

Forest Society ^[1]

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by [William S. Powell](#) ^[2], 2006

See also: [Colonial Period Overview](#) ^[3]



Site of the First Successful
English Settlement in America,
by John L. Cotter and J. Paul
Hudson. Courtesy of Learn
NC.

^[4]"Forest Society" is a term applied to the economy of the earliest European [settlers](#) ^[5] of the region that would become North Carolina and other eastern states. It is analogous to "hunters and gatherers" as applied to the native people found in North America by the explorers and colonists sent by [Sir Walter Raleigh](#) ^[6] in the sixteenth century. Both groups-[American Indians](#) ^[7] and settlers-were obliged to live off the land. Early settlers depended on forests for protection from the elements, for warmth in cold weather, for nuts and fruit to supplement their diet, and for furniture for their houses. They also relied on the forests to build boats for transportation and for much of their commerce, as [naval stores](#) ^[8](tar, pitch, and turpentine), shingles, and lumber became important items in trade.

Reference:

Brooke Hindle, ed., *America's Wooden Age: Aspects of Its Early Technology*(1976).

Image Credit:

Depicts colonists at Colonial Jamestown. Date created unknown. Painting by Sidney E. King, published in *New Discoveries at Jamestown: Site of the First Successful English Settlement in America*, by John L. Cotter and J. Paul Hudson. Courtesy of Learn NC. Available from <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/multimedia/7772> ^[4] (accessed May 25, 2012)

Subjects:

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[Precolonial period \(pre-1600\)](#) ^[10]

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From:

[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.](#)^[12]

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