

BIRTH OF BOSTON

PURITANS CREATE “CITY UPON A HILL”

By our newsheet writer in Boston

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PURITAN elders declared yesterday that the Shawmut Peninsula will be called “Boston” in the future. The seat of government of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, which began two years ago, will also be in Boston.

It follows a meeting between John Winthrop, the colony’s elected governor and clergyman William Blackstone, one of the first settlers to live in Trimount on the peninsula, so called because of its three “mountains.” Blackstone recommended its spring waters.

Winthrop (pictured) left England earlier this year to lead ships across the Atlantic. Of the hundreds of passengers on board, many were Puritans seeking religious freedom, eager to start a new life in New England. They had prepared well, bringing many horses and cows with them.

The new governor, a member of the English upper classes, brought the royal charter of the Massachusetts Bay Company with him. However, the company’s charter did not impose control from England—the colony would be effectively self-governing.

Arriving in Cape Ann, the passengers went ashore and picked fresh strawberries—a welcome change from shipboard life! Colonists had previously settled in the area, but dwellings had been abandoned after many had died in the harsh winter or were starving.

One early colonist was Roger Conant, who established Salem near the Native Naumkeag people. But Winthrop and the other Puritan leaders chose not to settle there, but to continue the search for their own Promised Land.

As Winthrop told his fellow Puritans: “We shall be as a City upon a Hill; the eyes of all people are upon us.” After a temporary stay in Charlestown, Boston will be their permanent home.

Its name is said to have been chosen by Puritan clergyman Isaac Johnson, who once lived in the English town of Boston. The ship *Arbella*, which Winthrop sailed on, is said to be named for Johnson’s wife Arabella.

Although Winthrop’s Puritans got off to a better start than the Pilgrims ten years before, the colony has struggled with illness and tragedy in recent months, and dozens have died. The governor’s own son Henry drowned in July.

The Massachusetts and other Native peoples suffered in the great dying, their numbers



drastically reduced by disease. But Winthrop is taking few chances by spreading out settlements to make it difficult for potentially hostile groups to attack.

In time, Winthrop believes many more Puritans will flock to his “City upon a Hill” to build a godly community, and to prosper. The harbor at Boston is a natural wonder with potential to become a great center of trade.

ESTABLISHED in 1636, Harvard was created by the “Great and General Court of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England.” The college was named for clergyman John Harvard of Charlestown, an early benefactor who had emigrated to North America from England where he had studied at Cambridge University. In its early years, Harvard trained many Puritan ministers. An Indian College for Native Americans was also established at Harvard in 1655.