



Between Two Worlds: How the English Became Americans

Malcolm Gaskill

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In the 1600s, over 350,000 intrepid English men, women, and children migrated to America, leaving behind their homeland for an uncertain future. Whether they settled in Jamestown, Salem, or Barbados, these migrants—entrepreneurs, soldiers, and pilgrims alike—faced one incontrovertible truth: England was a very, very long way away.

In *Between Two Worlds*, celebrated historian Malcolm Gaskill tells the sweeping story of the English experience in America during the first century of colonization. Following a large and varied cast of visionaries and heretics, merchants and warriors, and slaves and rebels, Gaskill brilliantly illuminates the often traumatic challenges the settlers faced. The first waves sought to recreate the English way of life, even to recover a society that was vanishing at home. But they were thwarted at every turn by the perils of a strange continent, unaided by monarchs who first ignored then exploited them. As these colonists strove to leave their mark on the New World, they were forced—by hardship and hunger, by illness and infighting, and by bloody and desperate battles with Indians—to innovate and adapt or perish.

As later generations acclimated to the wilderness, they recognized that they had evolved into something distinct: no longer just the English in America, they were perhaps not even English at all. These men and women were among the first white Americans, and certainly the most prolific. And as Gaskill shows, in learning to live in an unforgiving world, they had begun a long and fateful journey toward rebellion and, finally, independence

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