English Attempts in the New World

• John Cabot (Henry VII): 1497 Eastern Canada

• Religious conflict at home caused delay in exploration:
  – Henry VIII (Protestant) to Mary Tudor (Catholic) then Elizabeth (Protestant) for 40 years
    • Elizabeth saw colonization as a way to defeat Catholic domination

Sir Francis Drake  John Cabot  Henry Hudson
• Elizabeth I authorized expeditions to search for the “Northwest Passage” to Asia (Frobisher)

• Allowed privateers to raid Spanish ships & new world ports for gold and silver (John Hawkins and S.F. Drake most famous)
The Roanoke Colony

1585: Sir Walter Raleigh sent John White and 100+ men to build a settlement on Roanoke Island off the coast of the Carolinas, left and when returned:

- Settlement failed, but had some positive impacts (IDs of plants, animals; maps and pics of natives)

“CROATOAN” and original settlers’ whereabouts still unknown today
The last English attempt at colonization had been the “Lost Colony” of Roanoke in 1587

-Financial hit for Sir Walter Raleigh
Jamestown, VA and Maryland

James Fort skeleton JR1225B, in situ/Skeleton of a male, 14 to 15 years old, with a small stone arrowpoint. Credit: APVA Preservation Virginia/Historic Jamestowne. Image courtesy: Chip Clark
English Motivations

• Primogeniture decreed that only eldest sons were eligible to inherit land estates; younger sons were forced to seek their fortunes elsewhere.

• Landlords were “enclosing” cropland for sheep grazing, forcing many farmers to leave.
Joint Stock Companies

Shares of a company are sold to investors, who expect a profit in return.

What advantages does a Joint Stock Company offer over a single investor?
The VA Company approached King James I of England in 1606

Successfully requested a charter that would allow
the creation and settlement of two colonies along the N.
American coast.
Encouraging Settlement

The VA Company promises things to encourage men to go to N. America

Guaranteed colonists the same rights/protection as Englishmen

Future issues?
Jamestown

- In late 1606, the VA Company sends three ships to the Eastern coast of N. America
- Arrive in the spring of 1607
  - At the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay
  - Attacked by Indians, so they pressed inland
- On 24 May 1607, about 100 colonists land at what would become Jamestown, on the James River
Geography
Geography

Landscape

- Wide and slow moving
- Good for fishing/shipping

Waterways

- Flat, marshy land
- Fertile soil
- Long growing season

Problems

- Spreaders of disease
Jamestown Fort and Settlement Map
1607

- English colonists built a fortified settlement and immediately begin hunting for gold
- "Gentlemen" colonists refused to work for themselves
  - Spent little time hunting or planting
- By January 1608, only 38 colonists were still alive
John Smith

- Member of the first group of settlers
- Listed as one of the seven council members chosen to govern the colonies
- Captured by NAs in December 1607
- “Saved” from execution by Pocahontas
Smith’s True Contribution

-After his release from the Powhatans, Smith took control of Jamestown
-Imposed military discipline
  -Organized settlers into work gangs
  -Decreed “he that will not worke shall not eate”
Near Demise of Jamestown

“The Starving Time”

1607
104 colonists arrive

By spring 1608: 38 survive

1609
300 more colonists

By spring 1610: 60 survive

1610-1624
10,000 colonists

1624: 1,000

Adult life expectancy: 40 years old

Infant mortality rate
(death before 5) 80%

1607
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Lord De La Warr

- Malnourished and dying, settlers left and were met at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay by their new governor
- Imposed a harsh military regime
- 1610: declared war against the natives using “Irish Tactics” (raiding, burning, pillaging, torching cornfields)
- 1st Anglo-Powhatan War ends in 1614 with the marriage of Pocahontas and Rolfe
Tobacco: The Key to Survival

Settlers had been searching for a marketable product
  - Begin growing tobacco around 1610

High demand would have made it extremely profitable

Native VA leaf was of poor quality
- John Rolfe smuggles seedlings from the Caribbean
- These seeds will grow crops of better quality, creating high demand for VA tobacco
“King Nicotine”

-Leeched nutrients from the soil when successively planted
-Enchained the prosperity of VA to the fluctuating price of a single crop (monoculture export economy)
-Promoted the plantation system and with it a brisk demand for fresh labor
Labor Force in Jamestown

- Labor shortage became an issue

For freight or passage apply to Scott and Brown, merchants in Glasgow, or Captain William McCunn, in Greenock.

**WANTED,**

To go to Virginia, under indentures for a few years; Young Man, who understands LATIN, GREEK, and MATHEMATICS, to serve as a Tutor in a gentleman’s family.

A lad who has served an apprenticeship as a Surgeon, to live with one of his own profession.

Two Gardeners, who understands their business well, particularly the work in a garden.

These, properly recommended, will meet with suitable encouragement, on applying to Buchanan and Simson, merchants in Glasgow.

**THAT the FOGGAGE of the Laigh Park of Boogs, consisting of sixty four acres, or there-hv. is to be set till December next, and entered-to**
Indentured Servitude

Laborer who agreed to a fixed term (4-7 years) in exchange for free passage to VA

- Master/Sponsor provided food, shelter, clothing

Laborers came by the thousands

- Died in large numbers
- Often mistreated
- Later become rebellious, causing planters in VA to turn to slave labor instead of indentured servants (Bacon’s Rebellion)
The Headright System (1618)

- Used as a way to attract new settlers to the region and address the labor shortage
- New settlers who paid their way to VA received 50 acres of land
1619: An Important Year For Jamestown

Three important changes

120 pounds of tobacco
House of Burgesses

- 1\textsuperscript{st} Representative
- Democracy in the colonies
- Met once a year
- Actions needed governor approval (who were appointed by directors in England)
“Widowarchy”

- 6:1 ratio of men:women
- Women (especially widows) had unusual power in the Chesapeake area
Relationship with the Natives

Jamestown was settled right in the middle of the land controlled by NA leader Powhatan

- Chief of the Powhatan Confederacy of approx. 30 tribes
- Father of Pocahontas

- Originally sent food to colonists, assuming accepting food was accepting dependence and submission
- Colonists began to seize corn forcibly
Anglo-Powhatan Wars

- Pocahontas died in 1617
  - Severed the tie between the English and Natives
- Powhatan dies in 1618
  - His younger brother will take over as leader (dislikes English settlers)
- Rolfe and 346 others were killed in 1622, and the 2nd Anglo-Powhatan War began in 1644; natives defeated and banned from their land in 1646
- By 1669, only 2,000 NAs remained in VA (10%); 1685 considered extinct
The 3 D’s: “Disease, Disorganization, and Disposability”

- Smallpox and measles
- Lacked the unity to make effective opposition to the relatively well-organized and militarily disciplined whites
- Served no economic function for the VA colonists; provided no reliable labor source or valuable commodities to offer in commerce (agriculture)

After European colonization of the “New World”, Native American populations decreased by 90%
Lasting Result of War with Natives

The VA Company is bankrupt

Royal inquest into attacks finds that ten times more colonists had died from starvation and disease than at the hands of NAs

King James dissolves VA Company in 1624

House of Burgesses is allowed to continue to self-govern, but their actions are monitored by the crown and its advisors

VA becomes a royal colony in 1625
The Colony Spreads

Large plantations

Widely scattered
VA Governor William Berkeley

- Fur trade with NAs
- Ignored attacks on backcountry settlers
Bacon’s Rebellion - 1676

NA disputes between colonists over the frontier

Coastal planters were doing much better than frontier planters in many ways:

High taxes, low prices for tobacco, and resentment against special privileges given those close to the VA Governor

Frontier colonists ask for protection from VA Governor, but were denied
Bacon’s Rebellion - 1676

Bacon’s Rebellion: Nathaniel Bacon led frontier colonists and indentured servants in a rebellion; burned Jamestown

- Showed first signs of discontent with leadership in the English colonies; NA attacks did cease for a few years, but it failed to solve the issue of the VA govt/aristocracy

- Caused a move away from indentured servant use to the importation & use of slave labor