

Content Reading: Early North American Colonies Part 1

Britain began to colonize various areas in North America. **The Virginia Company** organized to attempt to bring resources back from the New World. They formed **Jamestown** in 1607, which was named after King James. **Joint-stock companies** were used to make profit on the colonies. In this system, a group of people invested money in hopes to make more money. Stock holders had rights to the profits coming from the colonial areas.

The Jamestown residents focused so much on finding gold that they neglected farming. Disease from bad water, hunger, and a poor focus on farming led to the deaths of many. This was a disastrous start in Virginia. More colonists arrived and the Virginia Company needed laborers to grow tobacco and sell it in Europe. The company offered free land to those who would work for them. **Tobacco** would eventually make Jamestown a very wealthy area.

Indentured servants were those who came and agreed to work four to seven years just to get to America. After the time period agreed upon, the indentured servant was set free. In 1619, enslaved Africans arrived; yet, many were set free. Slavery would increase after this era and most slaves were not set free in the eras that followed.

The desire for more land led to conflict with Native Americans. Many of the Spanish intermarried with conquered peoples. However, many of the British forced Native Americans out of their areas. The Europeans often fought with each other as well.

In 1676, **Nathaniel Bacon** confronted Virginia's leadership at Jamestown in a conflict known as **Bacon's Rebellion**. He wanted help from the government because he was having hostilities with Native Americans. He was denied assistance and rebelled. His rebellion failed, but it showed the colonists were restless and agitated.

King Henry the 8th joined the **Protestant Reformation** and broke away from the Catholic Church in the 1530s. **The Puritans** felt the Church of England did not change enough to abandon Catholicism. Many wanted to "purify" the Church of England. Some people were even **Separatists**, like **the Pilgrims**, who wanted to break away from the Anglican Church.

In 1620, a group of Pilgrims left on the ship called the **Mayflower** and came to America for their religious freedom. They formed **Plymouth Colony**. They formed a law system known as **the Mayflower Compact**. In 1630, Puritans formed **the Massachusetts Bay Colony**. Boston became the thriving capital. They believed their colony was for God and to advance Puritan Christianity.