

Summary: The Middle Colonies

New York and New Jersey

In 1664, England captured the colony of New Netherland. King Charles II gave the colony to his brother, James the Duke of York. James kept some of the land and named it New York. He gave the rest of the land to two friends. They divided the land into East Jersey and West Jersey. In 1702, the two colonies joined to form New Jersey.

The proprietors of New York and New Jersey picked governors to rule the colonies. The proprietors allowed the colonists to be part of the government in two ways. First, the governors chose a council that helped make decisions. Second, colonists elected representatives to an assembly. The assembly did not have much power, but it was a step toward self-government.

Pennsylvania and Delaware

William Penn belonged to a religious group called the Quakers. In England, people who did not belong to the Church of England were punished. Penn wanted a colony where all Christians could live in peace.

In 1681, King Charles gave Penn land in the Middle Colonies. This land was named Pennsylvania. The Duke of York gave Penn more land, which later became Delaware.

In Pennsylvania, colonists worshiped freely. They also had a more powerful elected assembly that could approve or reject laws. Penn bought land and made treaties with the Lenni Lenape Indians. His fairness helped everyone live together peacefully.

Penn planned the colony's first city, Philadelphia. This city became a big trade center because it had a good harbor. Ships brought goods from other colonies and from Europe.

Benjamin Franklin was Philadelphia's most famous citizen. He published a newspaper. He also helped to start Philadelphia's first fire company, hospital, and library. Franklin became famous for his inventions.



Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

proprietor *noun*, a person who owned and controlled all the land in a colony

representative *noun*, someone who is chosen to speak and act for others

treaty *noun*, an official agreement between nations or groups



After You Read

REVIEW How did colonists in New York and New Jersey take part in government? Highlight two sentences that tell how the proprietors allowed the colonists to take part in the government.

REVIEW How did the government of Pennsylvania differ from those of New York and New Jersey? Circle the sentence that describes the government of Pennsylvania.