

Jamestown, 1607-1624

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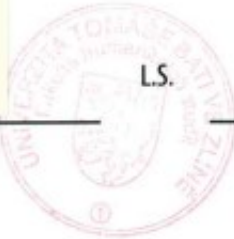
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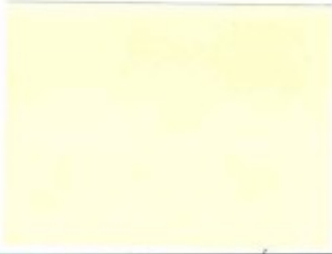
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ABSTRAKT

Jamestown ve Virginii byla první permanentní anglická kolonie v Severní Americe založená v roce 1607, nicméně nepatří mezi úspěšné kolonie. Původně nezávislá kolonie se v roce 1624 stala kolonií kontrolovanou monarchií Velké Británie. Tato práce dokumentuje několik nedostatků, které vedly ke ztrátě samosprávy.

Klíčová slova: Jamestown, Virginie, Anglická kolonie, Virginia Company of London, „20 and Odd Negroes“, Otroci, Indiáni, John Smith, Pocahontas, Období hladovění, Kanibalismus, První permanentní Anglická kolonie, Anglo-powhatanská válka, Indiánský masakr roku 1622 a 1644

ABSTRACT

Jamestown, Virginia, established 1607, was the first permanent English settlement in North America; however, it proved unsuccessful. Originally an autonomous colony, it was taken over by the Crown in 1624. This thesis will document the multiple failures that led to the colony's loss of autonomy.

Keywords: Jamestown, Virginia, English Colony, Virginia Company of London, “20 and Odd Negroes,” Slaves, Indians, John Smith, Pocahontas, Starving Time, Cannibalism, First Permanent English Settlement, Anglo–Powhatan War, Indian massacre of 1622 and 1644

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I hereby declare that the print version of my bachelor's thesis and the electronic version of my thesis deposited in the IS/STAG system are identical.

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INTRODUCTION

When people think of American colonization, they generally think of Columbus or the Pilgrims, but not necessarily of Jamestown. In the sixteenth century, Europeans began exploring and settling in the New World. England found itself behind Spain or France in the colonization race, in large part because the Crown suffered from insufficient funds. Thus, the King issued a royal charter to a joint-stock company in London to colonize Virginia. As a result, Jamestown was established in 1607. Although wealth initially eluded the colonists, it came when the colonists began growing tobacco for export. People wanted to leave England because most of them were only servants there, and they knew that if they left for the New World, they could start their own business after their seven-year contract with the company ended.¹ This led to the expansion of the colony, to the establishment of particular plantations, which were early versions of franchises, and to the adoption of black chattel slavery as a replacement for indentured servitude. Such expansion, however, encroached on native lands, leading to two Anglo-Powhatan wars. Ultimately, the Crown rested control of Jamestown away from the London Company in 1624, on the grounds that there were management quarrels in London, that the company was on the verge of bankruptcy, and that for seventeen years it had failed to achieve its main goal – self-sufficiency.

Examining these justifications, this thesis ultimately places the blame of Jamestown's failure on management by the Virginia Company of London. Although the London Company constituted remarkable achievement, it did not last for good.

The last chapter of this thesis will deal with how the colony prospered under the rule of the crown.

¹ Bernard Bailyn, *The Peopling of British North America: an introduction* (New York: Vintage Books, 1988), Chapter 1, Kindle.

1 EARLY ATTEMPTS AT NEW WORLD COLONIZATION

The European colonization of the “New World” began with Christopher Columbus’s arrival in the Caribbean in 1492. Columbus was searching for a water route to Asia, which illuded him, but he did find gold, which was more prized than land by the Spanish. From Marco Polo’s expeditions, the Spanish knew that there is gold and other scarce things in Asia. Columbus needed to find a sea route to India because Turks controlled the land route to Asia. The way around Africa was already taken by Portuguese sailors; thus, the Spanish decided to sail across an unexplored ocean. Despite returning to the Caribbean three times, Columbus died in Spain in 1506 still oblivious to the fact that he had been exploring and colonizing the Western Hemisphere. The conquistadors who followed him, like Cortés and Pizzaro, established the *encomienda*, a paternalistic system of labor for the Native Americans that basically enslaved them. Even after the New Laws of 1542 replaced the *encomienda* with the more benevolent *repartimiento*, the Spanish cared more for gold and glory than for civilizing and Catholicizing the Indians. For this reason, among others, Spanish Colonization largely failed.²

Even so, Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603) was jealous of the extreme wealth being accumulated by the Spanish Crown and wanted a piece of the action. Unable to afford a settlement attempt, she first relied on privateers, most notably Sir Francis Drake, who repeatedly successfully raided Spanish New World colonies and Spanish ships in the 1570s, filling his hold with gold and silver, which he dutifully delivered to the Queen in exchange for glory and a share of the profits. The Spanish ambassador to England repeatedly complained of Drake the pirate, but to no avail.³ In part because of this, the relationship between England and Spain deteriorated to the point that they fought a war, the most notable event of which was the sinking of the Spanish Armada off the coast of England in 1588.⁴

1.1 The Lost Colony of Roanoke

While the Spanish were occupied with building a mission system in Florida and Mexico, an English knight, Walter Raleigh, explored the mid-Atlantic region of North America and named it Virginia, supposedly in honor of Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen.⁵ Then, between 1585

² Howard Zinn, *A People’s History of the United States* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), Chapter 1, Kindle.

³ Jasper Ridley, *A Brief History of the Tudor Age* (London: Robinson, 2013), Chapter 11, Kindle.

⁴ John H. Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America, 1492-1830* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 2006), 6.

⁵ Marshall W. Fishwick, *Jamestown: First English Colony* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), Chapter 3, Kindle.

and 1590, the English attempted to establish a colony on Roanoke Island (now Dare Country, North Carolina), which would serve as a base for pirating and attacks on Spanish Florida. Approximately hundred and fifty English colonists were left on the island to construct a fort, while their ship returned to England to resupply. In the meantime, the colonists fought with the Indians and struggled to grow life-sustaining crops. Their prospects worsened when the supply ship, caught up in the war, did not return. When Drake stopped by Roanoke in 1587, he found the colonists clearly struggling on the island and contemplating a move north to the Chesapeake Bay. When the supply ship finally did return to Roanoke in 1590, the colony was abandoned. What happened to the colonists, including Virginia Dare, the first English child born in North America, remains a mystery.⁶

After this failure and the Queen's death in 1603, King James I (1566-1625) ended the Anglo-Spanish War (1585-1604) and established peace with England's old enemy. The monarchy was lacking money to fund another colonization, thus, in 1606, the King of England authorized the establishment of two joint-stock companies that were granted rights of the settlement in Virginia: the Virginia Company of London and the Virginia Company of Plymouth.⁷ The King would not have to put at risk any money from the treasury and still gain a certain percentage of the profits from the companies. The London Company was granted the land in the southern part of North America (the land that stretches from South Carolina to Connecticut today), and the Plymouth Company was granted the northern part of North America (now Delaware to Nova Scotia). Whoever would be more successful in the colonization could claim the overlapping part (now Delaware to Connecticut).⁸

1.2 Virginia Company of Plymouth

The Plymouth Company was to be the first to send the expedition to settle in British North America. In August 1606, the ship sailed from England but was attacked and captured by the Spanish near Florida hence never reached the intended destination. The Plymouth Company did not hesitate for long and sent a new expedition as soon as possible to catch up with its competitor (London Company). By the time when the company sent the second

⁶ Frank E. Grizzard, Jr., and Boyd D. Smith, *Jamestown Colony: A Political, Social, and Cultural History* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2007), xvii–xix.

⁷ James Horn, *A Land as God Made It: Jamestown and the Birth of America* (New York: Basic Books, 2005), Chapter 1.

⁸ "The Popham Colony," Maine's First Ship, accessed April 20, 2021, <https://mfship.org/home/history/popham-colony/>.

expedition to the New World, the London Company had already established the Jamestown colony in the Chesapeake Bay.⁹

1.2.1 Popham colony

In May 1607, two ships carrying around 120 colonists set sail from England to its intended destination – Maine. These ships carried fewer council members and more farmers, traders, and skilled men than ships of the London Company. In August 1607, the ships arrived in the Kennebec River, Maine, where the colonists settled and began building the colony's fortification. George Popham, the nephew of Sir John Popham who was one of the most important investors of the Plymouth Colony, was elected the first colony's president. Due to late summer arrival, the colonists had no time to harvest food before the upcoming winter. The colony was lacking food, and the Native Americans were not willing to help the colonists. Thus, in December 1607, half of the colonists set back to England, leaving behind fifty colonists to the harsh and cold winter. The weather in the northern part of North America was colder than the one they were used to back in England. In February 1608, George Popham died, and only twenty-five years old Raleigh Gilbert, the nephew of Sir Walter Raleigh, became the new colony's president. In following months, a supply ship brought information that Sir John Popham, the patron of the Plymouth Company, had died. His successors in the Plymouth Company's management had less influence on the investors and the King of England than Sir John Popham. When another supply ship arrived in late summer 1608, it brought the news about the death of Gilbert's older brother, thus, Gilbert decided to return to England to claim the inheritance. No one was willing to take the command, thus, forty-five remaining colonists, who were growing afraid of another cold winter, decided to follow his lead. The colony tried to prove as a colony for building ships; they even constructed the first British ship in North America, named Virginia, on which they later sailed back to England. After only a year, in September 1608, the colonists abandoned the Popham colony and returned back to England, thus, ending the first colonization attempt of the Plymouth Company.¹⁰ Since this failure, the Company remained inactive until 1620 when it was reorganized by a new charter from King James I as the Council for New England.¹¹

⁹ Stephen Luscombe, "Popham Colony," *The British Empire*, accessed April 20, 2021, <https://www.britishempire.co.uk/maproom/popham.htm>; "The Popham Colony," *Maine's First Ship*.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ "Plymouth Company." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, May 18, 2015, accessed April 30, 2021. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Plymouth-Company>.

1.3 Virginia Company of London

In 1606 the Virginia Company of London, also called the London Company, obtained the First Charter of Virginia granted by King James I, who allowed them to settle in the south part of Virginia, and to choose the council and government, but under the supervision of the King. King James I appointed the major thirteen investors who sworn to serve King's interests.¹² The London Company was backed by wealthy investors who saw in Virginia the opportunity to relieve over-population in England and make money in the process. Spain continued to profit off of her New World colonies in the Caribbean and South America, and the stakeholders of the Virginia Company expected similar results from Virginia. Attempting to learn from the Roanoke mistake, the company desired to create an autonomous and self-sustaining colony with its own governing Council, which would be better prepared to deal with issues as they arose. The hope was that such a council would guide the settlers in putting down permanent roots, instead of just seeking short-term fortune.¹³

¹² The English Crown, "First Charter of Virginia (1606)," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, December 07, 2020, accessed April 16, 2021, <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/first-charter-of-virginia-1606>.

¹³ Fishwick, *Jamestown*, Chapter 3, Kindle.

2 THE BEGINNINGS OF JAMESTOWN

2.1 First Arrival

Three ships (*Susan Constant*, *Discovery*, and *Godspeed*) with 105 men and weapons, seeds, food, and tools set off from England on December 20, 1606, destination Virginia. The reason for these men risking their lives was mainly to acquire land. Among these colonists were younger sons of noble ranks, who, thanks to primogeniture, would not inherit estates. Some of them were hoping to acquire gold and other wealth, and some of them were just searching for more freedom.¹⁴ The first colonists to arrive in Virginia were former soldiers, privateers, or some skilled craftsmen, but most of them were laborers with no skills. The Virginia Company sent men with military experience intentionally if there is a need to fight against the Spanish or the Indians.¹⁵ The company promised the colonists food, tools, accommodation, transportation, and clothes for the exchange of seven years of indentured servitude.¹⁶ No women or children were included on this journey.¹⁷ Most of the arriving colonists were gentlemen; they were lazy and not used to manual labor, they were rather adventurers than farmers. The intention of the colony was not to be completely self-sufficient from the beginning but to establish trade with Native Americans and rely on English supplies during the first years.¹⁸ The colonists brought a box with them that contained names of members to rule the colony, appointed by the Virginia Company. They did not open the box before the arrival in Virginia. The Council was to decide who would be the first governor of the colony.¹⁹

The expedition had three main aims: transportable wealth (namely gold and silver), a water route to Asia, and to locate and rescue the colonists of Roanoke. On April 26, 1607, they saw an entrance to the Chesapeake Bay, but before entering the bay to explore it, they stopped at one of the capes and placed a cross there to symbolize the entrance to the bay and

¹⁴ Fishwick, *Jamestown*, Chapter 3, Kindle.

¹⁵ Archibald Andrews Marks, "Life at Jamestown," *Jamestown Settlement & American Revolution Museum at Yorktown*, accessed April 18, 2021, <https://www.historyisfun.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Life-at-Jamestown.pdf>.

¹⁶ Archibald Andrews Marks, "The Virginia Company of London," *Jamestown Settlement & American Revolution Museum at Yorktown*, accessed April 18, 2021, https://www.historyisfun.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/VA_Company.pdf.

¹⁷ Horn, *A Land as God Made It*, Chapter 2: "The 'Pearl and the Gold'."

¹⁸ Sarah McBee, "The History of the Jamestown Colony: Seventeenth-Century and Modern Interpretations" (A Senior Honors Thesis, The Ohio State University, Mansfield, 2009), 4-11, https://kb.osu.edu/bitstream/handle/1811/37243/Sarah_McBee_thesis.pdf;sequence=1.

¹⁹ Jill Lepore, "Four centuries on, the battles over John Smith and Jamestown still rage," *New Yorker*, April 2, 2007, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2007/04/02/our-town>.

the establishment of Protestant Christianity in the New World. They named this cape, Cape Henry, after the King's son.²⁰ After making landfall in Virginia on May 13, 1607, they sought out an upriver settlement location, which would minimize the chance of the Spanish or pirate attack.²¹ The English colonists were aware of what happened to the French more than fifty years earlier when they attempted to colonize today's Florida. The French established a colony near the coast, making it easy for local Spaniards to invade and destroy the French later. Thus, the English settled further north and inland from the Spanish base to avoid Spanish attacks.²² Having chosen what seemed to be a suitable location on the northeast bank of the Powhatan River (renamed by the colonists as James River), they named the colony Jamestown in honor of the King and then searched for transportable wealth. Finding none, they focused on the land, and on growing cash crops, particularly tobacco.²³

Although the location of the colony was adequate for defense, it had its disadvantages. The land was marshy, mosquito-plagued, and encroached upon by the Indians who were sometimes friendly but other times not. The settlers worked hard and quickly to build a fortress that would repel an Indian attack. Meanwhile, the largest ship, *Susan Constant*, returned to England to resupply, leaving the colonists at their own devices. Summer brought with it hot weather, diseases and Indian attacks, which combined to kill two-thirds of the Jamestown colonists. With winter coming and food in short supply, it was looking like Jamestown would share the fate of Roanoke.²⁴

2.2 The First Two Years of the Colony

2.2.1 John Smith and Pocahontas

In December 1607, Jamestown's John Smith, who would be later referred to as the colony's savior, led an exploratory expedition up the Chickahominy River in search of gold mines, a way to Asia, or a supply of Indian corn. A narrowing of the river preempted further exploration, and then his party was attacked and captured by Pamunkey Indians, who were subservient to Chief Powhatan. Powhatan sentenced Smith to death for killing two Indians but then spared him at the impassioned request of Pocahontas, the chief's twelve-year-old

²⁰ Marks, "Life at Jamestown."

²¹ Fishwick, *Jamestown*, Chapter 3, Kindle; James P.P. Horn, *1619: Jamestown and the Forging of American Democracy* (New York: Basic Books, 2018), Chapter 1, Kindle.

²² "Jamestown - Why There?," Virginia Places, accessed April 15, 2021, <http://www.virginiaplaces.org/nativeamerican/thirdanglopowhatan.html>.

²³ Horn, "The Founding of English America," 26–27.

²⁴ Fishwick, *Jamestown*, Chapter 3, Kindle.

daughter. In the short term, Pocahontas served as a liaison between the Native Americans and the English colonists, helping to create an uneasy alliance between them.²⁵

2.2.2 First and Second Resupply

By January 1608, the Jamestown colony was on the verge of collapse. Many settlers had died, and most of the survivors were sick and weak due to malnourishment. Just in time, after more than seven months, the long-awaited ship carrying settlers, goods, and weapons arrived, unloaded, and then departed quickly again for more. To cover the costs of this resupply, Smith decided to seek wealth through another exploration, this time of the Chesapeake Bay. On his way, he discovered the Potomac River, but otherwise nothing of value. Upon his return to Jamestown, he found the settlers suffering again. In response, he got himself elected colonial governor and imposed measures of discipline. His approach was “must work or no food.”²⁶

The supply ships usually brought men, mostly soldiers or workers who were skilled in nothing. However, with the second resupply in October 1608 arrived also first two women, one of whom soon married and gave birth to a daughter, named Virginia, the first baby born at Jamestown.²⁷ This lone addition, however, in no way made up for a large number of deaths in the colony.²⁸ The accompanying instructions of company officials in London, to seek out gold, proved unhelpful in this regard.²⁹

A third resupply was expected in 1609, but the main ship was lost in a storm. A few smaller boats arrived in August, but they carried a hundred settlers (including women and children), some already ill, and few supplies, which only exacerbated the problems. Worse, Governor John Smith, injured in a gunpowder explosion, was forced to return to London for medical care. George Percy replaced him as governor, but under his rule, discipline lagged, Indian relations deteriorated, and the colony entered its most harrowing time.³⁰

²⁵ Fishwick, *Jamestown*, Chapter 4, Kindle.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Charles E. Hatch, Jr., *The First Seventeen Years: Virginia, 1607-1624* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1957), Chapter: “The Three Supplies, 1608-1610.”

²⁸ Fishwick, *Jamestown*, Chapter 4, Kindle.

²⁹ Hatch, Jr., *The First Seventeen Years*, Chapter: “The Three Supplies, 1608-1610.”

³⁰ Ibid.

2.3 Starving Time

After Smith left Jamestown, the Natives thought he had died, prompting their relationship with the English to cool.³¹ As a result, they did not help the Jamestown colonists when, in October 1609, conditions once again deteriorated, the result of a combination of severe drought, diseases, the hostility of the Natives, overcrowding and malnutrition. Death became an all-too-common event in Jamestown that winter, during what has come to be referred to as the “starving time.” Due to a lack of food, the settlers started to eat their horses, dogs, cats, milk cows, and later even snakes, rats, and roots. The Indians saw the weakness of the English, and raided their settlements several times, killing them and their cattle in the process. The Indians hoped to intimidate the English and drive them off their land. The settlers who entered the forests in search of food were ambushed and killed by the Indians. With nothing left to eat, the colonists consumed trash, leather goods, and even animal excrement.³² Fearing attack if they left the colony’s confines, they also started dismantling abandoned buildings for firewood. Ultimately, they dug up their dead and ate the bodies. One crazed man even murdered his pregnant wife in her sleep; he cut her open and took out the fetus and threw it in the river, then he salted the chopped body of his wife and ate it; he was later burned at the stake for the crime.³³ Those who did not succumb to cannibalism either starved to death or joined the Natives. The settlers blamed Percy’s leadership, claiming that nothing like this would have happened under Smith’s policies. Jamestown was once again about to share Roanoke’s fate when in May 1610, a supply ship finally arrived. Only sixty out of approximately four hundred remained to greet that ship and partake of the precious life-sustaining supplies in its hold.³⁴

³¹ David A. Price, *Love and Hate in Jamestown: John Smith, Pocahontas, and the Start of a New Nation* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 2003), Chapter 9, Kindle.

³² Horn, *1619: Jamestown*, Chapter 1, Kindle.

³³ Grizzard, Jr., and Smith, *Jamestown Colony*, xxxv-xxxvi.

³⁴ Horn, *1619: Jamestown*, Chapter 1, Kindle.

3 RESCUE OF JAMESTOWN

3.1 Third resupply in Virginia

In June 1609, seven ships carrying supplies and a new granted charter from King James I set off from England. The most significant changes in the Second Charter of Virginia were passed power over the Jamestown colony from the monarchy to investors and the appointment of a new governor with higher authority, who was to establish better discipline to the Jamestown colony. Albeit the power to elect the council members was passed to the investors, the King could still veto their choice. Investors elected Thomas Smythe as a treasurer and thus a leader of the company.³⁵

On their way, the ships became separated in a storm. A few smaller ships made it to Virginia, but the largest ship, the *Sea Venture*, carrying more than a hundred would-be colonists, shipwrecked on the coast of Bermuda. After more than nine months, the colonists built two new ships from *Sea Venture*'s wreckage and continued to Jamestown. In May 1610, they landed in Jamestown, finding it in a horrible state.³⁶ Realizing that they would face death if they remained, the colonists did not tarry but reboarded their ships and returned to England.³⁷

3.2 New beginnings in Jamestown

In June 1610, the remaining settlers were prepared to abandon Jamestown for good when another English supply ship arrived.³⁸ It carried four hundred men, including the colony's newly appointed governor, Lord De La Warr. Under his leadership, the fort was quickly rebuilt, and martial law was established to prevent the cruel time from repeating itself.³⁹ Those who would trade illegally with the Native Americans, kill breeding cattle, steal from the storehouse, or refuse to work would be punished with whipping, hanging, or burning at the stake.⁴⁰

³⁵ The English Crown, "Second Charter of Virginia (1609)," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, December 07, 2020, accessed April 16, 2021, <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/second-charter-of-virginia-1609/>; Brendan Wolfe, "Virginia Company of London," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, December 07, 2020, accessed April 16, 2021, <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/virginia-company-of-london>.

³⁶ Fishwick, *Jamestown*, Chapter 4, Kindle.

³⁷ Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *The Jamestown Project* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2007), 254–55.

³⁸ Tony A. Horwitz, *A Voyage Long and Strange: Rediscovering the New World* (London: John Murray, 2008), Chapter 12.

³⁹ Grizzard, Jr., and Smith, *Jamestown Colony*, xxxvi–xxxvii.

⁴⁰ Horwitz, *A Voyage Long and Strange*, Chapter 12.

With subsequent resupplies in 1611 arrived hundreds of workers and experienced soldiers who could face the Indians. For the new colonists, it was difficult to get used to De La Warr's strict system, because they were hoping to work less in the New World. Just when they got used to it, De La Warr, who had been elected governor for life, fell ill and returned to London for good.⁴¹

The new governor, Sir Thomas Dale, focused on maintaining discipline and defending the colony against the Indians. The colony's population was growing; a new plan was created to keep Jamestown as a port and administrative center and to establish new settlements along the James River to disperse the population. Two newly established settlements were Henrico, from where raids on Indian villages could be made, and Bermuda Hundred.⁴² The company was lacking funds, thus in 1612, King James I signed the Third Charter of Virginia, which did no changes in governance but allowed the company to hold public lotteries to raise money.⁴³

3.3 First Anglo–Powhatan War

Shortly after rebuilding the fort and implementing discipline, the English turned their attention to the Native Americans. With coexistence seemingly impossible, they decided to try to force the Indians out of the James River valley once and for all. This effort led to the First Anglo-Powhatan War (1610-1614).⁴⁴

The government of Sir Thomas Gates and Sir Thomas Dale in 1611 brought stabilization to the colony. The English undertook many raids on the Indian tribes, taking captives in the process. In 1613, the English captured Pocahontas, hoping to exchange her for corn, English captives, and stolen weapons. However, Chief Powhatan sent just a few weapons, corn, and captives, which did not please the English, therefore, they did not release Pocahontas. While in captivity, Pocahontas, then age 18, learned the English language and etiquette. She met a colonist John Rolfe, and they fell in love. Rolfe asked the governor for permission to marry Pocahontas. The war had grown wearisome for both sides, prompting Chief Powhatan and Governor Dale to use the marriage to establish a truce. In April 1614, Pocahontas, baptized Rebecca, married Rolfe. With peace thus established, Jamestown began to prosper.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Grizzard, Jr., and Smith, *Jamestown Colony*, xxxvi–xxxvii.

⁴² Fishwick, *Jamestown*, Chapter 4, Kindle; Marks, “Life at Jamestown.”

⁴³ The English Crown, “Third Charter of Virginia (1612),” *Encyclopedia Virginia*, December 07, 2020, accessed April 16, 2021, <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/third-charter-of-virginia-1612/>.

⁴⁴ Horwitz, *A Voyage Long and Strange*, Chapter 12; Grizzard, Jr., and Smith, *Jamestown Colony*, xxxix; Horn, *1619: Jamestown*, Chapter 1, Kindle.

⁴⁵ Horwitz, *A Voyage Long and Strange*, Chapter 12.

3.4 Prosperity of the Colony

The alliance with the Native Americans ensured the prosperity of the Jamestown colony. Since the very beginning, the colonists were trying to find something what would bring the company profit. They attempted to develop various industries such as wood produce, silk and wine production or glassmaking; however, none of these were very profitable.⁴⁶ Thus, the colony focused on growing cash crops for export to England. The original settlers had a seven-year contract to work for the company, which was now up.⁴⁷ The governor realized that private property is a key to prosperity; people work more if they are working for their own benefit, not for the company. The Jamestown colonists died during the starving time even though the land offered them a lot of crops. They were not ready for the coming winter because they did not have enough reserves. Since they worked for the company's benefit, not for theirs, they did not work hard enough.⁴⁸ In 1613, Governor Dale offered land to the original settlers as a means of enticing them to stay. Several took the offer and began growing tobacco for export.⁴⁹ By colonial law, private landowners could devote one-third of their land holdings to tobacco, the majority being earmarked for subsistence agriculture.⁵⁰

John Rolfe, who arrived with the 1610 ship from Bermuda but stayed, came to have a significant impact on the colony's prosperity as a planter. He began to grow Indian tobacco in 1612, but sensing it was too strong for the English, he switched to Spanish tobacco, which was milder and well-suited for the Virginia climate. In June 1613, Rolfe sent his first tobacco crop to England, where it sold quickly and for a high price, prompting other Jamestown colonists to follow his lead. Tobacco became the transportable wealth the English had been seeking in North America for three decades.⁵¹ And, with the Indians remaining peaceful, the colonists could expand their holdings.⁵² Around ninety self-sufficient smallholdings had been established in Jamestown by the end of 1614. The company realized that if men mainly worked for their own benefit, crop production would rise significantly.⁵³

In 1616, Rolfe, Pocahontas, and their one-year-old son Thomas sailed to London to prove the success of the colony and the colonists' relationship with the Indians. There,

⁴⁶ Marks, "Life at Jamestown."

⁴⁷ Grizzard, Jr., and Smith, *Jamestown Colony*, xl–xli.

⁴⁸ David Boaz, "Private Property Saved Jamestown, And With It, America," *Cato Institute*, May 14, 2007, accessed April 13, 2021, <https://www.cato.org/commentary/private-property-saved-jamestown-it-america>.

⁴⁹ Grizzard, Jr., and Smith, *Jamestown Colony*, xl–xli.

⁵⁰ Horn, *1619: Jamestown*, Chapter 2, Kindle.

⁵¹ Fishwick, *Jamestown*, Chapter 5, Kindle.

⁵² Grizzard, Jr., and Smith, *Jamestown Colony*, 188.

⁵³ Horn, *1619: Jamestown*, Chapter 2, Kindle.

Pocahontas fell sick and died, and Rolfe returned to Jamestown on his own, leaving his son behind with his English relatives.⁵⁴ The colony to which he returned had a population of around four hundred and, with peace at hand, had spread beyond the walls of the original palisade. Even so, the Virginia Company of London recognized that if the colony was to prosper and last, it would need to attract more settlers and investors.⁵⁵

In 1617, the London Company had to pay dividends to investors; due to a lack of funds, they decided to offer a hundred acres of land per share. Moreover, the company established a headright system that offered fifty acres of land for each person paying for his or someone else's passage. The company was also lacking recourses to transport new settlers; thus, they created the particular plantation. The particular plantation was a private plantation established by a group of stockholders who invested their money into one particular settlement along the James River. They had to pay for all expenses, including transportation, searching for indentured servants, and administering them. For each person they paid the expenses for, they obtained fifty acres of land. These plantations were separate commodities and had their own administration and were responsible for their own supplies; however, they were subject to the Jamestown colony, had to follow the colony's laws, and had to pay fees to Jamestown. The particular plantations were named "Hundreds" – Smythe's Hundred, Martin's Hundred, Berkeley Hundred, etc. The most famous of all particular plantations, however, was the one that was supposed to be located in Virginia but that was located by a twist of fate much further north, in what came to be known as Massachusetts.⁵⁶

3.4.1 Plymouth Colony

In 1620, separatist Puritans obtained a patent to settle in Virginia. Those separatists, later called Pilgrims, were escaping persecution in England. First, they sought safety in the Netherlands, but when the Thirty Years' War began, they realized they had to leave Europe. Thus, in September 1620, the ship *Mayflower* with 106 passengers departed for America with the intention of establishing a new settlement. They were planning to settle in the northern part of Virginia, but due to a storm that blew the *Mayflower* greatly off course, they landed in Massachusetts and established the Plymouth colony.⁵⁷ Those pilgrims had a

⁵⁴ Horwitz, *A Voyage Long and Strange*, Chapter 12.

⁵⁵ Horn, *1619: Jamestown*, Chapter 2, Kindle.

⁵⁶ Grizzard, Jr., and Smith, *Jamestown Colony*, xliii-xliv; Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York: WW Norton & Co., 2003), Chapter 5, Kindle; David Muraca, "Martin's Hundred: A Settlement Study" (Master's thesis, College of William and Mary, Virginia, 1993), 26.

⁵⁷ Kupperman, *The Jamestown Project*, 293.

different reason for the colonization, they were humble, not noble people who just wanted to recreate the English village life and isolate themselves from the Church of England. Whereas Jamestown colony was established on economic motives, Plymouth colony was established on religious motives. Also contrary to Jamestown, the Pilgrims traveled as families, with the intention of starting new lives in a new place where they could worship God in their own way.⁵⁸ Since most of the Jamestown former colonists returned to England or died within the first years, there are likely no descendants of Jamestown former settlers compared to Pilgrims.⁵⁹ Unlucky for the London Company and Jamestown, because the Pilgrims settled outside of Virginia, they paid the fees associated with establishing and maintaining their particular plantation to the Council of New England, a different joint-stock venture.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Nathaniel Philbrick, *Mayflower: A Story of Courage, Community, and War* (New York: Viking, 2006), Chapter 1.

⁵⁹ David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), Chapter: "The South of England to Virginia," Kindle.

⁶⁰ Patricia Scott Deetz and Christopher Fennell, "The Pierce Patent, 1621," Plymouth Colony Archive Project, <http://www.histarch.illinois.edu/plymouth/piercepat.html>.

4 MAJOR REFORMS IN 1619

With the increase of the colony's population and private plantations, there was a necessity for overhauling the government and laws. In November 1618, the new governor of Jamestown, George Yeardley, introduced "The Great Charter," one of the most important documents in Virginia history.⁶¹ This so-called charter was not granted by King James I, like the previous charters. It was created by Sandys leadership to introduce new changes in the governance of the colony.⁶² This document established a new land system containing information on how the land would be apportioned to the old settlers (those who come before 1616), newcomers, and stockholders. This system was established to reward investors and planters and to embolden newcomers.⁶³ Changes were also taking place in London, as Sir Thomas Smythe was replaced as treasurer and leader of the Virginia Company of London by Sir Edwin Sandys.⁶⁴

4.1 Virginia General Assembly

With the following year came more government reforms. The General Assembly and a new Council of State were established. The governor no longer had such power as before and was elected only for a three-year term. He governed together with members of the Council, whom the company appointed. Together with the General Assembly, they had all the functions, judicial, legislative, and executive. The Virginia General Assembly, also called the House of Burgesses, were men elected to represent each particular plantation or settlement.⁶⁵ Each plantation or settlement elected its two representatives; there were eleven settlements and plantations in total, thus the General Assembly consisted of twenty-two burgesses.⁶⁶ The Council could veto laws passed by the Assembly, and the Assembly could reject orders from the Council. Thus, a balance of power was established. The London Council believed that if planters could participate in government, they would not complain about the company's policies. The first session of the Assembly took place in the summer of 1619, and it involved the governor, four councilors, and twenty-two burgesses. They

⁶¹ Theodore Rabb, "Sandys, Sir Edwin (1561–1629)," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, February 12, 2021, accessed April 17, 2021, <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/sandys-sir-edwin-1561-1629>.

⁶² "The 'Great Charter' and the First General Assembly," Jamestown Settlement & American Revolution Museum at Yorktown, accessed April 17, 2021, <https://www.historyisfun.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Greatcharter.pdf>.

⁶³ Grizzard, Jr., and Smith, *Jamestown Colony*, xlv.

⁶⁴ Rabb, "Sandys, Sir Edwin."

⁶⁵ Horn, *1619: Jamestown*, Chapter 2, Kindle.

⁶⁶ "The 'Great Charter,'" Jamestown Settlement & American Revolution Museum at Yorktown.

established new rules and regulations, among them, setting the price of tobacco, regulating the Indian trade, and implementing a tax. Since the beginning, the Jamestown colony had tried to diversify the economy. The initial intention for the economy was to make England self-sufficient in all kinds of production and make it independent of other European countries. The colonists developed a lumber industry, glassmaking, or tobacco pipe manufacturing, but the success of these productions did not last long. Most of the production stopped in the 1620s. None of these productions resulted in sufficient profit for the company.⁶⁷

To encourage diversification, farmers had to grow other crops than tobacco, such as corn, grapes, silk, or flax. They also established moral rules that prohibited swearing, gaming, intoxication, indolence, or adultery. Newly established laws banned the Indian firearm trade.⁶⁸

The Virginia Company believed that a larger population in Jamestown would lead to economic diversification and self-sufficiency. To achieve this, the company heavily marketed Jamestown, and it worked. Between 1619 and 1623, four thousand men immigrated to the colony, and the company established more particular plantations, factories, and a college to Christianize the Indians.⁶⁹ To ensure the settlers would stay even after they made some profit, between 1619 and 1621, the company sent to Jamestown around one hundred and forty unmarried young women. They believed that if the settlers had wives there and family life, they would have no reason to return to England. The men who chose to marry a woman had to pay for her passage with 120 pounds of tobacco. These girls were beautiful, young and educated, between the ages of fifteen and twenty-eight, who traveled across the ocean with the promise of establishing families and making fortunes. The women were not forced to marry men against their will. If the woman refused to marry the settler, she would be forced into indentured servitude for seven years, to pay for her passage.⁷⁰

4.2 “20 and odd negroes”

In 1619, English privateers attacked a Portuguese ship carrying around three hundred Angolan slaves. Half of them died on their way, and many were killed during the assault.

⁶⁷ Sarah McBee, “The History of the Jamestown Colony,” 44–45.

⁶⁸ Horn, *1619: Jamestown*, Chapter 2, Kindle.

⁶⁹ Grizzard, Jr., and Smith, *Jamestown Colony*, xlix.

⁷⁰ Kupperman, *The Jamestown Project*, 287; Fishwick, *Jamestown*, Chapter 4, Kindle; Julie Richter, “Women in Colonial Virginia,” *Encyclopedia Virginia*, December 14, 2020, accessed April 3, 2021, <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/women-in-colonial-virginia/>.

The English privateers took these slaves to Jamestown in hopes of trading them for corn. These “20 and odd negroes” became the first African slaves in English North America. At the time when these first Africans arrived in Virginia, the Spanish colonists have been already using the transatlantic slave trade for more than one hundred years.⁷¹ Most of these Africans that arrived in Jamestown were bought by the governor of the colony, George Yeardley. The Council in London was told nothing about the Africans, as they were deemed inconsequential. Between 1619 and 1623, up to fifteen Africans were brought to Jamestown, and two black children were born. In 1620, around thirty-two Africans, including fifteen men and seventeen women, were documented living in the Jamestown colony. However, in the 1625 colonial census, only twenty-three Africans were listed, albeit unnamed.⁷² The difference between English indentured servants and Africans was that the indentured servant signed a seven-year contract to work for their master, and they obtained in return food, clothes, housing, and transportation to the colony. After finishing their contract, they acquired three barrels of corn and clothes from their master and were free. The black servants obtained food, clothes, and housing as well, but they were never set free and had to work for life.⁷³ The Africans could spend time with other Africans and even live together as a couple in their master’s house and have children. With the opportunity to meet with Africans, not just with the English, they were able to keep their language, customs, or religion. Despite the agrarian focus of Jamestown, and despite tobacco being a labor-intensive crop, black slavery in Virginia would not become widespread until the end of the seventeenth century, in large part because the Council was supplying Jamestown with enough indentured servants to meet the colony’s labor needs.⁷⁴ However, by the end of the seventeenth century, not enough Europeans wanted to travel to Virginia to work as indentured servants, thus, the English started to import Africans to work in their fields, and slavery replaced the indentured servitude.⁷⁵

⁷¹ Kelley Fanto Deetz, “Stolen from Africa, Enslaved People First Arrived in Colonial Virginia in 1619,” National Geographic, August 13, 2019, accessed April 18, 2021, <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/history-magazine/article/virginia-first-africans-transatlantic-slave-trade>.

⁷² Deetz, “Stolen from Africa,” Horn, *1619: Jamestown*, Chapter 2, Kindle; Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*, Chapter: “The South of England to Virginia,” Kindle.

⁷³ Archibald Andrews Marks, “Tobacco and Labor,” Jamestown Settlement & American Revolution Museum at Yorktown, accessed April 18, 2021, <https://www.historyisfun.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Tobacco-and-Labor.pdf>.

⁷⁴ Grizzard, Jr., and Smith, *Jamestown Colony*, 199–200.

⁷⁵ Marks, “Tobacco and Labor.”

5 THE CHANGE OF RELATIONS WITH THE NATIVES

As the colony's population grew, investors started to focus on one of the fundamental goals, to Christianize the Native Americans. Since the beginning of the Jamestown colony, only one Native American was christened, Pocahontas. They planned to bring Christianity to more Indians, but the death of Pocahontas deferred it.⁷⁶ After the death of Chief Powhatan in 1618, Chief Opechancanough took his place, and the relation between the English and the Indians started to crumble. The colonists believed that if they converted the Indians to Christianity, peace between the English and the Indians would continue.⁷⁷

5.1 Proselytizing of the Natives

In 1619, the colony raised money for establishing a school for the English and the Indian children. A new attempt at Christianizing the Native Americans began in the spring of 1620 with the arrival of the educator George Thorpe. He mainly focused on educating and converting children. To fully show them the English way of life, the Indian children started to live with some English colonists. They believed that once the children are converted and educated, they can spread Christianity in the tribe when they return home.⁷⁸ Thorpe's goal was to befriend the new Indian chief, Opechancanough. The Indians were painfully aware of the colony's rapid growth and knew the English intention - to undermine Indian religion and culture.⁷⁹ The English, however, were not aware of the Opechancanough's plan. He never liked the idea of living in peace with the English colonists and wanted to evict them from Virginia. He planned to make Thorpe believe he was a friend with him. To do so, Opechancanough visited Thorpe often and even agreed to send the Indian children to Jamestown and some adults to work in fields and live with the English colonists. Thorpe was delighted and believed a lasting peace between the English and the Indians was within reach. The English thought they had nothing to fear, and the Indians could enter the colony whenever they wanted and without questioning. Thorpe even ordered the culling of dogs in the colony because the Indians complained they were afraid of them. The colonists trusted the Indians so much that the General Assembly even repealed the law forbidding the sale of weapons to the Native Americans. Everything went according to Opechancanough's plan.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Kupperman, *The Jamestown Project*, 295.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 287.

⁷⁸ Fishwick, *Jamestown*, Chapter 5, Kindle.

⁷⁹ Grizzard, Jr., and Smith, *Jamestown Colony*, 1.

⁸⁰ Fishwick, *Jamestown*, Chapter 5, Kindle; Price, *Love and Hate in Jamestown*, Chapter 14, Kindle.

5.2 Indian massacre of 1622

The Indians earned the trust of the English and spread among them in the Jamestown colony and the surrounding plantations and settlements. With this, it was the ideal time for the Indians to strike. Good Friday, 1622, seemed just like any other day to the English, who were working in the fields with the Indians as usual. Then simultaneously at eight o'clock in the morning, the Indians attacked, slaughtering many English and burning down many settlements and plantations. It was Opechancanough's plan to wipe out the English in one day.⁸¹

The Indians killed about 350 colonists out of almost 1,300; the number could have been higher had some colonists not fought back. One of the Indian children warned his English godfather the night before and told him about the plan. The Englishman ran to Jamestown to warn everyone to prepare a defense. The new colonial governor, Sir Francis Wyatt, who replaced Yeardley in 1621, was able to inform nearby communities of the threat. However, some plantations and smaller settlements were out of reach. The attack was planned to surprise the English, so the Indians did not carry weapons; instead, they killed the colonists with their work tools or English weapons they found. The Indians withdrew when the English successfully fought back. The colonists in Jamestown were not the only ones informed; Thorpe also had been informed of the impending attack, but he trusted that the Indians would not do such a thing, so he took no precautions and was killed.⁸²

The attack on Jamestown and surrounding plantations and settlements had been planned a year prior, when Opechancanough requested from the chief of the nearby Accomac tribe a supply of a poisonous plant, cowbane, with the intention of poisoning the English. However, the Accomacs, who resided on the east coast of Virginia, warned the colonists about the attack planning, and when Opechancanough discovered that he had been betrayed, he delayed the attack and sought new means. Since then, he had tried to lull the English colonists into complacency, with success. Only when he had regained the loyalty of the English did he attack them.⁸³ One of the indications that could have warned the English about Opechancanough's plan was the change of his name. In 1621, he changed his name to

⁸¹ Fishwick, *Jamestown*, Chapter 5, Kindle; "The 'War Aims' of Powhatan and the English," Virginia Places, accessed April 5, 2021, <http://www.virginiaplaces.org/military/powhatanwaraims.html>.

⁸² Fishwick, *Jamestown*, Chapter 5, Kindle; Kupperman, *The Jamestown Project*, 307–14; Price, *Love and Hate in Jamestown*, Chapter 14, Kindle.

⁸³ "The Second Anglo-Powhatan War (1622-32) and the Wooden Wall Across the Peninsula," Virginia Places, accessed April 7, 2021, <http://www.virginiaplaces.org/nativeamerican/secondanglopowhatan.html>; James Rice, "Anglo-Powhatan War, Second (1622-1632)," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, February 17, 2021, accessed April 7, 2021, <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/anglo-powhatan-war-second-1622-1632/>.

Mangopeesomon. Renaming in the Indian culture meant some great military acts. However, the English were not interested in the Indian culture, so they had no idea that Opechancanough was planning an attack.⁸⁴

After the attack, the colonists abandoned surrounding plantations and settlements and moved closer to Jamestown. Between 1622 and 1624, the colony became an overcrowded place with the plague and other diseases spreading and killing twice as many colonists as the Indian uprising. The Virginia Company sent over a hundred new settlers and ordered them to build new villages and beware of the Indians. The Good Friday Massacre not only significantly changed the relationship between the English and the Indians, but it led to the second Anglo-Powhatan war and to the fall of the Virginia Company of London. Due to the war and the increase in diseases, investors and potential newcomers shied away from the colony.⁸⁵

5.3 Second Anglo-Powhatan war

When Opechancanough planned the attack, he had no idea that it would turn against him and destroy most of his people. His planned attack was intended to send a message to the Jamestown colonists, telling them not to spread further and seize the Indian's territory, but to remain in the surroundings of Jamestown as in the beginnings of the colony. The colonists understood the message differently, believing the Indians intended to kill them and force them out of Virginia.⁸⁶ The London Company was outraged with the massacre. Although the English were originally opposed to the Spanish way of treating the Indians, the company was no longer interested in coexistence with Native Americans after this event.⁸⁷ After the attack, there were more Indians than the English in Virginia, so the first step the English took was to ally with some other Indian tribes. They allied with more distant tribes, such as the tribes on the Potomac River and the tribes on the east coast of Virginia.⁸⁸

The settlers were ordered to start a war and kill as many Indians as possible, spearing only the young who could work on plantations. A special reward was announced for the one who would capture Opechancanough. To show royal favor, King James I had sent weapons to Virginia, and the London Company sent barrels of gunpowder.⁸⁹ Governor Wyatt realized

⁸⁴ Price, *Love and Hate in Jamestown*, Chapter 14, Kindle.

⁸⁵ Grizzard, Jr., and Smith, *Jamestown Colony*, li; Kupperman, *The Jamestown Project*, 310.

⁸⁶ Rice, "Anglo-Powhatan War, Second."

⁸⁷ Price, *Love and Hate in Jamestown*, Chapter 14, Kindle.

⁸⁸ Rice, "Anglo-Powhatan War, Second."

⁸⁹ Kupperman, *The Jamestown Project*, 309–10.

that one of the mistakes of the colony was that the other settlements were spread so far from each other so they could not be warned when the attack happened. As a solution, he ordered all survivors to move to Jamestown or the plantations near the main colony. Wyatt led several raids in 1622 and 1623 on the Indian villages, burning their houses, stealing their corn, and killing the Indians.⁹⁰ The English usually attacked the Indian villages at the harvest time to steal their crops. Thanks to this system, the English could focus on the production of tobacco on their plantations and still had enough food from the raids on the Indians.⁹¹ The English led the intermittent raids on the Indians within three regular periods of the year. They led raids on the tribes in March, when they lacked the food supplies after winter, then in July when it was the harvest season, and lastly, in November when the loss of dwellings would have the highest impact because of the following winter.⁹²

In 1623, Opechancanough realized that the English are stronger than he thought and that he cannot face them anymore. His tribes ran out of food, unable to work in their fields because they were repeatedly attacked. He sent a message to the Jamestown colony that he would like to restore peace. He offered to return twenty English captives that were captured during the massacre. The English, still full of desire for revenge, willingly accepted Opechancanough's offer. In May 1623, the colonists met with the Indians at the Pamunkey River for the peace negotiation. The English brought with them a large barrel of white wine containing poison. To show that the drink is not poisoned, the English drank the wine first in front of the Indians. However, the wine they drank was poured out of the Indians' sight and from a different barrel. Around two hundred Indians were poisoned, and the colonists killed those who survived the poisoning. Opechancanough somehow survived and escaped.⁹³

One of the battles between Indians and English that is worth mentioning happened in 1624. Only sixty English soldiers fought with eight hundred Indians. Although the Indians outnumbered the English, their bows and arrows were no match for the English rifle. After this event, the Indians were willing to negotiate peace, but the English chose to continue the raids on the Indian tribes.⁹⁴

The intermittent attacks had continued until 1632 when a new governor, Sir John Harvey, once again negotiated peace with the Indians. Most of the colonists did not fancy the negotiation because they were profiting from the raids on the Indians. The peace

⁹⁰ Price, *Love and Hate in Jamestown*, Chapter 14, Kindle.

⁹¹ Muraca, "Martin's Hundred," 49.

⁹² "The Second Anglo-Powhatan War," Virginia Places.

⁹³ Kupperman, *The Jamestown Project*, 316; Price, *Love and Hate in Jamestown*, Chapter 14, Kindle.

⁹⁴ "The Second Anglo-Powhatan War," Virginia Places.

agreement drew out the Indian tribes from the lower part of the peninsula. The General Assembly ordered to build a wooden wall to separate the peninsula. The settlers who were willing to establish a plantation near the wall were offered fifty acres of land.⁹⁵

⁹⁵ “The Second Anglo-Powhatan War,” Virginia Places; Brent Tarter, “Harvey, Sir John (ca. 1581 or 1582–by 1650),” *Encyclopedia Virginia*, February 12, 2021, accessed April 7, 2021, <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/harvey-sir-john-ca-1581-or-1582-by-1650/>.

6 DISPUTES IN THE VIRGINIA COMPANY OF LONDON

In addition to the war and the spread of diseases during the same period, there were disputes between the London Council and the Council of the colony. The London Council complained that they had sent a lot of supplies and new colonists to the Jamestown colony since 1607 and that the colony was still not self-sufficient; quite the reverse, it was reliant on the company supplies. The Council of the colony responded that they hoped for more empathy, arguing that the reason for letting the Native Americans live among them was due to the obedience to the investors' order. Moreover, investors failed to supply the colony with a sufficient amount of food and capable men. Most of the newcomers had died during the transport or a few weeks after the arrival.⁹⁶ In 1622 and 1623, hundreds of new colonists carrying diseases arrived at Jamestown, which caused a new wave of plague and afterward deaths. This led to the colony's financial bankruptcy, which in turn led to the destruction of the London Company.⁹⁷ Another issue that created quarrels, especially between investors, was the new Tobacco Contract created by Sandys leadership in 1622. This contract granted the London Company a monopoly on tobacco imports to England, but only until 1623 when the tobacco contract was canceled. The contract showed that Sandys and his officials would be paid large salaries, which created indignation since the company was close to bankruptcy.⁹⁸

6.1 Monarch intervention

In the summer of 1623, the message about dying settlers reached London. The colonists suffered from hunger and plague. The English investors were indignant about the news. The settlers kept sending exaggerated reports about the dire conditions of the colony. Many of them hoped that if the news reached the King, he would dissolve the colony. They thought that after the dissolution, a monopoly would be established and that they themselves would be able to control all production and sales.⁹⁹

On the contrary, King James I was indignant at the liberal government that ruled the colony. When he learned that Sandys planned to introduce a more liberal charter, he decided to intervene. Learning that the King intended to interfere and create a less liberal government in the colony, the colonists decided to stand up for the Sandys government. When the protests

⁹⁶ Kupperman, *The Jamestown Project*, 313.

⁹⁷ Grizzard, Jr., and Smith, *Jamestown Colony*, li.

⁹⁸ Brendan Wolfe, "Virginia Company of London;" Rabb, "Sandys, Sir Edwin."

⁹⁹ Fishwick, *Jamestown*, Chapter 5, Kindle.

reached the King, he decided to appoint three commissions for investigation of the company.¹⁰⁰ In early 1624, the King sent a commission to Jamestown to investigate the colony's condition and to investigate the Smythe and Sandys leadership.

Sir Thomas Smythe was appointed to the Council of Virginia by King in 1606. From 1609 until 1619, Smythe was a treasurer of the London Company, when in 1619, he was replaced by Sir Edwin Sandys.¹⁰¹ Sir Edwin Sandys, the member of the House of Commons and treasurer of the Virginia Company of London, played a crucial role in establishing and later destroying the London Company. He was appointed to the Council of Virginia in 1607, and in 1617 he became a treasurer and joint manager of the company. During his leadership, he had established many reforms in the colony, including the establishment of the Great Charter of 1618.¹⁰²

When the commission investigating the London management reported that the leadership was horrible, King James I with the Privy Council agreed that changes had to be made in the company regime. They agreed to return to the form of government of 1606, which means the King would help decide who would be selected as a treasurer, a council, and the governor. The Virginia Company of London was against this decision.¹⁰³ The King filed a lawsuit against the company to force them to create an undemocratic charter. Sandys and his colleagues disagreed and asked parliament to join them and reject the King's demands. However, parliament was more in favor of King and decided to ignore Sandys' petition. Thus, in May 1624, the Court of The King's Bench dissolved the Virginia Company of London; hence Virginia became the first royal colony.¹⁰⁴ When the commission that investigated the conditions in the Jamestown colony returned from Virginia with a positive report in June 1624, the company was already dissolved.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰ Fishwick, *Jamestown*, Chapter 5, Kindle.

¹⁰¹ Grizzard, Jr., and Smith, *Jamestown Colony*, lv; 209–10.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, 193–95.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, lv–lvi.

¹⁰⁴ Fishwick, *Jamestown*, Chapter 5, Kindle.

¹⁰⁵ Kupperman, *The Jamestown Project*, 313.

7 VIRGINIA AS A ROYAL COMPANY

The news about the company's dissolution came to Jamestown after several months. The colonists were aware that all the liberality and freedom they had, was lost for good.¹⁰⁶ The King decided to keep Sir Francis Wyatt as the first royal governor. The King and his advisors believed he would be a great governor and approve the dissolution of liberal policy. They were wrong. When Wyatt found out about the company's revocation, he convened a meeting to address a petition in which they demanded the conservation of the General Assembly and liberal policy of the colony.¹⁰⁷

The King rejected the petition; the General Assembly was dissolved, and new laws concerning economy, religion, personal rights, and security were established. The law regarding the Indians and security was forbidding any trade with them. The English were to have weapons ready even during the time they were working. Each summer until 1632, they were to attack surrounding tribes, especially burn their crops and houses. The tax was implemented for each man older than sixteen years old to pay back the public debt.¹⁰⁸ After the colony became ruled by the King, the Jamestown colony was prospering and growing in population like never before.¹⁰⁹

7.1 Later years

7.1.1 Indian massacre of 1644

In addition to only good times, bad events also occurred during the reign of the King. In April 1644, almost one hundred years old Opechancanough made his last attempt to stop the English from expanding and attacked them. During this second massacre, more colonists died than in the first one, but only because the population in Virginia was much higher than in 1622. The Indians simultaneously attacked the remote plantations and settlements and killed around five hundred colonists. This attack resulted in the Third Anglo-Powhatan War, which lasted from 1644 to 1646.¹¹⁰ The English again began to intermittently attack the Indian tribes until 1646 when the English captured and killed Opechancanough.¹¹¹ After the chief's death, the Indians craved peace. The Opechancanough's successor, chief

¹⁰⁶ Fishwick, *Jamestown*, Chapter 6, Kindle.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ Hatch, Jr., *The First Seventeen Years*, Chapter: "Virginia and Dissolution."

¹⁰⁹ Fishwick, *Jamestown*, Chapter 6, Kindle.

¹¹⁰ Lars C. Adams, "'The Battle of Weyanoke Creek': A Story of the Third Anglo-Powhatan War in Early Carolina," *Native South* 6 (2013): 173–174. <https://doi.org/10.1353/nso.2013.0006>.

¹¹¹ Price, *Love and Hate in Jamestown*, Chapter 14, Kindle; Fischer, *Albion's Seed*, Chapter: "The south of England to Virginia," Kindle.

Necotowance, and Governor Berkeley established a peace treaty that restricted the Native Americans to live around the James River and close to the settlements and plantations.¹¹²

7.1.2 Bacon's rebellion

In addition to the revolt of the Indians, an uprising of the English colonists followed, and this happened in 1676 under the leadership of Nathaniel Bacon, a member of the Virginia Council of State. There were some disagreements among the colonist about the relation with the Native Americans. The colonists split into two parties, those who supported Governor Berkeley and those who supported Bacon. Bacon argued that the Indians would never be allied with the English and that they should attack them and draw them out or enslave them. Berkeley was against this idea and forbade Bacon to led raids on the Indian tribes. However, Bacon disobeyed and attacked the Indian tribes, even those who negotiated peace with the English in 1646. Berkeley arrested Bacon, but after Bacon apologized on his knees for his rebellion, the governor forgave him, although he would regret it later. In September 1676, Bacon and his men rose again and threatened Berkeley, forcing him to leave Jamestown on the East Shore.¹¹³

On September 19, 1676, Bacon and his allies set Jamestown on fire and burned the whole capital, including all the houses, the church, the statehouse, and warehouses. After Nathaniel Bacon's death of typhus in October 1676, Governor Berkeley returned to Jamestown, knowing that the colonists without their leader were not rebels anymore. The colonists considered moving the capital to another colony, but the King ordered Jamestown to be rebuilt.¹¹⁴

Jamestown remained the capital of Virginia until 1698 when another fire burned down the statehouse. In 1699, Williamsburg, located between the York and James rivers, became the new capital of Virginia.¹¹⁵ Virginia remained a royal colony until 1776 when the Declaration of Independence freed the colony.¹¹⁶

¹¹² "The Third Anglo-Powhatan War (1644-46)," Virginia Places, Accessed April 7, 2021, <http://www.virginiaplaces.org/nativeamerican/thirdanglopowhatan.html>.

¹¹³ James Rice, "Bacon's Rebellion (1676-1677)," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, February 4, 2021, accessed April 7, 2021, <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/bacons-rebellion-1676-1677/>.

¹¹⁴ Fishwick, *Jamestown*, Chapter 6, Kindle.

¹¹⁵ Katherine Gruber, "Williamsburg during the Colonial Period," *Encyclopedia Virginia*. February 17, 2021, accessed April 30, 2021, <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/williamsburg-during-the-colonial-period>.

¹¹⁶ Hatch, Jr., *The First Seventeen Years*, Chapter: "Virginia and Dissolution."

CONCLUSION

The establishment of the first permanent and successful colony in the New World was a great dream for the Virginia Company of London. In the end, they succeeded in establishing the permanent colony; however, it was not as successful as they wished. The Jamestown colony went through many events in those seventeen years, and many things could have been done differently. One of the great admirations is that the colonists did not give up right after the first failure and did not abandon the colony, as happened in several other colonization attempts. The Jamestown colonists survived many bad events and experienced many great achievements that influenced future colonization efforts.

The company chose the worst time for colonization; between 1606 and 1612 was the driest time in more than seven hundred years, which led to the “starvation time” right in the beginning.¹¹⁷ However, the colonists did not give up and rebuilt the colony and started again from scratch. Among those great achievements belongs the introduction of tobacco that later became the transportable wealth for the English, following up with the slavery brought to the English settlement, which was later a huge part of the American economic system. The most significant influence they had was the establishment of the first representative government in the New World.¹¹⁸

Were it not for the Native Americans and the wars they fought together, perhaps the Jamestown colony would not eventually become a royal colony. The attack of the Indians in 1622 certainly attracted the attention of the people of England and later even the King’s attention. However, quarrels and wars with the Indians were not the only reason why the company was eventually dissolved. The reason for the dissolution of the company was the management in London, with which King James I did not agree. Before the company’s dissolution, the company was offered a new charter, which would return to the style of government from 1606, when the King would be deciding who would be governor or part of the Council. However, the Virginia Company of London rejected this new charter which led to the dissolution of the company and making Jamestown a royal company.¹¹⁹ Despite the many colonial successes, the company had failed to achieve its original main goal – self-sufficiency. Many people believed that the company would have failed years before if there

¹¹⁷ Danielle Moretti-Langholtz, *A Study of Virginia Indians and Jamestown: The First Century* (Williamsburg, VA: The College of William & Mary, 2005), Chapter 4, <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/turabian/turabian-notes-and-bibliography-citation-quick-guide.html>.

¹¹⁸ Grizzard, Jr., and Smith, *Jamestown Colony*, 113-18.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, lvi.

were no public lotteries and subscriptions. During the seventeen years under the company's rule, around 6,700 colonists arrived in Jamestown, but just 1,200 colonists were living in the Jamestown colony and surrounding settlements at the time of the company's dissolution.¹²⁰

Notwithstanding that Jamestown was not so successful in the end, thanks to this first colonization, other successful colonies followed, learning from Jamestown's mistakes, including the Plymouth colony.¹²¹ The following colonies did not just learn from Jamestown's mistakes but also followed some systems that the Jamestown colony established, such as the head-right system or the governmental system in the form of representative government.¹²²

¹²⁰ Fishwick, *Jamestown*, Chapter 6, Kindle; Grizzard, Jr., and Smith, *Jamestown Colony*, lvi.

¹²¹ Kupperman, *The Jamestown Project*, 2.

¹²² "The 'Great Charter'," Jamestown Settlement & American Revolution Museum at Yorktown; Hatch, Jr., *The First Seventeen Years*, Chapter: "A New Approach."

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