

## Chapter 2 - First English Colonies

### I. England's Spiritual and Political Heritage

#### A. Seeds of English Reformation in early 1300s

1. John Wycliffe - exposed false doctrines of the Roman Church and had entire Bible translated into English for the first time.
2. William Tyndale - Widely circulated English translation of the Bible
3. Henry VIII broke ties between England and the Roman Church - even though he did this for reasons that were unscriptural, it still allowed the English people freedom to study the Bible for themselves.

#### B. Limited Representative Government

1. Magna Carta, 1215, by King John - Englishmen had rights
2. British Parliament developed in 1200s

### II. The English begin to explore and colonize

#### A. Early English Explorers

1. John Cabot
  - a. Explored Atlantic Coast of North America and claimed the land for England in 1497.
  - b. First modern European explorer to set foot on the mainland of North America.
2. Francis Drake
  - a. First Englishmen to sail around the world in 1577
  - b. Stole gold from the Spanish ships leaving America
  - c. Queen Elizabeth knighted him on his ship's deck, *The Golden Hind*

#### B. Roanoke, the Lost Colony

1. Sir Humphrey Gilbert
  - a. Tried to set up colonies in the new world but failed twice.
  - b. Drowned at sea.
2. Sir Walter Raleigh
  - a. First expedition abandoned

- b. Second expedition was led by John White who landed at Roanoke
  - 1. White's granddaughter, Virginia Dare, was the first English child to be born in America.
  - 2. White sailed back to England for supplies but couldn't return right away because England was at war.
  - 3. When White returned, colony had vanished with letters "CROA" carved on a tree - thought might have stood for Croatan - an island with friendly Indians.

### C. Continued Interest in Colonization

- 1. The Joint-stock companies
  - a. Needed a great deal of money to begin colonies
  - b. Forerunner of a modern corporation
  - c. If colony failed, each man would lose only what he invested but if he succeeded, profits would be divided among the stockholders.
- 2. The Virginia Charter
  - a. King James I allowed two joint-stock companies to undertake colonization in Virginia.
    - 1. London Company - Southern Virginia
    - 2. Plymouth Company - Northern Virginia
  - b. Charter guaranteed the colonists were to enjoy the same rights and liberties as Englishmen abiding in the home country.

## III. The Virginia Colony

### A. Early Settlement

- 1. Jamestown
  - a. First permanent English settlement in the New World
  - b. Several problems
    - 1. Low-lying land was mosquito infested - malaria
    - 2. River water was contaminated
    - 3. Hostile Indians troubled the colony - mainly due to their inconsideration of the Indians to begin with.

4. Most settlers were either too lazy to work or too proud to do common labor.

c. Common-store system

1. All the fruits of labor were put in a common storehouse and each received food and supplies according to their needs.
2. Communal system meant industrious man provided for the idle.
3. Americas first experiment at Socialism.

2. Captain John Smith

- a. Established work policy that any that would not work would not eat. (2 Thess. 3:10)
- b. He was injured and had to return to England.

3. Starving Time

- a. Ate dogs, horses, rats, mice, and a few were found to have eaten their dead family members.
- b. Approximately 300 came to Jamestown, but in the spring of 1610, only 60 remained alive.

B. Jamestown Begins to Prosper

1. The introduction of tobacco

- a. John Rolfe
  1. Married Pocahontas as his second wife
  2. Introduced tobacco to the colony
    - a. King James I opposed the use
    - b. Became big business
    - c. Needed large labor force
- b. Indentured servant labor force was introduced to meet the demands of the tobacco industry.

2. An Important Change

- a. Each man got his own piece of ground to support him
- b. Free enterprise would become a cornerstone of American greatness.

- c. In 1619, first women arrived to marry settlers.
- 3. A New Labor Supply
  - a. First Africans in Virginia were purchased as indentured servants rather than slaves.
  - b. Led to the slavery system of the South
- 4. The House of Burgesses
  - a. Delegates from various districts assembled in Jamestown to advise the governor and assist him in making laws.
  - b. Important precedent for representative government in early America.
- 5. Virginia becomes a royal colony when the king revoked the charter in 1624 and now owned the colony personally.
- 6. Bacon's Rebellion
  - a. Nathaniel Bacon led rebellion against Governor Berkeley because he refused to help them against Indian attacks.
  - b. Americans already expected their government to protect all citizens and not just a few.

#### IV. The Pilgrims Sail for America

##### A. Desire for Religious Freedom

- 1. Puritans wanted to purify the Anglican Church from its Catholic traditions.
- 2. Separatists wanted to completely withdraw from the official church.
- 3. King James I persecuted both groups

##### B. Concern for Their Children

- 1. Scrooby, England's congregation of Separatists moved to Holland where they could worship freely.
- 2. John Robinson led them to Leyden, Holland
- 3. Children in Holland were forced to work long hours and neglect school
  - a. Separatists were concerned for their children's physical and spiritual health.

- b. Worldly values competed for spiritual ones.
  - 4. Separatists long remembered as Pilgrims
    - a. Came on the Mayflower to the New World in 1630.
    - b. Pilgrims called those who came with them that weren't part of their congregation "Strangers."
  - 5. Landed at Cape Cod which they called New England.
- C. The Mayflower Compact
  - 1. Charter of Civil government.
  - 2. Precedent for Representative government
- V. The Plymouth Colony
  - A. God Blesses the Pilgrims
    - 1. Indian help comes in the spring
      - a. Samoset
      - b. Squanto - remained in Plymouth
      - c. Massasoit - chief of the Wampanoag who signed peace treaty with Governor Carver.
    - 2. The First Thanksgiving
      - a. Fall 1621, three day feast thanking God for His bountiful blessings.
      - b. In 1863, Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the last Thursday in November as a holiday remembering this celebration.
    - 3. Established a Successful Colony
      - a. Miles Standish, "stranger", headed the Plymouth military defense force.
      - b. John Alden, "stranger", served in a political office
      - c. Elder William Brewster served as the minister.
      - d. John Carver, first governor for a little over a year.
      - e. William Bradford, second governor
        - 1. Governed for 30 years
        - 2. Wrote first American history book, *History of Plymouth Plantation*.

- f. Council for New England granted Plymouth a patent.
- g. Free enterprise system worked better than communal system.
  - 1. Faith in God
  - 2. Strong belief in Protestant work ethic
  - 3. Exercise of the free system made Plymouth a successful community.

B. Establishing Political Liberty

- 1. All freemen met in General Court - early example of republican self-government.
- 2. Pilgrims successful in representative self-government because:
  - a. Dominated by Scriptural concepts
  - b. Great respect for law and leaders

C. Establishing Religious Liberty

- 1. People were free to attend the churches of their choice.
- 2. Founded the Congregational Church.

D. Our Pilgrim Fathers

- 1. Became part of the Massachusetts Bay Colony
- 2. Shining light for principles of political and religious freedom that would take root in America.