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'Pilgrims; New World Settlers & the call of home'

JOURNEY'S END

In July 1660 Samuel Pepys turned up at the door of Major Francis Willoughby's house with a pair of bedsheets, and asked to stay the night. Willoughby agreed. Pepys had his eye on Willoughby's house, part of a complex of Navy Board houses in Seething Lane, close to Tower Hill in London. In the new administration of Charles II, Pepys was on his way up in the Navy Office, Willoughby on his way out. Within two days Pepys laid claim to the house, and within a fortnight his household took possession. In an untidy handover, Willoughby had to send for his goods nine days later.¹ He had come to England in 1650; he moved back to New England in 1662 to a career that included a spell as Deputy Governor of Massachusetts.²

With the Restoration of Charles II, migration from New England to England stopped. Rumours ran high that a new wave of emigrants would leave England for America. Massachusetts held five solemn fast days in just over a year for the 'dark prospect' in religion and politics on the other side of the Atlantic.³ Colonists received letters from anxious enquirers wanting advice by return about what the prospects for settlement would be, 'if times press them to transport their families into New England'.⁴ John Davenport predicted that the new Act of Uniformity (which reintroduced bishops and the Book of Common Prayer) would make many set sail for New England. In June 1662 he recorded the arrival of several hundred passengers. One was a messenger sent over by the English Congregationalist Thomas Goodwin – who would have come himself if his wife had not stopped him – on behalf of various churches and 'many men of considerable quality and estate who have a desire to come into this country'. There was 'great talk of many ministers coming over with their congregations . . . if room can be found for them'.⁵

In the end, far fewer came than expected. First-time emigrants were scarce. The hunted regicides William Goffe, John Dixwell and Edmund Whalley found a refuge in New England – and a place in American mythology – hiding

Photos for Francis Willoughby



Photo information

Location

Date

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Francis Willoughby
1613 - 1671



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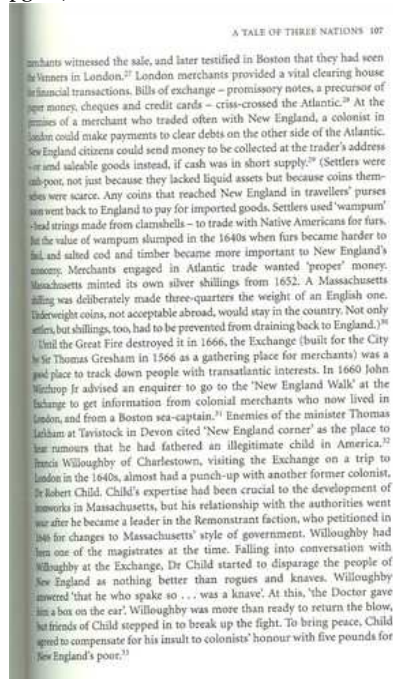
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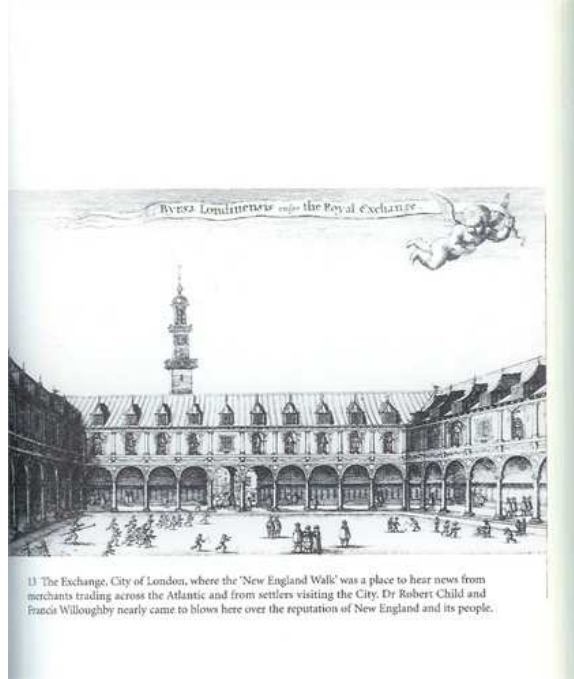
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