

“Sim” Settlement

Background

The year is 1763 and Royal Governor Benning Wentworth has just incorporated a new town on the New Hampshire frontier. You are among the settlers who have chosen to start a new life in this settlement. The amount and quality of the land that you will settle is going to have a lot to do with what you do for a living as well as how well connected you are to the governor. In a sense, choosing land in a new town was like the NBA Draft—the best land went first, just as the best players do. And different kinds of land were better for different reasons. For example, a miller needed to be near waterpower to operate the machinery of his mill.



Even though most New Hampshire people in the 1700s were farmers, there were many tradesmen who made things that people needed, like shoes, leather, pots, horseshoes, clothes, etc. These people didn't need as much land, but needed some since they too often did some farming.

Every town had a “meetinghouse” or church headed by a minister. This required land, too. Also, many towns had “common land” near the center where people could let their livestock graze, in addition to their own land. Land for graveyards needed to be set aside, as well.

The fact that New Hampshire was a royal colony meant that powerful people in the colonial government and their British friends claimed much of the best land. Other well-connected families were also able to get large chunks of a new town's best land. The following are some of the people who might own land or live in a colonial New Hampshire town.

Procedure

The Master Map

Using the master map provided, discuss as a class which land would be the best in the new settlement. Provide copies of the master map for the students along with copies of 100-acre grids as shown on the map. Students may sub-divide the grids into 25-acre plots, as needed. Students can then position their 25-acre lots on the map as a way of visualizing the area they wish to claim.

The squares are meant to be approximations only; not all acreage is square. Also, some students will need more than one 100-acre grid; some will need less. To get a sense of what farm and building lots might look like, check over the layout of the original town of Penacook—today's Concord—as laid out by its proprietors in 1726.) House lots were one and one-half acres in size; field lots measured six acres.

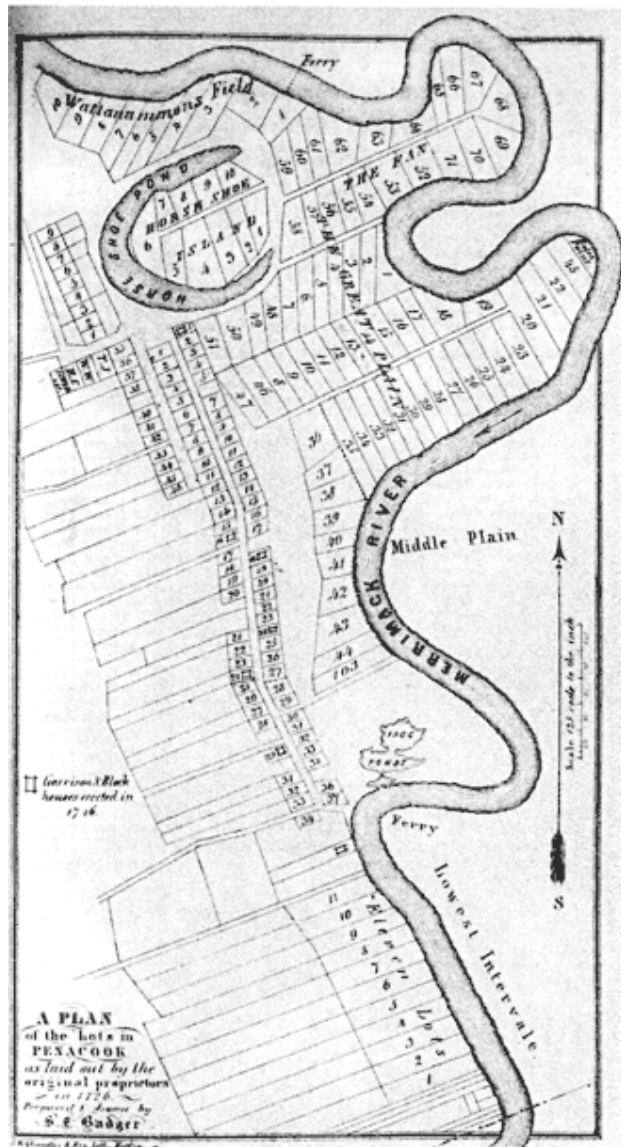
The Settlers

Take the settlers listed below, cut them out, and place them into a hat. Have students select one and read the descriptions to themselves.

In numbered order, starting with Governor Wentworth, have students read their descriptions aloud and select a parcel that meets their needs and land requirements.

The Problem

You may need to moderate a debate or two to ensure that common good and private interests are balanced. For example, the governor wants the settlement to succeed so that his own land there can become more valuable. But for this to happen, it is necessary that there be gristmills and sawmills that will allow settlers to feed and shelter themselves. This means that the governor cannot claim all of the land on the rivers. Also, the governor will wish to claim



forestland so he can profit by selling trees to England for use as ship masts. But if he claims all the best forests, there will be no timber for settlers to use for building homes or for heating and cooking. Also, keep in mind that the town will need to have roads. Where shall they be placed?

Keep track of who selects what on a master map. Have students record on their own maps their own holding, as well as the locations of mills, the church, the graveyard, the tavern, and the governor's land. For a take-home assignment, they can color the map, and write a paragraph about how they intend to use their land in the new settlement.

1. **Governor Wentworth**

I granted this land in the name of his Highness King George and in so doing am entitled to several acres of this township's champion land. In each township that I incorporate I keep about 500 acres. At the rate I'm going, I'll probably have 100,000 acres before the end of my life. Of course, my home is in the colonial capital, Portsmouth, so I won't live on this land. Actually, I probably won't even set foot on it. I will just generate income from it. Because I am the governor, I also get to name this town—after myself, after a friend who has helped me, after my old hometown, or after my dog.

[800 acres]

2. **Member of the Governor's Council**

I am a faithful servant of Benning Wentworth, the Royal Governor. As a reward for my service, I have been given land in several new towns like this one.

[400 acres]

3. **Lord Boscawen**

I am an English nobleman with a great amount of power. I live in London and have never set foot in New Hampshire. But your Royal Governor wants my friendship so he gives me land in towns that he incorporates. He even named a town near Concord after me to win my favor.

[400 acres]

4. **Surveyor of His Majesty's Trees and Forests**

I am a very powerful person in this colony because I get to decide which trees can be cut down and which ones belong to the King. Sometimes people bribe me to give them permission to cut down trees that should belong to the King.

Sometimes I'm bribed with land. This is how I was given some land in your town.

[300 acres]

5. Land Speculator

I have bought a large tract of land on the outskirts of town knowing that someday the town will grow and this cheap land will increase in value. Then people will buy it for much more than I paid. I will not live in town; I will just profit from its growth.

[300 acres]

6. Minister

I need land that is in the center of the village so my parishioners will not have to walk too far to church. An additional lot will be needed so the town may bury its dead. And I too will require a parsonage where I might live with my family, as well as a parcel of good farmland so we might feed ourselves.

[100 acres]

7. Miller (Grist)

I need to be located near a large stream or river to turn the gears in my mill to turn a 3,000 pound grindstone that can grind my neighbors' corn into flour.

[10 acres]

8. Sawyer

My sawmill needs to be located near a large stream or a river to make a large band saw go up and down to cut trees into the lumber that my neighbors will use to build their houses and barns.

[10 acres]

9. Militia Captain

Being a veteran of the French and Indian War, I am well versed in the ways of armed combat and shall provide a needed service by keeping the townsmen aged 16 to 60 in top fighting shape, so we shall be prepared in the event of an Indian raid. But most of my time will be spent farming, so I shall require several acres of good land.

[200 acres]

10. Tavern Keeper #1 and Shopkeeper

I should like to be located near the Meetinghouse so people can relax after Church and socialize—and gossip and discuss politics. As shopkeeper, I stock things that people can't produce themselves like sugar, molasses, glass, cinnamon, rum, china plates, and silk handkerchiefs.

[50 acres]

11. Ferryman

I shall require two small lots of land on both sides of the river so I can shuttle people, their belongings, their produce, and their livestock across the river. Because this is a small town, I cannot make enough shipping people across the river and must also farm, so I will need land elsewhere in town.

[50 acres]

12. Farmer #1

I am from a prominent family that helped me secure several acres of the best land in town.

[200 acres]

13. Farmer #2

I am from a prominent family that helped me secure several acres of the best land in town.

[200 acres]

14. Farmer #3

I am from a modest family and have come to this settlement for a new start.

[100 acres]

15. Farmer #4

I am from a modest family and have come to this settlement for a new start.

[100 acres]

16. Farmer #5

I am from a modest family and have come to this settlement for a new start.

[100 acres]

17. Farmer #6

I am from a modest family and have come to this settlement for a new start.

[100 acres]

18. Farmer #7

I am from a modest family and have come to this settlement for a new start.
[100 acres]

19. Farmer #8

I am from a modest family and have come to this settlement for a new start.
[100 acres]

20. Farmer #9

I am from a modest family and have come to this settlement for a new start.
[100 acres]

21. Hogreeve

I am responsible for catching and penning up livestock that wanders away from farmers' fields or the commons. These duties pay little, so mainly I farm.
[100 acres]

22. Farmer #10

I haven't the means to maintain a farm of my own so I live with the family of a farmer for whom I work. I do however maintain a few acres of corn and potatoes and hay for extra money.
[5 acres]

23. Farmer #11

I haven't the means to maintain a farm of my own so I live with the family of a farmer for whom I work. I do however maintain a few acres of corn and potatoes and hay for extra money.

[5 acres]

24. Blacksmith

I need a large supply of firewood for charcoal to fire the furnace that will allow me to make the horseshoes and tools that my neighbors will need on their farms.

[10 acres]

25. Tanner and Cordwainer

I need to be located near a small stream so I can wash off the animal skins before they can be made into leather. I will also provide the townspeople with sturdy shoes to protect their feet from these rugged New Hampshire winters.

[10 acres]

26. Tavern Keeper #2

I will locate on the major road out of town so travelers can rest their horses here, get supper, and spend the night. Because I shall have fewer visitors than the tavern keeper in town I will need more land for a small farm.

[100 acres]

27. Cooper

The barrels that I make are the primary way that people transport goods—anything, including potatoes, rum, cider, or fish. I will require a large woodlot so I will have plenty of trees to make into barrel staves.

[75 acres]

28. Potter

I need to be located near a source of firewood to fire the kiln where I make redware bowls. This work will not be enough to allow my family and me to survive, so I will need land for farming, too. If there isn't enough land here, I shall look elsewhere—maybe Portsmouth or Exeter where there is more work for a potter.

[0 acres]

29. Schoolmaster

Because I am not yet married and shall only teach in this town for a short while—maybe a couple of years—I will not set up housekeeping here. Thus I need no land of my own and live in the home of one of my students' families. But if there is to be a school, there will need to be land for it. This need only be a small parcel, but it can't be too far of a walk for my young scholars. If you cannot spare land for a school, I shall have to look to another community since frontier settlements like yours find it difficult to keep teachers.

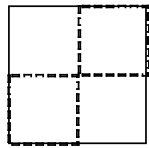
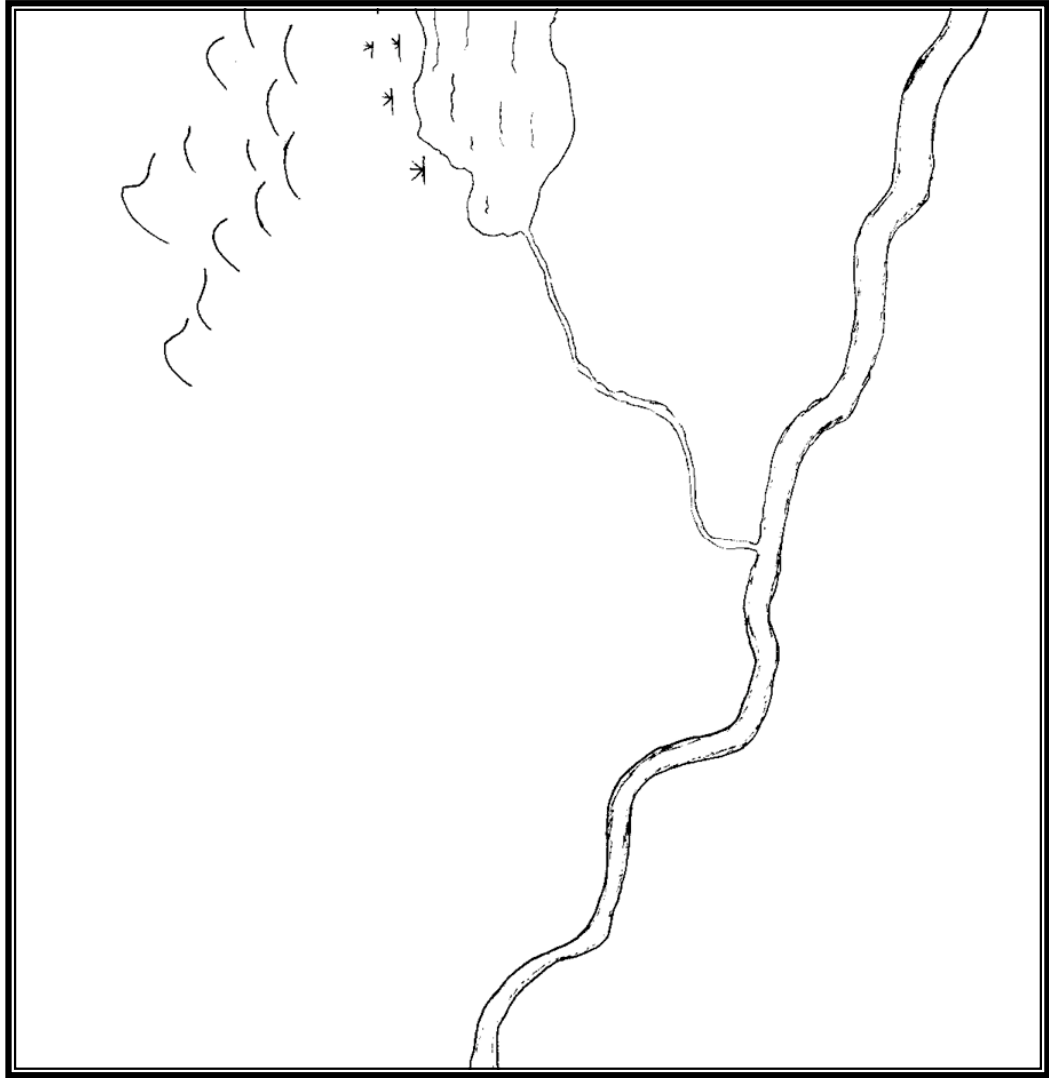
[0 acres]

30. Midwife

I shall assist the women of this town when they go into childbirth. I should be close enough to the town center to be near most of the women in town, but not too far from women on the outskirts. However, I am a woman and cannot own land by law and my location will depend on where my husband sets up our home.

[0 acres]

Master Map



About 100 Acres

