

# Native Americans and colonists: changing attitudes towards land

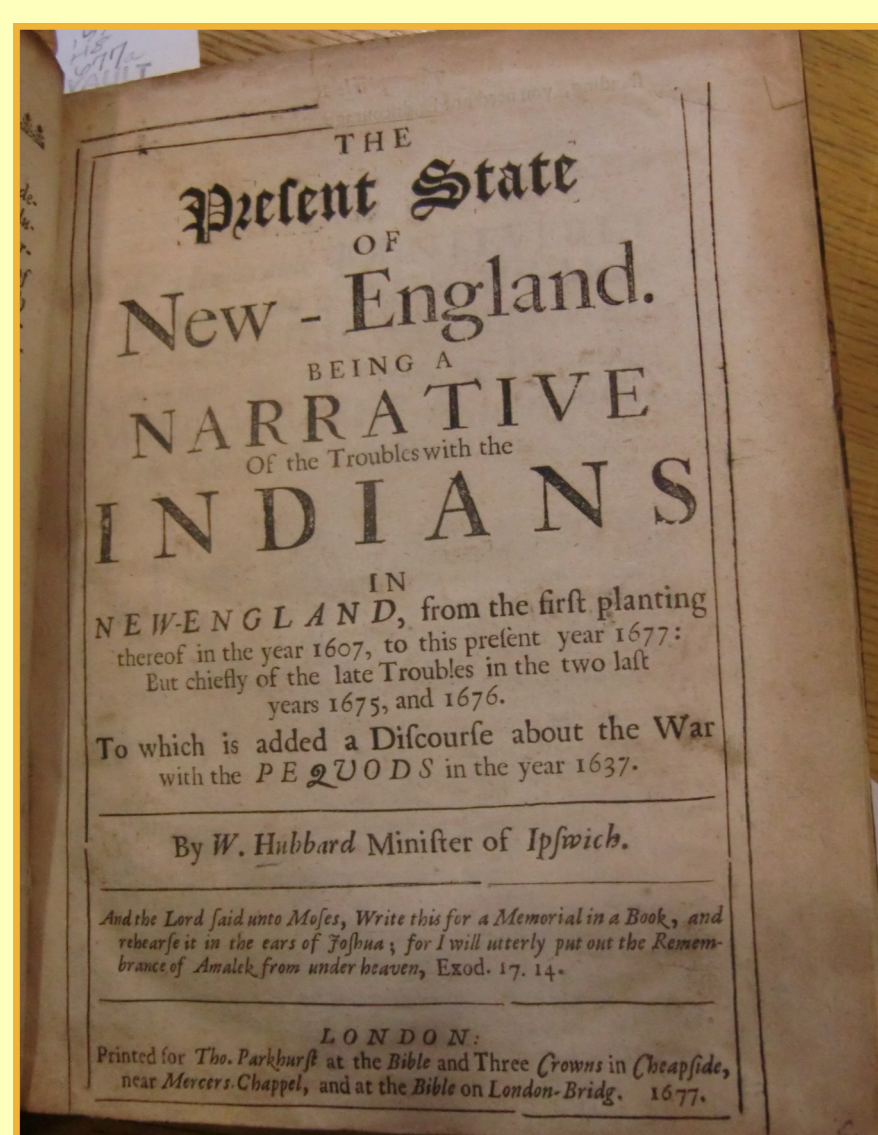


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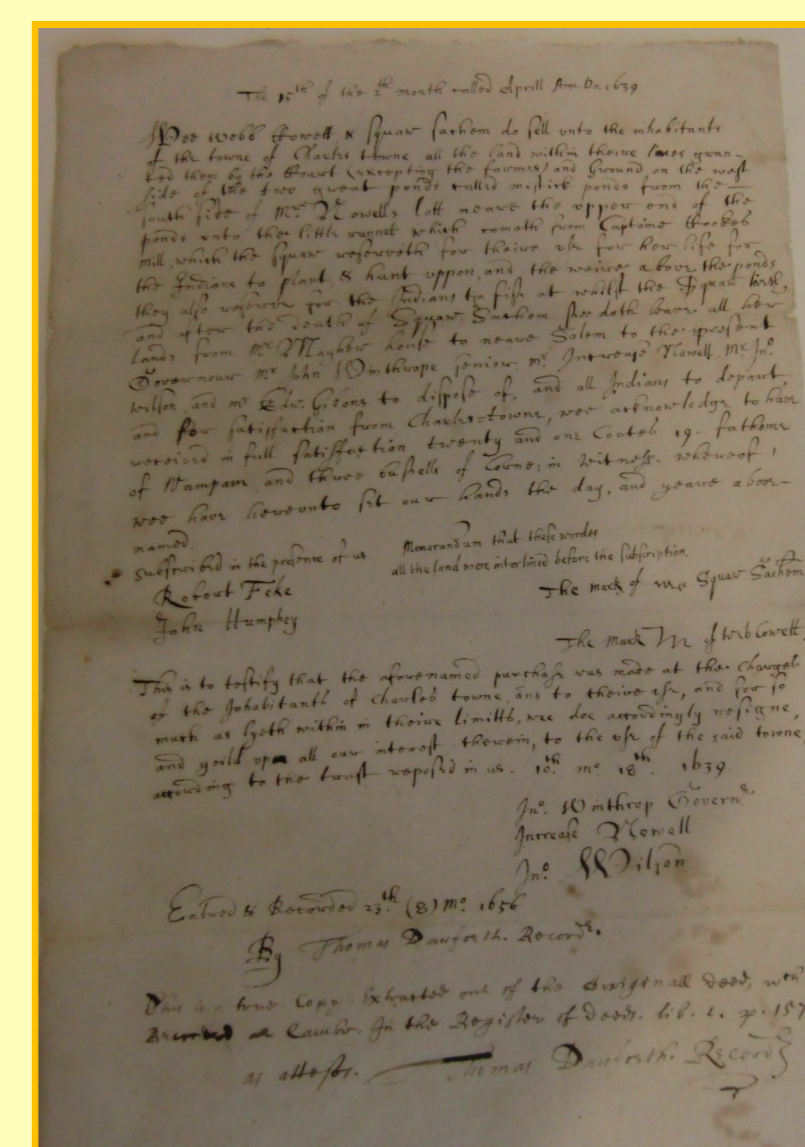
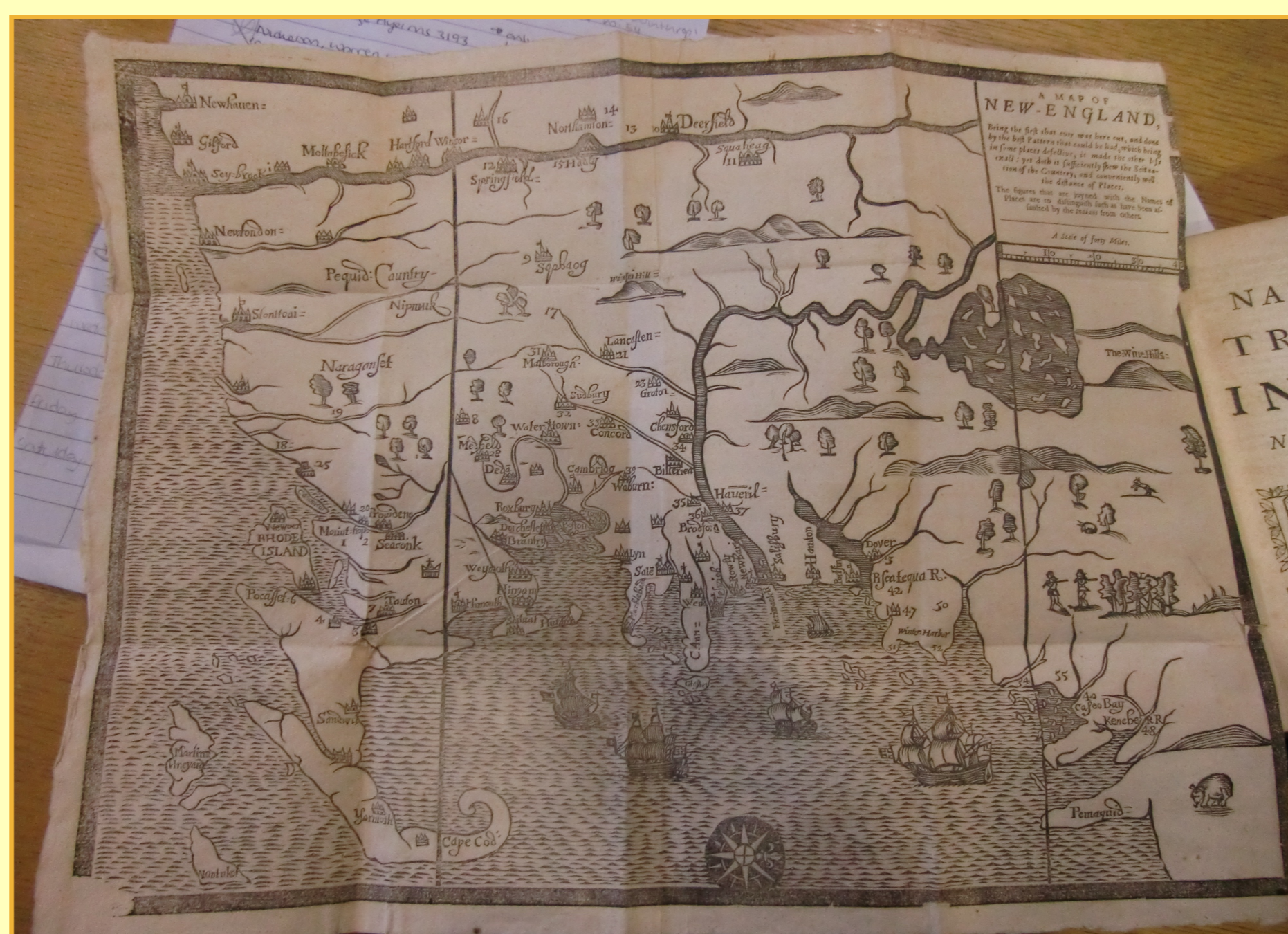
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Native Americans held a distinct set of beliefs concerning land. Through study of New England during the British colonial period I planned to explore three main aims:

- 1) To understand how the beliefs of Native Americans differed from those of the British colonists.
- 2) The extent to which British colonists altered the Native Americans' attitudes towards land.
- 3) The extent to which any changes in attitude and belief impacted the land and the Native American way of life.



Above and right: William Hubbard, *The Present State of New-England*, (London: 1677)



Webb Cowett and Squaw Sachem, *Indian Deed*, (Massachusetts: 15 April 1639)



The majority of my research was undertaken in the US, including visits to the National Museum of the American Indian (left) and the Library of Congress (right). Visits to institutions such as these allowed me access to original manuscripts whilst also giving me an understanding of the modern portrayal of Native American history in the US.



## Conclusions:

Attitudes are changing and Native Americans are no longer considered to be passive players in the past or present, environmentally, socially and economically.

- Native Americans played an active role in both transforming the land and selling their land to colonists.
- Land sales were part of the commoditization of resources in New England, influenced by British colonists, resulting in the development of a capitalist Native American economy.
- The portrayal of Native Americans in museums has been transformed in recent years. Native Americans now play a more prominent role in the telling of their histories, and are able to claim back tribal artefacts.