The Dutch Connection: New Netherland, the Pequots, and the Puritans in Southern New England, 1620–1638

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Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal, Volume 9, Number 2, Spring 2011, pp. 295-323 (Article)

Published by University of Pennsylvania Press
DOI: 10.1353/eam.2011.0015

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The Dutch Connection
New Netherland, the Pequots, and the Puritans in Southern New England, 1620–1638

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ABSTRACT Although most historical studies of the Pequot War acknowledge the existence of a trade alliance between the Pequots and the Dutch preceding the outbreak of the English-Pequot conflict, scholars have neglected to examine Dutch-Pequot relations in detail. Following a decade of material exchange between private traders and the Pequots, the Dutch West India Company (WIC) established a mutually beneficial trade alliance with the Pequots in 1626. When the relationship broke down in the early 1630s, WIC officials in New Netherland, distracted by personal and political feuds in the Dutch colony, were remarkably slow to repair the alliance. The inability of the WIC to restore stable relations with the Pequots drew the attention of the neighboring Puritan colonies, who coveted the fertile lands of the Connecticut Valley. By highlighting the complex role of the Dutch, this essay complicates our view of the Pequot War as an inevitable conflict between Puritans and Pequots.

The Pequot War (1636–38) in southern New England has never lacked for scholarly attention. Historians agree that the violent conflict is an important subject of study because the English victory over the Pequots secured the foothold of the fledgling Puritan colonies in eastern North America. The

For comments on an earlier version of this article I would like to thank Daniel K. Richter, Andrew Lipman, Ned Landsman, Andrew Newman, and the participants of the conference entitled “The World of Lion Gardiner, c. 1599–1663: Crossings and Boundaries,” held at Stony Brook University, March 20–21, 2009. I also want to thank Colin Calloway and the audience for comments they gave on a version of this essay delivered at the conference entitled “From Borderland to Backcountry: Frontier Communities in Comparative Perspective,” held at the University of Dundee, July 7–9, 2009.

Early American Studies (Spring 2011)
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Pequot War is also notorious and controversial because of the deliberate English torching of one of the two main Pequot villages, which burned hundreds of indigenous women and children alive. Some scholars have noted that it was one of the first Indian wars in North America in which the European colonizers effectively manipulated the existing rivalries among the indigenous peoples. During the war the English secured military support from the Narragansetts and the Mohegans, two indigenous peoples who were eager to strike a major blow against their Pequot neighbors. Finally, some historians such as Alfred Cave view the Pequot War as one of “the earliest expressions of the idea that Indian wars were providentially ordained events intended to test and chastise God’s people.”

One group usually left out in studies of the Pequot War are the Dutch. The Pequot War is typically perceived as a binary conflict between the English and the Pequots. Studies of the war do acknowledge the trade alliance between the Dutch and the Pequots in the preceding decade, but they shift their full attention to English-Pequot relations after the sudden unraveling of the Dutch-Pequot alliance in 1633–34.

To some extent the stereotypical image of the Dutch as traders rather than as colonizers has also contributed to their neglect in historical studies of the Pequot War. For example, in a


recent study of Dutch-indigenous encounters in New Netherland, Donna Merwick contrasted Dutch maritime trade with English settler colonialism in southern New England. In this view, whereas the Dutch wanted only to trade with the Pequots, the English were land-hungry settlers determined to drive the Pequots from their territories. Although Merwick’s distinction between Dutch and English policies in southern New England is useful, it is also simplistic and does not help us understand why Pequot-Dutch relations developed as they did. A challenge to this understanding is the scarcity of Dutch sources for this period. The years from 1645 to the English conquest of New Netherland in 1664 are well documented, but we have only a few written Dutch sources for the 1620s and 1630s. It is nevertheless possible to reconstruct Dutch actions before and during the Pequot War. By highlighting the role of the Dutch, this essay seeks to complicate our view of the Pequot War as an inevitable conflict between the Puritans and the Pequots.

THE NINNIMISSIINUOK OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND

The coast of southern New England between the Housatonic River and Buzzard’s Bay was one of the most densely populated areas north of Mexico before European contact. The maritime and estuary environment attracted and sustained a great variety of sea life, birds, fowl, shellfish, and land animals that made possible a “regionally based sedentism” for indigenous peoples. In contrast to peoples located inland, who lived in large sedentary villages surrounded by agricultural fields, the peoples of the coastal zone lived in small, semi-sedentary communities whose territories were usually centered on an estuary. The year-round availability of abundant food sources in relatively small areas fostered the emergence of densely populated areas and the development of multiple polities with a strong sense of territoriality. The main indigenous polities of southern New England were the Paugussets, Pequots, Mohegans, Niantics, Narragansetts, and Pokanokets. They were linguistically and culturally closely affiliated with peoples on eastern Long Island such as the Montauks, Shinnecocks, and Unquachogs. All these polities spoke a variety of the Eastern Algonquian language, were closely connected through kinship and intermarriage, and shared many similar cultural practices. The shared cultural identity of peoples in the region

was expressed by the Narragansett term Ninnimissiinuok, which translates as “common people.”

The presence of many territorially conscious and stable polities in the comparatively small region of maritime southern New England supported the emergence of centralized leadership among the Ninnimissiinuok. The hereditary rulers among the Ninnimissiinuok were known as sachems. Each polity in coastal New England, as well as in surrounding regions such as the Lower Hudson Valley, was headed by a sachem. Traditionally the office of the sachem continued from father to oldest son, but it was also possible for daughters to assume the position in the absence of male successors. Below the level of the main sachem were usually found sub-sachems and ahtaskoaog (“principal men”), the latter functioning as councillors for the sachems. The rights and obligations of sachems were diverse and complex. One of their main responsibilities included the preservation and management of the territory they and their followers claimed. In this context sachems played a main role in land transactions between the Ninnimissiinuok and Europeans during the seventeenth century. Other important functions for which the sachem was responsible included diplomacy, warfare, and trade. Although the sachemship lacked coercive authority, followers were expected to pay an annual tribute to their sachem in recognition of his superior status.

The prominent status and political influence of sachems among the Ninnimissiinuok was enhanced by the long-distance trade in wampum, which were small beads made from white and purple seashells found on the beaches of Long Island, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. Associated with spiritual power, wampum served several key functions in indigenous communities throughout eastern North America long before European contact. Wampum was widely used to pay ransom, tribute, and reparation among the indigenous peoples of the area. For the Iroquoian-speaking Five Nations of upstate New York, who lived far away from coastal New England, wampum also became an essential symbolic good that was used in many rituals. Additionally, wampum woven on belts and strings served as mnemonic devices in diplomatic meetings. Because of wampum’s limited availability and


owing to its symbolic value, the wearing of wampum and the trade in wampum beads were tightly controlled by sachems of the Ninnimissiinuok communities that had access to the white and purple shells. As the long-distance trade in wampum grew during the precontact period, the influence of sachems increased and the competition among the Ninnimissiinuok for access to wampum shells intensified.7

The Pequots as well as the Narragansetts expanded their political and economic influence in southern New England in the wake of a smallpox epidemic in 1617–19 that wreaked havoc among many Ninnimissiinuok communities in what is now the state of Massachusetts. This deadly infectious disease was most probably transmitted to the Ninnimissiinuok by French and English fur traders who had begun visiting the coast of northern New England in the early 1600s. The Pequots, the Narragansetts, and Algonquian groups on Long Island somehow survived the destructive epidemic, perhaps because they were not connected to the trade network of the Ninnimissiinuok in Massachusetts.8 During the first quarter of the seventeenth century the Pequot population is estimated to have been 16,000, which made them one of the largest Algonquian polities in the region.9 Eager to obtain direct access to valuable European trade goods such as iron, the Pequots and Narragansetts quickly moved into the vacuum left by their greatly weakened northern neighbors in the late 1610s. With their populations intact, the Pequots and Narragansetts were well positioned to control the burgeoning fur and wampum trades in southern New England.10

ANGLO-DUTCH CLAIMS TO SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND, 1606–1626

As the Pequots and the Narragansetts slowly expanded their influence in southern New England during the first quarter of the seventeenth century,

9. Cave, Pequot War, 42–43.
English and Dutch colonizers became interested in the region as well, albeit for different reasons. Whereas the English claimed southern New England through the right of discovery and through royal charters dating back to the sixteenth century, the Dutch claimed the region after having made maritime explorations in the area in 1609–1610. The English Crown took the initiative in claiming southern New England. As tensions mounted between England and Spain during the second half of the sixteenth century, Queen Elizabeth issued formal charters to English privateers and merchants authorizing them to establish colonies along the Atlantic American coast in any lands not governed by Christian rulers. In practice this meant the entire coast from Florida, which was claimed by the Spanish, to Newfoundland.11 During one of the semi-official English ventures, in 1602, an English expedition seeking to establish a permanent settlement navigated the coast of New England from Maine to Buzzard’s Bay and Martha’s Vineyard.12 After the conclusion of the Anglo-Spanish War (1585–1604), English interest in the North American Atlantic coast intensified. In 1606 King James I granted royal charters to the Virginia and North Virginia (Plymouth) Companies. The Virginia Company received the exclusive right to colonize the Chesapeake Bay, and the Plymouth Company was permitted to develop colonies between the thirty-eighth parallel (Maryland) and the forty-fifth parallel (Maine). The enormous territories included in the royal charters reflected English concerns to keep out any potential European competitors.13

Actual colonization of the land granted to the Plymouth Company remained limited to temporary fur trading stations on the coast of Maine. Frustrated by the lack of colonization, James I granted a charter to the newly


established Council for New England in November 1620. The council’s territory extended from “sea to sea” between the fortieth (Philadelphia) and the forty-eighth (Gulf of Saint Lawrence) parallels of latitude. The small Plymouth colony established by English Puritans on Cape Cod Bay in December 1620 was the first colony on land claimed by the Council for New England. Many of the separatist Puritans had lived in self-imposed exile in the Dutch Republic for more than a decade before migrating to New England, something officials in New Netherland reminded the Puritans of during later boundary disputes. Remarkably, even around the time of the founding of Plymouth colony the English remained unaware of the coast of southern New England. In 1616 Captain John Smith published a map of New England to promote the region for colonization. Although accurate, the map showed only New England north of Cape Cod.

The English failure to navigate and colonize the coast between Cape Cod and the Chesapeake Bay enabled the Dutch to claim the region. Because of the rising demand for furs in Europe, Amsterdam merchants were eager to circumvent the English and French traders who controlled the North Atlantic fur trade. The discovery and exploration of the Hudson River by the English navigator Henry Hudson, sailing in the service of the Dutch East India Company in 1609, gave the Amsterdam merchants the opportunity they were looking for. Hudson’s expedition revealed the existence of a region inhabited by people who were eager to exchange furs for trade goods. In 1611 a small group of merchants launched the first Dutch trade expedition to the Hudson River. By 1614 no fewer than four different Dutch trade companies were active in the region.


16. For the failure of Smith’s map to depict southern New England, see Benjamin Schmidt, “Mapping an Empire: Cartographic and Colonial Rivalry in Seventeenth-Century Dutch and English North America,” William and Mary Quarterly 54 (1997): 564 (map on 566).


The four companies united in the New Netherland Company in 1614 to reduce competition and to keep the price of animal pelts obtained from the natives low. Moreover, to rule out domestic and foreign competitors, the New Netherland Company petitioned the States General, the assembly of the seven United Provinces of the Dutch Republic, which was responsible for foreign affairs and diplomacy, for an exclusive charter. As part of this petition the New Netherland Company submitted a map of the region it called “New Netherland.” The map, made by the navigator Adriaen Block, contained a geographic representation of the Upper Susquehanna River, New York Bay, the Hudson River, Long Island, and the coast of New England from Connecticut to Maine (figure 1). Block’s detailed map also depicted many indigenous polities, including the “Pequats” in coastal Connecticut, suggesting that Dutch fur traders had already been in contact with these Indians. The States General approved the petition because the New Netherland Company had fulfilled the recently adopted Dutch legal requirement of private citizens having discovered and mapped the region. The States General charter granted the New Netherland Company the exclusive right to launch four trade expeditions to the region from 1615 to 1618. The charter allowed the New Netherland Company to operate between the fortieth and forty-fifth parallels, the same territory granted by the English Crown to the North Virginia Company in 1606. Surprisingly, the


English officials responded quickly, however, when the States General chartered the West India Company (WIC) in June 1621. The charter gave the WIC a monopoly on trade, colonization, and shipping in the Americas and West Africa.\footnote{For the WIC’s founding, see Henk den Heijer, “The Dutch West India Company, 1621–1791,” in Johannes Postma and Victor Enthoven, eds., *Riches from Atlantic Commerce: Dutch Transatlantic Trade and Shipping, 1585–1817* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 77–86.} The managing of New Netherland became the responsibility of the Amsterdam chamber of the WIC, one of the five chambers that made up the decentralized company. Upon learning of the founding of the WIC, the English ambassador in the Dutch Republic, Sir Dudley Carleton, quickly filed an official complaint with the States General. In February 1622 he reminded the States General that New Netherland was situated on territory claimed by the English Crown through the right of discovery.\footnote{*DRCHNY*, 1:27–28; Jacobs, *New Netherland*, 30; Oliver A. Rink, *Holland on the Hudson: An Economic and Social History of Dutch New York* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 69.}

The States General, surprised by Carleton’s complaint, asked for help from the directors of the WIC in drafting an answer to the English ambassador. The *Heren XIX*, the central board of nineteen directors of the WIC, soon replied that only permanent settlement, not discovery, certified a legal claim to overseas territory. To back up their claim, the *Heren XIX* dispatched several ships with colonists to New Netherland in 1624. At least thirty Walloon families were included among the settlers who were sent. Upon arriving in North America, the colonists were distributed over four places in the colony to bolster the company’s claim to New Netherland. These were the upper North (Hudson) River near Fort Orange, Manhattan, the lower South (Delaware) River, and the west bank of the Fresh (Connecticut) River.\footnote{Rink, *Holland on the Hudson*, 69–81.} The decision to populate New Netherland with permanent settlers was also driven by an influential faction within the Amsterdam
chamber of the WIC. While some Amsterdam directors wished to maintain New Netherland as a relatively inexpensive trading post manned only by a small number of personnel, another group of directors expressed interest in developing New Netherland as an agricultural colony. The colonization faction hoped that New Netherland would ultimately become a valuable exporter of grains to the republic and the Dutch Atlantic. 23

The policy of maintaining widely dispersed settlements in New Netherland, however, was quickly abandoned once the Heren XIX and the Amsterdam directors realized that it involved expenses the WIC could not afford. Around the same time as the settlers were distributed over four places in New Netherland, the WIC launched an ambitious and extremely expensive assault on Salvador de Bahia, the capital of Portuguese Brazil. This amphibious attack involved a massive number of vessels, costly artillery, and soldiers. 24 Additionally, the directors may have felt that the dispersed settlements in New Netherland made the colonists vulnerable to attacks from indigenous peoples. The WIC may have learned of the devastating Powhatan attacks on the English in Virginia in 1622, which killed hundreds of colonists. 25 In January and April 1625 the directors of the Amsterdam chamber instructed the newly appointed director of the colony, Willem Verhulst, to relocate all the settlers to one location, ideally one not occupied by Native people. If necessary, the Amsterdam directors ordered Verhulst to buy land and obtain written contracts or deeds from the indigenous peoples so as to demonstrate that the WIC was the rightful owner of the colony. Anticipating English challenges to New Netherland, the Amsterdam directors emphasized that these “contracts could be very useful to the Company in other situations.” The policy of obtaining indigenous consent for land purchases was also informed by the WIC’s desire to establish trading relationships with as many Native peoples as possible. Finally, the Heren XIX instructed Verhulst to stay neutral in conflicts among the indigenous communities, partially because the Dutch viewed the Indians as vengeful people but especially since involvement in intertribal warfare was seen as a hindrance to the fur trade. 26

24. For the attack on Salvador de Bahia, see Den Heijer, “The Dutch West India Company,” 86–87.
25. For the Powhatan attack on English Virginia in 1622, see Alan Taylor, American Colonies: The Settling of North America (New York: Penguin, 2001), 135.
26. For the instructions of January and April 1625, see “Instructie voor Willem Verhulst (Januari 1625),” in F. C. Wieder, ed., De Stichting van Nieuw York in 1625
Because of the administrative incompetence of Verhulst the centralization policy did not take effect until 1626, when Verhulst was replaced by Pieter Minuit, who succeeded in relocating all the colonists to Manhattan. Sometime in 1626 Minuit “bought” Manhattan from local Algonquian people in return for trade goods valued at sixty Dutch guilders. Although a copy of this transaction has never been found, it is likely that Minuit had the Algonquian sachems sign a written statement in Dutch indicating that the WIC had obtained permission from them to establish a settlement on Manhattan. It is most likely that the Algonquians viewed their arrangement with the Dutch not as a permanent transfer of land but as an alliance through which they allowed the Dutch to establish a temporary settlement on Manhattan in return for receiving Dutch trade goods and Dutch military support. The surviving documentary record of New Netherland contains many other contracts and land deeds between Indians and the Dutch in which the indigenous owners willingly and knowingly “sold” their land to the WIC or to individual colonists. It is unknown what happened with the WIC presence on the Fresh or Connecticut River after Minuit concentrated all Dutch colonists on Manhattan in 1626. Presumably a small trading station was maintained at the mouth of the Fresh River in order to continue trade relations with the Pequots and other Algonquian communities in the region. Alternatively, the region may have continued to be visited by small coastal vessels.

Apart from the formal protests such as the one delivered by Carleton, the English did not further challenge the Dutch claim to New Netherland during the 1620s. Although concerned about recent incidents such as the Amboyna “massacre” on the Spice Islands in southeast Asia, where Dutch colonial officials had executed several English traders, King James I was reluctant to confront the Dutch about overseas affairs because he needed them as an independent power in mainland Europe to occupy the more


dangerous Spanish. The English colony of Plymouth was also not in a position to challenge New Netherland. The hard-line Puritans, who had established a fragile alliance with the neighboring Pokanokets and lived on edge with the Narragansetts, were in a vulnerable position themselves. They continued to view Indians with great suspicion. Plymouth colony also was struggling to repay large debts owed to their creditors in England.

In contrast, the WIC remained optimistic about the future of New Netherland. Although the WIC occupation of Salvador de Bahia had ultimately failed in 1625, privateering expeditions captured a number of rich prizes in the Spanish Caribbean. For example, Dutch officials on Manhattan eagerly awaited the arrival of church bells from the Catholic cathedral of Spanish Puerto Rico, which had been recently looted by a WIC naval expedition. The captured bells, to be installed in the newly built Protestant church on Manhattan, symbolized the rising power of the Dutch in the Atlantic world. From a commercial perspective, Dutch officials in New Netherland were also optimistic. The export of beaver and other animal furs from New Netherland grew rapidly during the mid-1620s. Isaac de Rasière, secretary of the colony at that time, estimated that the export of furs in 1626 totaled no fewer than ten thousand pelts. It is in this context of Dutch confidence and English vulnerability that the Pequots became important trading partners of the WIC.

THE DUTCH-PEQUOT ALLIANCE, 1626–1633

Because of the reluctance of the English Crown to confront the Dutch and the tense relations between Plymouth colony and the Narragansetts, the Dutch were able to become the dominant European power in southern New England during the 1620s. WIC traders soon established a mutually beneficial alliance with the Pequots, the Narragansetts, and other Algonquian peoples. An attempt by Plymouth colony to participate in the thriving intercultural trade of southern New England demonstrated the attraction of


29. For the struggling first years of the Plymouth colony and its relations with Native peoples, see Salisbury, Manitou and Providence, 110–40.


31. For the fur trade in the mid-1620s, see Jacobs, New Netherland, 110.
the Dutch for the region’s indigenous peoples. Hoping to accumulate some profits to repay their debts, Plymouth officials sent a small trading vessel to the Narragansetts in 1623. To the dismay of William Bradford, the leader of Plymouth colony, the Narragansetts were more interested in trading with the Dutch because the latter had “cloth and better commodities” than the English, who had “only a few beads and knives which were not there much esteemed.” After this failed attempt to compete with the Dutch, Plymouth colony largely ignored its western frontier and instead initiated a small-scale trade with the Algonquian peoples in Maine, where English fishermen had been trading for decades. In return for beaver furs from the Algonquians, the English offered corn that they had grown in their colony.

The activities of Dutch fur traders provided benefits but also challenges to the Pequots and other Algonquian peoples of southern New England and eastern Long Island. The indigenous peoples had a commercial advantage in their relations with competing Dutch merchants before the WIC monopolized the fur trade in 1623. The intense competition among Dutch traders in New Netherland enabled sachems to drive up the price for beaver pelts. Although Dutch sources related to southern New England for the time before the period of WIC rule are very limited, several contemporary documents reveal frequent conflicts between competing fur traders. On several occasions the Algonquians simply refused to trade with the Dutch, presumably because the Algonquians did not agree with the exchange rate or approve of the variety of trade goods offered by the Dutch.

Attempts by Algonquians to manipulate Dutch traders backfired, however, as some Dutchmen became so frustrated by perceived indigenous arrogance that they took several Natives hostage. Sometime in the spring of 1620 a Dutch trade expedition commanded by the navigator Willem Jorisz Hontom and mercantile agent Jacob Jacobsz Eelkens took four Native hostages somewhere in New Netherland after a failed trade encounter. Eelkens and Hontom released their hostages after having obtained a ransom in the form of wampum. It is not surprising that Hontom and Eelkens accepted wampum, rather than beaver, as ransom. Experienced Dutch traders such as Hontom and Eelkens were always interested in learning about regional

33. For the trade in corn with Abenaki Indians in Maine, see Salisbury, Manitou and Providence, 144–47.
34. Hart, Prehistory, 37 (1620 expedition of Hontom and Eelkens, hostage taking of four Natives).
commodities in order to expand their commercial activities. For example, Dutch traders operating in West Africa during the early seventeenth century quickly recognized that regionally produced goods were often more popular with their native trading partners than European goods.\textsuperscript{35} Having observed that wampum was highly valued by the Native peoples of New Netherland, Hontom and Eelkens continued their extortion methods to obtain wampum throughout the winter of 1621–22. Hontom took hostage a Mohawk Iroquois chief whom he brutally murdered even after the Mohawks had paid a ransom in wampum, and Eelkens captured a Pequot sachem after the leader had climbed aboard the Dutchman’s yacht. Eelkens released the sachem only after the Pequots paid the enormous ransom of 140 fathoms (840 feet) of wampum.\textsuperscript{36}

Despite the aggressive and unpredictable Dutch actions, the Pequots intensified their alliance with the Dutch. After the WIC took control of New Netherland in 1623, some order was restored as the company forced fiercely competitive private traders to leave the colony. More important, in 1626 Pieter Barentsen, an experienced trader in the WIC service, negotiated a mutually beneficial trade alliance with the Pequots.\textsuperscript{37} It was wampum that cemented the Dutch-Pequot alliance. Having realized the value that indigenous peoples in eastern North America accorded to wampum, the Dutch quickly adopted wampum as a regional commodity during the mid-1620s. The Dutch shipped wampum from southern New England to the Upper Hudson Valley, where the polished beads were exchanged for beaver pelts with the Iroquois Five Nations and other indigenous peoples who had access to much larger beaver hunting and trapping grounds than the coastal Algonquians.\textsuperscript{38}


\textsuperscript{37} “From the ‘Historisch Verhael,’” \textit{NNN}, 86–87.

\textsuperscript{38} Cave, \textit{Pequot War}, 50–51.
The Pequots were eager to provide the Dutch with a constant supply of wampum. In doing so, the Pequots were able to secure a steady supply of European trade goods. Additionally, by controlling the flow of these goods into the region, the Pequots were able to exercise growing influence over their indigenous neighbors. The dramatic increase of wampum production in the second half of the 1620s was made possible by two developments. First, the Dutch supplied or traded metal drills to the Pequots so that the latter or their tributaries could perforate the white and purple sea shells much faster than with precontact stone tools. Second, the Pequots were able to meet the increasing Dutch demand for wampum by subjugating neighbouring peoples on both sides of Long Island Sound and by demanding from them a tribute in wampum.\textsuperscript{39} The willingness of the Pequots to accommodate Dutch demands had dramatic repercussions for the region. Warfare among the Algonquian peoples intensified, destabilizing many indigenous communities. Whereas communities previously had been left undefended, Algonquian towns in southern New England now became fortified through high palisades. In 1628 de Rasière reported that the Pequots had brought the wampum-producing Algonquian groups from eastern Long Island under tributary control. Several years later the Pequots had brought most Algonquian communities in the middle Connecticut Valley under control. Pequot expansion was supported by lethal metal arrowheads forged from Dutch copper kettles and other trade goods. The Pequots and their neighbors were also drawn into an unpredictable market economy controlled by Europeans. By the late 1620s the Algonquian peoples of southern New England were devoting increasing amounts of their time to the production of wampum.\textsuperscript{40}

The Algonquian peoples were further drawn into the aggressive market economy after de Rasière unintentionally drew the attention of Plymouth colony to the rapidly expanding wampum trade of southern New England. In a misguided and naive attempt to maintain control of the wampum trade, de Rasière sold fifty fathoms of wampum to Plymouth colony during an official visit to that colony in October 1627. De Rasière hoped that the English, whom the Dutch still perceived as vulnerable, would acknowledge

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., 50; Siminoff, \textit{Crossing the Sound}, 26–27; Oberg, \textit{Uncas}, 37–39.

\textsuperscript{40} McBride, “Source and Mother of the Fur Trade,” 45–46, reports the construction of palisaded towns after 1625, which he connects with the Pequot-Dutch alliance. For the arrowheads, see John Underhill, “Newes from America” (1638), in Charles Orr, \textit{History of the Pequot War: The Contemporary Accounts of Mason, Underhill, Vincent and Gardener} (Cleveland: Helman-Taylor, 1897), 69–70.
the dominant position of the Dutch in the wampum-producing areas of southern New England and eastern Long Island. De Rasière may also have hoped that the Plymouth colonists would use wampum in their trade relations with the Algonquian peoples of northern New England. De Rasière’s strategy backfired, however. Plymouth was no longer the struggling settlement of the early 1620s but instead by 1630 had become a stable colony of almost fifteen hundred settlers, easily outnumbering the tiny colonial population of New Netherland, which consisted of a few hundred souls. Moreover, Plymouth officials quickly recognized that wampum could be effectively used to increase the profitability of the fur trade, which was indispensable for repaying the outstanding debts of the colony. Within a few years of de Rasière’s visit to Plymouth, the English were actively sending maritime expeditions to southern New England to obtain wampum from the Algonquian peoples.

The arrival of Plymouth traders in southern New England seemed a prime opportunity for the Algonquian peoples to manipulate Anglo-Dutch rivalries. Competition between the WIC and Plymouth colony would have enabled the Pequots and the Narragansetts, the two Algonquian polities that had most profited from the expanding wampum trade, to demand more and better-quality trade goods from the Dutch and English. Moreover, merchants from the recently established and fast-growing Massachusetts Bay colony (1630), north of Plymouth, were also attracted to the trade in wampum and furs in southern New England. The growing economic competition between the English and the Dutch in southern New England did not, however, increase the opportunities for the indigenous peoples. On the contrary, regional animosities, some of them intensified by recent Pequot expansion, shaped Algonquian actions during the late 1620s and early 1630s. The Narragansetts, as well as smaller Algonquian groups that had been subjected to tributary status by the Pequots, tried to use the two expanding English colonies to undermine the prominent position of the Pequots, who were allied with the WIC. In early 1631 several Algonquian communities in southern New England contacted Plymouth and Massa-


42. For the growth of Plymouth colony during the 1620s, see Alan Taylor, American Colonies: The Settling of North America (New York: Penguin, 2001), 165.
chusetts Bay officials in the hope of establishing a military alliance against the Pequots. Even the Narragansetts, who had always had tense relations with Plymouth colony, initiated a diplomatic campaign to recruit the English to undermine the Pequots.  

In the meantime, the Pequots and the Dutch consolidated their close alliance in the face of the growing English influence in southern New England. The WIC had become increasingly concerned about the English after Plymouth colony officials temporarily held a company vessel in 1632. This ship was seized by the English to protest the illegal Dutch claim to North America. The incident angered the States General, which formally lodged a complaint against the English government in which it argued that New Netherland was justifiably Dutch territory. To shore up the defenses of New Netherland against the English, the Amsterdam chamber sent more than one hundred soldiers to the colony, together with the new governor, Wouter van Twiller, in the spring of 1633. Soon after his arrival, van Twiller dispatched officials to the Connecticut Valley to obtain Indian deeds with which to secure Dutch claims against the English. One of these officials, Jacob van Curler, negotiated an agreement with the Pequots that enabled the Dutch to construct a fortified trading post named Good Hope in the middle Connecticut Valley in June 1633. The Pequots did not consider the small number of Dutch traders and soldiers a threat, but rather a guarantee of a constant flow of trade goods. For its part, the WIC was grateful for the Pequot invitation because the trading post strengthened Dutch claims to the region.

The Puritan colonies quickly responded to the establishment of Fort Good Hope on the Connecticut River. In July 1633 Governor John Winthrop of Massachusetts Bay formally protested the founding of Good Hope to van Twiller. Winthrop argued that the English Crown was the sovereign owner of the entire eastern part of New Netherland from Manhattan to Narragansett Bay. Several months later van Twiller responded by stating that the Dutch claimed rightful possession of the Connecticut River by having bought and developed a plot of land located along the river from local Natives “at some reasonable and convenient price.” The WIC gover-

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45. Ibid., 141–42 (arrival of soldiers and van Twiller); For the building of Good Hope, see *DRCHNY*, 2:139–40.
nor also suggested to Winthrop that not they but their superiors in Europe should resolve the issue.\(^{46}\)

Van Twiller’s missive suggested that the WIC government of New Netherland wanted to avoid a confrontation with the English. By the early 1630s New Netherland was no longer the confident colony it had been in the mid-1620s. An attempt to increase the European population of New Netherland through private colonization had largely failed, as investors soon recognized the high costs associated with colonization. For example, one of the investors, Sammuel Blommaert, an Amsterdam director, attempted to establish a private colony on the Connecticut River, but his plan does not appear to have moved beyond the drawing board.\(^{47}\) Additionally, the government of New Netherland was plagued by political conflict, as the directors Verhulst and Minuit were unable to reach a consensus with other senior officials and with the colonists. Both Verhulst and Minuit were eventually recalled by the Amsterdam chamber. Fed up with the inept government of the colony, many of the Walloon families returned to the republic in the early 1630s.\(^{48}\) The total European population of New Netherland may not have numbered more than three hundred individuals in the early 1630s. At the same time the New England colonies experienced a rapid demographic growth. In 1634 the Massachusetts Bay population is estimated to have been four thousand souls. The population of the Puritan colony grew rapidly each year because of migration from England and a high birth rate among the English settlers. The arable land in the Bay colony soon became scarce, and Puritan settlers started to look elsewhere to find fertile agricultural land. The Connecticut Valley became an attractive destination for these land-hungry settlers.\(^{49}\)

Confronted with English numerical superiority, van Twiller found his

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47. Martine Gosselink, *New York, Nieuw-Amsterdam: De Nederlandse oorsprong van Manhattan* (Amsterdam: Nationaal Archief and Nieuw Amsterdam, 2009), 75.


options limited. His hesitancy to challenge the English openly was revealed when Plymouth colony established its own trading post on the Connecticut River in September 1633. Shrewdly adopting the WIC policy of obtaining Indian deeds to claim territory, the Puritan officials “bought” a plot of land from Natawanute, an Algonquian sachem who had been exiled by the Pequots from the Connecticut Valley some years before. Natawanute was willing to “sell” his land since he had gained military support from Plymouth colony. The Plymouth officials located their trading station a short distance upriver from Good Hope. Thus, they were able to intercept Native fur traders from the upper Connecticut Valley before they reached Good Hope to exchange pelts for wampum. In an attempt to intimidate the small English outpost, van Twiller dispatched most of his recently arrived soldiers to the English trading station. This intimidation tactic did not, however, have the desired result. The English traders refused to leave, and the WIC soldiers had apparently received orders from van Twiller not to attack the English. After an inconclusive meeting with the English, the soldiers returned to New Amsterdam, the WIC headquarters on Manhattan. The tactical move of the Puritans in the Connecticut Valley forced van Twiller to rethink Dutch strategy.50

THE COLLAPSE OF THE DUTCH-PEQUOT ALLIANCE, 1633–1638

One option left for van Twiller to maintain control of the valuable wampum trade would have been to mobilize the Pequots against the English. Instead, the Dutch and Pequots fell into a fundamental disagreement about the function of Good Hope. While the WIC officials at the fort viewed the post as a regional market accessible to all Natives from the Connecticut Valley and southern New England, the Pequots intended to closely supervise those who visited Good Hope. When, shortly after the completion of the fort, a group of Natives, most likely Narragansetts or Niantics (one of the Narragansetts’ Algonquian tributaries), attempted to trade with the Dutch at Good Hope, they were ambushed and killed by Pequot warriors. This incident greatly angered the officials at Good Hope, who sought to draw all indigenous peoples of southern New England to the WIC. The foolish response of the local Dutch commander at the fort, however, effec-

50. Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, 259, mentions a troop of seventy Dutch soldiers, which is possible since more than one hundred had recently arrived from the republic. For van Twiller and the English trading post, see Jaap Jacobs, “A Troubled Man: Director Wouter van Twiller and the Affairs of New Netherland in 1635,” *New York History* 85, no. 3 (2004): 222–23, 229.
tively ended any chances the WIC may have had of using strategic alliances with the Pequots to stop further English expansion into the Connecticut Valley. To humiliate the Pequots, company personnel at the fort took hostage Tatobem, the grand sachem of the Pequots. Although the Pequots paid the Dutch the required wampum ransom, the Dutch bluntly killed Tatobem.\(^{51}\)

The assassination of Tatobem was a clear violation of the earlier mentioned instructions of the *Heren XIX* to colonial officials not to become involved in intertribal conflicts in New Netherland. Van Twiller’s apparent failure to intervene in response to this crisis contrasts with Peter Minuit’s rapid diplomatic response to a similar incident in 1626, in which Daniel Krieckenbeeck, the commander of Fort Orange, on the upper Hudson River, recklessly participated in an expedition with the Mahicans against the Mohawk Iroquois (and was killed in the process). Colonial officials quickly dispatched the experienced go-between Pieter Barentsen to the Mohawks to prevent the incident from escalating into a war. Although the details of the meeting are murky, Mohawk-Dutch relations were soon restored, and Minuit appointed Barentsen as the new commander of Fort Orange. Clearly, both the Dutch and the Mohawks were eager to restore mutually beneficial trade relations. Although Dutch sources for this period are scarce, there is no indication that Dutch colonial officials attempted to mend the relationship with the Pequots at a time when the English were slowly expanding into southern New England.\(^{52}\)

The Pequots took a measured response to the killing of Tatobem because they did not want to lose the profitable trade alliance with the Dutch. Severing the vital connection to the Dutch would have brought on the collapse of the wampum trade, on which Pequot power in the region was based. The Pequots responded not by declaring an all-out war against the Dutch, but by relying on the Algonquian practice of revenge killings, by which members of the aggrieved party were permitted to take the lives of individuals related to the perpetrators. Instead of killing WIC personnel, who were perhaps well fortified in Good Hope, the Pequots and their Western Niantic tributaries murdered the English merchant-adventurer John Stone and his crew as they

\(^{51}\) Cave, *Pequot War*, 58; Oberg, *Uncas*, 42.

\(^{52}\) For Krieckenbeeck’s fateful participation in the Mohawk-Mahican war and the subsequent diplomacy by Barentsen, see “From the ‘Historisch Verhael,’ by Nicolaes van Wassenaer, 1624–1630,” *NNN*, 84–87. See also William A. Starna and José Antonio Brandao, “From the Mohawk-Mahican War to the Beaver Wars: Questioning the Pattern,” *Ethnohistory* 51, no. 4 (Fall 2004): 725–50, esp. 737.
navigated the Connecticut River in 1633. Stone was considered a rightful target because the Pequots and the Western Niantics had observed how he kidnapped two Natives along the Connecticut River.\(^53\) In the late summer of 1636, shortly before the outbreak of the Pequot War, a Pequot sachem also told the English that the Pequots had killed Stone because at that time they knew “no difference between the Dutch and the English; they are both strangers to us, we took them to be all one.”\(^54\) Although the English found this explanation incredible, it is entirely plausible, since the Pequots until the confrontation with Stone in 1633 had not had much direct contact with the English. Moreover, the Pequots may have observed that John Stone, who was on friendly terms with the Dutch, even visited Good Hope during his fateful visit to the Connecticut Valley. Having taken revenge through the killing of Stone, the Pequots expected that their vital alliance with the Dutch would continue.\(^55\)

Amicable relations between the Pequots and the WIC, however, were not easily restored. Shortly after the killing of Stone, the spectacularly undiplomatic personnel at Good Hope killed yet another Pequot sachem. According to William Bradford, the unnamed Pequot sachem was killed when the Pequots attempted to resume trading with the Dutch at Good Hope.\(^56\) Surprisingly, van Twiller again appears not to have attempted to restore the important Dutch-Pequot alliance. One likely explanation for van Twiller’s inaction was his growing number of other problems. In 1634 he became embroiled in conflicts with the Protestant minister Evarudus Bogardus as well as with Lubbert van Dincklagen, the chief prosecuting officer of New Netherland. These serious personal feuds, which lasted throughout van Twiller’s tenure as director of the colony, probably distracted van Twiller from tending to intercultural diplomacy on the frontiers of the colony.\(^57\) For example, the local commander of Fort Orange on his own initiative, not van Twiller’s, dispatched a diplomatic excursion to the nearby Five Nations.

\(^{53}\) Cave, *Pequot War*, 59–60.

\(^{54}\) Underhill, “Newes from America,” 56–57.

\(^{55}\) Cave, *Pequot War*, 59–63.

\(^{56}\) Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, 270, is the only primary source for this incident; Cave, *Pequot War*, 60.

in December 1634 to improve trade relations. This action stood in great contrast to those at Fort Good Hope, where the unknown commanding officer only alienated the Pequots.58

Fed up with their unreliable Dutch allies, the Pequots turned to the English. Pequot actions had suddenly become severely limited, however, owing to a smallpox epidemic, probably introduced by recently arrived European settlers to New Netherland or New England, which raged through southern New England during the winter of 1633–34. Of an estimated 16,000 Pequots before the epidemic only 3,000 may have been still alive by the spring of 1634. Incredibly, in a span of less than a year the Pequots had been nearly destroyed as a people.59 Even though the Narragansetts were also greatly devastated by the epidemic, they continued to wage war against the Pequots. The Narragansetts intensified their raids against the Pequots to avenge the killing of their men by the Pequots near Good Hope. To make matters worse for the Pequots, many of their tributaries also began to challenge their overlords after they realized how much the Pequots had been weakened by the conflict with the Dutch and by the smallpox epidemic. Uncas, the sachem of the Mohegans, an Algonquian group closely related to the Pequots by kinship ties, sought an alliance with the English against the Pequots in the mid-1630s, further undermining Pequot power in the region.60

In these desperate circumstances the Pequots sent a delegation to Boston for a fateful visit with officials from the Massachusetts Bay colony in the fall of 1634. During this meeting, Sassacus, the grand sachem of the Pequots who had succeeded the slain Tatobem and the other recently slain Pequot leader, intended to establish a trade and military alliance with Massachusetts Bay colony to guarantee Pequot dominance in the region. Like his predecessor, who had invited the Dutch to establish Good Hope in 1633, Sassacus now invited the Massachusetts Bay colonists to establish


60. See Oberg, Uncas, 47–50, for a discussion of Uncas in 1634.
small settlements in Pequot territory. Rightly sensing Pequot desperation, Boston officials declared that they were willing to open trade relations, but they refused to commit themselves to a military alliance. Moreover, Massachusetts Bay magistrates demanded that the Pequots not only pay an enormous amount of wampum as a sign of good intentions but also deliver the murderers of John Stone. Sassacus and his councillors refused to accept the excessive demands because they would have turned the Pequots into tributaries of Massachusetts Bay. Following the failed diplomatic mission to the English, the Pequots were forced to continue their desperate war for survival against the Dutch, the Narragansetts, and the Mohegans.61

Colonists from the overcrowded colony of Massachusetts Bay did not waste much time in taking advantage of the disruption in the Dutch-Pequot alliance. In 1635 settlers from Massachusetts Bay migrated to the fertile Connecticut Valley and quickly established three villages between the existing Plymouth trading post and Good Hope. In December 1635 a group of Puritan migrants from England established Fort Saybrook, a small coastal settlement located at the mouth of the Connecticut River. The WIC fortified trading post of Good Hope was now surrounded and outnumbered by English settlers. Dutch personnel were increasingly subjected to harassment by English settlers who wanted to evict the Dutch. In March 1636 some 250 Puritans lived in the vicinity of Good Hope, greatly outnumbering the small garrison of WIC traders and soldiers.62

Although the WIC had suffered a major setback in its struggle with the English for control of the Connecticut Valley, the Dutch refused to surrender their trading station of Good Hope as well as their larger claim to southern New England. The trade in wampum continued to be vital for Dutch trade with the Mohawk Iroquois in northern New Netherland. Despite the tense Dutch-Pequot relations, WIC vessels continued to visit the coast of southern New England during the mid-1630s. In the summer of 1636 a Dutch vessel was halted by Fort Saybrook officials as it made its way along the Connecticut coast. According to the English source, the Dutch crew related “that they were bound for Pequeat river [Thames River] to trade.”63 Since this river made its way through the heart of Pequot country,


62. Cave, Pequot War, 87–98, discusses the arrival of settlers from Massachusetts Bay, the establishment of the Saybrook colony, and the subsequent tensions among the various English settler communities over control of the Connecticut Valley.

63. For the Dutch vessel, see Underhill, “Newes from America,” 58.
it is realistic to assume that the Dutch vessel attempted to reestablish or maintain relations with the Pequots. Both the Pequots and the Dutch had good reasons to mend the strained alliance. Rekindling ties with the Dutch would give the Pequots access to essential trade goods such as hatchets, knives, and kettles, which had become indispensable for most Algonquian communities in southern New England by the 1630s. The reparation of relations with the Pequots enabled the Dutch to maintain both access to wampum and their influence in southern New England.

It is possible that van Twiller was behind the restored Dutch-Pequot alliance in 1636. One year earlier he had acted decisively when an English vessel from Virginia sailed into the South (Delaware) River and captured the local WIC Fort Nassau. Van Twiller quickly realized the seriousness of this threat, and he dispatched a vessel with soldiers to drive the English from Fort Nassau. This expedition was successful, and van Twiller sent extra soldiers to the South River to defend the colony’s southern border against further English intrusions. In a letter to the Amsterdam chamber in August 1635 van Twiller expressed the fear that the English could soon take over Manhattan if the WIC did not send more settlers to New Netherland. The growing English threat to the colony may have galvanized van Twiller into repairing the strained alliance with the Pequots on New Netherland’s vulnerable eastern border.64

Shortly after the renewal of trade relations between the Dutch and the Pequots, Massachusetts Bay colony launched a war in an attempt to impose control on a region that Boston officials increasingly viewed as lawless. Following the unresolved killing of John Stone by the Pequots in 1633, the additional murder of two English traders by unknown Algonquians on Long Island in 1636, and the violent death of the Massachusetts Bay trader John Oldham at Block Island in July 1636, Boston authorities had had enough. Although it quickly became clear to Massachusetts Bay magistrates that the murderers of Oldham were not Pequots but members of a small Algonquian tributary of the Narragansetts, Massachusetts Bay authorities were eager to punish the Pequots, who were seen as an obstacle to the settlement of the Connecticut Valley.65

Although van Twiller was faced with serious political problems in the

65. The causes of the Pequot War have been extensively discussed by Cave, Pequot War, 69–121; Karr, “Violence of the Pequot War,” 897–99.
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colony through his conflicts with Bogardus and van Dincklagen, the director effectively defended Dutch interests in southern New England during the Pequot War from 1636 to 1637. Since van Twiller was unsure how the Pequot War would develop, he delicately tried to keep open diplomatic channels with both the Pequots and the English. For example, sometime in the winter of 1636–37 a Dutch vessel destined for Good Hope carried intelligence and corn, collected by the English commander Lion Gardiner, from Saybrook, on the mouth of the Connecticut River, to the English settlements located near Good Hope. During this time the English settlements were constantly besieged by Pequot warriors.66

Several months later, in May 1637, the crew of another Dutch vessel navigating the coastal waters of Connecticut was asked by Fort Saybrook officials to negotiate the release of two English girls recently captured by the Pequots. During the meeting between the crew of the WIC vessel and Fort Saybrook authorities, the Dutch were initially unwilling to support the English request to refrain from trading with the Pequots. The English, who were preparing a major offensive against the Pequots at this time, were rightly afraid that the Dutch would supply the Pequots with trade items such “as kettles, or the like,” from which the Pequots could “make them arrow-heads.” The Dutch traders were reluctant to abide by the English demand, however, because they did not want to abandon their commercial expedition. Eventually a compromise was reached by which the English allowed the Dutch to trade with the Pequots as long as they would try to secure the release of the two captive girls. Interestingly, the Dutch crew was successful in securing their release only after taking hostage several Pequots who had climbed aboard the Dutch boat to trade. The Dutch reliance on treachery rather than on genuine negotiations showed the limits of the Dutch-Pequot alliance. Clearly, Dutch-Pequot relations left much to be desired.67

Van Twiller tried to use the release of the two English girls as an opportunity to improve Dutch-English relations. When he learned that the Pequots had taken the two English girls, he sent a small coastal vessel after the company’s trading ship with instructions to obtain the release of the two girls. According to the contemporary narrative by John Underhill, who pro-

67. Underhill, “Newes from America,” 69–70 (including quote). Cave, Pequot War, 142–43, also discusses this episode but without explaining why and how the Dutch had restored trade relations with the Pequots.
vides the only account of the event, van Twiller had given “strict order and command to the former vessel to get these captives, what charge soever they were at, nay, though they did hazard their peace with them [the Pequots].” Van Twiller even ordered the two girls to be brought back to Manhattan before returning them to their families living along the Connecticut Valley. Although van Twiller may have had humane considerations at heart, it is more likely that the WIC director’s actions were also shaped by the ongoing tensions between the Puritans and the WIC over control of southern New England. By acting as a valuable negotiator on behalf of the English, who greatly feared for the “two English maids,” van Twiller hoped to strengthen peaceful relations with the numerically superior Puritan colonies.

Van Twiller, however, did not anticipate a complete and dramatic English victory over the Pequots. Following the destructive Pequot raid on Wethersfield in April 1637, which had cost the lives of nine English settlers, the colonies of Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, and Connecticut united to organize a retaliatory campaign to punish the Pequots. In May 1637 an English force of seventy soldiers, supplemented and outnumbered by sixty Mohegan and approximately two hundred Narragansett warriors, surrounded and burnt a major Pequot town along the Thames River, killing several hundred inhabitants inside. Although the surviving Pequots desperately fought on for a few months, the English and their Algonquian allies eventually killed or captured most of them. In a desperate attempt to find refuge, the main Pequot sachem Sassacus fled to the Mohawks, who promptly killed him. At the signing of the Treaty of Hartford, concluded between the English, the Narragansetts, and Mohegans in 1638, the English declared the Pequots to be no longer a nation. Having lost their Pequot trading partners, the already weakened Dutch in southern New England were now even more exposed to English pressure. Moreover, in the wake of the Pequot War practically all Algonquian communities in southern New England as well as eastern Long Island pledged their allegiance to the powerful English.

68. Underhill, “Newes from America,” 71.
70. Cave, Pequot War, 122–67 (detailed discussion of the English campaign from May 1637 to 1638, including the killing of the main Pequot sachem Sassacus by the Mohawks, 161); Oberg, Uncas, 58–72 (role of the Mohegans in the Pequot War); Lipman, “Exchange of Body Parts,” 20–25 (Sassacus’s killing and aftermath of the Pequot War); John A. Strong, “Wyandanch: Sachem of the Montauks,” in Robert S. Grumet, ed., Northeastern Indian Lives, 1632–1816 (Amherst: University
The Dutch influence in southern New England rapidly declined after the Pequot War. Van Twiller was finally recalled to the republic by the Amsterdam chamber in connection to his conflicts with Bogardus and van Dincklagen in late 1637, shortly after the Pequots had been defeated.\textsuperscript{71} The small WIC detachment stationed at Good Hope was maintained by the WIC, not so much to trade with the Algonquian peoples as to remind the English about the Dutch claim to southern New England. While several individual Dutch traders managed to maintain a small maritime trade with the Narragansetts and other coastal Algonquian peoples during the 1640s, the English increasingly harassed the Dutch traders and WIC personnel in Connecticut. Although Willem Kieft and Petrus Stuyvesant, the successors of van Twiller, frequently protested these English actions, they were careful not to provoke the numerically superior New England colonies. Through delicate diplomatic relations Stuyvesant was even able to establish a boundary line between New Netherland and Puritan New England at the Treaty of Hartford in Connecticut in 1650. The boundary line separating the Dutch and English colonies, however, was drawn west of Good Hope, turning the Dutch outpost into an indefensible enclave in Puritan territory. During the First Anglo-Dutch War (1652–54) Good Hope was easily captured by English forces, signaling the end of the Dutch presence in southern New England.\textsuperscript{72}

In hindsight the rapidly expanding colony of Massachusetts Bay would have sooner or later clashed with the Pequots and the Dutch over control of the Connecticut Valley. Only the presence of a sizable number of Dutch settlers along the Connecticut River would have prevented the English from expanding into southern New England. It is likely that the Pequots would have been willing to “sell” parcels of land along the Connecticut River to the Dutch, since these lands belonged to the tributaries of the Pequots. Moreover, during the first half of the seventeenth century the Puritan colonies were reluctant to challenge their Protestant Dutch neighbors openly,

\textsuperscript{71} Frijhoff, \textit{Wegen van Evert Willemsz}, 687; Rink, \textit{Holland on the Hudson}, 131.  
which made it unlikely that the English would have attacked Dutch settlements in the Connecticut Valley. With the Dutch and Pequots firmly in control of southern New England, the Puritans would have had a difficult time gaining access to the region.

Dutch migration to southern New England was never a realistic option, however, as the colonial population of New Netherland remained tiny until the early 1650s. Because of the inexperienced and authoritarian directors such as Verhulst, Minuit, and van Twiller, some of the New Netherland colonists became so disillusioned that they actually returned to the republic. As van Twiller pointed out to the directors of the Amsterdam chamber in 1635, if more colonists were not sent to New Netherland soon, even Manhattan would be overrun with English colonists. During the first half of the seventeenth century there were simply no strong religious or economic motives in the tolerant and prosperous republic for Dutch people to migrate to overseas territories. The inability to attract Dutch settlers was a common problem for all the overseas possessions of the Dutch trade companies in the Atlantic and in maritime Asia during the seventeenth century.73

Confronted with an aggressively expanding Massachusetts Bay colony, the Dutch-Pequot alliance was ultimately doomed. The inconsistent Dutch policies toward the Pequots, however, accelerated the outbreak of the Pequot War and contributed to the loss of Dutch influence in southern New England in the mid-1630s. The inexperienced van Twiller, who was involved in personal and political problems in New Netherland, neglected to restore the flourishing Dutch-Pequot alliance after the local commander of Fort Good Hope had killed the Pequots’ main sachem in 1633. Van Twiller’s failure to repair relations proved costly for the Dutch and ultimately for the Pequots; the desperate Pequots felt compelled to establish an alliance with the powerful Massachusetts Bay colony. But the Bay colony imposed such humiliating conditions on an alliance that the Pequots rejected the offer. As the Pequots, whose population had been devastated by a smallpox epidemic, were frantically searching for a way to recover their power, former tributaries as well as their main rival, the Narragansetts, initiated attacks to weaken the Pequots even further. The result of this intertribal warfare, in which several Englishmen were killed, was that southern New England came to be seen by Massachusetts Bay leaders as a lawless region that needed to be brought under control through a military campaign. When van Twiller finally realized the strategic value of rekindling relations with

the Pequots in the mid-1630s, it was too late; the Puritan colonies were already determined to punish the Pequots. For the Dutch, the loss of their alliance with the Pequots was ultimately of not much significance. The Dutch simply shifted their trade relations to other indigenous peoples in eastern North America, such as the Iroquois Five Nations and the Susquehannocks. For the Pequots, however, the loss of their alliance with New Netherland was catastrophic and signaled the end of their prosperity and power.