

Late seventeenth-century map of the Northeast, 1682

Introduction

Like many other explorers, Henry Hudson stumbled upon North America almost by accident. Employed by the Dutch Republic to find a sea passage to the Far East, Hudson and the crew of his ship the *Halve Maen* landed at what is today New York on September 11, 1609, claiming the region for the Dutch.

Efforts to map the region began almost immediately after Henry Hudson landed and culminated with this map, made by Nicholas Visscher and printed in 1682. This map depicts not only the former Dutch holdings of New Amsterdam (which had been taken over by the British), but also New England and New Jersey. The lower right-hand corner features a panoramic view of New Amsterdam and its harbor.

Questions for Discussion

Read the document introduction and closely examine the enlarged document image in order to answer these questions.

1. Numerous images of wildlife appear on this map. Identify the variety of animals and explain why they were placed on the map.
2. Carefully examine the panoramic view of New Amsterdam at the bottom right of the map. What can you learn about that settlement from the drawing?
3. Compare this map, printed in 1682, with a current physical map of the same area. Why is this considered an amazing document for its time—in an era long before global positioning devices (GPS)?

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Image



Novi Belgii Novaeque Angliae [New Netherland and New England], 1682 (The Gilder Lehrman Collection, GLC03582)