

## Early English Settlement:

### Motivations for Settlement & the Founding of Jamestown

#### ❖ **Motives of the English Settlers**

##### ➤ **Religious**

- Protestant Reformation vs. Catholic Counter-Reformation
- Anglican Church became the official Church of England (1530's)
  - Cath. & Prot. dissenters (Puritans, Quakers) suffered discrimination & persecution
    - ◆ Many migrated to New World in search of religious freedom

##### ➤ **Political**

- Series of political conflicts between Parliament & Stuart Kings
  - English Civil War (1642-45), beheading of Charles I (1649), Cromwell & the Protectorate (1648-58), Stuart Restoration (1660) & the Glorious Revolution (1688-89)
    - ◆ Many migrated to colonies to escape tyranny & unrest

##### ➤ **Economic**

- 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries - Enclosure system (fencing off common fields for use as pasture)
  - Landless peasants moved to cities – high unemployment & debt
  - Poor Laws punish debtors w/ whipping and/or imprisonment
    - ◆ Many migrate with hope of acquiring their own farmland

#### ❖ **Motives of the English Government**

##### ➤ **World Power**

- Rivalry & conflict w/ Spain leads to English “seadog” raids (Hawkins & Drake) on Spanish shipping carrying treasure & goods
- 1588 – Defeat of Spanish Armada
  - Emergence of England as a world force & dominant sea power
- England plants colonies to enlarge & protect overseas empire

##### ➤ **Economic Benefits**

- England adopted doctrine of **mercantilism**
  - Colonies organized & governed to enrich mother country & make it self-sufficient from world market of raw materials

#### ❖ **During Elizabeth's reign – Spain & France claimed most of N.A.**

- English raided Spanish shipping and explored for NW Passage to Asia
  - 1577-80 – Drake sails around world
  - 1570's → Eng. & Spain set up defensive bases in N World
  - 1583 – Humphrey Gilbert fails to start colony in Newfoundland
  - **1584 – Walter Raleigh establishes Roanoke Colony in Virginia**
    - 1<sup>st</sup> attempt failed – colonists not prepared for hard work

- Expected Indians to provide for them
  - 1587 – more settlers left in colony – Eng. ships leave to fight Sp.
    - No new supplies or people until 1590 – by then **all colonists at Roanoke were gone without a trace**
  - Parliament discouraged from funding further attempts at colonization due to costs & failures
  - **Future attempts would come with private \$ from Joint Stock Companies** – shareholders pay for colony
- ❖ C. 1603 – King James I (Eng.) had better relations w/ Spain
- Spain feared Netherlands more than England – gave up claim on territory known to Eng. as Virginia, allowing for English colonization
  - James granted overlapping charters to 2 joint stock companies
    - **Virginia Co. of London - London Company (Carolinas to Hudson)**
    - **VA Co. of Plymouth - Plymouth Company (Maine to Potomac)**
  - **Colonies to make \$ for company** – colonists regarded as employees
- ❖ 1607 – London Co. sets up Jamestown on James River
- **1<sup>st</sup> perm. English colony in N.A.** - Good defensive spot but swampy
    - Most of 105 settlers men from English gentry – not prepared for harsh conditions – **only 38 survive 1<sup>st</sup> year**
      - Replacements come in larger #'s
  - **1608 – Capt. John Smith brings order & survival w/ military discipline – organized work gangs for food & shelter**
    - Also builds positive relations w/ Powhatan Confed.
  - Discipline collapses in 1609 w/ Smith's departure
    - **1609-10 – Starving Time – 400+ die**
    - **Expected Indians to provide – colonists not used to hard work**
      - Series of wars w/ Powhatan Confed. follow
  - Jamestown revitalized w/ new colonists & military rule
  - **John Rolfe develops tobacco as cash crop – key to colony's prosperity**
    - **London Co. increases supplies and colonists to capitalize on it**
- ❖ **1618 - Colonization encouraged by Headrights** – 50 acre grants to those paying own way to VA + 50 more for each person they bring
- **Many come as indentured servants** – work 4-7 years to pay debt
- ❖ By 1619 – colonial elected assembly formed – House of Burgesses
- Decisions had to be ok'd by London Co. but **1st rep. govt. in America**
- ❖ By 1622 – **key problems w/ VA colony**
- **Company corruption, high death rates, continued war w/ Indians**
  - **Land disputes w/ Powhatans** nearly lead to elimination of Indians
  - Problems w/ London Co. lead James I to revoke the charter in 1624
    - Virginia becomes a Royal colony under a royal governor