THE AMERICAN YAWP

2. Colliding Cultures

Theodor de Bry, "Negotiating Peace With the Indians," 1634, Virginia Historical Society.

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I. Introduction

The Columbian Exchange transformed both sides of the Atlantic, but with dramatically dis-

parate outcomes. New diseases wiped out entire civilizations in the Americas, while newly imported nutrient-rich foodstuffs enabled a European population boom. Spain benefited most immediately as the wealth of the Aztec and Incan Empires strengthened the Spanish monarchy. Spain used its new riches to gain an advantage over other European nations, but this advantage was soon contested.

Portugal, France, the Netherlands, and England all raced to the New World, eager to match the gains of the Spanish. Native peoples greeted the new visitors with responses ranging from welcoming cooperation to aggressive violence, but the ravages of disease and the possibility of new trading relationships enabled Europeans to create settlements all along the western rim of the Atlantic world. New empires would emerge from these tenuous beginnings, and by the end of the seventeenth century, Spain would lose its privileged position to its rivals. An age of colonization had begun and, with it, a great collision of cultures commenced.

II. Spanish America

Spain extended its reach in the Americas after reaping the benefits of its colonies in Mexico, the Caribbean, and South America. Expeditions slowly began combing the continent and bringing Europeans into the modern-day United States in the hopes of establishing religious and economic dominance in a new territory.

Juan Ponce de León arrived in the area named La Florida in 1513. He found between 150,000 and 300,000 Native Americans. But then two and a half centuries of contact with European and African peoples—whether through war, slave raids, or, most dramatically, foreign disease—decimated Florida's Indigenous population. European explorers, meanwhile, had hoped to find great wealth in Florida, but reality never aligned with their imaginations.

1513 Atlantic map from cartographer Martin Waldseemuller. Wikimedia.

In the first half of the sixteenth century, Spanish colonizers fought frequently with Florida's Native peoples as well as with other Europeans. In the 1560s Spain expelled French Protestants, called Huguenots, from the area near modern-day Jacksonville in northeast Florida. In 1586 English privateer Sir Francis Drake burned the wooden settlement of St. Augustine. At the dawn of the seventeenth century, Spain's reach in Florida extended from the mouth of the St. Johns River south to the environs of St. Augustine—an area of roughly 1,000 square miles. The Spaniards attempted to duplicate methods for establishing control used previously in Mexico, the Caribbean, and the Andes. The Crown granted missionaries the right to live among Timucua and Guale villagers in the late 1500s and early 1600s and encouraged settlement through the *encomienda* system (grants of Native labor).[1]

In the 1630s, the mission system extended into the Apalachee district in the Florida panhandle. The Apalachee, one of the most powerful tribes in Florida at the time of contact, claimed the territory from the modern Florida-Georgia border to the Gulf of Mexico. Apalachee farmers grew an abundance of corn and other crops. Native American traders carried surplus products east along the Camino Real (the royal road) that connected the western anchor of the mission system with St. Augustine. Spanish settlers drove cattle eastward across the St. Johns River and established ranches as far west as Apalachee. Still, Spain held Florida tenuously.

Farther west, in 1598, Juan de Oñate led four hundred settlers, soldiers, and missionaries from Mexico into New Mexico. The Spanish Southwest had brutal beginnings. When Oñate sacked the Pueblo city of Acoma, the "sky city," the Spaniards slaughtered nearly half of its roughly 1,500 inhabitants, including women and children. Oñate ordered one foot cut off every surviving male over age fifteen, and he enslaved the remaining women and children.[2]

Santa Fe, the first permanent European settlement in the Southwest, was established in 1610. Few Spaniards relocated to the Southwest because of the distance from Mexico City and the dry and hostile environment. Thus, the Spanish never achieved a commanding presence in the region. By 1680, only about three thousand colonists called Spanish New Mexico home.[3] There, they traded with and exploited the local Puebloan peoples. The region's Puebloan population had plummeted from as many as sixty thousand in 1600 to about seventeen thousand in 1680.[4]

Spain shifted strategies after the military expeditions wove their way through the southern and western half of North America. Missions became the engine of colonization in North America. Missionaries, most of whom were members of the Franciscan religious order, provided Spain with an advance guard in North America. Catholicism had always justified Spanish conquest, and colonization always carried religious imperatives. By the early seventeenth century, Spanish friars had established dozens of missions along the Rio Grande and in California.

III. Spain's Rivals Emerge

The earliest plan of New Amsterdam (now Manhattan), 1660. Wikimedia.

While Spain plundered the New World, unrest plagued Europe. The Reformation threw England and France, the two European powers capable of contesting Spain, into turmoil. Long and expensive conflicts drained time, resources, and lives. Millions died from religious violence in France alone. As the violence diminished in Europe, however, religious and political rivalries continued in the New World.

The Spanish exploitation of New Spain's riches inspired European monarchs to invest in exploration and conquest. Reports of Spanish atrocities spread throughout Europe and provided a humanitarian justification for European colonization. An English reprint of the writings of Bartolomé de Las Casas bore the sensational title "Popery Truly Display'd in its Bloody Colours: Or, a Faithful Narrative of the Horrid and Unexampled Massacres, Butcheries, and all manners of Cruelties that Hell and Malice could invent, committed by the Popish Spanish." An English writer explained that Native Americans "were simple and plain men, and lived without great labour," but in their lust for gold the Spaniards "forced the people (that were not used to labour) to stand all the daie in the hot sun gathering gold in the sand of the rivers. By this means a great number of them (not used to such pains) died, and a great number of them (seeing themselves

brought from so quiet a life to such misery and slavery) of desperation killed themselves. And many would not marry, because they would not have their children slaves to the Spaniards."[5] The Spanish accused their critics of fostering a "Black Legend." The Black Legend drew on religious differences and political rivalries. Spain had successful conquests in France, Italy, Germany, and the Netherlands and left many in those nations yearning to break free from Spanish influence. English writers argued that Spanish barbarities were foiling a tremendous opportunity for the expansion of Christianity across the globe and that a benevolent conquest of the New World by non-Spanish monarchies offered the surest salvation of the New World's pagan masses. With these religious justifications, and with obvious economic motives, Spain's rivals arrived in the New World.

The French

The French crown subsidized exploration in the early sixteenth century. Early French explorers sought a fabled Northwest Passage, a mythical waterway passing through the North American continent to Asia. Despite the wealth of the New World, Asia's riches still beckoned to Europeans. Canada's St. Lawrence River appeared to be such a passage, stretching deep into the continent and into the Great Lakes. French colonial possessions centered on these bodies of water (and, later, down the Mississippi River to the port of New Orleans).

French colonization developed through investment from private trading companies. Traders established Port Royal in Acadia (Nova Scotia) in 1603 and launched trading expeditions that stretched down the Atlantic coast as far as Cape Cod. The needs of the fur trade set the future pattern of French colonization. Founded in 1608 under the leadership of Samuel de Champlain, Quebec provided the foothold for what would become New France. French fur traders placed a higher value on cooperating with Indigenous people than on establishing a successful French colonial footprint. Asserting dominance in the region could have been to their own detriment, as it might have compromised their access to skilled Native American trappers, and therefore wealth. Few Frenchmen traveled to the New World to settle permanently. In fact, few traveled at all. Many persecuted French Protestants (Huguenots) sought to emigrate after France criminalized Protestantism in 1685, but all non-Catholics were forbidden in New France.[6]

This depiction of New Orleans in 1726 when it was an eight-year-old French frontier settlement. Jean-Pierre Lassus, Veüe et Perspective de la Nouvelle Orleans, 1726, Centre des archives d'outre-mer, France. Wikimedia.

The French preference for trade over permanent settlement fostered more cooperative and mutually beneficial relationships with Native Americans than was typical among the Spanish and English. Perhaps eager to debunk the anti-Catholic elements of the Black Legend, the French worked to cultivate cooperation with Native Americans. Jesuit missionaries, for instance, adopted different conversion strategies than the Spanish Franciscans. Spanish missionaries brought Natives into enclosed missions, whereas Jesuits more often lived with or alongside Indigenous people. Many French fur traders married Native American women.[7] The offspring of Native American women and French men were so common in New France that the French developed a word for these children, *Métis(sage)*. The Huron people developed a particularly close relationship with the French, and many converted to Christianity and engaged in the fur trade. But close relationships with the French would come at a high cost. The Huron were decimated by the ravages of European disease, and entanglements in French and Dutch conflicts proved disastrous.[8] Despite this, some Native peoples maintained alliances with the French.

Pressure from the powerful Iroquois in the East pushed many Algonquian-speaking peoples toward French territory in the midseventeenth century, and together they crafted what historians have called a "middle ground," a kind of cross-cultural space that allowed for native and European interaction, negotiation, and accommodation. French traders adopted—sometimes clumsily—the gift-giving and mediation strategies expected of Native leaders. Natives similarly engaged the impersonal European market and adapted—often haphazardly—to European laws. The Great Lakes "middle ground" experienced tumultuous success throughout the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries until English colonial officials and American settlers swarmed the region. The pressures of European expansion strained even the closest bonds.[9]

The Dutch

The Netherlands, a small maritime nation with great wealth, achieved considerable colonial success. In 1581, the Netherlands had officially broken away from the Hapsburgs and won a reputation as the freest of the new European nations. Dutch women maintained separate legal identities from their husbands and could therefore hold property and inherit full estates.

Ravaged by the turmoil of the Reformation, the Dutch embraced greater religious tolerance and freedom of the press than other European nations.[10] Radical Protestants, Catholics, and Jews flocked to the Netherlands. The English Pilgrims, for instance, fled first to the Netherlands before sailing to the New World years later. The Netherlands built its colonial empire through the work of experienced merchants and skilled sailors. The Dutch were the most advanced capitalists in the modern world and marshaled extensive financial resources by creating innovative financial organizations such as the Amsterdam Stock Exchange and the Dutch East India Company. Although the Dutch offered liberties, they offered very little democracy—power remained in the hands of only a few. And Dutch liberties certainly had their limits. The Dutch advanced the slave trade and brought enslaved Africans with them to the New World. Slavery was an essential part of Dutch capitalist triumphs.

Sharing the European hunger for access to Asia, in 1609 the Dutch commissioned the Englishman Henry Hudson to discover the fabled Northwest Passage through North America. He failed, of course, but nevertheless found the Hudson River and claimed modern-day New York for the Dutch. There they established New Netherland, an essential part of the Dutch New World empire. The Netherlands chartered the Dutch West India Company in 1621 and established colonies in Africa, the Caribbean, and North America. The island of Manhattan provided a launching pad to support its Caribbean colonies and attack Spanish trade.

Spiteful of the Spanish and mindful of the Black Legend, the Dutch were determined not to repeat Spanish atrocities. They fashioned guidelines for New Netherland that conformed to the ideas of Hugo Grotius, a legal philosopher who believed that Native peoples possessed the same natural rights as Europeans. Colony leaders insisted that land be purchased; in 1626 Peter Minuit therefore "bought" Manhattan from Munsee people.[11] Despite the seemingly honorable inten-

tions, it is likely the Dutch paid the wrong people for the land (either intentionally or unintentionally) or that the Munsee and the Dutch understood the transaction in very different terms. Transactions like these illustrated both the Dutch attempt to find a more peaceful process of colonization and the inconsistency between European and Native American understandings of property.

Like the French, the Dutch sought to profit, not to conquer. Trade with Native peoples became New Netherland's central economic activity. Dutch traders carried wampum along Native trade routes and exchanged it for beaver pelts. Wampum consisted of shell beads fashioned by Algonquians on the southern New England coast and was valued as a ceremonial and diplomatic commodity among the Iroquois. Wampum became a currency that could buy anything from a loaf of bread to a plot of land.[12]

In addition to developing these trading networks, the Dutch also established farms, settlements, and lumber camps. The West India Company directors implemented the patroon system to encourage colonization. The patroon system granted large estates to wealthy landlords, who subsequently paid passage for the tenants to work their land. Expanding Dutch settlements correlated with deteriorating relations with local Native Americans. In the interior of the continent, the Dutch retained valuable alliances with the Iroquois to maintain Beverwijck, modern-day Albany, as a hub for the fur trade.[13] In the places where the Dutch built permanent settlements, the ideals of peaceful colonization succumbed to the settlers' increasing demand for land. Armed conflicts erupted as colonial settlements encroached on Native villages and hunting lands. Profit and peace, it seemed, could not coexist.

Labor shortages, meanwhile, crippled Dutch colonization. The patroon system failed to bring enough tenants, and the colony could not attract a sufficient number of indentured servants to satisfy the colony's backers. In response, the colony imported eleven enslaved people owned by the company in 1626, the same year that Minuit purchased Manhattan. Enslaved laborers were tasked with building New Amsterdam (modern-day New York City), including a defensive wall along the northern edge of the colony (the site of modern-day Wall Street). They created its roads and maintained its all-important port. Fears of racial mixing led the Dutch to import enslaved women, enabling the formation of African Dutch families. The colony's first African marriage occurred in 1641, and by 1650 there were at least five hundred enslaved Africans in the colony. By 1660, New Amsterdam had the largest urban enslaved population on the continent.[14]

As was typical of the practice of African slavery in much of the early seventeenth century, Dutch slavery in New Amsterdam was less comprehensively exploitative than later systems of American slavery. Some enslaved Africans, for instance, successfully sued for back wages. When several enslaved people owned by the company fought for the colony against the Munsee, they petitioned for their freedom and won a kind of "half freedom" that allowed them to work their own land in return for paying a large tithe, or tax, to their enslavers. The children of these "half-free" laborers remained held in bondage by the West India Company, however. The Dutch, who so proudly touted their liberties, grappled with the reality of African slavery, and some New Netherlanders protested the enslavement of Christianized Africans. The economic goals of the colony slowly crowded out these cultural and religious objections, and the much-boasted liberties of the Dutch came to exist alongside increasingly brutal systems of slavery.

The Portuguese

The Portuguese had been leaders in Atlantic navigation well ahead of Columbus's voyage. But the incredible wealth flowing from New Spain piqued the rivalry between the two Iberian countries, and accelerated Portuguese colonization efforts. This rivalry created a crisis within the Catholic world as Spain and Portugal squared off in a battle for colonial supremacy. The pope had earlier intervened and divided the New World with the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494. Land east of the Tordesillas Meridian, an imaginary line dividing South America, would be given to Portugal, whereas land west of the line was reserved for Spanish conquest. In return for the license to conquer, both Portugal and Spain were instructed to treat the natives with Christian compassion and to bring them under the protection of the Church.

Lucrative colonies in Africa and India initially preoccupied Portugal, but by 1530 the Portuguese turned their attention to the land that would become Brazil, driving out French traders and establishing permanent settlements. Gold and silver mines dotted the interior of the colony, but two industries powered early colonial Brazil: sugar and the slave trade. In fact, over the entire history of the Atlantic slave trade, more Africans were enslaved in Brazil than in any other colony in the Atlantic World. Gold mines emerged in greater numbers throughout the eighteenth century but still never rivaled the profitability of sugar or slave trading.

Jesuit missionaries brought Christianity to Brazil, but strong elements of African and Native spirituality mixed with orthodox Catholicism to create a unique religious culture. This culture resulted from the demographics of Brazilian slavery. High mortality rates on sugar plantations required a steady influx of new enslaved laborers, thus perpetuating the cultural connection between Brazil and Africa. The reliance on new imports of enslaved laborers increased the likelihood of resistance, however, and those who escaped slavery managed to create several free settlements, called *quilombos.* These settlements drew from both enslaved Africans and Natives, and despite frequent attacks, several endured throughout the long history of Brazilian slavery.[15]

Despite the arrival of these new Europeans, Spain continued to dominate the New World. The wealth flowing from the exploitation of the Aztec and Incan Empires greatly eclipsed the profits of other European nations. But this dominance would not last long. By the end of the sixteenth century, the powerful Spanish Armada would be destroyed, and the English would begin to rule the waves.

IV. English Colonization

Nicholas Hilliard, The Battle of Gravelines, 1588. Wikimedia

Spain had a one-hundred-year head start on New World colonization, and a jealous England eyed the enormous wealth that Spain gleaned. The Protestant Reformation had shaken England, but

Elizabeth I assumed the English crown in 1558. Elizabeth oversaw England's so-called golden age, which included both the expansion of trade and exploration and the literary achievements of Shakespeare and Marlowe. English mercantilism, a state-assisted manufacturing and trading system, created and maintained markets. The markets provided a steady supply of consumers and laborers, stimulated economic expansion, and increased English wealth.

However, wrenching social and economic changes unsettled the English population. The island's population increased from fewer than three million in 1500 to over five million by the middle of the seventeenth century.[16] The skyrocketing cost of land coincided with plummeting farming income. Rents and prices rose but wages stagnated. Moreover, movements to enclose public land—sparked by the transition of English landholders from agriculture to livestock raising—evicted tenants from the land and created hordes of landless, jobless peasants that haunted the cities and countryside. One quarter to one half of the population lived in extreme poverty.[17]

New World colonization won support in England amid a time of rising English fortunes among the wealthy, a tense Spanish rivalry, and mounting internal social unrest. But supporters of English colonization always touted more than economic gains and mere national self-interest. They claimed to be doing God's work. Many claimed that colonization would glorify God, England, and Protestantism by Christianizing the New World's pagan peoples. Advocates such as Richard Hakluyt the Younger and John Dee, for instance, drew upon *The History of the Kings of Britain*, written by the twelfth-century monk Geoffrey of Monmouth, and its mythical account of King Arthur's conquest and Christianization of pagan lands to justify American conquest.[18] Moreover, promoters promised that the conversion of New World Native Americans would satisfy God and glorify England's "Virgin Queen," Elizabeth I, who was seen as nearly divine by some in England. The English—and other European Protestant colonizers—imagined themselves superior to the Spanish, who still bore the Black Legend of inhuman cruelty. English colonization, supporters argued, would prove that superiority.

In his 1584 "Discourse on Western Planting," Richard Hakluyt amassed the supposed religious, moral, and exceptional economic benefits of colonization. He repeated the Black Legend of Spanish New World terrorism and attacked the sins of Catholic Spain. He promised that English colonization could strike a blow against Spanish heresy and bring Protestant religion to the New World. English interference, Hakluyt suggested, might provide the only salvation from Catholic rule in the New World. The New World, too, he said, offered obvious economic advantages.

Trade and resource extraction would enrich the English treasury. England, for instance, could find plentiful materials to outfit a world-class navy. Moreover, he said, the New World could provide an escape for England's vast armies of landless "vagabonds." Expanded trade, he argued, would not only bring profit but also provide work for England's jobless poor. A Christian enterprise, a blow against Spain, an economic stimulus, and a social safety valve all beckoned the English toward a commitment to colonization.[19]

This noble rhetoric veiled the coarse economic motives that brought England to the New World. New economic structures and a new merchant class paved the way for colonization. England's merchants lacked estates, but they had new plans to build wealth. By collaborating with new government-sponsored trading monopolies and employing financial innovations such as joint-stock companies, England's merchants sought to improve on the Dutch economic system. Spain was extracting enormous material wealth from the New World; why shouldn't England? Joint-stock companies, the ancestors of modern corporations, became the initial instruments of colonization. With government monopolies, shared profits, and managed risks, these money-making ventures could attract and manage the vast capital needed for colonization. In 1606 James I approved the formation of the Virginia Company (named after Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen).

Rather than formal colonization, however, the most successful early English ventures in the New World were a form of state-sponsored piracy known as privateering. Queen Elizabeth sponsored sailors, or "Sea Dogges," such as John Hawkins and Francis Drake, to plunder Spanish ships and towns in the Americas. Privateers earned a substantial profit both for themselves and for the English crown. England practiced piracy on a scale, one historian wrote, "that transforms crime into politics."[20] Francis Drake harried Spanish ships throughout the Western Hemisphere and raided Spanish caravans as far away as the coast of Peru on the Pacific Ocean. In 1580 Elizabeth rewarded her skilled pirate with knighthood. But Elizabeth walked a fine line. With Protestant-Catholic tensions already running high, English privateering provoked Spain. Tensions worsened after the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, a Catholic. In 1588, King Philip II of Spain unleashed the fabled Armada. With 130 ships, 8,000 sailors, and 18,000 soldiers, Spain launched the largest invasion in history to destroy the British navy and depose Elizabeth.

An island nation, England depended on a robust navy for trade and territorial expansion. England had fewer ships than Spain, but they were smaller and swifter. They successfully harassed the armada, forcing it to retreat to the Netherlands for reinforcements. But then a fluke storm,

celebrated in England as the "Protestant wind," annihilated the remainder of the fleet.[21] The destruction of the armada changed the course of world history. It not only saved England and secured English Protestantism, but it also opened the seas to English expansion and paved the way for England's colonial future. By 1600, England stood ready to embark on its dominance over North America.

English colonization would look very different from Spanish or French colonization. England had long been trying to conquer Catholic Ireland. Rather than integrating with the Irish and trying to convert them to Protestantism, England more often simply seized land through violence and pushed out the former inhabitants, leaving them to move elsewhere or to die. These same tactics would later be deployed in North American invasions.

English colonization, however, began haltingly. Sir Humphrey Gilbert labored throughout the late sixteenth century to establish a colony in Newfoundland but failed. In 1587, with a predominantly male cohort of 150 English colonizers, John White reestablished an abandoned settlement on North Carolina's Roanoke Island. Supply shortages prompted White to return to England for additional support, but the Spanish Armada and the mobilization of British naval efforts stranded him in Britain for several years. When he finally returned to Roanoke, he found the colony abandoned. What befell the failed colony? White found the word *Croatoan* carved into a tree or a post in the abandoned colony. Historians presume the colonists, short of food, may have fled for a nearby island of that name and encountered its settled native population. Others offer violence as an explanation. Regardless, the English colonists were never heard from again. When Queen Elizabeth died in 1603, no Englishmen had yet established a permanent North American colony.

After King James made peace with Spain in 1604, privateering no longer held out the promise of cheap wealth. Colonization assumed a new urgency. The Virginia Company, established in 1606, drew inspiration from Cortés and the Spanish conquests. It hoped to find gold and silver as well as other valuable trading commodities in the New World: glass, iron, furs, pitch, tar, and anything else the country could supply. The company planned to identify a navigable river with a deep harbor, away from the eyes of the Spanish. There they would find a Native American trading network and extract a fortune from the New World.

V. Jamestown

Incolarum Virginiae piscandi ratio (The Method of Fishing of the Inhabitants of Virginia), c. 1590. The Encyclopedia Virginia.

In April 1607 Englishmen aboard three ships—the *Susan Constant*, the *Godspeed*, and the *Discovery*—sailed forty miles up the James River (named for the English king) in present-day Virginia (named for Elizabeth I, the Virgin Queen) and settled on just such a place. The uninhabited peninsula they selected was upriver and out of sight of Spanish patrols. It offered easy defense against ground assaults and was both uninhabited and located close to many Native American villages and their potentially lucrative trade networks. But the location was a disaster. Indigenous people had ignored the peninsula for two reasons: terrible soil hampered agriculture, and brackish tidal water led to debilitating disease. Despite these setbacks, the English built Jamestown, the first permanent English colony in the present-day United States.

The English had not entered a wilderness but had arrived amid a people they called the Powhatan Confederacy. Powhatan, or Wahunsenacawh, as he called himself, led nearly ten thousand Algonquian-speaking people in the Chesapeake. They burned vast acreage to clear brush and create sprawling artificial parklike grasslands so they could easily hunt deer, elk, and bison. The Powhatan raised corn, beans, squash, and possibly sunflowers, rotating acreage throughout the Chesapeake. Without plows, manure, or draft animals, the Powhatan produced a remarkable

number of calories cheaply and efficiently.

Jamestown was a profit-seeking venture backed by investors. The colonists were mostly gentlemen and proved entirely unprepared for the challenges ahead. They hoped for easy riches but found none. As John Smith later complained, they "would rather starve than work."[22] And so they did. Disease and starvation ravaged the colonists, thanks in part to the peninsula's unhealthy location and the fact that supplies from England arrived sporadically or spoiled. Fewer than half of the original colonists survived the first nine months.

John Smith, a yeoman's son and capable leader, took command of the crippled colony and promised, "He that will not work shall not eat." He navigated Native American diplomacy, claiming that he was captured and sentenced to death but Powhatan's daughter, Pocahontas, intervened to save his life. She would later marry another colonist, John Rolfe, and die in England.

Powhatan kept the English alive that first winter. The Powhatan had welcomed the English and placed a high value on metal ax-heads, kettles, tools, and guns and eagerly traded furs and other abundant goods for them. With ten thousand confederated natives and with food in abundance, Indigenous people had little to fear and much to gain from the isolated outpost of sick and dying Englishmen.

John White, "Village of the Secotan, 1585. Wikimedia.

Despite reinforcements, the English continued to die. Four hundred settlers arrived in 1609, but the overwhelmed colony entered a desperate "starving time" in the winter of 1609–1610. Supplies were lost at sea. Relations with Native Americans deteriorated and the colonists fought a

kind of slow-burning guerrilla war with the Powhatan. Disaster loomed for the colony. The settlers ate everything they could, roaming the woods for nuts and berries. They boiled leather. They dug up graves to eat the corpses of their former neighbors. One man was executed for killing and eating his wife. Some years later, George Percy recalled the colonists' desperation during these years, when he served as the colony's president: "Having fed upon our horses and other beasts as long as they lasted, we were glad to make shift with vermin as dogs, cats, rats and mice . . . as to eat boots shoes or any other leather. . . . And now famine beginning to look ghastly and pale in every face, that nothing was spared to maintain life and to doe those things which seam incredible, as to dig up dead corpses out of graves and to eat them."[23] Archaeological excavations in 2012 exhumed the bones of a fourteen-year-old girl that exhibited signs of cannibalism.[24] All but sixty settlers would die by the summer of 1610.

Little improved over the next several years. By 1616, 80 percent of all English immigrants who had arrived in Jamestown had perished. England's first American colony was a catastrophe. The colony was reorganized, and in 1614 the marriage of Pocahontas to John Rolfe eased relations with the Powhatan, though the colony still limped along as a starving, commercially disastrous tragedy. The colonists were unable to find any profitable commodities and remained dependent on Native Americans and sporadic shipments from England for food. But then tobacco saved Jamestown.

By the time King James I described tobacco as a "noxious weed, . . . loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmful to the brain, and dangerous to the lungs," it had already taken Europe by storm. In 1616 John Rolfe crossed tobacco strains from Trinidad and Guiana and planted Virginia's first tobacco crop. In 1617 the colony sent its first cargo of tobacco back to England. The "noxious weed," a native of the New World, fetched a high price in Europe and the tobacco boom began in Virginia and then later spread to Maryland. Within fifteen years American colonists were exporting over five hundred thousand pounds of tobacco per year. Within forty years, they were exporting fifteen million.[25]

Tobacco changed everything. It saved Virginia from ruin, incentivized further colonization, and laid the groundwork for what would become the United States. With a new market open, Virginia drew not only merchants and traders but also settlers. Colonists came in droves. They were mostly young, mostly male, and mostly indentured servants who signed contracts called indentures that bonded them to employers for a period of years in return for passage across the

ocean. But even the rough terms of servitude were no match for the promise of land and potential profits that beckoned English farmers. But still there were not enough of them. Tobacco was a labor-intensive crop and ambitious planters, with seemingly limitless land before them, lacked only laborers to escalate their wealth and status. The colony's great labor vacuum inspired the creation of the "headright policy" in 1618: any person who migrated to Virginia would automatically receive fifty acres of land and any immigrant whose passage they paid would entitle them to fifty acres more.

In 1619, the Virginia Company established the House of Burgesses, a limited representative body composed of white landowners that first met in Jamestown. That same year, a Dutch slave ship sold twenty Africans to the Virginia colonists. Southern slavery was born.

Soon the tobacco-growing colonists expanded beyond the bounds of Jamestown's deadly peninsula. When it became clear that the English were not merely intent on maintaining a small trading post but sought a permanent ever-expanding colony, conflict with the Powhatan Confederacy became almost inevitable. Powhatan died in 1622 and was succeeded by his brother, Opechancanough, who promised to drive the land-hungry colonists back into the sea. He launched a surprise attack and in a single day (March 22, 1622) killed over 350 colonists, or one third of all the colonists in Virginia.[26] The colonists retaliated and revisited the massacres on Indigenous settlements many times over. The massacre freed the colonists to drive Native Americans off their land. The governor of Virginia declared it colonial policy to achieve the "expulsion of the savages to gain the free range of the country."[27] War and disease tilted the balance of power decisively toward the English colonizers.

English colonists brought to the New World particular visions of racial, cultural, and religious supremacy. Despite starving in the shadow of the Powhatan Confederacy, English colonists nevertheless judged themselves physically, spiritually, and technologically superior to Native peoples in North America. Christianity, metallurgy, intensive agriculture, transatlantic navigation, and even wheat all magnified the English sense of superiority. This sense of superiority, when coupled with outbreaks of violence, left the English feeling entitled to Indigenous lands and resources.

Spanish conquerors established the framework for the Atlantic slave trade over a century before the first chained Africans arrived at Jamestown. Even Bartolomé de Las Casas, celebrated for his pleas to save Native Americans from colonial butchery, for a time recommended that Indigenous

labor be replaced by importing Africans. Early English settlers from the Caribbean and Atlantic coast of North America mostly imitated European ideas of African inferiority. "Race" followed the expansion of slavery across the Atlantic world. Skin color and race suddenly seemed fixed. Englishmen equated Africans with categorical blackness and blackness with sin, "the handmaid and symbol of baseness."[28] An English essayist in 1695 wrote that "a negro will always be a negro, carry him to Greenland, feed him chalk, feed and manage him never so many ways."[29] More and more Europeans embraced the notions that Europeans and Africans were of distinct races. Others now preached that the Old Testament God cursed Ham, the son of Noah, and doomed Black people to perpetual enslavement.

And yet in the early years of American slavery, ideas about race were not yet fixed and the practice of slavery was not yet codified. The first generations of Africans in English North America faced miserable conditions, but, in contrast to later American history, their initial servitude was not necessarily permanent, heritable, or even particularly disgraceful. Africans were definitively set apart as fundamentally different from their white counterparts and faced longer terms of service and harsher punishments, but, like the indentured white servants whisked away from English slums, these first Africans in North America could also work for only a set number of years before becoming free landowners themselves. The Angolan Anthony Johnson, for instance, was sold into servitude but fulfilled his indenture and became a prosperous tobacco planter himself.[30]

In 1622, at the dawn of the tobacco boom, Jamestown had still seemed a failure. But the rise of tobacco and the destruction of the Powhatan turned the tide. Colonists escaped the deadly peninsula and immigrants poured into the colony to grow tobacco and turn a profit for the Crown.

VI. New England

Seal of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The History Project (UC Davis).

The English colonies in New England established from 1620 onward were founded with loftier goals than those in Virginia. Although migrants to New England expected economic profit, religious motives directed the rhetoric and much of the reality of these colonies. Not every English person who moved to New England during the seventeenth century was a Puritan, but Puritans dominated the politics, religion, and culture of New England. Even after 1700, the region's Puritan inheritance shaped many aspects of its history.

The term *Puritan* began as an insult, and its recipients usually referred to each other as "the godly" if they used a specific term at all. Puritans believed that the Church of England did not distance itself far enough from Catholicism after Henry VIII broke with Rome in the 1530s. They largely agreed with European Calvinists—followers of theologian John Calvin—on matters of religious doctrine. Calvinists (and Puritans) believed that humankind was redeemed by God's grace alone, and that the fate of an individual's immortal soul was predestined. The happy minority that God had already chosen to save were known among English Puritans as the Elect. Calvinists also argued that the decoration of churches, reliance on ornate ceremony, and corrupt priesthood obscured God's message. They believed that reading the Bible was the best way to understand God.

Puritans were stereotyped by their enemies as dour killjoys, and the exaggeration has endured. It is

certainly true that the Puritans' disdain for excess and opposition to many holidays popular in Europe (including Christmas, which, as Puritans never tired of reminding everyone, the Bible never told anyone to celebrate) lent themselves to caricature. But Puritans understood themselves as advocating a reasonable middle path in a corrupt world. It would never occur to a Puritan, for example, to abstain from alcohol or sex.

During the first century after the English Reformation (c. 1530–1630) Puritans sought to "purify" the Church of England of all practices that smacked of Catholicism, advocating a simpler worship service, the abolition of ornate churches, and other reforms. They had some success in pushing the Church of England in a more Calvinist direction, but with the coronation of King Charles I (r. 1625–1649), the Puritans gained an implacable foe that cast English Puritans as excessive and dangerous. Facing growing persecution, the Puritans began the Great Migration, during which about twenty thousand people traveled to New England between 1630 and 1640. The Puritans (unlike the small band of separatist "Pilgrims" who founded Plymouth Colony in 1620) remained committed to reforming the Church of England but temporarily decamped to North America to accomplish this task. Leaders like John Winthrop insisted they were not separating from, or abandoning, England but were rather forming a godly community in America that would be a "City on a Hill" and an example for reformers back home.[31] The Puritans did not seek to create a haven of religious toleration, a notion that they—along with nearly all European Christians—regarded as ridiculous at best and dangerous at worst.

While the Puritans did not succeed in building a godly utopia in New England, a combination of Puritan traits with several external factors created colonies wildly different from any other region settled by English people. Unlike those heading to Virginia, colonists in New England (Plymouth [1620], Massachusetts Bay [1630], Connecticut [1636], and Rhode Island [1636]) generally arrived in family groups. Most New England immigrants were small landholders in England, a class contemporary English called the "middling sort." When they arrived in New England they tended to replicate their home environments, founding towns composed of independent landholders. The New England climate and soil made large-scale plantation agriculture impractical, so the system of large landholders using masses of enslaved laborers or indentured servants to grow labor-intensive crops never took hold.

There is no evidence that the New England Puritans would have opposed such a system were it possible; other Puritans made their fortunes on the Caribbean sugar islands, and New England

merchants profited as suppliers of provisions and enslaved laborers to those colonies. By accident of geography as much as by design, New England society was much less stratified than any of Britain's other seventeenth-century colonies.

Although New England colonies could boast wealthy landholding elites, the disparity of wealth in the region remained narrow compared to the Chesapeake, Carolina, or the Caribbean. Instead, seventeenth-century New England was characterized by a broadly shared modest prosperity based on a mixed economy dependent on small farms, shops, fishing, lumber, shipbuilding, and trade with the Atlantic World.

A combination of environmental factors and the Puritan social ethos produced a region of remarkable health and stability during the seventeenth century. New England immigrants avoided most of the deadly outbreaks of tropical disease that turned the Chesapeake colonies into graveyards. Disease, in fact, only aided English settlement and relations to Native Americans. In contrast to other English colonists who had to contend with powerful Native American neighbors, the Puritans confronted the stunned survivors of a biological catastrophe. A lethal pandemic of smallpox during the 1610s swept away as much as 90 percent of the region's Native American population. Many survivors welcomed the English as potential allies against rival tribes who had escaped the catastrophe. The relatively healthy environment coupled with political stability and the predominance of family groups among early immigrants allowed the New England population to grow to 91,000 people by 1700 from only 21,000 immigrants. In contrast, 120,000 English went to the Chesapeake, and only 85,000 white colonists remained in 1700.[32]

The New England Puritans set out to build their utopia by creating communities of the godly. Groups of men, often from the same region of England, applied to the colony's General Court for land grants.[33] They generally divided part of the land for immediate use while keeping much of the rest as "commons" or undivided land for future generations. The town's inhabitants collectively decided the size of each settler's home lot based on their current wealth and status. Besides oversight of property, the town restricted membership, and new arrivals needed to apply for admission. Those who gained admittance could participate in town governments that, while not democratic by modern standards, nevertheless had broad popular involvement. All male property holders could vote in town meetings and choose the selectmen, assessors, constables, and other officials from among themselves to conduct the daily affairs of government. Upon their founding, towns wrote covenants, reflecting the Puritan belief in God's covenant with his people. Towns

sought to arbitrate disputes and contain strife, as did the Church. Wayward or divergent individuals were persuaded, corrected, or coerced. Popular conceptions of Puritans as hardened authoritarians are exaggerated, but if persuasion and arbitration failed, people who did not conform to community norms were punished or removed. Massachusetts banished Anne Hutchinson, Roger Williams, and other religious dissenters like the Quakers.

Although by many measures colonization in New England succeeded, its Puritan leaders failed in their own mission to create a utopian community that would inspire their fellows back in England. They tended to focus their disappointment on the younger generation. "But alas!" Increase Mather lamented, "That so many of the younger Generation have so early corrupted their [the founders'] doings!"[34] The jeremiad, a sermon lamenting the fallen state of New England due to its straying from its early virtuous path, became a staple of late-seventeenth-century Puritan literature.

Yet the jeremiad could not stop the effects of prosperity. The population spread and grew more diverse. Many, if not most, New Englanders retained strong ties to their Calvinist roots into the eighteenth century, but the Puritans (who became Congregationalists) struggled against a rising tide of religious pluralism. On December 25, 1727, Judge Samuel Sewell noted in his diary that a new Anglican minister "keeps the day in his new Church at Braintrey: people flock thither."[35] Previously forbidden holidays like Christmas were celebrated publicly in church and privately in homes. Puritan divine Cotton Mather discovered on Christmas 1711 that "a number of young people of both sexes, belonging, many of them, to my flock, had . . . a Frolick, a reveling Feast, and a Ball, which discovers their Corruption."[36]

Despite the lamentations of the Mathers and other Puritan leaders of their failure, they left an enduring mark on New England culture and society that endured long after the region's residents ceased to be called "Puritan."

VII. Conclusion

The fledgling settlements in Virginia and Massachusetts paled in importance when compared to the sugar colonies of the Caribbean. Valued more as marginal investments and social safety valves

where the poor could be released, these colonies nonetheless created a foothold for Britain on a vast North American continent. And although the seventeenth century would be fraught for Britain—religious, social, and political upheavals would behead one king and force another to flee his throne—settlers in Massachusetts and Virginia were nonetheless tied together by the emerging Atlantic economy. While commodities such as tobacco and sugar fueled new markets in Europe, the economy grew increasingly dependent on slave labor. Enslaved Africans transported across the Atlantic would further complicate the collision of cultures in the Americas. The creation and maintenance of a slave system would spark new understandings of human difference and new modes of social control. The economic exchanges of the new Atlantic economy would not only generate great wealth and exploitation, they would also lead to new cultural systems and new identities for the inhabitants of at least four continents.

VIII. Primary Sources

1. Richard Hakluyt makes the case for English colonization, 1584

Richard Hakluyt used this document to persuade Queen Elizabeth I to devote more money and energy into encouraging English colonization. In twenty-one chapters, summarized here, Hakluyt emphasized the many benefits that England would receive by creating colonies in the Americas.

2. John Winthrop dreams of a city on a hill, 1630

John Winthrop delivered the following sermon before he and his fellow settlers reached New England. The sermon is famous largely for its use of the phrase "a city on a hill," used to describe the expectation that the Massachusetts Bay colony would shine like an example to the world. But Winthrop's sermon also reveals how he expected Massachusetts to differ from the rest of the world.

3. John Lawson encounters Native Americans, 1709

John Lawson took detailed notes on the various peoples he encountered during his explo-

THE AMERICAN YAWP

3. British North America

Unidentified artist, The Old Plantation, c. 1790–1800, Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Museum. Wikimedia.

The American Yawp is an evolving, collaborative text. Please click here to improve this chapter.

I. Introduction

Whether they came as servants, enslaved laborers, free farmers, religious refugees, or powerful planters, the men and women of the American colonies created new worlds. Native Americans saw fledgling settlements grow into unstoppable beachheads of vast new populations that increasingly monopolized resources and remade the land into something else entirely. Meanwhile, as

colonial societies developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, fluid labor arrangements and racial categories solidified into the race-based, chattel slavery that increasingly defined the economy of the British Empire. The North American mainland originally occupied a small and marginal place in that broad empire, as even the output of its most prosperous colonies paled before the tremendous wealth of Caribbean sugar islands. And yet the colonial backwaters on the North American mainland, ignored by many imperial officials, were nevertheless deeply tied into these larger Atlantic networks. A new and increasingly complex Atlantic World connected the continents of Europe, Africa, and the Americas.

Events across the ocean continued to influence the lives of American colonists. Civil war, religious conflict, and nation building transformed seventeenth-century Britain and remade societies on both sides of the ocean. At the same time, colonial settlements grew and matured, developing into powerful societies capable of warring against Native Americans and subduing internal upheaval. Patterns and systems established during the colonial era would continue to shape American society for centuries. And none, perhaps, would be as brutal and destructive as the institution of slavery.

II. Slavery and the Making of Race

After his arrival as a missionary in Charles Town, Carolina, in 1706, Reverend Francis Le Jau quickly grew disillusioned by the horrors of American slavery. He met enslaved Africans ravaged by the Middle Passage, Native Americans traveling south to enslave enemy villages, and colonists terrified of invasions from French Louisiana and Spanish Florida. Slavery and death surrounded him.

Le Jau's strongest complaints were reserved for his own countrymen, the English. English traders encouraged wars with Native Americans in order to purchase and enslave captives, and planters justified the use of an enslaved workforce by claiming white servants were "good for nothing at all." Although the minister thought otherwise and baptized and educated a substantial number of enslaved people, he was unable to overcome enslavers' fears that Christian baptism would lead to slave emancipation.[1]

The 1660s marked a turning point for Black men and women in English colonies like Virginia in North America and Barbados in the West Indies. New laws gave legal sanction to the enslavement of people of African descent for life. The permanent deprivation of freedom and the separate legal status of enslaved Africans facilitated the maintenance of strict racial barriers. Skin color became more than a superficial difference; it became the marker of a transcendent, all-encompassing division between two distinct peoples, two races, white and Black.[2]

All seventeenth-century racial thought did not point directly toward modern classifications of racial hierarchy. Captain Thomas Phillips, master of a slave ship in 1694, did not justify his work with any such creed: "I can't think there is any intrinsic value in one color more than another, nor that white is better than black, only we think it so because we are so."[3] For Phillips, the profitability of slavery was the only justification he needed.

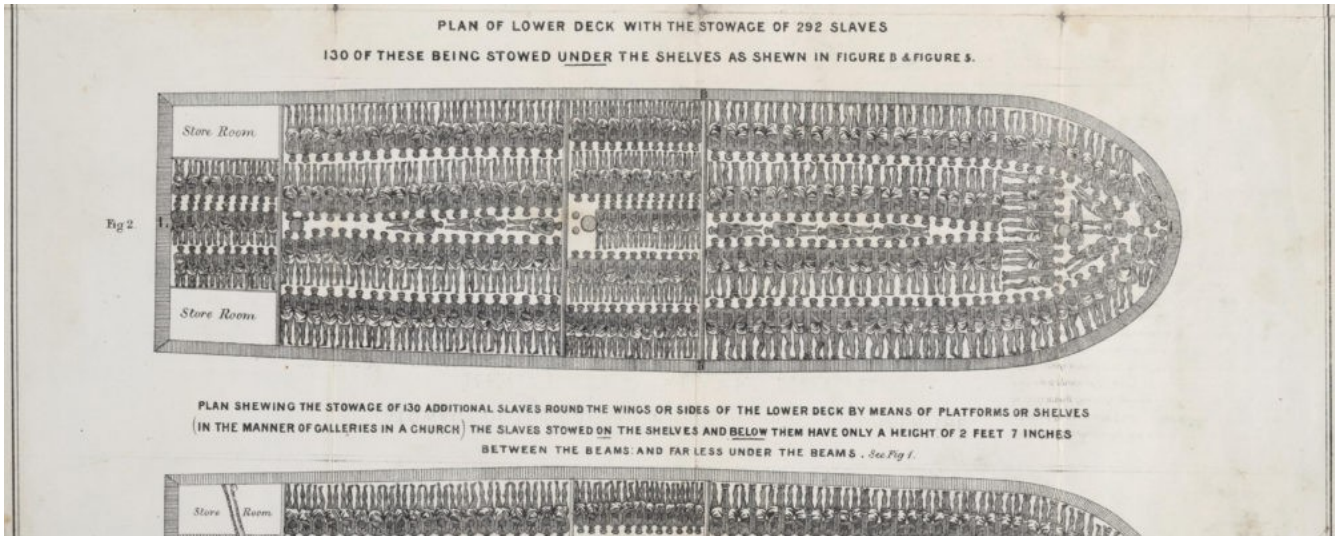
Wars offered the most common means for colonists to acquire enslaved Native Americans. Seventeenth-century European legal thought held that enslaving prisoners of war was not only legal but more merciful than killing the captives outright. After the Pequot War (1636–1637), Massachusetts Bay colonists sold hundreds of Native Americans into slavery in the West Indies. A few years later, Dutch colonists in New Netherland (New York and New Jersey) enslaved Algonquians during both Governor Kieft's War (1641–1645) and the two Esopus Wars (1659–1663). The Dutch sent these war captives to English-settled Bermuda as well as Curaçao, a Dutch plantation colony in the southern Caribbean. An even larger number of enslaved Native Americans were captured during King Philip's War (1675–1676), an uprising against the encroachments of the New England colonies. Hundreds of Native Americans were bound and shipped into slavery. The New England colonists also tried to send enslaved Native Americans to Barbados, but the Barbados Assembly refused to import them for fear they would encourage rebellion.

In the eighteenth century, wars in Florida, South Carolina, and the Mississippi Valley produced even more enslaved Native Americans. Some wars emerged from contests between Native Americans and colonists for land, while others were manufactured as pretenses for acquiring captives. Some were not wars at all but merely illegal raids performed by slave traders. Historians estimate that between 24,000 and 51,000 Native Americans were forced into slavery throughout the southern colonies between 1670 and 1715.[4] While some of the enslaved Native Americans remained in the region, many were exported through Charles Town, South Carolina, to other ports

in the British Atlantic—most likely to Barbados, Jamaica, and Bermuda. Many of the English colonists who wished to claim land in frontier territories were threatened by the violence inherent in the Native American slave trade. By the eighteenth century, colonial governments often discouraged the practice, although it never ceased entirely as long as slavery was, in general, a legal institution.

Enslaved Native Americans died quickly, mostly from disease, but others were murdered or died from starvation. The demands of growing plantation economies required a more reliable labor force, and the transatlantic slave trade provided such a workforce. European slavers transported millions of Africans across the ocean in a terrifying journey known as the Middle Passage. Writing at the end of the eighteenth century, Olaudah Equiano recalled the fearsomeness of the crew, the filth and gloom of the hold, the inadequate provisions allotted for the captives, and the desperation that drove some enslaved people to suicide. (Equiano claimed to have been born in Igboland in modern-day Nigeria, but he may have been born in colonial South Carolina, where he collected memories of the Middle Passage from African-born enslaved people.) In the same time period, Alexander Falconbridge, a slave ship surgeon, described the sufferings of enslaved Africans from shipboard infections and close quarters in the hold. Dysentery, known as "the bloody flux," left captives lying in pools of excrement. Chained in small spaces in the hold, enslaved people could lose so much skin and flesh from chafing against metal and timber that their bones protruded. Other sources detailed rapes, whippings, and diseases like smallpox and conjunctivitis aboard slave ships.[5]

"Middle" had various meanings in the Atlantic slave trade. For the captains and crews of slave ships, the Middle Passage was one leg in the maritime trade in sugar and other semifinished American goods, manufactured European commodities, and enslaved Africans. For the enslaved Africans, the Middle Passage was the middle leg of three distinct journeys from Africa to the Americas. First was an overland journey in Africa to a coastal slave-trading factory, often a trek of hundreds of miles. Second—and middle—was an oceanic trip lasting from one to six months in a slaver. Third was acculturation (known as "seasoning") and transportation to the American mine, plantation, or other location where enslaved people were forced to labor.



Slave ships transported 11–12 million Africans to destinations in North and South America, but it was not until the end of the 18th century that any regulation was introduced. The Brookes print dates to after the Regulated Slave Trade Act of 1788, but still shows enslaved Africans chained in rows using iron leg shackles. The slave ship Brookes was allowed to carry up to 454 enslaved people, allotting 6 feet (1.8 m) by 1 foot 4 inches (0.41 m) to each man; 5 feet 10 inches (1.78 m) by 1 foot 4 inches (0.41 m) to each woman, and 5 feet (1.5 m) by 1 foot 2 inches (0.36 m) to each child, but one slave trader alleged that before 1788, the ship carried as many as 609 enslaved Africans. Stowage of the British slave ship Brookes under the regulated slave trade act of 1788, 1789. Wikimedia.

The impact of the Middle Passage on the cultures of the Americas remains evident today. Many foods associated with Africans, such as cassava, were originally imported to West Africa as part of the slave trade and were then adopted by African cooks before being brought to the Americas, where they are still consumed. West African rhythms and melodies live in new forms today in music as varied as religious spirituals and synthesized drumbeats. African influences appear in the basket making and language of the Gullah people on the Carolina coastal islands.

Recent estimates count between eleven and twelve million Africans forced across the Atlantic between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, with about two million deaths at sea as well as an additional several million dying in the trade's overland African leg or during seasoning.[6] Conditions in all three legs of the slave trade were horrible, but the first abolitionists focused especially on the abuses of the Middle Passage.

Southern European trading empires like the Catalans and Aragonese were brought into contact with a Levantine commerce in sugar and enslaved laborers in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Europeans made the first steps toward an Atlantic slave trade in the 1440s when Portuguese sailors landed in West Africa in search of gold, spices, and allies against the Muslims who dominated Mediterranean trade. Beginning in the 1440s, ship captains carried enslaved Africans to Portugal. These Africans were valued primarily as domestic servants, as peasants provided the primary agricultural labor force in Western Europe.[7] European expansion into the

Americas introduced both settlers and European authorities to a new situation—an abundance of land and a scarcity of labor. Portuguese, Dutch, and English ships became the conduits for Africans forced to America. The western coast of Africa, the Gulf of Guinea, and the west-central coast were the sources of African captives. Wars of expansion and raiding parties produced captives who could be sold in coastal factories. African slave traders bartered for European finished goods such as beads, cloth, rum, firearms, and metal wares.

The first trading post built on the Gulf of Guinea and the oldest European building southern of the Sahara, Elmina Castle was established as a trade settlement by the Portuguese in the fifteenth century. The fort became one of the largest and most important markets for enslaved Africans along the Atlantic slave trade. "View of the castle of Elmina on the north-west side, seen from the river. Located on the gold coast in Guinea," in Atlas Blaeu van der Hem, c. 1665–1668. Wikimedia.

Slavers often landed in the British West Indies, where enslaved laborers were seasoned in places like Barbados. Charleston, South Carolina, became the leading entry point for the slave trade on the mainland. The founding of Charleston ("Charles Town" until the 1780s) in 1670 was viewed as a serious threat by the Spanish in neighboring Florida, who began construction of Castillo de San Marcos in St. Augustine as a response. In 1693 the Spanish king issued the Decree of Sanctuary, which granted freedom to enslaved people fleeing the English colonies if they con-

verted to Catholicism and swore an oath of loyalty to Spain.[8] The presence of Africans who bore arms and served in the Spanish militia testifies to the different conceptions of race among the English and Spanish in America.

About 450,000 Africans landed in British North America, a relatively small portion of the eleven to twelve million victims of the trade.[9] As a proportion of the enslaved population, there were more enslaved women in North America than in other colonial enslaved populations. Enslaved African women also bore more children than their counterparts in the Caribbean or South America, facilitating the natural reproduction of enslaved people on the North American continent.[10] A 1662 Virginia law stated that an enslaved woman's children inherited the "condition" of their mother; other colonies soon passed similar statutes.[11] This economic strategy on the part of planters created a legal system in which all children born to enslaved women would be enslaved for life, whether the father was white or Black, enslaved or free.

Most fundamentally, the emergence of modern notions of race was closely related to the colonization of the Americas and the slave trade. African slave traders lacked a firm category of race that might have led them to think that they were selling their own people, in much the same way that Native Americans did not view other Indigenous groups as part of the same "race." Similarly, most English citizens felt no racial identification with the Irish or the even the Welsh. The modern idea of race as an inherited physical difference (most often skin color) that is used to support systems of oppression was new in the early modern Atlantic world.

In the early years of slavery, especially in the South, the distinction between indentured servants and enslaved people was initially unclear. In 1643, however, a law was passed in Virginia that made African women "tithable."[12] This, in effect, associated African women's work with difficult agricultural labor. There was no similar tax levied on white women; the law was an attempt to distinguish white women from African women. The English ideal was to have enough hired hands and servants working on a farm so that wives and daughters did not have to partake in manual labor. Instead, white women were expected to labor in dairy sheds, small gardens, and kitchens. Of course, because of the labor shortage in early America, white women did participate in field labor. But this idealized gendered division of labor contributed to the English conceiving of themselves as better than other groups who did not divide labor in this fashion, including the West Africans arriving in slave ships to the colonies. For many white colonists, the association of a gendered division of labor with Englishness provided a further justification for the enslavement and subordina-

tion of Africans.

Ideas about the rule of the household were informed by legal and customary understandings of marriage and the home in England. A man was expected to hold "paternal dominion" over his household, which included his wife, children, servants, and enslaved laborers. In contrast, enslaved people were not legally masters of a household and were therefore subject to the authority of the white enslaver. Marriages between enslaved people were not recognized in colonial law. Some enslaved men and women married "abroad"; that is, they married individuals who were not owned by the same enslaver and did not live on the same plantation. These husbands and wives had to travel miles at a time, typically only once a week on Sundays, to visit their spouses. Legal or religious authority did not protect these marriages, and enslavers could refuse to let their enslaved laborers visit a spouse, or even sell an enslaved person to a new enslaver hundreds of miles away from their spouse and children. Within the patriarchal and exploitative colonial environment, enslaved men and women struggled to establish families and communities.

III. Turmoil in Britain

Religious conflict plagued sixteenth-century England. While Spain plundered the New World and built an empire, Catholic and Protestant English monarchs vied for supremacy and attacked their opponents as heretics. Queen Elizabeth cemented Protestantism as the official religion of the realm, but questions endured as to what kind of Protestantism would hold sway. Many radical Protestants (often called "Puritans" by their critics) looked to the New World as an opportunity to create a beacon of Calvinist Christianity, while others continued the struggle in England. By the 1640s, political and economic conflicts between Parliament and the Crown merged with long-simmering religious tensions, made worse by a king who seemed sympathetic to Catholicism. The result was a bloody civil war. Colonists reacted in a variety of ways as England waged war on itself, but all were affected by these decades of turmoil.

Between 1629 and 1640 the absolute rule of Charles I caused considerable friction between the English Parliament and the king. Conflict erupted in 1640 when a Parliament called by Charles refused to grant him subsidies to suppress a rebellion in Scotland. The Irish rebelled the following year, and by 1642 strained relations between Charles and Parliament led to civil war in England.

In 1649 Parliament won, Charles I was executed, and England became a republic and protectorate under Oliver Cromwell. These changes redefined England's relationship with its American colonies, as the new government under Cromwell attempted to consolidate its hold over its overseas territories.

In 1642, no permanent British North American colony was more than thirty-five years old. The Crown and various proprietors controlled most of the colonies, but settlers from Barbados to Maine enjoyed a great deal of independence. This was especially true in Massachusetts Bay, where Puritan settlers governed themselves according to the colony's 1629 charter. Trade in tobacco and naval stores tied the colonies to England economically, as did religion and political culture, but in general the English government left the colonies to their own devices.

The English Revolution of the 1640s forced settlers in America to reconsider their place within the empire. Older colonies like Virginia and proprietary colonies like Maryland sympathized with the Crown. Newer colonies like Massachusetts Bay, populated by religious dissenters taking part in the Great Migration of the 1630s, tended to favor Parliament. Yet during the war the colonies remained neutral, fearing that support for either side could involve them in war. Even Massachusetts Bay, which nurtured ties to radical Protestants in Parliament, remained neutral.

King Charles I, pictured with the blue sash of the Order of the Garter, listens to his commanders detail the strategy for what would be the first pitched battle of the First English Civil War. As all previous constitutional compromises between King Charles and Parliament had broken down, both sides raised large armies in the hopes of forcing the other side to concede their position. The Battle of Edgehill ended with no clear winner, leading to a prolonged war of over four years and an even longer series of wars (known generally as the English Civil War) that eventually established the Commonwealth of England in 1649. Charles Landseer, The Eve of the Battle of Edge Hill,1642, 1845. Wikimedia.

Charles's execution in 1649 challenged American neutrality. Six colonies, including Virginia and Barbados, declared allegiance to the dead monarch's son, Charles II. Parliament responded with an act in 1650 that leveled an economic embargo on the rebelling colonies, forcing them to accept Parliament's authority. Parliament argued that America had been "planted at the Cost, and settled" by the English nation, and that it, as the embodiment of that commonwealth, possessed ultimate jurisdiction over the colonies.[13] It followed up the embargo with the Navigation Act of 1651, which compelled merchants in every colony to ship goods directly to England in English ships. Parliament sought to bind the colonies more closely to England and prevent other European nations, especially the Dutch, from interfering with its American possessions.

England found itself in crisis after the death of Oliver Cromwell in 1658, leading in time to the reestablishment of the monarchy. On his thirtieth birthday (May 29, 1660), Charles II sailed from the Netherlands to his restoration after nine years in exile. He was received in London to great acclaim, as depicted in this contemporary painting. Lieve Verschuler, The Arrival of King Charles II of England in Rotterdam, 24 May 1660. c. 1660–1665. Wikimedia.

The monarchy was restored with Charles II, but popular suspicions of the Crown's Catholic and French sympathies lingered. Charles II's suppression of the religious and press freedoms that flourished during the civil war years demonstrated the Crown's desire to reimpose order and royal rule. But it was the openly Catholic and pro-French policies of his successor, James II, that once again led to the overthrow of the monarchy in 1688. In that year a group of bishops and Parliamentarians offered the English throne to the Dutch Prince William of Holland and his English bride, Mary, the daughter of James II. This coup was called the Glorious Revolution and was accomplished with little bloodshed in England, but considerable warfare in Ireland.

In the decades before the Glorious Revolution, English colonists experienced religious and political conflict that reflected transformations in Europe as well as distinctly colonial conditions. In the 1670s and early 1680s, King Charles II tightened English control over North America and the West Indies through the creation of new colonies, the imposition of new Navigation Acts, and the establishment of a new executive council called the Lords of Trade and Plantations.[14] As imperial officials attempted to curb colonists' autonomy, threats from Native Americans and New France on the continent led many colonists to believe that Native Americans and Catholics sought to destroy English America. In New England an uprising beginning in 1675 led by the Wampanoag leader Metacom, or King Philip as the English called him, seemed to confirm these

fears. Conflicts with Native Americans helped trigger the revolt against royal authorities known as Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia the following year.

James II worked to place the colonies on firmer administrative and defensive footing by creating the Dominion of New England in 1686. The Dominion consolidated the New England colonies, New York, and New Jersey into one administrative unit to counter French Canada, but colonists strongly resented the loss of their individual provinces. The Dominion's governor, Sir Edmund Andros, did little to assuage fears of arbitrary power when he forced colonists into military service for a campaign against Native Americans in Maine in early 1687. Impressment into military service was a long-standing grievance among English commoners that was transplanted to the colonies.

In England, James's push for religious toleration of Catholics and dissenters brought him into conflict with Parliament and the Anglican establishment in England. After the 1688 invasion by the Protestant William of Orange, James fled to France. When colonists learned imperial officials in Boston and New York City attempted to keep news of the Glorious Revolution secret, simmering hostilities toward provincial leaders burst into the open. In Massachusetts, New York, and Maryland, colonists overthrew colonial governments as local social antagonisms fused with popular animosity toward imperial rule. Colonists in America quickly declared allegiance to the new monarchs. They did so in part to maintain order in their respective colonies. As one Virginia official explained, if there was "no King in England, there was no Government here."[15] A declaration of allegiance was therefore a means toward stability.

More importantly, colonists declared for William and Mary because they believed that their ascension marked the rejection of absolutism and confirmed the centrality of Protestantism and liberty in English life. Settlers joined in the revolution by overthrowing the Dominion government, restoring the provinces to their previous status, and forcing out the Catholic-dominated Maryland government. They launched several assaults against French Canada as part of King William's War and rejoiced in Parliament's 1689 passage of a Bill of Rights, which curtailed the power of the monarchy and cemented Protestantism in England. For English colonists, it was indeed a "glorious" revolution as it united them in a Protestant empire that stood counter to Catholic tyranny, absolutism, and French power.

IV. New Colonies

Despite the turmoil in Britain, colonial settlement grew considerably throughout the seventeenth century, and several new settlements joined the two original colonies of Virginia and Massachusetts.

In 1632, Charles I set a tract of about 12 million acres of land at the northern tip of the Chesapeake Bay aside for a second colony in America. Named for the new monarch's queen, Maryland was granted to Charles's friend and political ally, Cecilius Calvert, the second Lord Baltimore. Calvert hoped to gain additional wealth from the colony, as well as to create a haven for fellow Catholics. In England, many of that faith found themselves harassed by the Protestant majority and more than a few considered migrating to America. Charles I, a Catholic sympathizer, was in favor of Lord Baltimore's plan to create a colony that would demonstrate that Catholics and Protestants could live together peacefully.

In late 1633, both Protestant and Catholic settlers left England for the Chesapeake, arriving in Maryland in March 1634. Men of middling means found greater opportunities in Maryland, which prospered as a tobacco colony without the growing pains suffered by Virginia.

Unfortunately, Lord Baltimore's hopes of a diverse Christian colony were thwarted. Most colonists were Protestants relocating from Virginia. Many of these Protestants were radical Quakers and Puritans who were frustrated with Virginia's efforts to force adherence to the Anglican Church, also known as the Church of England. In 1650, Puritans revolted, setting up a new government that prohibited both Catholicism and Anglicanism. Governor William Stone attempted to put down the revolt in 1655 but was not successful until 1658. Two years after the Glorious Revolution (1688–1689), the Calverts lost control of Maryland and the province became a royal colony.

Religion was a motivating factor in the creation of several other colonies as well, including the New England colonies of Connecticut and Rhode Island. The settlements that would eventually compose Connecticut grew out of settlements in Saybrook and New Haven. Thomas Hooker and his congregation left Massachusetts for Connecticut because the area around Boston was becoming increasingly crowded. The Connecticut River Valley was large enough for more cattle and agriculture. In June 1636, Hooker led one hundred people and a variety of livestock in settling an

area they called Newtown (later Hartford).

New Haven Colony had a more directly religious origin, as the founders attempted a new experiment in Puritanism. In 1638, John Davenport, Theophilus Eaton, and other supporters of the Puritan faith settled in the Quinnipiac River Valley (New Haven) area of Connecticut. In 1643 New Haven Colony was officially organized, with Eaton named governor. In the early 1660s, three men who had signed the death warrant for Charles I were concealed in New Haven. This did not win the colony any favors, and it became increasingly poorer and weaker. In 1665, New Haven was absorbed into Connecticut, but its singular religious tradition endured with the creation of Yale College.

Religious radicals similarly founded Rhode Island. After his exile from Massachusetts, Roger Williams created a settlement called Providence in 1636. He negotiated for the land with the local Narragansett sachems Canonicus and Miantonomi. Williams and his fellow settlers agreed on an egalitarian constitution and established religious and political freedom in the colony. The following year, another Massachusetts exile, Anne Hutchinson, and her followers settled near Providence. Others soon arrived, and the colony was granted a charter by Parliament in 1644. Persistently independent and with republican sympathies, the settlers refused a governor and instead elected a president and council. These separate communities passed laws abolishing witchcraft trials, imprisonment for debt and, in 1652, chattel slavery. Because of the colony's policy of toleration, it became a haven for Quakers, Jews, and other persecuted religious groups. In 1663, Charles II granted the colony a royal charter establishing the colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

Until the middle of the seventeenth century, the English neglected the area between Virginia and New England despite obvious environmental advantages. The climate was healthier than the Chesapeake and more temperate than New England. The mid-Atlantic had three highly navigable rivers: the Susquehanna, the Delaware, and the Hudson. The Swedes and Dutch established their own colonies in the region: New Sweden in the Delaware Valley and New Netherland in the Hudson Valley.

Compared to other Dutch colonies around the globe, the settlements on the Hudson River were relatively minor. The Dutch West India Company realized that in order to secure its fur trade in the area, it needed to establish a greater presence in New Netherland. Toward this end, the com-

pany formed New Amsterdam on Manhattan Island in 1625.

Although the Dutch extended religious tolerance to those who settled in New Netherland, the population remained small. This left the colony vulnerable to English attack during the 1650s and 1660s, resulting in the handover of New Netherland to England in 1664. The new colony of New York was named for the proprietor, James, the Duke of York, brother to Charles II and funder of the expedition against the Dutch in 1664. New York was briefly reconquered by the Netherlands in 1667, and class and ethnic conflicts in New York City contributed to the rebellion against English authorities during the Glorious Revolution of 1688–1689. Colonists of Dutch ancestry resisted assimilation into English culture well into the eighteenth century, prompting New York Anglicans to note that the colony was "rather like a conquered foreign province."[16]

After the acquisition of New Netherland, Charles II and the Duke of York wished to strengthen English control over the Atlantic seaboard. In theory, this was to better tax the colonies; in practice, the awarding of the new proprietary colonies of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and the Carolinas was a payoff of debts and political favors.

In 1664, the Duke of York granted the area between the Hudson and Delaware rivers to two English noblemen. These lands were split into two distinct colonies, East Jersey and West Jersey. One of West Jersey's proprietors included William Penn. The ambitious Penn wanted his own, larger colony, the lands for which would be granted by both Charles II and the Duke of York. Pennsylvania consisted of about forty-five thousand square miles west of the Delaware River and the former New Sweden. Penn was a member of the Society of Friends, otherwise known as Quakers, and he intended his colony to be a "colony of Heaven for the children of Light."[17] Like New England's aspirations to be a City Upon a Hill, Pennsylvania was to be an example of godliness. But Penn's dream was to create not a colony of unity but rather a colony of harmony. He noted in 1685 that "the people are a collection of diverse nations in Europe, as French, Dutch, Germans, Swedes, Danes, Finns, Scotch, and English; and of the last equal to all the rest."[18] Because Quakers in Pennsylvania extended to others in America the same rights they had demanded for themselves in England, the colony attracted a diverse collection of migrants. Slavery was particularly troublesome for some pacifist Quakers of Pennsylvania on the grounds that it required violence. In 1688, members of the Society of Friends in Germantown, outside Philadelphia, signed a petition protesting the institution of slavery among fellow Quakers.

The Pennsylvania soil did not lend itself to the slave-based agriculture of the Chesapeake, but other colonies depended heavily on slavery from their very foundations. The creation of the colony of Carolina, later divided into North and South Carolina and Georgia, was part of Charles II's scheme to strengthen the English hold on the Eastern Seaboard and pay off political and cash debts. The Lords Proprietor of Carolina—eight powerful favorites of the king—used the model of the colonization of Barbados to settle the area. In 1670, three ships of colonists from Barbados arrived at the mouth of the Ashley River, where they founded Charles Town. This defiance of Spanish claims to the area signified England's growing confidence as a colonial power.

To attract colonists, the Lords Proprietor offered alluring incentives: religious tolerance, political representation by assembly, exemption from fees, and large land grants. These incentives worked, and Carolina grew quickly, attracting not only middling farmers and artisans but also wealthy planters. Colonists who could pay their own way to Carolina were granted 150 acres per family member. The Lords Proprietor allowed for enslaved people to be counted as members of the family. This encouraged the creation of large rice and indigo plantations along the coast of Carolina; these were more stable commodities than deerskins and enslaved Native Americans. Because of the size of Carolina, the authority of the Lords Proprietor was especially weak in the northern reaches on Albemarle Sound. This region had been settled by Virginians in the 1650s and was increasingly resistant to Carolina authority. As a result, the Lords Proprietor founded the separate province of North Carolina in 1691.[19]

Henry Popple, A map of the British Empire in America with the French and Spanish settlements adjacent thereto, 1733. Library of Congress.

V. Riot, Rebellion, and Revolt

The seventeenth century saw the establishment and solidification of the British North American colonies, but this process did not occur peacefully. English settlements on the continent were rocked by explosions of violence, including the Pequot War, the Mystic massacre, King Philip's War, the Susquehannock War, Bacon's Rebellion, and the Pueblo Revolt.

In May 1637, an armed contingent of English Puritans from Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, and Connecticut colonies trekked into Native American territory that was claimed by New England. Referring to themselves as the "Sword of the Lord," this military force intended to attack "that insolent and barbarous Nation, called the Pequots." In the resulting violence, Puritans put the Mystic community to the torch, beginning with the north and south ends of the town. As Pequot men, women, and children tried to escape the blaze, other soldiers waited with swords and guns. One commander estimated that of the "four hundred souls in this Fort . . . not above five of them escaped out of our hands," although another counted near "six or seven hundred" dead. In a span of less than two months, the English Puritans boasted that the Pequot "were drove out of their country, and slain by the sword, to the number of fifteen hundred."[20]

The foundations of the war lay within the rivalry between the Pequot, the Narragansett, and the Mohegan, who battled for control of the fur and wampum trades in the northeast. This rivalry eventually forced the English and Dutch to choose sides. The war remained a conflict of Native interests and initiative, especially as the Mohegan hedged their bets on the English and reaped the rewards that came with displacing the Pequot.

Victory over the Pequot not only provided security and stability for the English colonies but also propelled the Mohegan to new heights of political and economic influence as the primary power in New England. Ironically, history seemingly repeated itself later in the century as the Mohegan, desperate for a remedy to their diminishing strength, joined the Wampanoag war against the Puritans. This produced a more violent conflict in 1675 known as King Philip's War, bringing a decisive end to Native American power in New England.

In the winter of 1675, the body of John Sassamon, a Christian, Harvard-educated Wampanoag, was found under the ice of a nearby pond. A fellow Christian Native Americans informed English authorities that three warriors under the local sachem named Metacom, known to the

English as King Philip, had killed Sassamon, who had previously accused Metacom of planning an offensive against the English. The three alleged killers appeared before the Plymouth court in June 1675. They were found guilty of murder and executed. Several weeks later, a group of Wampanoags killed nine English colonists in the town of Swansea.

Metacom—like most other New England sachems—had entered into covenants of "submission" to various colonies, viewing the arrangements as relationships of protection and reciprocity rather than subjugation. Native Americans and the English lived, traded, worshipped, and arbitrated disputes in close proximity before 1675, but the execution of three of Metacom's men at the hands of Plymouth Colony epitomized what many Native Americans viewed as the growing inequality of that relationship. The Wampanoags who attacked Swansea may have sought to restore balance, or to retaliate for the recent executions. Neither they nor anyone else sought to engulf all of New England in war, but that is precisely what happened. Authorities in Plymouth sprang into action, enlisting help from the neighboring colonies of Connecticut and Massachusetts.

Metacom and his followers eluded colonial forces in the summer of 1675, striking more Plymouth towns as they moved northwest. Some groups joined his forces, while others remained neutral or supported the English. The war badly divided some Indigenous communities. Metacom himself had little control over events as panic and violence spread throughout New England in the autumn of 1675. English mistrust of neutral Native Americans, sometimes accompanied by demands that they surrender their weapons, pushed many into open war. By the end of 1675, most of the Native Americans of present-day western and central Massachusetts had entered the war, laying waste to nearby English towns like Deerfield, Hadley, and Brookfield. Hapless colonial forces, spurning the military assistance of allies such as the Mohegans, proved unable to locate more mobile Native communities or intercept attacks.

The English compounded their problems by attacking the powerful and neutral Narragansett of Rhode Island in December 1675. In an action called the Great Swamp Fight, 1,000 Englishmen put the main Narragansett village to the torch, gunning down as many as 1,000 Narragansett men, women, and children as they fled the maelstrom. The surviving Narragansett joined those already fighting the English. Between February and April 1676, Native forces devastated a succession of English towns closer and closer to Boston.

In the spring of 1676, the tide turned. The New England colonies took the advice of men like

Benjamin Church, who urged the greater use of Native allies, including Pequot and Mohegan, to find and fight the mobile warriors. As the combatants were unable to plant crops and forced to live off the land, their will to continue the struggle waned as companies of English and Native allies pursued them. Growing numbers of fighters fled the region, switched sides, or surrendered in the spring and summer. The English sold many of the latter group into slavery. Colonial forces finally caught up with Metacom in August 1676, and the sachem was slain by a Christian Native American fighting with the English.

The war permanently altered the political and demographic landscape of New England. Between eight hundred and one thousand English and at least three thousand Native Americans perished in the fourteen-month conflict. Thousands of others fled the region or were sold into slavery. In 1670, Native Americans comprised roughly 25 percent of New England's population; a decade later, they made up perhaps 10 percent.[21] The war's brutality also encouraged a growing hatred of all Indigenous people among many New England colonists. Though the fighting ceased in 1676, the bitter legacy of King Philip's War lived on.

Sixteen years later, New England faced a new fear: the supernatural. Beginning in early 1692 and culminating in 1693, Salem Town, Salem Village, Ipswich, and Andover all tried women and men as witches. Paranoia swept through the region, and fourteen women and six men were executed. Five other individuals died in prison. The causes of the trials are numerous and include local rivalries, political turmoil, enduring trauma of war, faulty legal procedure where accusing others became a method of self-defense, or perhaps even low-level environmental contamination. Enduring tensions with Native people framed the events, however, and a Native American or African woman named Tituba enslaved by the local minister was at the center of the tragedy.[22]

Native American communities in Virginia had already been decimated by wars in 1622 and 1644. But a new clash arose in Virginia the same year that New Englanders crushed Metacom's forces. This conflict, known as Bacon's Rebellion, grew out of tensions between Native Americans and English settlers as well as tensions between wealthy English landowners and the poor settlers who continually pushed west into territory controlled by Native Americans.

Bacon's Rebellion began, appropriately enough, with an argument over a pig. In the summer of 1675, a group of Doeg people visited Thomas Mathew on his plantation in northern Virginia to collect a debt that he owed them. When Mathew refused to pay, they took some of his pigs to set-

tle the debt. This "theft" sparked a series of raids and counterraids. The Susquehannock people were caught in the crossfire when the militia mistook them for Doegs, leaving fourteen dead. A similar pattern of escalating violence then repeated: the Susquehannocks retaliated by killing colonists in Virginia and Maryland, and the English marshaled their forces and laid siege to the Susquehannock. The conflict became uglier after the militia executed a delegation of Susquehannock ambassadors under a flag of truce. A few parties of warriors intent on revenge launched raids along the frontier and killed dozens of English colonists.

The sudden and unpredictable violence of the Susquehannock War triggered a political crisis in Virginia. Panicked colonists fled en masse from the vulnerable frontiers, flooding into coastal communities and begging the government for help. But the cautious governor, Sir William Berkeley, did not send an army after the Susquehannock. He worried that a full-scale war would inevitably drag other Native Americans into the conflict, turning allies into deadly enemies. Berkeley therefore insisted on a defensive strategy centered on a string of new fortifications to protect the frontier and strict instructions not to antagonize friendly Native people. It was a sound military policy but a public relations disaster. Terrified colonists condemned Berkeley. Building contracts for the forts went to Berkeley's wealthy friends, who conveniently decided that their own plantations were the most strategically vital. Colonists denounced the government as a corrupt band of oligarchs more interested in lining their pockets than protecting the people.

By the spring of 1676, a small group of frontier colonists took matters into their own hands. Naming the charismatic young Nathaniel Bacon as their leader, these self-styled "volunteers" proclaimed that they took up arms in defense of their homes and families. They took pains to assure Berkeley that they intended no disloyalty, but Berkeley feared a coup and branded the volunteers as traitors. Berkeley finally mobilized an army—not to pursue Susquehannock, but to crush the colonists' rebellion. His drastic response catapulted a small band of vigilantes into full-fledged rebels whose survival necessitated bringing down the colonial government.

Bacon and the rebels stalked the Susquehannock as well as friendly Native Americans like the Pamunkeys and the Occaneechi. The rebels became convinced that there was a massive Native American conspiracy to destroy the English. Berkeley's stubborn persistence in defending friendly Natives and destroying the rebels led Bacon to accuse the governor of conspiring with a "powerful cabal" of elite planters and with "the protected and darling Indians" to slaughter his English enemies.[23]

In the early summer of 1676, Bacon's neighbors elected him their burgess and sent him to Jamestown to confront Berkeley. Though the House of Burgesses enacted pro-rebel reforms like prohibiting the sale of arms to Native Americans and restoring suffrage rights to landless freemen, Bacon's supporters remained unsatisfied. Berkeley soon had Bacon arrested and forced the rebel leader into the humiliating position of publicly begging forgiveness for his treason. Bacon swallowed this indignity but turned the tables by gathering an army of followers and surrounding the State House, demanding that Berkeley name him the general of Virginia and bless his universal war against Native Americans. Instead, the seventy-year-old governor stepped onto the field in front of the crowd of angry men, unafraid, and called Bacon a traitor to his face. Then he tore open his shirt and dared Bacon to shoot him in the heart, if he was so intent on overthrowing his government. "Here!" he shouted before the crowd, "shoot me, before God, it is a fair mark. Shoot!" When Bacon hesitated, Berkeley drew his sword and challenged the young man to a duel, knowing that Bacon could neither back down from a challenge without looking like a coward nor kill him without making himself into a villain. Instead, Bacon resorted to bluster and blasphemy. Threatening to slaughter the entire assembly if necessary, he cursed, "God damn my blood, I came for a commission, and a commission I will have before I go."[24] Berkeley stood defiant, but the cowed burgesses finally prevailed upon him to grant Bacon's request. Virginia had its general, and Bacon had his war.

After this dramatic showdown in Jamestown, Bacon's Rebellion quickly spiraled out of control. Berkeley slowly rebuilt his loyalist army, forcing Bacon to divert his attention to the coasts and away from Native Americans. But most rebels were more interested in defending their homes and families than in fighting other Englishmen, and they deserted in droves at every rumor of Native activity. In many places, the "rebellion" was less an organized military campaign than a collection of local grievances and personal rivalries. Both rebels and loyalists smelled the opportunities for plunder, seizing their rivals' estates and confiscating their property.

For a small but vocal minority of rebels, however, the rebellion became an ideological revolution: Sarah Drummond, wife of rebel leader William Drummond, advocated independence from England and the formation of a Virginian Republic, declaring "I fear the power of England no more than a broken straw." Others struggled for a different kind of independence: white servants and enslaved Black people fought side by side in both armies after promises of freedom for military service. Everyone accused everyone else of treason, rebels and loyalists switched sides depending on which side was winning, and the whole Chesapeake disintegrated into a confused melee of

secret plots and grandiose crusades, sordid vendettas and desperate gambits, with Native Americans and English alike struggling for supremacy and survival. One Virginian summed up the rebellion as "our time of anarchy."[25]

The rebels steadily lost ground and ultimately suffered a crushing defeat. Bacon died of typhus in the autumn of 1676, and his successors surrendered to Berkeley in January 1677. Berkeley summarily tried and executed the rebel leadership in a succession of kangaroo courts-martial. Before long, however, the royal fleet arrived, bearing over one thousand red-coated troops and a royal commission of investigation charged with restoring order to the colony. The commissioners replaced the governor and dispatched Berkeley to London, where he died in disgrace.

But the conclusion of Bacon's Rebellion was uncertain, and the maintenance of order remained precarious for years afterward. The garrison of royal troops discouraged both incursion by Native Americans and insurrection by discontented colonists, allowing the king to continue profiting from tobacco revenues. The end of armed resistance did not mean a resolution to the underlying tensions destabilizing colonial society. Native Americans inside Virginia remained an embattled minority, and those outside Virginia remained a terrifying threat. Elite planters continued to grow rich by exploiting their indentured servants and marginalizing small farmers. Most Virginians continued to resent their exploitation with a simmering fury. Virginia legislators did recognize the extent of popular hostility toward colonial rule, however, and improved the social and political conditions of poor white Virginians in the years after the rebellion. During the same period, the increasing availability of enslaved workers through the Atlantic slave trade contributed to planters' large-scale adoption of slave labor in the Chesapeake.

Just a few years after Bacon's Rebellion, the Spanish experienced their own tumult in the area of contemporary New Mexico. The Spanish had been maintaining control partly by suppressing Native American beliefs. Friars aggressively enforced Catholic practice, burning native idols and masks and other sacred objects and banishing traditional spiritual practices. In 1680, the Puebloan religious leader Popé, who had been arrested and whipped for "sorcery" five years earlier, led various Puebloan groups in rebellion. Several thousand Puebloan warriors razed the Spanish countryside and besieged Santa Fe. They killed four hundred, including twenty-one Franciscan priests, and allowed two thousand other Spaniards and Christian Puebloans to flee. It was perhaps the greatest act of Indigenous resistance in North American history.

Built sometime between 1000 and 1450 AD, the Taos Pueblo located near modern-day Taos, New Mexico, functioned as a base for the leader Popé during the Pueblo Revolt. Luca Galuzzi (photographer), Taos Pueblo, 2007. Wikimedia. Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.5 Generic.

In New Mexico, the Puebloans eradicated all traces of Spanish rule. They destroyed churches and threw themselves into rivers to wash away their Christian baptisms. "The God of the Christians is dead," Popé proclaimed, and the Puebloans resumed traditional spiritual practices.[26] The Spanish were exiled for twelve years. They returned in 1692, weakened, to reconquer New Mexico.

The late seventeenth century was a time of great violence and turmoil. Bacon's Rebellion turned white Virginians against one another, King Philip's War shattered Native American resistance in New England, and the Pueblo Revolt struck a major blow to Spanish power. It would take several more decades before similar patterns erupted in Carolina and Pennsylvania, but the constant advance of European settlements provoked conflict in these areas as well.

In 1715, the Yamasee, Carolina's closest allies and most lucrative trading partners, turned against the colony and nearly destroyed it entirely. Writing from Carolina to London, the settler George Rodd believed the Yamasee wanted nothing less than "the whole continent and to kill us or chase us all out."[27] The Yamasee would eventually advance within miles of Charles Town.

The Yamasee War's first victims were traders. The governor had dispatched two of the colony's most prominent men to visit and pacify a Yamasee council following rumors of native unrest. The Yamasee quickly proved the fears well founded by killing the emissaries and every English trader they could corral.

The Yamasee, like many other Native Americans, had come to depend on English courts as much as the flintlock rifles and ammunition that traders offered them for enslaved laborers and animal skins. Feuds between English agents had crippled the court of trade and shut down all diplomacy, provoking the violent Yamasee reprisal. Most villages in the southeast sent at least a few warriors to join what quickly became a cause against the colony that united various Native American peoples.

Yet Charles Town ultimately survived the onslaught by preserving one crucial alliance with the Cherokee. By 1717, the conflict had largely dried up, and the only remaining menace was roaming Yamasee bands operating from Spanish Florida. Most Native American villages returned to terms with Carolina and resumed trading. The lucrative trade in enslaved Native Americans, however, which had consumed fifty thousand souls in five decades, largely dwindled after the war. The danger was too high for traders, and the colonies discovered even greater profits by importing Africans to work new rice plantations. Herein lies the birth of the Old South, that expanse of plantations that created untold wealth and misery. Native Americans retained the strongest militaries in the region, but they never again threatened the survival of English colonies.

If a colony existed where peace with Indigenous people might continue, it would be Pennsylvania. At the colony's founding, William Penn created a Quaker religious imperative for the peaceful treatment of Native Americans. While Penn never doubted that the English would appropriate Native lands, he demanded that his colonists obtain these territories through purchase rather than violence. Though Pennsylvanians maintained relatively peaceful relations with Native Americans, increased immigration and booming land speculation increased the demand for land. Coercive and fraudulent methods of negotiation became increasingly prominent. The Walking Purchase of 1737 was emblematic of both colonists' desire for cheap land and the changing relationship between Pennsylvanians and their Native neighbors.

Through treaty negotiation in 1737, Native Delaware leaders agreed to sell Pennsylvania all of the land that a man could walk in a day and a half, a common measurement used by Delawares in

evaluating distances. John and Thomas Penn, joined by the land speculator and longtime friend of the Penns James Logan, hired a team of skilled runners to complete the "walk" on a prepared trail. The runners traveled from Wrightstown to the present-day town of Jim Thorpe, and proprietary officials then drew the new boundary line perpendicular to the runners' route, extending northeast to the Delaware River. The colonial government thus measured out a tract much larger than the Delaware had originally intended to sell, roughly 1,200 square miles. As a result, Delaware-proprietary relations suffered. Many Delaware left the lands in question and migrated westward to join Shawnee and other Delaware already living in the Ohio Valley. There they established diplomatic and trade relationships with the French. Memories of the suspect purchase endured into the 1750s and became a chief point of contention between the Pennsylvanian government and the Delaware during the upcoming Seven Years' War.[28]

VI. Conclusion

The seventeenth century saw the creation and maturation of Britain's North American colonies. Colonists warred against unforgiving climates, imperial intrigue, and Native Americans. They did so largely through ruthless expressions of power. Colonists attacked Native Americans, provoked European rivals, and joined a highly lucrative transatlantic economy rooted in slavery. After surviving a century of desperation and war, British North American colonists fashioned increasingly complex societies with unique religious cultures, economic ties, and political traditions. These societies would come to shape not only North America but soon the entirety of the Atlantic World.

VII. Primary Sources

1. Olaudah Equiano describes the Middle Passage, 1789

In this harrowing description of the Middle Passage, Olaudah Equiano described the terror of the transatlantic slave trade. Equiano eventually purchased his freedom and lived in London where he advocated for abolition.