Early Colonization in America

Following a series of exploratory visits (Florida, 1565; California, 1579; Newfoundland, 1583; etc.), the English made their first attempt at American colonization at Roanoke Island (1585–87). They named the colony Virginia after Elizabeth the Virgin Queen (1558–1603), though the island is in what is now the state of North Carolina. The Roanoke effort was unsuccessful, in part because of the attempt of Queen Mary’s widower, Philip II of Spain, to take control of England by sending the Spanish Armada (1588). In anticipation of that attack the English government directed all ships to remain in port. No supply ships made the trip to Roanoke until 1590, by which time no surviving colonists of what has come to be called “the Lost Colony” could be found. In 1607, however, an English mercantile company (the London Company) did plant a permanent colony further north, which it named Jamestown after James I (James VI of Scotland), who had followed Elizabeth to the English throne.

During James’s reign (1603–25), this Virginia colony was the primary focus of English colonial efforts. It was not, however, the only English settlement. Navigation was still an inexact science in the seventeenth century, and not all the ships headed for the new colony reached their intended destination. In 1612, the wreck of a ship bound for Virginia led to the establishment of an English colony in Bermuda, a collection of islands 580 miles to the east of the coast of North Carolina. In 1620, the Pilgrims, also bound for Virginia,
landed at Plymouth, considerably to the north. In 1624 the English first visited the island of Barbados in the Caribbean, establishing a colony there three years later.

**English Christianity and the Reformation**

The colonists came from England to America at a time when the faith of the English people was in transition. As was the case with many of the people of Europe, the English of the seventeenth century were attempting to come to terms with a major transformation of the Christian faith that had taken place during the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century.²
Prior to the Reformation most English men and women accepted a late medieval Catholicism according to which individuals acknowledged their sinfulness and then sought to make themselves acceptable to God by means of good works, pilgrimages, indulgences, and memorial celebrations of the Mass. Theologians explained that these disciplines were effective only because of God’s grace but that distinction was often lost on ordinary believers, who had limited understanding of the Bible or the words of the mass (both of which were in Latin) and heard homilies only infrequently (since many parish priests were not licensed by their bishops to preach).

Beginning in 1519, however, a group of theologians at Cambridge University began to question this theology, both as a result of reading work by German reformer Martin Luther (1483–1546) and as a result of their own study of scripture. An early member of that group, Thomas Bilney (1495?–1531), later described his understanding of faith in a letter to the Bishop of London, Cuthbert Tunstall (1474–1559). Bilney compared himself to the woman with the flow of blood in Mark 5:25–34 who spent all she had on physicians without getting any better. He said that he used up his strength, his money, and his wit following the advice of “unlearned hearers of confession” who “appointed . . . fasting, watching, buying of pardons, and masses.” He concluded that they did so more for “their own gain, than the salvation of [his] sick and languishing soul.”

It was at that point that Bilney read of 1 Timothy 1 in a new Latin translation of the Bible by humanist Desiderius Erasmus (1496?–1536):

At the first reading (as I well remember) I chanced upon this sentence of St. Paul (O most sweet and comfortable sentence to my soul!) in 1 Tim. i., “It is a true saying and worthy of all men to be embraced, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am the chief and principal.” This one sentence through God’s instruction and inward working, which I did not then perceive did so exhilarate my
heart, being wounded with the guilt of my sins, and being almost in despair, that immediately I felt a marvelous comfort and quietness, insomuch “that my bruised bones leaped for joy.”

Bilney understood on a personal level that which Martin Luther had understood several years earlier. God did not despise Bilney because he was a sinner who could not make himself righteous. On the contrary, it was precisely because Bilney was mired in sin that God had sent his only Son. The verse from 1 Timothy that had moved Bilney would later find a place in the Book of Common Prayer as one of the “comfortable words” following the absolution in the Eucharist.

Bilney was soon joined by a circle of early English Protestants who existed more or less openly in Cambridge during the 1520s. Their number came also to include Robert Barnes (1495–1540), John Frith (ca. 1503–33), William Tyndale (1495–1536), Miles Coverdale (1488–1568), Hugh Latimer (ca. 1490–1555), and Richard Cox (ca. 1500–81). At first only mild voices of protest, these early English Protestants made themselves increasingly heard. Barnes warned that the pomp and ceremony of the church could obscure the simple meaning of the gospel. Frith rejected the popular depiction of the Eucharist as a re-sacrifice of the natural body of Christ that produced merit for those who paid the priest for the celebration. Tyndale and Coverdale worked on a translation of the Bible into English.

The monarch at the time, Elizabeth I’s father, King Henry VIII (1509–47), was involved in a religious program of his own. Anxious to gain access to church wealth, to select his own candidates for church positions, and to secure an annulment from his spouse, he bullied the Parliament in the early 1530s to nationalize the Church of England, claiming for his monarchy the oversight and leadership at that time exercised by the Pope. Struggles between nations and Popes had been common in Europe since the eleventh century and generally did not lead to permanent breaks or to major reformations of the church. Personnel decisions made by Henry laid
the groundwork for both, however. Henry chose two men with sympathy for the Cambridge Protestants—Cambridge graduate Thomas Cranmer (1489–1556) and merchant Thomas Cromwell (1485?–1540)—as his Archbishop of Canterbury and his secretary to the royal Council. He chose one of the Cambridge Protestants (Hugh Latimer) as a bishop and another (Richard Cox) as the tutor of his son Edward VI. He approved the publication of an English Bible translated by two other members of the group (Tyndale and Coverdale).

Henry never entirely trusted the members of the Protestant circle from Cambridge and limited their authority and influence by also appointing religious conservatives such as Stephen Gardiner (c. 1490–1555) to positions of importance (Bishop of Winchester, 1531–55). When displeased, he proved willing to execute both conservatives (such as Thomas More, 1478–1535) and advocates of Protestant reform (such as Thomas Cromwell).

The members of the Protestant circle, for their part, reserved judgment about the king, accepting him as a possible instrument of reform without forgetting the dangers that political leaders could present for the church. In periods of cooperation, they were able to take the first rudimentary steps toward the reformation of the English church. They issued an English Bible based on the work of Tyndale and Coverdale (the Great Bible, 1538) and a form of public prayer in English (the Great Litany, 1544); began to dissolve the monastic orders that, as the custodians of the primary relics and pilgrimage sites, were the strongest supporters of the medieval penitential system; and raised questions about the medieval doctrine of purgatory. The alliance proved an unstable one, with Henry turning more conservative in the 1540s. Yet the decade of cooperation gave the English Reformation a character that distinguished it from that on the continent. In Germany, Martin Luther moved within three years from mild criticism to total rejection of the episcopal hierarchy of the church. In England, in contrast, some members of the circle of Protestants at Cambridge were able to move into positions of importance, including the episcopate. That they were able to do so gave the English Christians a sense
that many continental Christians could not share—that reform and the church’s episcopal hierarchy need not be incompatible.

The reigns of Henry’s children—Edward VI (1547–53), Mary I (1553–58), and Elizabeth I—strengthened this perception for the English people. During the short reign of Edward, the Protestant circle quickened the rate of reform; they prepared two editions of the Book of Common Prayer (1549 and 1552), published a series of sermons for use in English churches (the Homilies), introduced legislation to allow for clerical marriage, and drafted a reformed statement of faith (Edward’s Forty-two Articles, which would form the basis for the later Thirty-nine Articles of Religion). During Mary’s Roman Catholic reaction, the Protestants lost their church positions but discovered a leadership of another kind—that of martyrdom. (Together Henry and Mary burned twenty-five members of the Cambridge circle. Many other less prominent Protestants were executed during Mary’s reign as well, with a total of roughly three hundred executed for heresy.) When Elizabeth came to the throne, she chose bishops for the church who had studied with the Cambridge Protestants or otherwise shared a conviction about the compatibility of tradition and reform. It was this evolving English Christianity that provided the religious backdrop to the founding of colonies in Roanoke and Jamestown.

The Religious Character of the Virginia Colony under Elizabeth and James

During the years that Elizabeth I and James I occupied the throne, the primary focus of English colonial efforts was Virginia. The records of that effort bear out the central role that religion played in their lives. The Virginia martial law provisions of 1610, for example, specified that members of the colony should gather to give thanks and to seek God’s assistance at daily Morning and Evening Prayer, Sunday morning worship, and Sunday afternoon instruction in the catechism. Clergy were to preside at daily worship and preach each Sunday and Wednesday. The settlers at Jamestown initially met for prayer
in a temporary worship tent (constructed of sailcloth) which was replaced with a wooden structure in 1608. The community at Jamestown grew, and in 1617 the chapel was relocated to a position that was near the center of the expanded settlement. This building was in turn replaced with a brick structure that was begun in 1639.9

The colonists believed that their day-to-day struggle to found a settlement was religiously significant for three important reasons. First, they could preach the gospel to an Indian population that they believed had not yet heard the good news of Jesus Christ. Thus, W. Thomas Harriot attempted to preach to the Indians at Roanoke, and Governor John White’s account of the Roanoke colony, which English clergyman and geographer Richard Hakluyt (1552–1616) included in his *Principal Navigations* (1589), recorded with pride the baptism of Manteo (the first Native American baptized by a clergyman of the Church of England).10 William Crashaw, a clerical supporter of colonization, preached in 1610 that conversion of the Native Americans was “plainly a necessary duty.”11 The first Virginia legislature (1619) declared its commitment to the “conversion of the Savages.”12

A second motive for colonization was closely related to the first. By spreading the gospel, colonists helped to unfold God’s plan for the world, thereby hastening the coming of the kingdom. In a November 1622 sermon to the members of the Virginia Company (the new name adopted by the London Company in 1609), poet and clergyman John Donne (1573–1631) used the Acts 1:8 promise that the Holy Spirit would assist the disciples to preach “to the end of the earth” to make the point. He noted that the members of his congregation had an advantage over the first-century Christians, who knew nothing about such places as the West Indies and, therefore, could not reach the ends of the earth. Colonists of the Virginia Company could, in contrast, create a “bridge . . . to that world that shall never grow old, the Kingdom of heaven.” By adding the names of new colonists, the members of the Company could “add names . . . to the Booke of Life.”13
A third reason for colonization was an awareness of the geopolitical importance of expanding the frontiers of Protestantism. The first half of the seventeenth century was dominated by wars of religion that often pitted Roman Catholics against Protestants. The leading colonial powers of the age were also Roman Catholic nations. By founding colonies of its own in the new world, England was able to join other Protestant nations in what historian Norman Sykes has dubbed the “anti-Roman Grand Alliance,” and historian John Woolverton has explained as “an imperial strategy whose potent unifying theme was anti-Roman Catholicism.”\textsuperscript{14} The religious element of English strategy was evident to Roman Catholics at the time. The Spanish ambassador in England complained in 1609 that the members of the mercantile company responsible for the colony at Jamestown “have actually made their ministers in their sermons dwell upon the importance of filling the world with their religion.”\textsuperscript{15}

Such prospects attracted serious-minded young clergy. Indeed, at a time when many clergy of the Church of England were not university trained, most of those who volunteered for service in Virginia were university graduates. Alumni of Magdalen College, Oxford and King’s, Emmanuel, and St. Johns, Cambridge, were well represented in the rolls of colonial clergy.\textsuperscript{16} Robert Hunt (d. 1608), the first Vicar of Jamestown, had, for example, earned his M.A. from Magdalen College. The managers of the Virginia Company screened volunteers and sent out those whose qualifications and vision for their ministry seemed the most appropriate to fill newly established parishes or vacancies created by the high mortality rate in the colony (Forty-four of the sixty-seven
clergy who served before 1660 died within five years of arrival). Undoubtedly, however, some candidates were motivated to volunteer by personal as well as religious reasons. Robert Hunt’s marriage, for example, was an unhappy one; rumors circulated about his wife’s infidelity and his own misconduct; she did not accompany him to the colony.

When the members of the company appointed clergy for their colonies, they were following the English custom of patronage. In England, the individual or institution that built a church building and provided the support for its clergy had the right (the advowson) to present a candidate for rector or vicar to the bishop for consent. Since the Virginia Company created parishes in each of its settlements, set aside glebe lands to provide income, and directed that glebe houses and churches be built, it also claimed the right to nominate candidates for vacant positions.

The Virginia Company’s hope of conversion of the Native American people turned out to be considerably more complicated than the English settlers anticipated. Most of the Native Americans in Virginia were part of a confederation of predominantly Algonquian-speaking tribes led by Wahunsonacock (Powhatan) that may have been created as a result of a conflict with the Spanish Jesuits, missionaries who reached Virginia in about 1570. A Native American named Paquiquineo (Don Luis), who had been kidnapped by a party of Spanish explorers ten years earlier and educated in Spain and Mexico, came as an interpreter for the Jesuits. Once in Virginia, however, he abandoned the Jesuits and led an attack on the Spaniards, all but one of whom were killed. A Spanish expedition the following year collected the lone survivor and killed dozens of Native Americans in retaliation. It is also possible that the Native Americans knew of the failed attempt at Roanoke Island of the 1580s, which had involved multiple occasions of violence between the English and local Native Americans. Neither experience, if remembered, would have led the Native Americans to have positive expectations about missionary activity by the English.
It is therefore not surprising that the actual relationship between the English and the Native Americans in Virginia was an alternation between efforts to subdue one another in battle and to gain advantage over one another through treaty and trade.

Wahunsonacock (Powhatan) and his allies raided the English soon after their arrival in May 1607 and by September were engaged in a campaign of regular attacks. Lacking food and worrying about the coming winter, the dwindling company of colonists deposed their leader (Edward Maria Wingfield) and selected Captain John Smith (c. 1580–1631) in his place. Smith was able to purchase food in November from the Chickahominy, who were not part of Wahunsonacock’s federation. Wahunsonacock’s men captured Smith in December. The chief, who probably was not moved—as Smith later claimed—by the entreaties of his daughter Pocahontas (Metoaka or Matoaka, 1595?–1617), offered a treaty, which the Native Americans probably understood as a grant of food in exchange for English goods and subordination to their leader. This led to relative peace for a year.21

From 1609 to 1614, the colonists and Native Americans were back at battle again, with a new treaty ending the fighting in 1614, this one secured by the marriage of colonist John Rolfe (1585–1622) to Pocahontas (Metoaka or Matoaka). Rolfe later explained the marriage was “for the converting to the true knowledge of God and Jesus Christ an unbelieving creature.”22 Clergyman Alexander Whitaker prepared Pocahontas for baptism.23 Marriage to the daughter of a chief, however, clearly had political advantages as well.24 The John Rolfe-Pocahontas
(Metoaka or Matoaka) marriage was one of at least four early marriages between male English settlers and Native American women, and in each case the woman was the daughter of a Native American leader.\textsuperscript{25}

The marriage alliance would not be permanent. After the death of Wahunsonacock (Powhatan), his successor Opechancanough attacked the colonists in 1622 (the Great Massacre) killing perhaps a quarter of the settlers and calling the sustainability of the colony into question. The colonists responded throughout the remainder of the decade with retaliatory attacks.\textsuperscript{26} The state of continued warfare was hardly ideal for evangelization.

### Colonization under Charles I and during the Commonwealth

For so long as James I occupied the throne, the majority of English colonists came to Virginia. With his death, however, the situation began to change rapidly. The number and the religious variety of the colonies increased. The uniform religious character of the Jacobean colonies, broken only by the small and relatively late Plymouth settlement, gave way to a broad religious spectrum.

While many English Christians during Charles’s reign agreed that a Reformed insistence on justification by faith was compatible with a national church, they disagreed strongly on what a properly Reformed national church should look like. In particular, they could not agree on the externals of worship or on the role of the laity in church government.

One party in Caroline England, which the English at mid-century would call *episcopal* because of its support of the episcopacy, believed that the process of reform had already gone far enough.\textsuperscript{27} If anything, members of this party argued, the Church of England had already abandoned too much of the medieval tradition. The English Book of Common Prayer and such attempts at Christian education as the *Homilies* had corrected major theological abuses. The reforming legislation of the sixteenth century had ended the excessive concentration
of power in the hands of the clergy and had given the laity a sufficient voice in church government through the Parliament. Members of a second church party, whom the English called puritans, disagreed. They hoped further to purify worship by eliminating catholic elements such as liturgical vestments, which they feared might obscure the changes that had taken place in theology. They also believed that the laity and the lower clergy needed a stronger voice in the church.

Unlike Elizabeth I and James I, who had avoided favoring any single faction within the church, Charles I sided squarely with the episcopal party. He appointed priests with episcopal party sympathies as his bishops and supported a campaign by William Laud (1573–1645), his choice for Archbishop of Canterbury, to reintroduce more Catholic ritual in England. Puritans objected, and Charles and Laud used arrest and corporal punishment to force compliance.

In 1637, Charles and Laud intensified the religious campaign in two important ways. First, Charles invited a papal legate to join the royal court in order to minister to his queen (Roman Catholic Henrietta Maria of France), thereby signaling to the nation his intention to modify the anti-Roman Catholic stance of his two predecessors. Second, he required the use of an edition of the Book of Common Prayer in Scotland, of which he (like all British monarchs after 1603) was also monarch.

The religious policy of the king and prelate solidified puritan opposition. Most puritans came to favor parliamentary authority over that of the king and to favor forms of church government in which authority was exercised by either regional gatherings of clergy and laity (presbyterian church order) or congregational meetings (congregational or independent church order) to government by bishops.

The colonists in Virginia were not particularly concerned with many of the issues that were hotly debated in Charles's England. Colonial life was still too rough and tumble, for example, for ecclesiastical vestments to be a real option. Similarly, the role of bishops was more of a theoretical than a practical question, since no English bishop visited the
Founding the Church in an Age of Fragmentation (1585–1688)

colonies during the whole of the colonial period. Yet even so, the English debate during the years of Charles’s reign had a profound effect on the religious character of the colonies. It provided so great a distraction from the effort at colonization that settlers were able to remake religious institutions to fit their circumstances. It also changed the character of emigration.

In 1624, Charles prevailed upon his father, the then failing James I, to revoke the charter of the Virginia Company. Charles explained the action by referring to the high mortality rates and dissatisfaction among colonists in Virginia, but his major motive was political. He wanted a source of income that would be free of the control of a Parliament that was becoming increasingly critical of his policies.

Charles’s actions in the remainder of the decade made this motivation clear. He did not suggest major reforms in the management of the Virginia colony and generally paid less attention to it than had the officers of the Virginia Company. He allowed, for example, the Virginia Company’s clergy placement system to lapse without providing for any alternative procedure. When he did summon the colonial legislature in 1629, it was only to demand tax concessions. The colonial legislators rejected the tax proposal but took advantage of the session to adopt a plan for the designation of clergy. The members of the lower house of the legislature (the House of Burgesses) claimed the right to present clergy to the colonial governor for induction into parish positions. In the 1630s and 1640s, the burgesses would also provide legal regulations governing colonial vestries.

The vestries were evolving institutions in England at the time. From the thirteenth to the sixteenth century, English Christians used the name vestry to refer to the regular meetings in which parishioners gathered to provide for the maintenance of church property. The situation changed, however, in 1598 when the English Parliament passed a law making vestries responsible for the care of the poor, a function carried out by monastic institutions before the Reformation. English Christians quickly learned that congregational meetings were not the most
efficient means to meet such obligations. They began to elect select vestries composed of leading men in the parish who provided for the poor between sessions of the congregational meeting. During the seventeenth century, the English vestries took on additional duties that are carried out today by county governments. They cared for roads and replaced the decaying manorial court system in certain judicial matters.

As English congregations and select vestries took such added responsibilities, some puritan members of the Church of England began to suggest that they should also acquire a role in the selection of clergy. This proposal was made in the Second Admonition to the Parliament (1572), which was probably written by Thomas Cartwright (1535–1603), and was one of the ideas advanced by Walter Travers (c. 1548–1635) that led Richard Hooker (c. 1554–1600) to write Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity (1593–97). English parishes never acquired the right to select their own clergy, but some colonial vestries did. This would be the case in Virginia, where the indifference of Charles I made it possible by the 1630s for some vestries to select their own rectors. By 1643, the legislature abandoned its claim to designate clergy and incorporated vestry appointment in its religious statutes. The Virginia precedent would not be followed by the Church of England in all of the remaining colonies, however. When, for example, the English government established the Church of England in Maryland at the end of the century, it gave to the governor the authority to assign clergy. After the American Revolution, however, the Virginia practice became the general rule in the American church.

Virginia vestries attempted to revise English vestry-clergy relations in another way. English clergy, once inducted into their parishes, could only be dismissed by their bishops and then only for grave offenses. In a similar way, clergy in the Virginia colony, once inducted into their parishes by the governor, had life tenure; their vestries could not dismiss them. Colonial vestries tried to get around this situation by neglecting to present their new rectors to the governor, offering their clergy
a series of one-year contracts instead. In most cases, these contracts were renewed each year, producing a stable relationship between vestry and clergy. Where disputes did arise, however, nonpresentation provided the vestry with an effective weapon.\textsuperscript{35}

Again, not all the colonies would follow the Virginia practice of nonpresentation during the colonial era. But after the American Revolution, the Episcopal Church in the United States adopted a canon (1804) that bore some resemblance to the \textit{de facto} Virginia arrangement; it made it possible for vestries in dispute with their clergy to appeal to their bishops for a termination of the rector’s tenure in circumstances that would never have been allowed under English canon law of the same period.

The second way in which Charles’s religious policy affected colonial religion was through emigration. In 1630, whole communities of members of the Church of England who favored congregational polity took advantage of a generous royal charter and moved to New England. Almost from its inception, this settlement was larger in population than Virginia. Indeed, the colonists soon moved beyond the Massachusetts Bay territory into what would later become the separate colonies of New Hampshire and Connecticut. Going beyond the innovations of the settlers in Virginia, they limited church membership to those who could give accounts of their conversion and abandoned use of the Book of Common Prayer. With king and bishops safely distant in London, they were in little danger of being contradicted. On the contrary, John Winthrop (1588–1649) and other members of the new colony hoped that their innovations would provide a model that would be followed back home.

The religious policy of the growing New England colony distanced it not only from the church in England but also from the Virginia colony to the south. The two colonies, separated geographically by the Dutch colony of New Netherlands, attracted colonists from different parts of England. Two-thirds of the New England colonists came from the eastern counties of England’s East Anglia.\textsuperscript{36} The clergy in Virginia, whose geographical patterns usually matched those of the parishioners whom they served, came predominantly from the north and
west of England. Differences that already existed in England were only amplified in America.

Massachusetts Bay was not the only new colony chartered by Charles. Interested in the fortunes of Roman Catholics at the royal court, he also gave his Roman Catholic secretary of state, George Calvert (1580?–1632), permission to create a colony (Maryland, charted in 1632). The first colonists sailed two years later. The majority of the wealthier emigrants would be Roman Catholics, but from the start they only constituted a minority of the settlers. Many of the lower-income colonists were Protestant in sympathy.

In the following decade, Charles was no longer in a position to authorize new colonization. He was locked in a losing power struggle with the puritans that required all his attention. In 1640 Scottish presbyterians, unhappy with the episcopacy and the Scottish Book of Common Prayer (1637), invaded England. Charles summoned two sessions of Parliament to raise money for an English army, but a presbyterian majority in the House of Commons allied itself with the Scots against the king. The presbyterians joined with the army of Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658), composed primarily of puritan independents (congregationalists), to win the resultant Civil War. The victors executed both Archbishop Laud (1645) and Charles I (1649). With the king and archbishop removed, the Parliament reshaped the Church of England, abolishing the prayer book, the episcopate, and the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion. An assembly of puritan divines, summoned by the Parliament to meet at Westminster Abbey, drew up a new confession of faith (the Westminster Confession of Faith) and liturgy (*Directory for Public Worship of God*, 1645).

The victory of the presbyterian party was, however, only partial. Backed by Oliver Cromwell, independent puritans were able to resist Parliament’s efforts to bring all of English puritanism under the new presbyterian form of church government. In 1653, Cromwell asserted his authority over the Parliament more openly; he dissolved the legislative body and ruled alone as England’s Lord Protector. He continued to rule until his death in 1658.
English colonists in the New World acted in a predictable manner. New Englanders, from the same East Anglian towns that were centers of presbyterian and congregational opposition to the crown, supported the Parliament. The colonists in Virginia, Maryland, Bermuda and Barbados, from areas of England in which loyalist sentiments were strong, generally favored the royal family. A third group of colonists, dissenters who objected not only to the episcopal but also to the presbyterian and congregational forms of discipline and doctrine, took advantage of the confusion in England to form a colony in Rhode Island (first charter in 1644) and to establish a dissenting foothold in the Bahamas (arrival of dissenters from Bermuda in 1648). Cromwell sent an expedition to the Caribbean in 1655 that would add Jamaica to the English colonial possessions, taking it from the Spanish.

The Civil War in England may have contributed to a second attack on the colonists by Native Americans. In 1644 Opechancanough, angered by the growing English encroachment on Native American land, sent warriors to drive out the colonists, attacking and destroying their homes, crops, and livestock. The English responded in kind and by 1646 had captured and executed the elderly Opechancanough, enslaved Native American combatants, and imposed annual tribute payments on the remaining Native Americans. By the reckoning of at least one colonist, it was awareness of the civil war taking place in England that led the Native Americans to attack when they did.38

The Colonies after the Restoration

Charles I’s son, Charles II (king, 1660–85), returned to England from exile on the continent in 1660, invited by a Parliament that was dissatisfied with Richard Cromwell’s attempt to succeed his father. With Charles II’s restoration, the episcopal party recaptured the Parliament and ended the Church of England’s experiment with presbyterian government. Anxious to prevent any repetition of the Civil War, the episcopal party in Parliament
not only reestablished the episcopacy, the prayer book (Book of Common Prayer 1662), and the traditional Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, but also enacted legislation to guarantee continued dominance in the Church of England. The Parliament required, for example, that all clergy in the Church of England who were ordained during the presbyterian years be reordained by bishops or forfeit their positions. It also strengthened the language in the prayer book’s preface about the requirement that clergy read Morning and Evening Prayer daily. The new edition of prayer book also contained a provision about confirmation that members of the Church of England in the colonies used to advantage. Earlier editions of the Book of Common Prayer included a rubric requiring confirmation as a prerequisite for reception of communion. The 1662 edition amended that rubric to say that one had to “be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed.”

Many presbyterians, congregationalists, and independents—particularly among the clergy—refused to accept the Parliament’s realignment of the Church of England. Approximately three hundred thousand laypersons and one-fifth of the clergy withdrew from the Church of England and formed separate dissenting denominations. The Parliament tolerated the new groups but adopted the Clarendon Code to limit their privileges. The code’s Five Mile Act, for example, forbade dissenting ministers from living within five miles of any town or parish in which they had served.

The strategy led to a decline in the number of dissenters in England; there were only fifty thousand left in 1750. It provided, however, an increased motivation for dissenting emigration to the colonies, where the provisions of the Clarendon Code were not systematically enforced. The puritans in Massachusetts, for example, retained rights and privileges under their royal charter, despite the fact they organized as a denomination (the Congregational Church) outside of the Church of England. Charles II, moreover, granted a new royal charter to Congregationalists in the Connecticut Valley (1662). The Church of England, a majority church at home, was soon
outnumbered more than three to one by dissenters in the colonies. Only in Virginia, Bermuda, and a few British possessions in the Caribbean was the Church of England established by law, and even they were slow to enforce Parliament’s new religious legislation. As late as 1686, a Virginia vestry, for example, elected a rector who had not complied with the requirement for episcopal ordination.\(^42\)

The Restoration did not, however, finally settle the religious debate in England. The Parliament was strongly episcopal in sentiment, but both Charles II and his brother James II (King, 1685–88) were deeply attracted to Roman Catholicism. Charles II made a deathbed profession to Rome, and James followed an open Roman Catholic policy. When James II introduced Roman Catholic worship at the universities, put Roman Catholics at the head of the army, and arrested seven bishops of the Church of England, the Parliament rebelled against him (the Glorious Revolution, 1688).

Charles and James had pursued their religious goals in a way that contributed to the growth of Presbyterian, Congregational, and other dissenting groups in the colonies. Believing that granting toleration to dissenting Protestants in the colonies was the first step toward toleration of Roman Catholics, Charles renewed the charter of Baptists in Rhode Island (1663) and granted a charter to Quaker William Penn for Pennsylvania (1681). In addition, he made no provisions for the establishment of the Church of England in the charters for the Carolinas (1663) or the territory in New Jersey and New York (1664) that the English had taken from the Dutch. In the year before he was removed from the throne, James attempted to follow his brother’s colonial policy with a Declaration of Indulgence, which would have removed legal penalties against dissenting Protestants and Roman Catholics in England itself. During Charles II’s reign, Presbyterians emigrated in increasing numbers to New York and New Jersey, where neither the Church of England nor the Congregational Church was established and where the Dutch Calvinists, who predated the English, represented a theological tradition similar to their own. By the next
century, English, Scottish, and Irish Presbyterians would prove as numerous in the British colonies on the American mainland as members of the Church of England.

By the time that James II responded to the rebellion engineered by Parliament by abandoning the English throne in 1688, the American colonies on the mainland were well on their way to becoming the most denominationally diverse territory on earth. The Church of England; the Society of Friends (Quakers); and the Congregational, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, and Baptist churches all had their spheres of influence. The colonists had lost forever the religious simplicity of the first colonies in Virginia and Bermuda.

The religious disagreements that colonists brought with them from England contributed to the zeal and the excitement of the competing religious enclaves. The same disagreements, however, resulted in an intolerant attitude toward others. In one sense the colonists were simply mimicking the actions of the British toward them. When the English authorities paid attention to the religious life of this diverse group of colonists, it was most often for negative reasons. In 1638 Archbishop Laud proposed sending a colonial bishop, not to Virginia or Bermuda where episcopal sympathies were strong, but to New England where such a bishop might be used to replace congregational polity. Oliver Cromwell would likewise send a delegation with military authority not to friendly territory, but to Virginia and the Barbados in order to convince the colonists there to abandon the Book of Common Prayer with its petitions for the king and royal family, and to Maryland in order to replace the Roman Catholic proprietor.

The colonists' record was hardly better than that of their motherland. In 1643, Virginia's legislature banned all who were not members of the episcopal party from the colony. Groups of Maryland Protestants led armed insurrections against the Roman Catholic gentry (1655–58 and 1689). Massachusetts authorities executed four Quakers for heresy (1659–61) and nineteen residents of Salem for witchcraft (1692). The various groups of colonists had won for themselves the control of their
own religious lives, but they were unwilling to grant the same privilege to minorities within their midst.

**Indentured and Enslaved Servants**

The restoration of Charles II in 1660 contributed to a process already underway of legalizing life-long servitude for Africans. English colonists had relied upon the labor of servants from the beginning of colonization. During much of the seventeenth century the majority of that labor was provided by European servants, who at least theoretically contracted voluntarily to labor for a set number of years in exchange for the cost of passage to the New World.\(^{45}\) Even in Massachusetts—the colony with the highest percentage of free labor—about one-quarter of early emigrants were indentured servants. Elsewhere the percentages were higher. In Virginia and Maryland, for example, about three-quarters of early British emigrants were servants. Barbados had the highest percentage of enslaved labor in the first half of the century, but even there English indentured servants were more important economically than were enslaved Africans or Native Americans before the 1660s.\(^{46}\)

There were, however, enslaved Native Americans and Africans from early on. The first African and Native American servants reached Bermuda by 1616. Dutch traders brought enslaved Africans to Virginia in 1619. The colony in Barbados included enslaved persons from its founding in 1627.\(^{47}\)

While the conditions of these early indentured and enslaved servants were far from ideal, the contours of servitude were not yet fixed prior to 1660. Members of both groups were called servants in the first half of the century, with the term slave only becoming common for those in involuntary servitude in the second half of the century.\(^{48}\) Farmers worked in the fields beside their indentured and enslaved servants, slept in the same rooms, and at times shared the same beds.\(^{49}\)

At least some of the colonists would have been aware that involuntary servitude was a condition from which Europeans were not immune. By some recent estimates, Muslim raiders
on the Barbary Coast enslaved one to one and a quarter million Europeans between 1530 and 1780. Europeans also constituted a significant percentage of those enslaved by Ottoman Turks. Of this Captain John Smith of the Jamestown colony claimed first-hand knowledge; he wrote that as a young man he had been captured in battle by the Turks and sold as a slave before later escaping by killing his master and fleeing by way of Russia.

As historian Philip Morgan has explained, indentured servants and enslaved people in the British colonies came to recognize that they had much in common. “The level of exploitation each group suffered inclined them to see the others as sharing their predicament . . . . Not only did many blacks and whites work alongside one another, but they ate, caroused, smoked, ran away, stole, and made love together.”

Prior to 1660 and the accession of Charles II the British colonies lacked any clear legal basis for keeping people in permanent servitude or any consistent legal way to distinguish the status of indentured and enslaved persons. Colonists in Bermuda dealt with the ambiguity by extending the length of the indenture for most enslaved Africans and Native Americans to 99 years. There were exceptions, however, including one European given such a 99-year term and about ten percent of the Africans in Bermuda who were given shorter periods of service. Something similar must have been going on at the same time in Virginia, where “in some counties perhaps a third of the black population was free in the 1660s and 1670s.” The Barbados Council included the possibility of a contract for a fixed term of service in a declaration about servitude for Native Americans and Africans in 1636.

There also was confusion about the relationship between the Christian faith and perpetual servitude. Enslaved individuals who were or became Christians argued that they should be made free as a result of their faith. Some Christian servants in Virginia and Maryland sued in the courts for freedom. This argument was used in Virginia as late as the 1690s. There was also the question of the status of the children to those in permanent or ninety-nine-year servitude.
The effort to codify the status of those in servitude was delayed by uncertainties of the English Civil War (1642–48) and the subsequent Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell (1653–58), who increased the supply of indentured servants by sending large numbers of Irish prisoners to the Caribbean. With the restoration of Charles II in 1660, however, matters began to change. Charles II and his brother James, who would follow him to the throne as James II in 1685, were anxious to profit from the slave trade. They founded the Company of Royal Adventurers Trading to Africa (1660, reorganized 1663), went to war with the Dutch to support the company’s interests (the second Anglo-Dutch War, 1665–1667), and finally reorganized the body as the Royal African Company (1672). The company claimed a monopoly on all transportation of enslaved persons to British colonies. It would eventually ship “more enslaved African women, men, and children to the Americas than any other single institution during the entire period of the transatlantic slave trade.”

With a new king supportive of the slave trade, England’s colonies began to put servitude on a more certain level. Barbados led the way in 1661 with the adoption of one act “for the good governing of Servants, and ordering the Rights between Masters and Servants” and another for “the better ordering and governing of Negroes.” The new British colony in Jamaica adopted a version of the same act in 1664, and a further act in 1684. The new colony of Carolina, which Charles II chartered in 1663, would copy the Jamaica act of 1684 in 1691.

In 1662 the Virginia General Assembly adopted an act that set aside the English precedent that the status of a child depended on that of the father. For enslaved Africans, the status of the child would thereafter depend on that of the mother. When the Lower Norfolk Court ruled in 1665 that a mixed-race Christian man named Manuel was to be treated as an indentured servant rather than permanently enslaved, the legislature responded with a 1667 act stating “that the sacrament of baptism ‘doth not alter the condition of the person as to his bondage or freemome.’” An act in 1670 let stand legislation (1655 and 1658) that classified
enslaved Native Americans as indentured servants, but specified that non-Christians who arrived in the colony by ship (presumably from Africa or the Caribbean) were enslaved for life.\textsuperscript{60}

One of the motives for treating enslaved African Americans and indentured servants differently was the perceived danger that the two groups might unite against their common oppressors. This is in fact what happened in Virginia in Bacon’s Rebellion of 1676. A dispute between English settler Thomas Matthews and members of the small Doeg tribe, which was touched off by the destruction of the Doegs’ corn by Matthews’s hogs, quickly escalated as a result of two complicating factors: the presence in the region of Iroquois-speaking Susquehannocks who were probing south from their base in southern New York and a simmering dispute among settlers about the exclusive trading agreements with Native Americans held by the colony’s upper class (which less-privileged settlers considered to be a scheme to limit available land and maintain the value of large estates). Matthews’s men attacked a Susquehannock village in error, thinking that it was inhabited by Doegs. The Susquehannocks retaliated, killing approximately three hundred settlers, particularly along the Rappahannock River that marked the northern most line of settlement in Virginia at the time. Nathaniel Bacon (1647–76), who had only been in the colony since 1674 and was related by marriage to Governor William Berkeley (1606–77), blamed Berkeley for inaction. Bacon raised an army composed of indentured servants and Africans to whom he promised land, attacked the Siouan-speaking Occaneechee tribe in the southwest of the colony (which had nothing to do with the Susquehannocks), and sacked the colonial capital at Jamestown. Bacon died of disease and the rebellion soon collapsed. His followers were subdued, with twenty-three going to the gallows.\textsuperscript{61}

The fear of this sort of collaboration between indentured servants and Africans led legislators to construct provisions limiting contact between groups. This was already happening before Bacon’s uprising. The Virginia legislature passed laws in 1662 setting the fine for fornication of people of different
races as twice that for those of the same race. A Maryland act in 1664 spoke of interracial marriage in strongly negative terms. In 1691 Virginia specified banishment for any person who married another of a different race. Other legislation was designed to limit the presence of free Africans, who might be perceived as offering hope to those who were still enslaved. In 1691 Virginia banned the freeing of any enslaved person, unless provisions were also made for that person to leave the colony. In 1729 Bermuda required all free Africans and Native Americans to leave the colony.

This effort to separate enslaved Africans from English indentured servants was the source of the linguistic convention of referring to persons of European origin as “white.” Early acts had spoken of Africans and Christian servants but beginning in Barbados in the 1650s the term “Christian servants” was replaced by “whites.” In many cases the term was paired with the designation of persons of African heritage as “blacks.”

By the 1670s some were raising their voices against the formalization of the slave trade and the status of enslaved people that had begun a decade earlier. Merchants protested against the monopoly of the Royal African Company, not objecting to perpetual servitude but arguing that their inability to engage in the profitable market was an abridgement of their rights. Some clergy—particularly new arrivals from England—protested against the denial of common humanity and the resistance to evangelization of enslaved people. William Frith preached in his parish in the Barbados in 1677 that “Negroes have souls to be saved, no less than other people, and an equal right, even to be saved, to the merits of Christ.” One of the other five Church of England clergy on the island preached in a similar vein. Both he and Frith were ejected from their parishes as a result.

Clergyman Morgan Godwyn (baptized 1640, died between 1685 and 1709), who served in a parish in Virginia and also spent time in Barbados, raised similar objections. After returning to England he published a critique of the colonial practice (Negro’s and Indians Advocate, 1680). He advocated adoption of the Bermuda scheme of the 99-year
indenture (which potentially preserved the free status of children), chided the European settlers to baptize Africans and Native Americans, and suggested that failure to evangelize and allow free religious practice to an enslaved person should result in “a present and absolute release to the said Slave for ever.” Some Virginia clergy were apparently not supportive of the 1691 ban on intermarriage, for the legislature thought it necessary in 1705 to adopt a further act that specified a fine of ten thousand pounds of tobacco for any clergyman who presided at a marriage of a black to a white.

These individual protests were not capable of turning back the expanding institution of slavery. The title of a sermon that Godwyn preached in London and published in 1685—Trade Preferr’d before Religion—did a good job of summarizing the problem. The churches in the British colonies, divided as they were into competing denominations, were no match for the economic lure of the fortunes to be made in the African slave trade.

The enslaving of Native Americans did end—though for economic and political—rather than humanitarian—reasons. The English settlements in the middle colonies initially lacked the numerical advantage that had enabled Virginia and Massachusetts colonists to dominate Native Americans and as a result opted for negotiated treaties. The enslaving in the Carolinas continued until colonists learned of the lethal consequences of war with Native Americans and Native Americans became convinced that sale of captives from other tribes to the English was unwise as a long-term policy. Perhaps most importantly, the English grew aware of the need to cultivate Native American allies against the French and Spanish.

Virginia banned the further enslavement of Native Americans in 1705. Massachusetts (1712) and Connecticut (1715) followed suit with similar legislation. The Yamasee War in the Carolinas (1715–17) marked the end of ended large-scale slaving there.
NOTES


2. Prior to the 1970s it was common for historians to assume that the English people had embraced an internally consistent Protestant Anglicanism at some point in the reign of Elizabeth I. James Anthony Froude argued in his *History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Death of Elizabeth* (1856–1870), for example, that the failed invasion of the Spanish Armada convinced the English people to accept the Reformation. A. G. Dickens argued in his *English Reformation* (1964) that what he identified as a “balanced Anglicanism” came into being around 1600. It is now common for historians to suggest that change for a whole nation comes at a far slower pace and that English religion was in flux during a “long Reformation” that, according to some accounts, lasted into the eighteenth century. See, for example, Nicholas Tyacke, ed., *England’s Long Reformation: 1500–1800* (London: UCL Press, 1998).

3. For a sympathetic description of late medieval Catholicism in England, see Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (1992). In contrast to such earlier authors as A. G. Dickens (*The English Reformation*, 1964) who suggested that much about late medieval Catholicism was superstitious and non-Biblical, Duffy has argued that “late medieval Catholicism exerted an enormously strong, diverse, and vigorous hold over the loyalty of the people up to the very moment of the Reformation,” and “traditional religion had about it no particular marks of exhaustion or decay.” See Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (New Haven: Yale, 1992), 4; and A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation*, 2d edition (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989), 25–45.


6. The comfortable words first appeared in the English liturgy in the *Order of Communion* of 1548 and were included in editions of
the Book of Common Prayer from 1549 on. The Episcopal Church retained the comfortable words in the rite I Holy Eucharist of 1979, but altered the introduction that had given words their name—“Hear what comfortable words our Saviour Christ saith unto all who truly turn to him.” See Book of Common Prayer (1928), 76; and the Book of Common Prayer (1979), 332.

7. At the time of the coronation of Edward VI in 1547, the English used the term Protestant to apply to German Lutherans and Reformed Christians. By the end of the following century, however, the word Protestant was in general use in England as a generic term for non-Roman Catholic, non-Anabaptist western Christians. The Act of Settlement of 1700, for example, specified that the English monarch should be “in the Protestant Line for the Happiness of the Nation and the Security of our Religion.” Since the nineteenth century, however, many Episcopalians have avoided use of the adjective Protestant to describe their church, suggesting instead that Anglicanism occupies a middle ground between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. While Protestant still remains part of the official corporate title of the Episcopal Church (the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America), the General Convention of the Episcopal Church authorized the use of the shorter title (the Episcopal Church) in 1967 and 1976. For further information see Diarmaid MacCulloch, The Reformation: A History (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), xx, and Act of Settlement (1700 CHAPTER 2 12 and 13 Will 3), http://www.legislation.gov.uk/aep/Will3/12-13/2 (accessed February 11, 2014).


25. Rebecca Anne Goetz recounts three other marriages: Metoaka’s attendant (and possibly half-sister) Elizabeth, who married an Englishman from Bermuda; Keziah, the daughter of a Nansemond underchief, who married clergyman John Bass in 1638; and Mary Kittomaquund, the daughter of a Piscataway chief, who married Giles Brent in 1644. See Goetz, *Baptism of Early Virginia*, 66–70.
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27. *The Oxford English Dictionary* notes the use of “Episcopal Party” in a 1651 work by Richard Baxter (1615–91). Eight years later, Edward Stillingfleet identified the three major English church parties in his *Irenicum* as “congregational men,” “presbyterians,” and “episcopal men.” This history has followed this seventeenth century usage for two reasons: (1) it is a more neutral term than the *Orthodox* label used by Archbishop William Laud or the *Anglican* designation popular since the middle of the nineteenth century (Laud distinguished his *orthodoxy* from the *heterodoxy* of the puritans. The use of *Anglican* can mislead readers into believing that pre-Restoration puritans were not members of the Church of England); (2) *episcopal* would be the word that American Anglicans adopted for their church after the American Revolution.

33. The English still follow the patronage system. In much of the remainder of the Anglican world, the bishop meets with a committee that includes parish representation in order to choose a rector. In the United States, however, there is one remainder of the patronage system. In many dioceses, the bishop retains the right to appoint the vicars of missions.
34. English clergy would retain the right of tenure until it was abridged in the early 21st century by the passage of “the Clergy Discipline Measure” (2003, No. 3) and “the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure” (2009, No. 1).


39. The idea that confirmation is a separate sacrament that is required prior to reception of communion is an idea that dates to the 13th century or earlier. Roman Catholics continued the expectation of confirmation prior to reception of communion until about 1910, when they created a separate rite of first communion. Episcopalians dropped the expectation of confirmation as a prerequisite for communion in the 1970s.


42. Woolverton, *Colonial Anglicanism*, 53.


44. Brydon noted that the Virginia colonists reached a compromise with Cromwell’s commissioners. The commissioners allowed the colonists to continue to use the Book of Common Prayer for one year, provided that they omitted the royal prayers. Brydon assumed that the colonists used the prayer book even after the expiration of the year. Campbell noted that Barbados clergy followed a direction from Cromwell’s fleet and surrendered their Books of Common Prayer, but suggested that “they probably kept other copies.” See Brydon, *Virginia’s Mother Church*, 1:122; and P. F. Campbell. *The Church in Barbados in the Seventeenth Century* (St. Ann’s Garrison, St. Michael, Barbados: Barbados Museum and Historical society, 1982), 60.

45. See Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*, 229–31 for a discussion of individuals who were kidnapped and sold into indentured servitude. See Edward B. Rugemer, “The Development of Mastery and Race in the Comprehensive Slave Codes of the Greater Caribbean during the Seventeenth Century,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 70 (July 2013):


48. The Barbados slave code of 1661 may have been the first to use the term slave as a synonym for enslaved African. In Bermuda the term slave does not appear regularly in legal documents until the 1680s. See Bernhard, *Slaves and Slaveholders in Bermuda, 1616–1782* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 50; and Rugemer, “The Development of Mastery and Race,” 438.


53. The European exception was a Damian Pecke who agreed in 1654 to a 99-year indenture. Twelve of 118 blacks who appear in indentures and deeds (1636–1661) in Bermuda had terms of service ranging from seven to thirty years. See Bernhard, *Slaves and Slaveholders in Bermuda*, 51.


57. Pettigrew estimated that the company transported 150,000 enslaved persons between 1672 and the early 1720s. See William A. Pettigrew, *Freedom’s Debt: The Royal African Company and


60. Carolina did not initially follow the example of Virginia in excluding Native Americans from permanent servitude. While the South Carolina slave act of 1691 was based on precedent from Jamaica, it altered the Jamaica act in one important way; it added “Native Americans” to the category of those that were treated as in perpetual servitude. It should also be noted that the Virginia legislation, interpreted as excluding Native Americans from perpetual servitude, contained an ambiguity. It specified servants who “come by land” should serve a twelve-year indenture, and that children should serve until the age of thirty. Not all enslaved Native Americans came by land; however; the English sometimes took Native American prisoners of war by ship to other colonies away from their homes to limit the possibility of escape. See Kathleen M. Brown, Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and power in Colonial Virginia (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1996), 136; Parent, Foul Means, 113–14; and Rugemer, “Development of Mastery,” 452.


62. Morgan, Slave Counterpoint, 15.

63. Bernhard, Slaves and Slaveholders in Bermuda, 52, 62.

64. Rugemer, “Development of Mastery,” 446–47.


66. Campbell, Church in Barbados, 115–16.

67. Morgan Godwyn, The Negro’s and Indians Advocate, Suing for their Admission to the Church: or A Persuasive to the Instructing and Baptizing of the Negro’s and Indians in our Plantations. Shewing, that as the Compliance therewith Can Prejudice No Man’s Just Interest; so the Wilful Neglecting and Opposing of it, is no Less than a Manifest Apostacy from the Christian Faith. To which is Added, a Brief Account of Religion in Virginia (London: Printed for the author, by J.D., 1680), 143, 154.


70. Demographics in the middle colonies began to change about 1720, however. See Francis Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies from its Beginning to the Lancaster Treaty of 1744* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1984), 8–9.
