

Columbus and Other Lost Europeans

On 25 Sept. 1492 nothing of any consequence happened! One of Columbus' crew sighted land; this was a rather frequent occurrence on the voyage because the captain had offered a reward to the first crewman to sight land. But this time the coast of North America was still about 1,000 miles away. On Oct. 12, land was actually sighted, and perhaps either significantly or ominously, Columbus fired a cannon at it. He was very lucky to be there at all. Had he sailed earlier or later he might not have made it there, or back. The crew was following flocks of migratory birds to land. Two weeks earlier those same birds would have led him into treacherous shoals in Florida, but thanks to a little luck, the birds were further south by October, so he found a safe harbor. Columbus' voyage is representative of American exploration and discovery by Europeans. They were generally led by lost explorers who were searching for stuff that wasn't there.

What America actually was to Europeans was a large very inconvenient lump of geography between them and where they wanted to be – Asia. So for almost 250 years they searched for a water route through America for the Pacific. They kept finding it, too. The only problem was that it didn't exist! The Italian cartographer and explorer, Giovanni da Verrazano decided that America was only one mile wide. He had seen Pamlico Sound across a narrow natural causeway, and decided that the sound must be the Pacific Ocean. It wasn't.

In 1528, Panfilo de Narvaez, a vain, arrogant, one-eyed Spanish soldier of fortune got a license from the king of Spain to explore (read loot) the area north of Mexico. The king sent his own treasurer to make sure that the Spanish Crown got its share of the loot (an Imperial civil servant and bean counter named Cabeza da Vaca). The party landed with 400 soldiers just north of what Narvaez thought was Tampico, Mexico, and Narvaez sent the ships home. The only problem was a slight miscalculation. They had actually landed near modern Tampa Florida. Eight years later the five survivors of the expedition stumbled into a mission in western Mexico.

In 1607 John Smith explored the various rivers of Virginia looking for China—it wasn't there. French, Dutch and English explorers confidently expected that the Long Island Sound, the East River, or the St. Lawrence would provide them with a short, safe water route to Asia. Wrong!!

Native peoples discovered the best way to get rid of explorers was to tell them that what they wanted was somewhere else.



Native peoples were only too willing to help; they quickly discovered that the best way to get rid of these uncouth and usually dangerous and odd smelling strangers was to tell them that what they wanted was somewhere else. Henry Hudson heard Indians talking about a great ocean three days west; it was the Great Lakes, not the Pacific. In 1548, the French explorer, Henri Cartier heard the same story, and found Lake Erie. In 1596, Greek explorer Juan de Fuca managed to convince European cartographers that he had discovered a water route from the Pacific Ocean to the American Northeast. He hadn't, but mapmakers put his route in anyway. One thing that Lewis and Clark were looking for after the U.S. bought the Louisiana Purchase was a water route from the eastern United States to the Pacific Ocean, but, unfortunately there isn't one.

Geography of North America

Since this course is devoted to the history of the United States, from here on out, I will primarily restrict our focus to North America.

So let us now leave behind the perceptions of North America, and take a look at the realities? Let's start with the Atlantic Ocean. The Atlantic Ocean has three roles to play in European expansion and colonization of the Western

Hemisphere. It is a barrier, a road, and also a resource.

1. A Barrier. There are two basic routes to the Western Hemisphere from Europe, the northern route and the southern route. The Spanish took the southern route, so the English took the northern route. The trip, either way, took up to 3 months, but the Southern route, while longer, was less perilous. The most dangerous leg of the trip was the last three miles. Shifting sand banks, hidden rocks, reefs, all offered opportunities for European seamen to lose their ships and their lives within sight of land and safety. The best way to discover these hazards was to risk them. Ships traveled in flotillas, so if one ship went down, the survivors tried to land elsewhere and marked the dangers down on their charts. Usually the same dangers were discovered 3 or four times; one nationality didn't tell the other their exploration secrets. This allowed everybody to make the same mistakes.

Barriers offer some degree of isolation from the mother country. So American colonies tended to develop local self-government more independence and autonomy from the mother country than colonies nearer to home might have. Compare the British colonies in North America with the other British colony, Ireland, which was governed much

more closely from London than any American colony. But the colonies were still dependent on England, because England's enemies, the Dutch, French and Spanish surrounded them on land and sea, and the colonists depended on the British armed forces (especially the navy) to protect their lives and property.

Another way that the Atlantic Ocean was a barrier is that it made the transportation of people to North America very expensive; so there would be a labor shortage and a land surplus in North America from the very beginning of colonization. That meant that if you could get to America your opportunities would be vastly greater than they ever could be in Europe. Free white laborers would not be very likely to work for anyone after they had paid off the debt that they had incurred to get here, usually as indentured servants. So, slavery offered a long-term solution to the labor demand problem. For free Whites, opportunities for wealth abounded in ways that were no longer possible in Europe.



2. The ocean is also a road. The cost to transport one ton of material from Massachusetts to London was the same as the cost to move the same weight in goods overland 30 miles. Thus a) each colony was a seaboard colony, and b) each had a cheap means of exporting goods for a world market. This alternately retarded colonial unity – virtually all trade was with the mother country directly. There was a fairly brisk coastal trade up and down the American seaboard, but the bulk of colonial trade was with Britain. The colonies never cooperated on anything until the American Revolution. In fact, to a lesser or greater degree, folks from the various colonies didn't really even like each other.

3. The ocean as a resource. The Atlantic was exploitable. Fish was the first commodity that was profitable for English colonists in America. Salted cod was caught off of New England and Nova Scotia and shipped by the ton to Europe to feed Catholics (the English hated fish just as much as they hated Catholics). The ocean kept settlers alive when they first arrived. Many of them write home in disgust, saying that the only thing that they could find to eat were oysters and mussels, crabs and cod fish.

Now let's take a look at the geography of eastern North America. The coastal plain is a lopsided triangle from Cape Cod in the north widens to a broad rich alluvial plain in Georgia. The shape of this great alluvial coastal plain helps to shape the economies of the English colonies in North America. The Northeastern seacoast offers only a small amount of good farmland. As a result of the paucity of good farmland, in New England, the colonists had to turn to other sources of economic activity. New Englanders were involved in shipping, trade, shipbuilding, fishing and other seagoing activities. Farms were small family concerns rather than great plantations. The relatively long winters and cold weather further restricted farming activities to the production of necessities rather than exportable cash crops.

The further south that you travel the better the farmland, and the more of it there is. So the northeast grew wealthy on trade, the south on agriculture. In the south there are also many

short, navigable rivers that go west, so plantations had their own docks. Southern towns were few and generally small. The South developed only one city of any real size during the colonial period. That city was Charleston, South Carolina.

Mountains. Running from Newfoundland in Canada to around Birmingham, Alabama, this great eastern mountain chain channeled settlement patterns in all of the colonies. The main ports of entry for immigrants was Philadelphia, Boston and New York City. The coastal plain rapidly filled and new arrivals were forced west to find available land. They could either fight their way across the mountains, or turn south and settle in the numerous valleys that run north to south, eventually these later arrivals move all the way to Georgia, settling in mountain valleys. So every southern colony has, by the 1750s, two distinct cultures based on two different streams of settlement. A) The Great Planters: The earliest settlers lived on the rich farmlands of the coastal plain. They were Anglican in their religion and ethnically English. Families of these early settlers became planter aristocrats, wealthy, and politically powerful. B) Westerners of the "Backcountry" arrived later and moved further west to settle in the valleys of the Appalachian Mountain chain. They were Presbyterian or Methodist in their religion and often Scots or Scotch-Irish or Welsh in their ethnicity. Lacking the resources of the great alluvial plains, these late arrivals were primarily poor small farmers, politically weaker than the great planters. Backcountry folks rapidly became a culture apart from and distinct from their neighbors on the coast, and the Backcountry culture ran across and through most of the colonies from Pennsylvania to South Carolina.



Before Columbus -- the New World

The first immigrants to come to North America were not European, they were of Asiatic origins. They came to America between anywhere from 60 to 20,000 years ago. They were hunters and gatherers who traveled in small tribal groups following and hunting the large herds of animals that roamed the plains of northwestern Asia and North America. During this geological period there were several ice ages. At various intervals during the period a shallow bridge existed between North America and Siberia across the Bering Straits. Large herds of animals moved across the Bering Land Bridge and they were followed by the hunting tribes who depended upon the herds for meat, skins and bone for their food and technology.

We know that the time over which these new Americans came and settled in America covered a long period because we can study the racial traits of the various Indian tribes in existence today. The first immigrants were of an earlier racial stock than the modern Asians. They have some features in common with modern Asiatic peoples, straight black hair, little body hair and sparse beards. However, their skin coloring is more reddish than brownish yellow, and they do not have that characteristic which is found in modern Asians called an epicanthic eye fold. As more tribal groups entered North America these early tribes moved east and south across the Rockies and Great Plains and south into central South America all of the earliest arrivers to North America are from this earliest group of immigrants. A somewhat later group of arrivals in America had a slight epicanthic fold, a rounder face and were of generally slighter build. They traveled down the Great Plains and finally settled in Central America and Mexico. They founded great civilizations in Central America – the Olmecs, Toltecs, Aztecs and Mayans. Some of these tribes traveled into South America and mixed with a group of earlier arrivals. The most important group of these was to become the Incas who built an empire in present day Peru and Ecuador. The last peoples to arrive in America were more Asian in appearance. They looked very much like the Asians of Siberia. They had a pronounced epicanthic fold, were slight in build and usually tended to have a good deal more body fat than their predecessors. This is because they were genetically adjusted to live in the bitter cold climate of Siberia and China of the late ice ages. They settled in Alaska and northwestern Canada, and some moved all the way down into the Amazon basin of South America.

By 1450 there may have been as many as 20 million American Indians living in the western hemisphere. There were as many as 500 language groups and hundreds of tribes spread all over north and South America.

The three major Indian cultures had attained a high degree of civilization by the time that the Spanish made contact in the new world -- these are the Maya, the Aztecs and the Inca

The Maya

The Mayans lived in Central America in what is today Guatemala, southern Mexico and Belize. Their civilization appears to have begun in about 300 A.D. they had a very advanced civilization by about 1000 A.D. they had developed a form of writing based on pictographs (for objects) and ideographs for ideas. They excelled in architecture, astronomy, mathematics and medicine. They lived in cities and farming communities which grew up around their great temples. Their temples were great pyramids made of carved stones some of which weighed as much as 10 tons. The Mayans were sun worshipers, and practiced human sacrifice. Their religious calendars contained a short year (365 days) and a long year, which was made up of about 500 short years.

The most interesting thing about the Mayan civilization is the fact that in about 1300 A.D. the Mayans left their cities and temples never to return to them. The great empire was broken up and the great buildings left for the jungle to take over. Just why the Mayas deserted their cities has been a subject of lots of speculation but is still unknown.

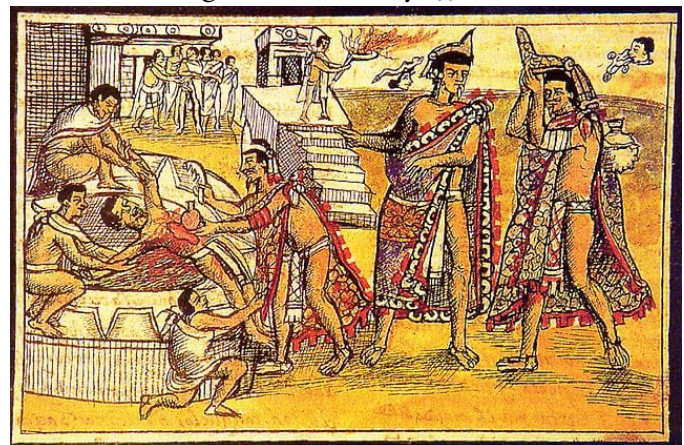
The Incas

The Incas lived in the mountain valleys of the Andes in South America. They reached a high level of civilization by about 1200 A.D. they had

domesticated llamas and alpacas for wool and transportation, and they kept dogs and guinea pigs for food. They raised potatoes and tomatoes among their foods. By 1500 the Incas had created a large empire in northern South America. The empire was connected by a system of roads, and imperial runners took messages to all parts of the far-flung empire from the capital at Cuzco the emperor of the Incas was believed to be the earthly offspring of the sun. When the Spanish arrived in Peru the emperor of the Incas (Atahualpa) sent representatives to study them and welcome them to his land. The Spanish attacked the representatives. Since the emperor had not told his representatives to fight with the Spanish, they were slaughtered without putting up any defense. The Spanish conquistadors made Atahualpa a prisoner and told the Incas that if a large room were filled with gold then Atahualpa would be freed. The room was filled but the priests with the Spanish were unable to convert Atahualpa to Christianity, so he was executed for heresy. The Inca Empire became part of the Spanish empire.

The Aztecs

From about 900 B.C. There were a series of Indian civilizations in central Mexico by about 1100 A.D. The Toltec empire were masters of all of central Mexico they were an advanced civilization -- masters of ruthless government, architecture, astronomy and agriculture. By about 1200 a subject nation of the Toltec, the Aztecs, conquered the Toltec and took over their empire. The Aztec civilization began to flourish by 1350 A.D. the



Left: A Mayan leader.

Above: Aztec priests sacrifice victim.

Aztecs had a great deal of leisure time because their subject tribes provided them with food and gold which they paid as tribute. The Aztecs were ruled by a king/priest who was elected by the Aztec warrior nobility. Even though he was an elected official, he was considered to be the son of the chief Aztec god Quetzalcoatl --the feathered serpent. The Aztecs had several interesting religious festivals, all of which included human sacrifice.

Archaeologists estimate that by about 1500 the Aztec capital -- Tenochtitlan -- had a population of some 2 million people. By the time the Spanish arrived there the population had dwindled down to less than a million as a result of diseases that the Spanish carried that the Native peoples had never encountered, and thus to which they had built up no natural resistance.

Indians of the Eastern Woodlands

By the 16th century the eastern seaboard of North America was inhabited by many nations of American Indians who shared a fairly similar cultural heritage and spoke primarily dialects of the Algonquian language. In the north Indians lived in small tribal groups, they subsisted by means of slash and burn agriculture, and by hunting and fishing. Food was never plentiful enough all year around, however, and their annual subsistence cycle was one of plenty and famine. In the spring tribes moved to the coast and planted corn, beans and squash, and lived on fish and shellfish through the summer. After fall harvests the small northern tribes moved inland to hunt and trap birds, deer, bear, and squirrels. Food rarely lasted through the long, harsh winter, and every tribe experienced some period that they called the starving time.

In the coastal south weather and soil conditions made it possible for larger tribes to live together in more permanent settlements. Tribes like the Secotans of the Chesapeake lived in large settlements, raising corn, vegetables and tobacco inside large earthwork and palisade fortifications, and hunting and fishing all year around.

Among the products that are used in the modern world which were domesticated by the Indians of the Western Hemisphere:

Potatoes -- Inca

Maize -- all tribes in North and Central America

Squash -- Northern Mexico & North America

True beans -- Mexico and North America

Quinine -- Inca

Tomatoes -- Inca

Avocado -- Central Mexico

Chocolate -- used as currency by the Aztecs

Pineapples -- Mexico

Chewing gum -- from chicle -Mayans

Tobacco -- all Mexico and North America

Maple sugar and candy -- North Eastern North America

To the Spanish, however, the most important item that the Indians of central and South America had in quantity was gold.





European Expansion

Now I would like to turn our attention to some of the early exploration that led to the development of European settlement in the new world. I will also look at some of the factors that made the exploration and colonization of the new world feasible. It is important to realize that the Americas would not have been colonized when they were had these factors not made the concept of expansion attractive to the rulers and merchants of Western Europe

The earliest group of European people to come into contact with the New World were the Vikings. They were a resourceful seafaring people who lived in Scandinavia in the ninth and tenth centuries. They traded and raided all over Europe, and began to establish settlements in the North Atlantic in the 900s. They established a commonwealth in Iceland in 980. The state of Iceland still exists, and is the oldest parliamentary government in the world. Eric the red founded a colony in Greenland slightly later. If the Norse stories are correct Leif the Lucky, the son of Eric the Red set sail with a crew of thirty five Viking warriors to discover the mainland of the North American continent in about 1000.

The first large-scale exploration of the New World by Europeans was brought about because the Europeans wanted to find an easier way to get to Asia and the East. It was the attraction of the Orient that brought Europeans to America.

Europeans were reintroduced to the luxuries of the Orient during the Crusades. A consequence of the First Crusade was that Europeans gained control of the Near East. These crusaders began to use and enjoy the goods, that came from the Orient such as spices and silk, and as a result, trade grew up between East and West during this period. But after 1140 the Holy Land and the Ner East were retaken by the Moslems. The trade routes between Asia and Europe became closed for about two centuries.

Trade with the East was re-opened in the 14th century. This happened as the result of the explorations of missionaries such as the Franciscans who traveled in Persia, India, China and finally Japan. Some few brave merchant families also began to explore the Far East and set up trade agreements there. The most famous of these families were the Polos, a trading family from Venice, Italy, who, in the 13th century, visited the fabulous court of the great Khan of China. The stories and material that these men brought back to Europe began to revive the East-West trade that had all but disappeared, by 1400. These Italian traders reopened trade in luxuries From the East-- silks, precious stones, silver and gold-- as well as such necessities as spices and drugs. By the mid-1400s, Italian merchants from Venice, Genoa, Florence, and Naples had begun to trade extensively by sea

with Eastern Mediterranean ports, as well as directly overland along the Great Silk Road into India and China.

This growing trade with the orient had the effect of causing the growth of several Italian city-states. The most notable of these were Venice, Genoa, and Florence the system of trade that had grown up caused the enrichment of these Italian "middlemen" who invested in sea trade with the Eastern Mediterranean. These men became merchant princes, controlling the flow of precious goods from the East to markets in Western Europe; the renewed prosperity of Italian cities caused triggered the Renaissance in Italy.

During the 15th. Century the emerging nations of western Europe--Portugal and Spain, France and England-- became more and more dissatisfied with the trade conditions that forced them to pay high prices to the Italian states for goods from the East. The rulers of these nations wanted to acquire trade goods from the East that would enrich their new states rather than foreign merchants. Several factors that appeared in the late 1400's helped to stimulate this interest.

Knowledge about sources of trade goods in the orient was brought back to Europe by missionaries and merchants.

Improved methods of navigation and ship construction led to greater exploration and more exact geographical information. Of particullar note was a new kind of ship, the caravel, a strong manueverable sailing ship that could carry a large cargo amd could travel more safely in deeper waters. Other important innovations included aides to navigation like the magnetic compass, used to accurately gage magnetic north, and the astrolabe (acquired from the Arabs), that helped navigators plot courses by the sun and stars.

The growth of trade in Europe and the improvements made in shipping brought about the growth of banking systems. This made it possible to handle and invest large sums of money, in the form of credit, in new trade ventures.

These factors first prompted commercial expansion in Portugal and Spain, but soon almost every advanced western European nation became involved in the

founding of colonies in both the old and new worlds.

Portugal was the first nation to establish direct contact with the Far East. Her merchant explorers trained in the school founded by prince Henry the navigator (1418), traveled down the western coast of Africa by the beginning of the 16th. Century Portuguese explorers had opened trade with India, china and Japan. In this way the Portuguese were able to gain the riches that had previously belonged to the Italian merchant princes. Portugal also traded in Africa in 1500 the Portuguese founded a colony in the new world in Brazil

Unlike Portugal, Spain turned her attention to the west rather than the east. This was because of the explorations of Christopher Columbus in 1492 this Italian seaman and geographer became interested in the idea that it should be possible to travel west, across the Atlantic Ocean, in order to reach the orient. He tried to sell the idea to the Italian merchant princes, but they were happy with the trade arrangement that they already had. So he took his idea to Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain. They were interested in the idea and were willing to finance his experiment. In this voyage and three succeeding ones, Columbus discovered the Americas, and eventually recognized that this was in fact a new world, and not the Indies

Soon other explorers began to seek new lands, or new ways to reach Asia competition between Spain and Portugal became threatening to the security of both

countries. In order to avoid bloodshed the pope established an agreement between the two countries called the Treaty of Tordesillas. Spain was given control of most of the new world.

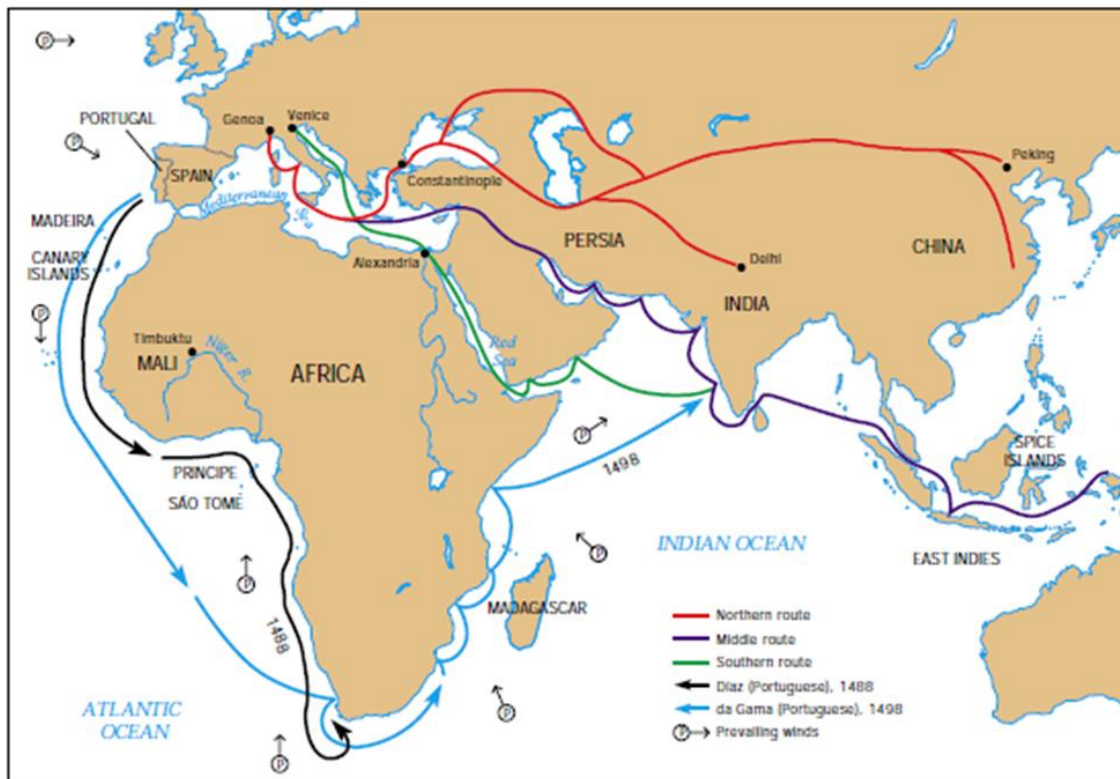
Spain acquired large colonies in the new world through the activities of conquistadors who established colonies in Peru, Mexico, Cuba, Florida and the American southwest.



By the time that Spain had conquered Mexico, France had become a force in the power politics of Western Europe. Francis I, the king of France in 1515, served notice that he would not permit the Spanish and Portuguese to divide up the new world among themselves France wanted a slice of the pie! The French founded colonies in Canada, and the great

lakes, down the Mississippi into Louisiana, and the Caribbean.

The Dutch provinces of the Netherlands, which broke away from Spanish control in 1581 preyed on Spanish shipping in the Atlantic, and the Portuguese in their Asian and African trading posts. The Dutch grew wealthy off of the spoils of these raids on Spanish and Portuguese colonies; they had become a legitimate commercial power by the mid-1600's. The New Netherlands Company and the West India Company sponsored settlements in South America, and the valley of the Hudson River in North America. A decade later Dutch settlers began to arrive on Manhattan Island. They founded the port town of New Amsterdam, in the Dutch colony of New Netherlands. In 1664, New Amsterdam passed to English control, and English and Dutch settlers lived together peacefully. In 1673, there was a short interruption of English rule when the Netherlands temporary regained the settlement. In 1674, New York was returned to the English.



Map showing trade routes in the 1300s and 1400s.



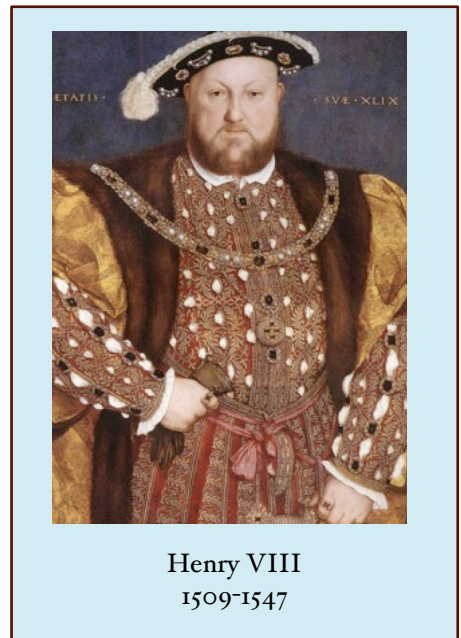
God, Gold and Glory

In order to make sense of the British colonization of North America, we need to look at three developments that took place in Britain during the 15th and 16th centuries. The first is the English Reformation, the second is the growth of population and changes in agricultural patterns in Britain, and the third is the growth of nationalism, and international competition that took place during the period.

The English Reformation. By the last quarter of the 16th century, England was a Protestant nation. Its Reformation had not, admittedly, been as profound a theological process as the Lutheran Reformation in Europe.

The initial stimulus for the English Reformation was, in fact, a royal divorce. In 1533, king Henry VIII was head over heels in lust with a young lady of the court named Anne Boleyn. Henry decided to put aside his wife, Catherine of Aragon, and marry Anne. The Catholic Church did not recognize divorce, so Henry had to ask the pope for an annulment. The pope refused. Henry, a very strong willed king, with the support of Parliament, left the Roman Catholic Church, and founded the Church of England. This was also a popular move with his subjects, because 1) the English Catholic Church was little respected, and 2) Henry's favorite courtiers were invited to acquire church lands (about 1/3 of England) either as gifts from the king, or at bargain basement prices. After the break between England and Rome, the English monarch became both the head of the English state and the head of the English church. At first there was very little difference between Anglicanism and Catholicism.

Henry really didn't make any changes in worship, but during the reign of his son, Edward VI (1547-1553) the Anglican religion became increasingly more Lutheran and less Catholic in its ceremony. When Edward died, his half-sister Mary Tudor succeeded him. She was a Roman Catholic. She married the Catholic king of Spain and attempted to restore Catholicism to England. Generally, English people had become quite Protestant. They didn't want to return to the Catholic fold. Mary's 5-year reign was remembered for its ferocity. She had several hundred of her own subjects burned for heresy because they refused to embrace the Catholic religion. She is known to history as bloody Mary.



When Elizabeth came to the throne in 1558, she ended the religious persecution, and tolerated religious diversity within her realm so long as she was acknowledged the head of the church in England. she created an Anglican Church that was a somewhat Catholic in terms of its rites, so that the church would be palatable to moderate Catholic-leaning English people, but Protestant enough in its doctrines that moderate Protestants would accept it. Anglican worship under Elizabeth became what Shakespeare called a "mingle-mangle" of a church, but the vast majority of English people were happy with it. You might think that this would mean smooth sailing, but no.



Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603)

Some Englishmen and women had traveled to Europe to escape Mary's wrath. They had embraced the teachings of a French religious reformer named John Calvin. Many of these Calvinists felt that the English Reformation had not gone far enough. They wanted to abolish the church hierarchy (bishops and such) in favor of more independent individual churches. Some of them also wanted to free the church from political influence. They also thought that Anglican worship was much too similar to Catholic worship, and they wanted the English Church to look like European Calvinist churches (we'll say more about this later). Since these English Calvinists wanted to purify the church they gained the name "Puritans."

During her reign, Pope Pius V excommunicated Elizabeth, and even announced that, in effect, it was not only ok, but even really cool, to assassinate a Protestant ruler. A couple of Catholics tried to assassinate Elizabeth, so during her reign the English began to equate Catholicism, not only with unacceptable religion, but also with treason

Elizabeth's Stuart successors, James I and Charles I, were considerably less tolerant of Puritans, and it should be added, Puritans were considerably less tolerant of James I and Charles I. These Scottish monarchs also had little respect for Parliamentary government that had grown increasingly powerful over the previous century. The Stuarts insisted that

royal power was derived directly from God, and that royal authority was absolute. Since the head of the state was also the head of the church, any challenge to the one was automatically a challenge to the other. So the distinction between heresy and treason became blurred. If you refused to conform to the church, you were both a heretic **and** a traitor. Increasingly, Puritans became both a religious and a political liability for the crown. In the 1620s and 1630s, both the Stuart kings and the English Puritans saw lots of good reasons for Puritans to immigrate to America. Puritans saw an opportunity to practice their religion unhindered by the Anglican Church



Charles I Stuart (1625-1649)

and government at home, and Stuarts looked forward to getting rid of them.

The second consideration that led to the growth of English colonization in America was the amazing population growth that took place in Britain

between 1530 and 1600. During this period the English population more than doubled. This increase in population in a short period of time, led to a lot of social and economic problems. As an increasing number of people competed for the necessities of life (food, clothing, shelter) inflation grew. At the same time, the increase in the number of workers caused real wages to drop. Many great landholders decided to increase their profits by taking land once used for grain production and worked by tenant farmers, and raising sheep on the land. This process, called enclosure, forced tenant farmers to leave the lands they had worked for generations and seek work elsewhere. Many of them moved to urban areas to look for work. There wasn't much work yet to be had in these towns, so England began to experience what we today would call a "homeless problem." as this problem increased, officials became obsessed with the problem of maintaining order, and many came to believe that the best means of solving the problem would be to transport the homeless, landless population elsewhere. American colonization, they came to believe, would both solve the problems of lawlessness and disorder in the old country, and give the English poor a second chance in a land rich, labor poor new world.

The third stimulus to English colonization was Nationalism. England Viewed itself, with some justice, as a small island state surrounded by enemies. Catholic Spain was the greatest threat, but France and the Netherlands also threatened England as well.

Mary Tudor had married Philip II of Spain, who was both a powerful European monarch and a Catholic zealot. After Mary's death, Philip claimed a right to rule England. Philip, and other Catholic rulers were also eager to spread Catholicism to those areas of Europe that had "strayed from the true path" by embracing Protestantism. France also posed a threat, and later the Dutch became a military and commercial power that Britons viewed with increasing nervousness.

Unlike modern economists, Europeans in the 1500



Richard Hakluyt

and 1600s believed that there was only so much wealth to go around. Wealth was power, so if you lost the race to acquire wealth, and your enemies (i.e. every other European nation) acquired it instead, sooner or later you would be unable to defend yourself from your enemies. Given this view (called Mercantilism), colonization became both a way for your country to gain wealth, and a way to keep your enemies from gaining a greater position of strength in the ongoing power politics of Europe.

In 1584, Richard Hakluyt, a geography professor at Oxford, wrote a book entitled *A Discourse on*

The Western Planting. Hakluyt wasn't talking about planting crops like tobacco or cabbages; he was talking about planting people, for preference English people, in colonies in America. He combined all of the stuff that we have been talking about into one big coherent argument, and hoped that Queen Elizabeth I would buy it. First, Hakluyt argued, there's gold in America. We know that because the Spanish have been trucking it back to Spain by the boatload. But even if there is no gold, planting English colonies will relieve the population problems in England and turn useless unemployed Englishmen into useful and productive farmers, and England will benefit both because they won't be the responsibility of the government anymore and because their surplus produce will be salable goods. So even if there is no gold, England profits. Englishmen, Hakluyt wrote, also have an obligation both to spread the true religion (Anglicanism) to the heathen savages of the New World, and to keep the French and Spanish Roman Catholics from spreading the evil doctrines of the Church of Rome (oh, did I mention the English didn't like Catholics). By spreading the Anglican religion, English missionaries and settlers would live in peace and trade with the natives, and from this trade, England would acquire wealth. Finally, England would attain the glory of planting new English colonies in the New World that would constrain and limit the colonization plans of her enemies. So even if there were no gold, England would profit because her

European rivals would not.

Hakluyt and others also argued that North America was a paradise where food literally dropped into your lap, ripe, sweet and ready to eat. America was a place where there was so much game that meat literally jumped onto the dinner table and committed suicide before your very eyes. In America everything that you planted grew bigger and tasted better than it ever had in Europe. The New World smelled of perfume and had all that anyone would ever need to become wealthy and self-sufficient. Oh! and did I mention the gold?

So, England, like Spain and France, in many ways can be said to have had the same three general motives for colonization – God, gold and glory.