seriously considered of the bewty of the place, with all her faire indowments, I did not thinke that in all the knowne world it could be paralel'd. For so many goodly groues of trees; dainty fine round rising hillucks: delicate faire large plaines, sweete cristall fountaines, and cleare running streames, that twine in fine meanders through the meads, making so sweete a murmuring noise to heare, as would even lull the sences with delight a sleepe, so pleasantly doe, they glide upon the pebble stones, jetting most jocundly where they doe meete; and hand in hand runne downe to Neptunes Court, to pay the yearely tribute, which they owe to him as soveraigne Lord of all the springs. Contained within the volume of the Land, Fowles in abundance, Fish in multitude, and discovered besides; Millions of Turtledoves one the greene boughes: which sate pecking, of the full ripe pleasant grapes, that were supported by the lusty trees, whose fruitfull loade did cause the armes to bend, which here and there dispersed (you might see) Lillies and of the Daphnean-tree, which made the Land to mee seeme paradise, for in mine eie, t'was Natures Master-peece: Her cheifest Magazine of, all where lives her store: if this Land be not rich, then is the whole world poore.

\* \* \* \*

The Salvages are accustomed, to set fire of the Country in all places where they come; and to burne it, twize a yeare, vixe at the Spring, and the fall of the leafe. The reason that mooves them to doe so, is because it would other wise be so overgrowne with underweedes, that it would be all a copice wood, and the people would not be able in any wise to passe through the Country out of a beaten path. . . .

And least their firing of the Country in this manner; should be an occasion of damnifying us, and indaingering our habitations; wee our selves have used carefully about the same times; to observe the winds and fire the grounds about our owne habitations, to prevent the Dammage that might happen by any neglect thereof, if the fire should come neere those howses in our absence.

For when the fire is once kindled, it dilates and spreads it selfe as well against, as with the winde; burning continually night and day, untill a shower of raine falls to quench it.

And this custome of firing the Country is the meanes to make it passable, and by that meanes the trees growe here, and there as in our parks: and makes the Country very beautifull, and commodious.

### William Wood on Indian Women's Housing and Horticulture, 1634

*Of their women, their dispositions, employments, usage by their husbands, their apparel, and modesty.*

[Women's] employments be many: First their building of houses, whose frames are formed like our garden-arbors, something more round, very strong and handsome, covered with close-wrought mats of their own weaving, which deny entrance to any drop of rain, though it come both fierce and long, neither can the piercing North wind find a cranny, through which he can convey his cooling breath, they be warmer than our English houses; at the top is a square hole for the smoke's evacuation, which in rainy weather is covered with a pluver; these be such smoky dwellings, that when there is good fires, they are not able to stand upright, but lie all along under the smoke, never using any stools or chairs, it being as rare to see an Indian sit on a stool at home, as it is strange to see an English man sit on his heeles abroad. Their houses are smaller in the Summer, when their families be dispersed, by reason of heat and occasions. In Winter they make some fifty or threescore foot long, forty or fifty men being inmates under one roof; and as is their husbands' occasion these poor tectonists are often troubled like snails, to carry their houses on their backs sometime to fishing-places, other times to hunting-places, after that to a planting place, where it abides the longest: an other work is their planting of corn, wherein they exceed our English husband-men, keeping it so clear with their Clam shell-hoes, as if it were a garden rather than a corn-field, not suffering a choking weed to advance his audacious head above their infant corn, or an undermining worm to spoil his spurns. Their corn being ripe, they gather it, and drying it hard in the Sun, convey it to their barns, which be great holes digged in the ground in form of a brass pot, sealed with rinds of trees, wherein they put their corn, covering it from the inquisitive search of their gourmandizing husbands, who would eat up both their allowed portion, and reserved seed, if they knew where to find it. But our hogs having found a way to unhinge their barn doors, and rob their garners, they are glad to implore their husbands' help to roll the bodies of trees over their holes, to prevent those pioneers, whose thievery they as much hate as their flesh.

### Roger Williams on Indian Uses of the Forest, 1643

*Obs.* This question they oft put to me: Why come the *Englishmen* hither? and measuring others by themselves; they say, It is because you want *firing*: for they, having burnt up the *wood* in one place, (wanting draughts to bring *wood* to them) they are faine to follow the *wood*; and so to remove to a fresh new place for the *woods* sake. . . .

They are so exquisitely skilled in all the body and bowels of the Country (by reason of their huntings) that I have often been guided twentie, thirtie, sometimes fortie miles through the woods, a streight course, out of any path. . . .

With friendly joyning they breake up their fields, build their Forts, hunt the Woods, stop and kill fish in the Rivers, it being true with them as in all the World in the Affaires of Earth or Heaven: By concord little things grow great, by discord the greatest come to nothing. . . .

. . . They have it from their Fathers, that *Kautántowwit* made one man and woman of a stone, which disliking, he broke them in pieces, and made another ~~man~~ and woman of a Tree, which were the Fountaines of all mankind. . . .

The Natives hunt two wayes:

First, when they pursue their game (especially Deere, which is the generall and wonderfull plenteous hunting in the Countrey:) I say, they pursue in twentie, fortie, fiftie, yea, two or three hundred in a company, (as I have seene) when they drive the woods before them.

Secondly, They hunt by Traps of severall sorts, to which purpose, after they have observed in Spring-time and Summer the haunt of the Deere, then about Harvest, they goe ten or twentie together, and sometimes more, and withall (if it be not too farre) wives and children also, where they build up little hunting houses of Barks and Rushes (not comparable to their dwelling houses) and so each man takes his bounds of two, three, or foure miles, where hee sets thirty, forty, or fiftie Traps, and baits his Traps with that food the Deere loves, and once in two dayes he walks his round to view his Traps.

## A Timber Merchant's Estate, 1682

A true Inventory of the Moneys goods Cattle & Chattels belonging & appertaining to the Estate of Major Nicho. Shapleigh, of Kittery in the Province of Maine In New England deceased, taken and apprized by us whose names are here subscribed, this 9th day of May 1682: which are as follows.\*

	£	s	D
Inprst to so much In Cash or ready money	055	17	00
Itto 70 ounces of plate at 6s p 8 oz	021	00	00
It to his wearing apparel thirteen pounds 13s	013	13	00
It to a Parcel of worn Pewter, at 6 pounds 7s	006	07	00
It to a Parcel of New Pewter apprized at	009	03	00
It 68lb of beaver at 5s p lb at Otter skin 5s, a Moose skin 8s	017	00	00
It two hats & a Case 20s, his riding horse & furniture 5: 10: 00	006	10	0
It The home stall, dwelling house out houses orchards grandings pastures fields with all appurtenances hereunto belonging with all other out-lands hereto adjoining, the Timber of the saw Mills only, excepted	500	00	00
It the saw Mill & Grist Mill, and their accommodations at Kittery valued	300	00	00
It William Ellinghams Interest purchased by Major Shapleigh in his life time lying on the North side of the Creek	050	00	00
It about thirty Acres of Marsh lying at Sturgeon Creeck	090	00	00
It Ten thousand foot of boards or thereabouts at the Saw Mills	010	00	00
It Three horses apprized at 50s p horse	007	00	00
It eleven oxen 38£: eleven Cows: 27: 10: 00, 3 3 year old Cattle: 7: 10: 00, four two years old at six pounds	079	00	00
It four yearlings 4: 00: 00: 11 sheep & five lambs 4 pounds	008	00	00
It a Parcel of swine at 10£: 4 Negroes 3 men one woman & one little Negro all at ninety pounds	100	00	00
	1273	10	0
It Two Irish boys, one to serve about two years, & one 3 years	010	00	0
It Great Guns & Carriages seven pounds, a great fowling piece that Samson White borrowed 30s, four New Muskets four pounds 4 small guns 40s: a blunderbuss 15s	015	05	0
Two Timber Chains 40s six draft Chains 48s, 6 yokes ready fitted with rings & staples 24s, two plows 16s, two Clevises 5s	012	18	0
It a Cart & wheels 35s one pair logging Wheels & drags 4: 10: 0	008	00	0
It Two pair of Mast Wheels decayed with Iron work 3 pounds			
It Two Mast Chains & 1/3 of another Chain at 5 £			
It 12 old axes, two spades, 1 pair of hand screws, too scythes two drawing knives, Carpenters tools & Turning tools five pounds	005	00	0
It one pair of large steelyards at Mr Richd Waldens	003	00	0
It In the smiths shop one pair of bellows, small Tools & old Iron	002	10	0
It one old lighter, one shallop with old Rigging & furniture at	010	00	0
It 3 great hay Canoes & a Coasting Canoe	005	00	0
It one old Cloak at 35s	001	15	0
	73	08	0

\*In the columns, 1 pound (£) equals 20 shillings (s), and 1 shilling (s) equals 12 pence (d).

†Inpr: Probably abbreviation for *in principio*, meaning "in the beginning."

‡It: Abbreviation for *item*, meaning "also," to introduce each article in a list.

§p: Abbreviation for *per*.

## A Governor Enforces the King's Forest Policy, 1730

By His Excellency Jonathan Belcher Esqr Captain General & Governour in Chief in and over His Maj'ties Province of New Hampshire in New England—

## A Proclamation to prevent the Destruction or Spoil of His Majesties Woods.—

Forasmuch as the Preservation of His Majesties Woods within this and the neighbouring Provinces is highly necessary for furnishing the Royal Navy, and divers Acts of Parliament have been accordingly from time to time made & pass'd for that end; notwithstanding which and the care of this Governmt to prevent & punish the Destruction and spoil of His Majesties Woods, many evil minded Persons have broke thro' the restraints of the Law in that behalf; and have for their own private gain made great wast of such trees as might be fit for His Majesties service. . . . It is enacted "That from and after the Twenty first day of September one thousand seven hundred & twenty two, no Person or Persons within the Colonys or plantations of Nova Scotia, New Hampshire, the Massachusetts Bay & Province of Mayne, Rhode Island, & Providence Plantations, the Narraganset Countrey, or Kings province, and Connecticut in New England & New York & New Jersey in America, or within any of them do or shall presume to cut, fell or destroy any white pine trees, not growing within any Township or the bounds, lines, or limits thereof in any of the said Colonies or plantations without His Majesties Royal Lycense. . . . And whereas their late Majestys King William & Queen Mary for the better providing & furnishing Masts for the Royal Navy. . . . did reserve to themselves their heirs & successors all Trees of the Diameter of twenty four inches & upwards at twelve inches from the ground growing upon any soil or Tract of Land within the said Province or Territory, not then before granted to any private Person: In order therefore to make the said Reservation more effectual, Be it further Enacted by the Authority aforesaid That no Person or Persons whatsoever within the said Province of the Massachusetts Bay or New England do or shall presume to cut or destroy any white pine trees of the Diameter of twenty four inches, or upwards at twelve inches from the ground, not growing within some soil or Tract of Land within the said Province granted to some private person or Persons before the seventh day of October which was in the year 1690 without His Majesties Lycense first had and obtained. . . .

Dated this thirtieth day of October 1730. . . . GOD SAVE THE KING—

## E S S A Y S

The essays feature environmental histories written from three different viewpoints. In the first selection, Jim O'Brien, an American historian who has written on the history of the New Left and contributed to the journal *Radical America*, offers a history of North America from the vantage point of the beaver. In considering how the fur trade affected the beaver, O'Brien turns history upside down, suggesting