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**HOW TO START A COLONY, OR NOT:
DIFFERENT MODELS TO COLONIZE
BERMUDA, BARBADOS AND TOBAGO**

A thesis submitted to the Graduate College of Marshall University
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master in Arts
In
History
by
James William St Clair

Approved by

Dr. Robert Deal, Committee Chairperson
Dr. Laura Michele Diener, Committee Member
Dr. Phillip T. Rutherford, Committee Member

APPROVAL OF THESIS

We, the faculty supervising the work of James William St Clair, affirm that the thesis, *How to Start a Colony, or Not: Different Models to Colonize Bermuda, Barbados and Tobago* meets the high academic standards for original scholarship and creative work established by the Department of History and the College of Liberal Arts. This work also conforms to the editorial standards of our discipline and the Graduate College of Marshall University. With our signatures, we approve the manuscript for publication.



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ABSTRACT

This thesis considers three different and distinct models utilized by the British to colonize the Caribbean islands of Bermuda (1612), Barbados (1627) and Tobago (1763). Much has been written about the development of each one of these islands, yet it appears no study has drawn out and compared the varied development schemes employed by the British in these three instances. Such comparisons are appropriate since, unlike many other areas of British colonization, Bermuda, Barbados and Tobago were not, at the time the British arrived, occupied nor settled by indigenous people or other European settlers. This provided the British an opportunity to devise, develop and implement a settlement scheme that did not have to accommodate existing inhabitants on the islands. Given these blank slates for development, this thesis asks why three different models were utilized instead of one: was the first model not as useful and beneficial as the second and third? Some answers may be accessed by looking at the evolving political and economic climate in London where seventeenth century British adventurers and merchants making the decisions for Bermuda and Barbados eventually became the government bureaucrats calling the shots for the eighteenth century development in Tobago. However, in all three cases, despite the best of intentions and efforts by adventurers and bureaucrats, the resulting settlements did not meet their planners' expectations. Distance between the colonies and Britain, coupled with the frailties and foibles of those appointed to implement the plans on the islands, thwarted the plans as designed. This leads one to mull over whether the problem was with the various models of colonization, or with the process of colonization itself.

INTRODUCTION

Mention the islands of Bermuda, Barbados and Tobago and exotic images come to mind, like a bright yellow sun drifting over a deserted white sand beach that is fringed with green palm trees curving gracefully up to a blue sky. This description was most likely what British adventurers encountered when they came ashore on these three islands.¹ Each isle was, at the time of initial British incursion, uninhabited. Although the islands had been previously visited from time to time by Amerindians, and later by some European explorers, who sought to benefit from the food, trees and other resources located thereon, these islands were not the home of established settlements when the British arrived. Therefore, the British were presented with three islands that were blank slates, so to speak, clean canvases upon which the British could paint their visions of happy settlements of industrious people working for the betterment of themselves and the Crown.

In comparison, British adventurers moving into other Caribbean islands had to contend with established settlements located thereon. Some islands were settled by Amerindians, such as St. Vincent, which was the home of thousands of Kalinago people (aka Caribs). British efforts to settle that island in the late eighteenth century were met

1. Ben Johnson, "The UK & Great Britain – What's the Difference?," Historic UK, accessed November 8, 2021, <https://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/HistoryofBritain/The-UK-Great-Britain-Whats-the-Difference/>. The word "Britain" and "British" refers collectively to the kingdom of England and Scotland in the seventeenth century, and to the kingdom of England, Scotland and Ireland in the eighteenth century. This convention avoids the tedium of referring to "England" in some instances and "Britain" in others.

with Kalinago resistance that eventually led to two wars with the Caribs.² Other islands were previously settled by Europeans who had set up defenses before the British arrived, one example being Jamaica. In 1654, a force dispatched by Oliver Cromwell attacked Spanish forts on the southern side of that island that led to a negotiated surrender of the Spanish forces.³ The islands of Grenada, St. Lucia, Dominica, all of which eventually became part of the British realm, were initially settled by French planters, with St. Kitts and Anguilla being settled jointly by both French and British planters before being brought under the British flag.⁴ In these instances, British designs for settlement were required to take into account, accommodate and work with and around the existing people living and working on the islands. This makes Bermuda, Barbados and Tobago unique in the British colonization experience in the Caribbean. Those making the decisions were free to choose from an array of development schemes that did not have to account for, or make provisions for, existing settlements.

To these blank canvases, British authorities had at their disposal a range of plans to develop the islands, schemes that had previously been employed in trading ventures and land use plans in other areas of the world. For example, use of a joint stock company funded by private investors to develop foreign trade was initiated in 1555 when the Muscovy Company received a royal charter that eventually granted the

2. Christopher Taylor, *The Black Carib Wars: Freedom, Survival, and the Making of the Garifuna* (Oxford: Signal Books, 2012).

3. Carla Gardinia Pestana, *The English Conquest of Jamaica: Oliver Cromwell's Bid for Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2017).

4. L. H. Roper, *The Torrid Zone: Caribbean Colonization and Cultural Interaction in the Long Seventeenth Century* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2018), 3-5.

company an exclusive monopoly over all trade between England and Tsarist Russia. At about the same time, the English were trying out and tinkering with various land use, redistribution and development schemes in Ireland under the guise of plantations, such as those established in Laois-Offaly, Munster and Ulster.⁵ Further, the British have a long history of distributing acquired lands as patronage, starting with William the Conqueror, who after conquering and claiming England for himself, distributed about two-thirds of the conquered lands to about 170 of his subordinates.⁶ It seems, then, that British government officials, bankers, merchants and adventurers were well-acquainted with planning and managing different types of overseas ventures when the decision was made to take and establish control over the three islands of Bermuda, Barbados and Tobago.

The British asserted dominion and control over the three islands based on Roman law, particularly, the doctrine of *terra nullius*, which can be roughly translated as “no man’s land.” Although the Spanish claimed legal title to all lands west of the of the Azores and Cape Verde Islands, pursuant to a 1493 papal bull issued by Pope Alexander VI, the British disputed the meaning and effect of this pronouncement. Relying on the doctrine of *terra nullius*, and its companion principle *vacuum domicilium* (vacant lands), the British took the legal position that dominion of uninhabited lands could be acquired only through taking physical possession and control of the property

5. Colm Lennon, *Sixteenth Century Ireland: The Incomplete Conquest* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2005).

6. Hugh M. Thomas, *The Norman Conquest: England After William the Conqueror* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008), 67-70.

by putting it to some good use, such as cultivation, habitation and fortification. This legal requirement of habitation incentivized the British to recruit, bribe and sometimes coerce settlers to relocate to the islands where they established permanent farms, homes and forts.⁷

Interestingly, each of the three islands was settled by a distinctively different scheme. As will be explained in this thesis, Bermuda was settled by the Crown granting a patent (a deed from a sovereign authority) to a private stock corporation, with London merchants and British aristocracy as stockholders, who, in turn, controlled the initial development of the island (the corporate model). Fifteen years later, the Crown steered away from the corporate model and instead opted to grant a patent for the whole of Barbados and other nearby islands to William Hay, Earl of Carlisle (Hay), who thereafter developed the island by leasing tracts to British planters (the proprietary model). In the following century, British authorities employed an altogether different approach to develop Tobago, appointing government commissioners to hold a public sale of surveyed lots of property, varying in sizes up to 500 acres each, with the purchase price being financed by the government (the bureaucratic model).

This varied approach can draw one into comparing the three models to weigh their relative effectiveness, successes and failures. Such an inquiry leads one into a web of complications, such as trying to reach a consensus in quantifying and qualifying what “success” means, and to whom, in the context of the colonization process. More

7. Andrew Welch, “The History of International Law in the Caribbean and the Domestic Effects of International Law in the Commonwealth Caribbean,” *SOAS Law Journal*, Vol. 1, Issue 1 (August 2014): 128.

particularly, which numbers are to be used to gauge success: is it measured by revenue received by the government, or by profits generated by planters and merchants, or by the number of settlers that moved to an island? Further, what is the time period for measuring success: Is it ten years after the initial settlers arrived, or one hundred years after settlement? Also, can one accurately compare such numbers derived from the three islands due to their differences in size, location and time of settlement?⁸ Finally, is a comparison possible when the political and economic conditions in 1612, the year Bermuda was settled, was vastly different than the political climate and resources available when Tobago was settled in 1763? Consequently, efforts to compare the effectiveness of each scheme by examining figures coming from each of the three islands is fraught with complications.

Yet, a curious question remains as to why British authorities used three different schemes, and not a single plan, for developing each of the three islands. Did the corporate model prove unsuccessful in Bermuda, followed by the proprietary model failing in Barbados that eventually led authorities to implement the bureaucratic model in Tobago? These questions may be addressed by looking into the halls of power in London where the decisions were ultimately made that approved, authorized and

8. "World Factbook," United States Central Intelligence Agency, accessed February 27, 2022, <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries>. Bermuda is much smaller than Barbados and Tobago. Bermuda is comprised of 22.7 sq. miles of land, compared to 166.4 sq. miles and 115.8 sq. miles respectively for Barbados and Tobago. Additionally, Bermuda is located about 1,300 miles northwest of Tobago and Barbados, which are themselves only 140 miles apart. To draw out this distinction, only 555 nautical miles separate Bermuda from the coast of North Carolina, while Tobago lies 55 nautical miles off the coast of Venezuela. "Distances From To", accessed February 27, 2022, <https://www.distancefromto.net>.

directed the specific scheme be employed on each island. Doing so opens up more specific and directed questions: who participated in the decisions, what were the internal and external economic and political factors considered in making the decisions, who benefitted from them, and at what cost to those who did not benefit?

This thesis will address initially Bermuda, Barbados and Tobago separately, providing a description of each island, initial incursions by the British, the scheme applied, and the developments thereafter. The inquiry will then shift to the halls of power in Britain where the various schemes were decreed, looking at the circumstances and considerations taken into account in deciding a plan for development, if any. These inquiries will reveal that the corporate and proprietary development models used in Bermuda and Barbados were not so much deliberated upon as tacitly approved by the Crown honoring requests made by ambitious merchants and adventurers. In comparison, the bureaucratic scheme used in Tobago was more carefully considered for the benefit of settlers and the Empire.

This differentiation reveals a shift, from the seventeenth century into the eighteenth century, in the British government's consideration of establishing colonies. In the earlier period, colonization was a private affair engaged in by private investors whose adventures were more acknowledged than sanctioned by the Crown. In comparison, the colonies established in the eighteenth century were planned, staffed, implemented and managed by trained government bureaucrats who sought to provide each and every detail of the colonization process. One factor precipitating this shift from a private affair to greater public involvement was the establishment of the

Commonwealth in 1649, wherein adventurers and merchants supporting Cromwell assumed positions in government where they were able to influence official policy for all overseas colonies. One can then portend that the adventurers and merchants placed in charge of settling Bermuda and Barbados were the predecessors to the analytical members of the Board of Trade and Treasury controlling the settlement of Tobago.

This shift from private to public, however, did not produce a more productive development of Tobago. Rather, distance between the colonies and Britain, coupled with diplomatic maneuvering in settling disputes, combined with the frailties and foibles of those appointed to implement the plans on island, were impediments to the implementation of the designed settlement plans in Bermuda and Barbados that continued to stymie the settlement of Tobago more than one hundred years later.

CHAPTER 1

BERMUDA

Introduction

Bermuda has the distinction of being one of the first planned and developed “company towns,” that is a community that is organized by, and dependent upon, one business entity responsible for delivering to its inhabitants all services and amenities of an organized community (e.g., employment, housing, churches and stores). The initial British inhabitants of the island were marooned passengers and crew of a ship bound for the Virginia Company’s settlement in Jamestown in 1609.⁹ Initially, the Company simply claimed the island as part of its corporate property that was later confirmed by a separate patent issued to the Virginia Company by James I In 1615. Thus, Bermuda was effectively spun off from the Virginia Company, with the island thereafter being granted to a new corporation named the Somers Isle Company. This new company laid out and organized Bermuda in a business-like manner using a detailed survey of the island to map out for sale parcels of property for agricultural use.¹⁰

9. Josephine Oktabec, "Relations between England and the American Colonies, 1607 - 1625" (MA thesis, Montana State University, 1953), 1. The English claimed as its sovereign territory all lands in North America between the latitudes of thirty-four and forty-five degrees (roughly from Cape Fear to Nova Scotia), which it named Virginia. The Crown granted charters and patents to two separate companies, with the Virginia Company of London being granted the southern portion of the territory, with the northern portion assigned to the Virginia Company of Plymouth. References to the “Virginia Company” are to the Virginia Company of London.

10. Wesley Frank Craven, “An Introduction to the History of Bermuda,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 2d series 17 (April 1937): 320.

The Somers Isle Company later suffered a prolonged era of economic setbacks as a result of the English Civil War (1642-1651). The company's stockholders and directors in London sided with the Protectorate established by Oliver Cromwell, while the inhabitants of Bermuda generally remained loyal royalists. Puritans siding with the Protectorate were expelled from the island for failing to take an oath of loyalty to the Crown. The political division between the London owners and the royalist settlers, separated by a vast ocean, was finally resolved after restoration when Charles II revoked the royal charter for the company in 1684, with Bermuda thereafter becoming a royal colony.

Description

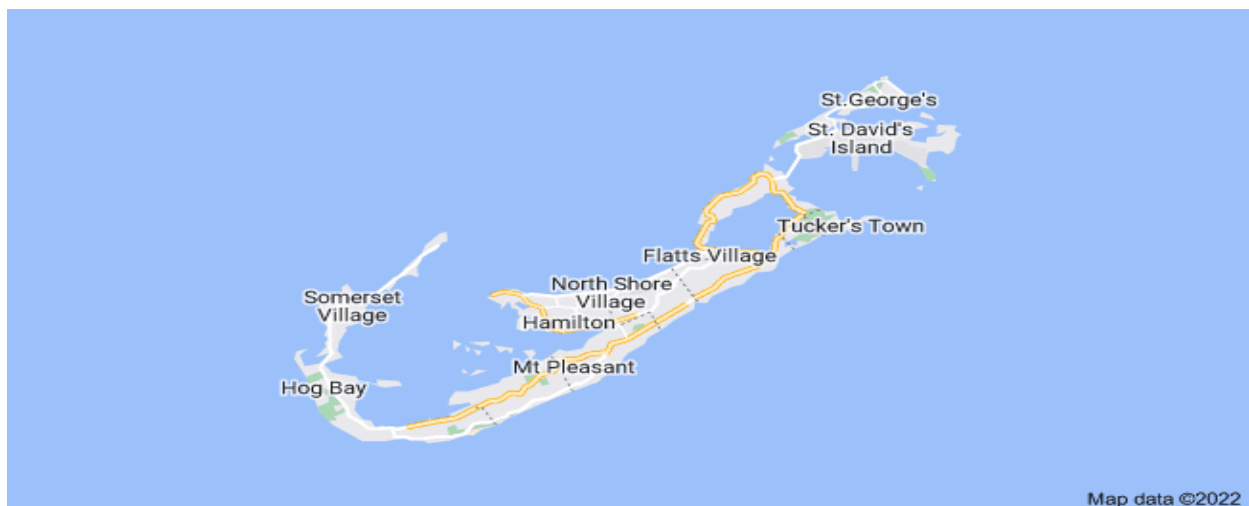


Figure 1 Map of Bermuda. Created by Google, 2022.

Bermuda is not one island, but is more accurately described as an archipelago of seven small islands connected with bridges that make up 95% of the 22.7 square mile land mass of the island grouping. Another twelve inhabited islands, and over 100 very

small islands, comprise the other 5%.¹¹ Bermuda was named after the Portuguese explorer Juan Bermudez who recorded coming ashore in 1505. He found a coral island primarily composed of limestone with a rolling terrain reaching an elevation of about 250-feet above sea level.¹²

Bermuda's location is one of isolation. There are very few other islands in the world that are so small and so far from any other land mass.¹³ The island's nearest landfall is Cape Hatteras, North Carolina which is 575 nautical miles away, with New York City lying 675 miles northeast of the island, and the Bahama islands being further away at a distance of 715 miles southwest. Notwithstanding its diminutive size in a vast area of ocean, in the early years of European exploration Bermuda served as an important nautical reference point for seafarers. To avoid sailing against the northeasterly winds blowing west across the Caribbean, sailing ships heading out from the Gulf of Mexico and the West Indies traveling east towards Europe charted a course north to Bermuda where they then turned east to pick up the Gulf Stream and westerlies for easier passage.¹⁴ The island remained only a nautical point of reference to early seafarers due to the reefs and unpredictable currents surrounding Bermuda deterring those who may have wanted to explore the interior of the island.¹⁵

11. Richard A. Crooker, *Bermuda* (New York: Chelsea House, 2002), 18.

12. William North Rice, *The Geology of Bermuda* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1884), 10.

13. Robert S. Platt, "Significance of the Location of Bermuda," *Journal of Geography*, 20:1 (1921): 13.

14. Michael A. Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade: Bermuda, Bermudians and the Maritime Atlantic World 1680-1783* (Chapel Hill: University North Carolina Press 2010), 3-4.

15. Rice, *The Geology of Bermuda*, 17.

Initial Contact

The founding of Bermuda was initiated by way of a calamitous accident. On July 28, 1609, a fleet of British settlers setting sail from Britain and heading to the Virginia colony of Jamestown encountered a hurricane. One ship, the *Sea Venture*, was blown off course and taking on water when its captain, Sir George Somers, fortuitously crashed his sinking ship into the reefs surrounding Bermuda. Written accounts of the harrowing storm and rescue were narrated by two survivors, William Strachey and Silvester Jourdain.¹⁶ These memoirs describe 150 passengers and crew stumbling ashore to find refuge on a very lush island with an abundance of food and other resources to support them. They even found thousands of wild hogs that had propagated from a few purposely placed on the island by Spanish mariner Gonzales Oviedus in 1515. The hogs were strategically placed there so that other mariners passing by Bermuda could replenish their food supplies from the large herd roaming the island.¹⁷ The marooned writers described that while some worked to build two new vessels to carry them on to Virginia, others explored the island and erected shelters for their ten-month stay. This sojourn was not without its difficulties. The group endured a mutiny by some who wanted to stay on the island instead of moving on to Virginia: two were murdered; one was executed; two who were condemned escaped and hid; two stole a long boat and left the island; two endured labor in child birth; and several died of

16. William Strachey, Silvester Jourdain, and Louis B. Wright, *A Voyage to Virginia in 1609 : Two Narratives: Strachey's "True Reportory" and Jourdain's Discovery of the Bermudas*. 2nd Ed. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013).

17. Stachey, *Voyage*, 18.

disease. After nearly a year in Bermuda, 135 people boarded the two newly-built ships and set sail for Jamestown. Three men stayed behind to prepare for later arrivals who would hopefully be coming ashore.¹⁸

When the news reached London that the settlers who were thought lost had survived, it was a relief and a sensation, with Strachey's account serving as an inspiration for Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.¹⁹ The survivors' accounts, as amplified by the Bard's popular play, created in the minds of the British that Bermuda was an island paradise and an ideal place to invest and relocate. The Virginia Company seized upon this fame by publishing a letter in June 1611 to attract investors, touting Bermuda's environment as so healthy and fertile that its prospects for settlement and success was much better than in the Virginia colony.²⁰ To shore up its claim to the island, the Virginia Company sought and received from King James I an amended charter issued on March 12, 1612, that extended the boundaries of the Company's territories "to include all the islands lying within three hundred leagues of the continent" and between thirty and forty-

18. The three men were Edward Chard, Edward Waters, and Christopher Carter. These men had engaged in mutinous conduct and other nefarious actions. They decided to stay on island fearing they may be arrested after arriving in Virginia. Admiral Somers allowed them to stay thinking they could help maintain England's claim to the island. John Smith, "The Fifth Book: The General Historie of the Bermudas," *The Complete Works of Captain John Smith (1580-1631)*, edited by Philip L. Barbour, vol. II (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 351.

19. The long-standing historical connection of the *Sea Venture* accounts being the inspiration for the play has recently been scrutinized and questioned. See Alden T. Vaughan, "William Strachey's 'True Reportory' and Shakespeare: A Closer Look at the Evidence," *Shakespeare Quarterly* Vol. 59, No. 3 (Fall, 2008): 245-273.

20. David B. Quinn, "Advice for Investors in Virginia, Bermuda, and New England, 1611," *The William and Mary Quarterly*. 3rd Series, 23(1) (1966): 137.

one degree north latitude.²¹

Rather than incorporating Bermuda into the Virginia Company, some investors requested a special and subordinate joint-stock company be formed to settle Bermuda, a distinct "under company" of stockholders who would be financially responsible for financing the development in exchange for receiving most of the profits derived from the venture. Under this proposal, the Virginia Company retained legal ownership of the island, as well as some vague supervisory authority over the under company's affairs. It is thought that some members of the Virginia Company may have wanted to separate Bermuda from the colony in Jamestown so that the island would not be pulled down financially by the venture struggling on the continent, which, in hindsight, was prescient.²² Later, stockholders of the new "under company" went one step further in November 1612: they paid the Virginia Company £2,000, or about \$560,000 in current value, in exchange for all "fishings mynes and minerals . . . , pearls, precious stones, quarries, and all and singuler other comodities, Jurisdiccons, royalties priuileges franchises and prhcmiencies whatsoever" belonging to the Virginia Company.²³ The Virginia Company accepted this proposal because it was in need of additional financial capital to supply the colony in Jamestown. On the other side of this transaction, the eleven investors, all of whom were unburdened from the questionable ethics of insider trading, pushed the deal because they had information that was not disclosed to all

21. Craven, "An Introduction", 322-3.

22. Craven, "An Introduction", 323

23. J. H. Lefoy, *Memorials of the Discovery and Early Settlement of the Bermudas or Somers Islands: 1515-1685* (London: Logmans, Green & Co., 1877), 85.

other shareholders of the Virginia Company. Specifically, the small group of investors learned that a large chunk of ambergris was discovered by the three men left behind on the island when the rest of the passengers and crew sailed for Virginia.

Ambergris is a solid waxy substance formed in the intestine of sperm whales that is used to stabilize the scent of fine perfumes. Left alone on the island, the three men found a total cache of about 175 lbs. of the substance, with one chunk weighing about 80 lbs. These finds had a market value in London of about £10,000, or about \$2,800,000 in current value.²⁴ The eleven investors were eager to have the ambergris transported immediately to London so that they could recoup their investment and provide additional working capital to develop Bermuda. However, the governor appointed by the Company in 1612 to manage the island, Sir Richard Moore, thought it best for Bermuda's development that the ambergris be delivered to the investors in three installments so as to encourage them to continue sending resupply ships with additional settlers for the island.²⁵ This strategy was successful, as shown by nine ships transporting about 600 settlers to Bermuda between 1612-1615. However, after the last of the ambergris was sold, the island continued to require more infusions of capital for its development.

It was thought that the continuing financial struggles of the Jamestown venture would dissuade and deter investors from contributing additional capital to the Virginia

24. Conversion made by Eric W. Nye, *Pounds Sterling to Dollars: Historical Conversion of Currency*. <https://www.uwyo.edu/numimage/currency.htm>.

25. William Robert Scott, *The Constitution and Finance of English, Scottish and Irish Joint-Stock Companies to 1720*, Vol. II (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1910), 260-1.

Company for use in Bermuda. To allay these concerns, the decision was made to completely sever the island from the Virginia Company. On November 23, 1614, the Virginia Company surrendered the island of Bermuda to the Crown, with James I thereafter issuing a new charter on June 29, 1615, to form a separate joint-stock venture known familiarly as the Somers Islands Company (the Company), with a patent for the island granted to this newly-chartered company.²⁶

Developing the Model

Investors in the newly-formed company devising a plan for the development of Bermuda had the benefit of observing and learning from the successes and failures of the venture in Jamestown. The Virginia Company was formed as a typical joint-stock company by which the company owned all the land granted to it by the Crown, with the company receiving all profits and benefits from the land, which, after payment of expenses, were then distributed as dividends to the shareholders. The initial 144 settlers landing in Jamestown on May 13, 1607, were essentially company workers, provisioned with company supplies and following company instructions directed at generating profits for the shareholders located back in the motherland. The initial workers were indentured whereby in exchange for seven years of service they would receive payment of their passage to Virginia, their initial provisions, and at the end of the seven-year term, receive shares of stock in the company.²⁷ Early on, managers of

26. The formal name of the corporation is "The Governor and Company of the City of London for the Plantation of the Somers Islands". Scott, *The Constitution and Finance*, 262.

27. Abbott Emerson Smith, *Colonists in Bondage: White Servitude and Convict Labor in*

the company found this scheme problematic due to workers being disgruntled with their living conditions, working on public projects without any present personal gain, and being harassed by Native Americans. Some left the settlement to live with Native Americans, while those who remained put less than their all into their work.²⁸

In an effort to avoid similar labor issues in Bermuda, directors of the under company developed a different scheme to attract both additional investors and workers to the island. The initial instructions given to Governor Moore in 1612 allotted a quarter acre of land to each settler for a house and garden, with the settler keeping any crops they raised on their small plot of land. The rest of the land was to be farmed under a 50-50 sharecropping arrangement with the Company.²⁹ This plan was rendered unfeasible due to Governor Moore requiring all settlers to work on fortifications to defend against an anticipated Spanish invasion, thereby limiting the settlers' time to produce for themselves. The under company considered this hindrance in devising a different plan in 1613. The revised plan envisioned one quarter of the total area of the island being retained by the Company to be used to generate revenue to pay administrative expenses and public infrastructure projects. The other three quarters of the island would be divided into 400 separate and equal parcels to be allotted to individual investors at the rate of one parcel per one share of stock. Therefore, in exchange for paying £12.10s per share, each shareholder received both a parcel of land and a share of stock. Private

America, 1606-1776 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1947), 9.

28. David W. Galenson, "The Rise and Fall of Indentured Servitude in the Americas: An Economic Analysis," *The Journal of Economic History*, Vo. 44, No. 1 (March 1984): 4.

29. Lefoy, *Memorials*, 60.

land ownership was denied to settlers who were not shareholders of the Company. The initial settlers on island were thereafter forced to negotiate terms with the new owner of land on which the settlers had previously built their homes and gardens.

The new plan was confirmed by a charter issued by King James I to the Somers Islands Company in 1615. It is a lengthy document, written by the investors, that contains detailed instructions, limitations and prohibitions to organize and order the new company's affairs to develop Bermuda.³⁰ For example, the charter provides: 1) leadership on the island was to be headed by one governor; 2) the land was to be divided into eight parishes or "tribes"³¹, reserving one-quarter of the land to the new Company; 3) land in each tribe was to be set aside for a church and a school; 4) the eight tribes each contained 50 shares, thereby limiting the new Company to issuing no more than 400 shares; 5) no one person could own more than ten shares of stock; 6) Bermuda commodities were to be free from import/export taxes assessed by the Crown for twenty-one years; and 7) the new Company was authorized to make laws and ordinances that were not contrary to English laws. The charter concludes with a list of names of the investors in the company at that time, which numbered 117, a substantial increase from the eleven original investors three years earlier.

The four hundred parcels of property specified in the patent to be allotted to the

30. Lefoy, *Memorials*, 83-100.

31. A "tribe" refers to the corporate nature of the colony by being defined in seventeenth century parlance as "a division of territory allotted to a family or company". The tribes were designed to organize constituents in loose associations "within and under" the general control of the Bermuda Company in order to "make decisions for the common good". See, Wesley Frank Craven, *An Introduction to the History of Bermuda* (Bermuda: Bermuda Maritime Museum Press, 1990), 76.

investors were not described either by location or by acreage. This was due to there being no detailed survey existing when the patent was granted in 1615. The task of making such a survey was given to Richard Norwood, who was commissioned to describe and draw a map of the islands, thereafter reserving one quarter of the land for the Company and then dividing the remaining territory into eight equally sized tribes, with each tribe divided further into fifty separate parcels. Norwood wrote a journal describing the process of his eight-month survey, beginning at the eastern end of the island and moving west through Pembroke. He then broke off and went to the Western end of the island beginning with Ireland Island and moved east.³² His final map provided the basic framework for the settlement of Bermuda.

32. Richard Norwood, *The Journal of Richard Norwood, Surveyor of Bermuda* (New York: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reports, 1945).

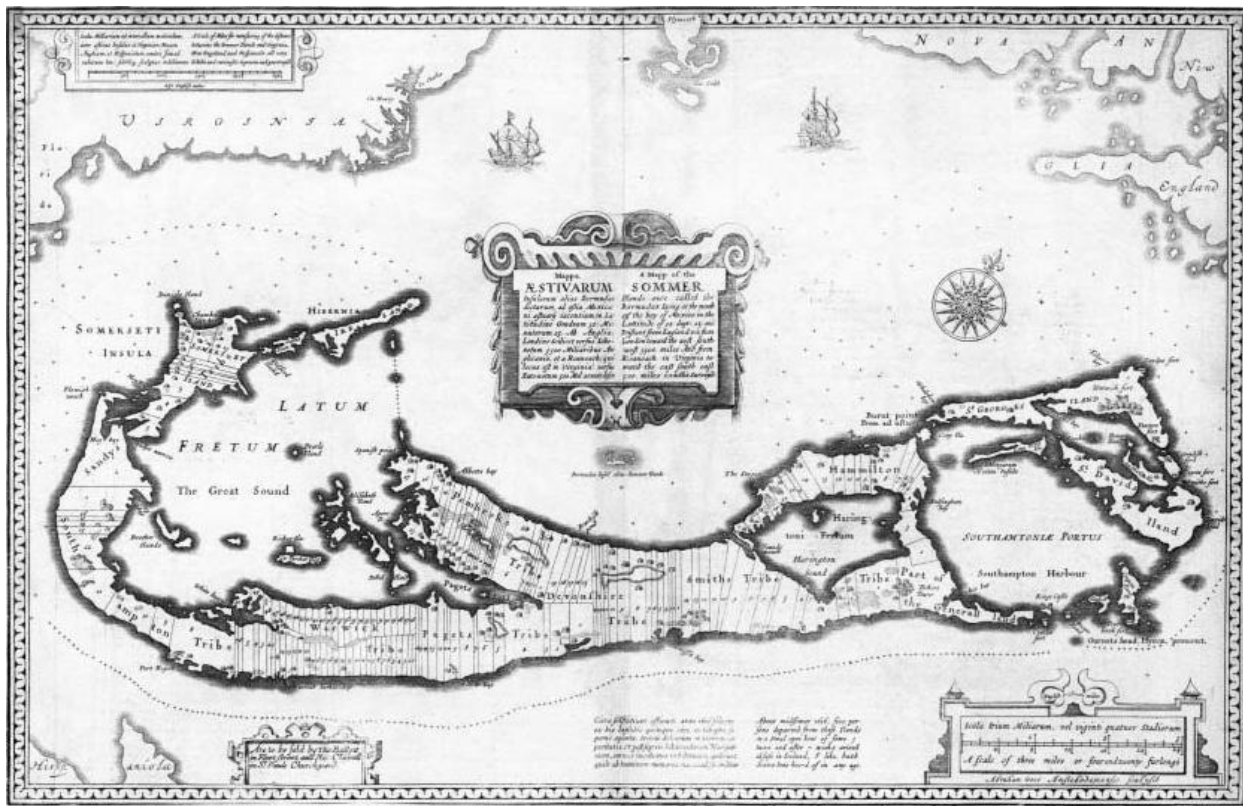


Figure 2 John Speed's 1626 Map of Bermuda, based on Richard Norwood's 1616/17 (now lost) manuscript survey.

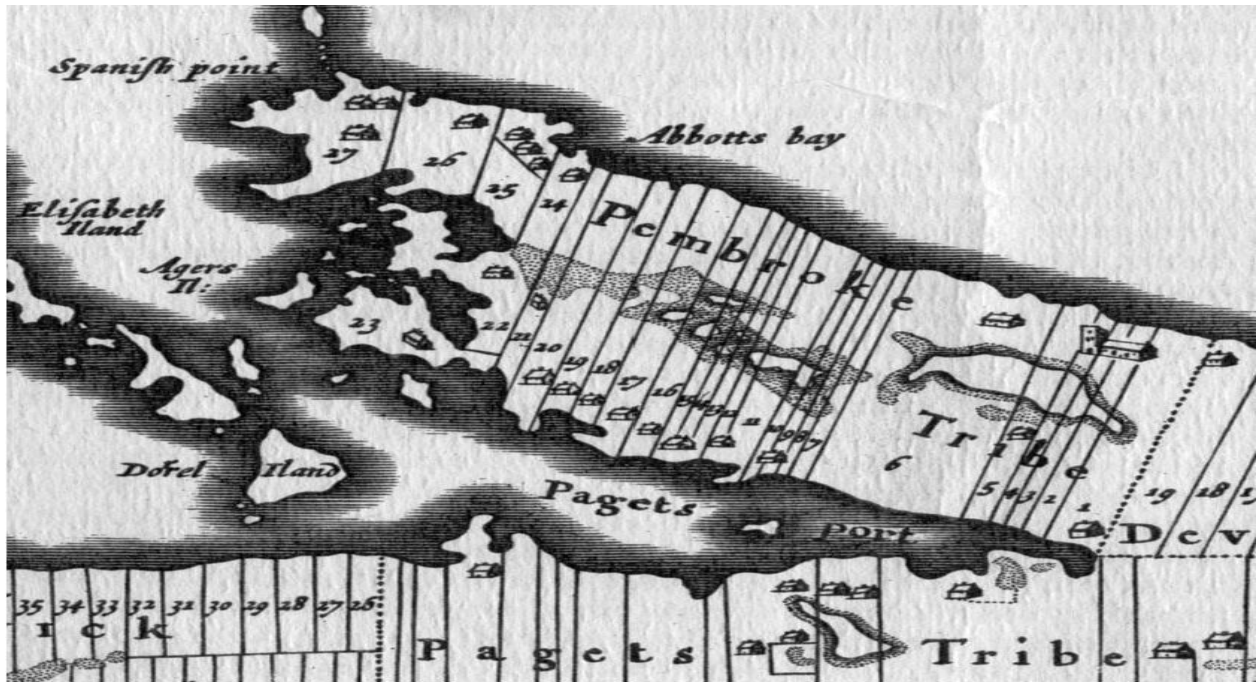


FIG. 2

Speed's 1626 map: detail of Pembroke Tribe. Note the cluster of houses near Paget's Port and their proximity to each other (image courtesy of the National Museum of Bermuda, modified by M. Jarvis).

Figure 3 Speed's 1626 map: detail of Pembroke Tribe. Note the cluster of houses near Paget's Port and their proximity to each other. Image courtesy of the National Museum of Bermuda, modified by M. Jarvis.

After making all the divisions required by the patent, the resulting 400 parcels ended up being about 25 acres each. Allocation of the parcels between the shareholders was made by drawing lots. It appears the Company allowed shareholders to trade parcels between themselves due to the final allocation resulting in many shareholders owning contiguous parcels. The members of each tribe were responsible for deciding among the owners of the fifty parcels where the church and school would be established within its bounds.³³

Neither the patent nor subsequent Company directives given to replacement

33. Lefoy, *Memorials*, 299.

Governor Daniel Tucker in 1616 placed any requirements or restrictions on the shareholders' use or non-use of their parcels. For example, shareholders were not required to send tenants to occupy and use the parcels, and had the option to allow their land to remain vacant and fallow.³⁴ This permitted each shareholder to decide the manner in which to use, or not to use, their respective parcels. Some rented parcels to other shareholders, while some sent indentured workers to work the land under a sharecropping arrangement, with others leasing their parcels for a sum-certain to tenants on island.³⁵ Therefore, the responsibility and burden to develop three-fourths of the island was placed in the hands of the stockholders in Britain who were free to decide how much and how little they wanted to further invest in the venture to utilize their respective parcels. It could be that the threat of a Spanish invasion may have encouraged some shareholders to make additional investments in manpower and supplies to avoid losing their entire investment to a foreign power. Others may have considered that threat as a deterrent for further investment.

It was hoped that granting investors a full proprietary interest in parcels of property on Bermuda would avoid the pitfalls of the Virginia plan where ownership of all lands was held by the company. Further, limiting the number of shares each investor

34. Fifty-Four separate instructions were given by the Company Secretary to Governor Tucker before he sailed to Bermuda, with these directives included in Lefoy, *Memorials*, 105-119. Directive 9 states that the Governor may appropriate any vacate parcels for public use or leave barren, but there is no burden or responsibility for shareholders to occupy and use their parcels.

35. "Robert Rich to Nathaniel Rich, May 25, 1617", *The Rich Papers: Letters from Bermuda, 1615-1646*, ed. Vernon A. Ives (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984): 22.

could acquire to ten was imposed to avoid a few investors monopolizing the island. It appears that personal and diffuse land ownership was aimed at strengthening the investors' commitment to the venture by allowing individual enterprise within the framework of a joint undertaking.

Implementing the Model

The Company's initial investment expectations were not fulfilled despite a robust sale of tobacco and other commodities produced from the island. This was due in part to the land set aside for the Company (approximately 1,890 acres) being unable to generate income sufficient to pay the administrative expenses and infrastructure costs required to establish a functioning British community in Bermuda. Crops produced on the large tracts set aside for the Company were unable to fetch prices to pay all the costs and expenses to construct roads, bridges, ports, forts, as well as to pay the salaries of government, educational and religious officials. Settlers on the island required and expected these improvements and services to come from the produce raised on the public lands on which many of them were sharecropping.³⁶

After being instructed by African and Native slaves in the fine art of tobacco cultivation and cure, Bermudians began producing an increasing crop of the leaf for export to Britain - 30,000 pounds in 1618, followed by 70,000 pounds in 1619, with between 80,000 and 100,000 pounds being produced each year in the early 1620's.³⁷ Since there was at the time an increasing demand for the commodity in Britain, with a

36. Robert Paul Goetz, "The Failure of Early Bermuda, 1612-1630" (Ph.D. diss., Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1989): 47.

37. Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade*, 27.

limited supply of tobacco being shipped in from abroad, then the high price for tobacco gave the investors and sharecropper-settlers a financial windfall for their efforts. Although the Company lands participated in this windfall, the resulting sums were ultimately not enough to pay the administrative salaries and necessary capital improvements. This deficiency was due not so much to the relative productivity of the Company land as it was a consequence of that land being allotted for the exclusive use of administrative leaders and other officials in lieu of their wages.

The Orders and Constitutions of Bermuda, enacted in 1622, allotted to the appointed governor of the island twelve shares of land, or 300 acres, on St. George's Island. The sheriff was assigned four more shares, or 100 acres, adjacent to the governor's land. The governor's secretary was allotted two shares, or fifty acres adjacent to the sheriff's shares, with the four ministers serving the island each receiving two shares, or fifty acres of land, for their support.³⁸ These allocations were not freehold grants, but rather a license to use the acreage as long as the officials were serving on island. Although the Company continued to own these allotted shares, the profits derived from them went to the officials and their sharecroppers, and not to the Company coffers.

To make up for the diminishing sums in the Company's account, the stockholders in London opted not to reinvest their earnings from Bermuda tobacco to pay the costs for public development of the island. Instead, they decided to levy taxes on the settlers' crops. In 1620, the Company authorized the governor to levy and collect, essentially

38. "Orders and Constitutions, February 6, 1621/2", in Lefroy, *Memorials*, 212-3.

taking, a portion of the entire island's tobacco crop, and to draft private labor for public use with the approval of a colonial assembly established that same year. The collected tobacco provided the Company a mechanism to essentially force the settling sharecroppers to contribute and pay a share of the Company's expenses, such as financing public works, reimbursing the Company for general supplies and equipment, and paying the salaries of minor public servants in the colony.³⁹ Initially, the assembly authorized the collection of one thousand pounds of tobacco produced in the eight tribes "accordinge to the quantity and somme of Tobaccoe generally made up and not accordinge to the number of shares, the Charge thereof to be equally diuided and distributed betweene the undertaker and the planter."⁴⁰

Levies on crops and forced labor effectively locked in the status of owners abroad and colonial officials on island owning or controlling essentially all the land in Bermuda, with the exception of two tracts of company land amounting to just over 200 acres each. The settlers were also locked out of the prospect of land ownership because any potential profits they received from tobacco grown by them were diminished by the levy. Additionally, what sums the settlers received were spent at the Company store, where they were required to buy their provisions at high prices, generating profit for the Company. The settlers were precluded from negotiating for supplies from ships coming into port.⁴¹ Therefore, the settlers could not, under these

39. "Acts of the First Assembly", Lefroy, *Memorials*, 169.

40. "Acts of the First Assembly", Lefroy, *Memorials*, 176-7.

41. Nathaniel Butler, *Historye of the Bermudaes or Summer Islands*, ed. J. H. Lefroy (New York: Burt Franklin, 1964), 213.

conditions, feasibly save sufficient sums to buy their shares in the Company with accompanying land. They were resigned to working for half profits, with a portion of their half being taken as a general levy. Additionally, their time in the field working their one-half share was interrupted by being conscripted from time to time to labor for the good of the Company. This system of trade and taxation had the effect of stifling the settlers' incentive to improve their positions.

Their incentive was further smothered by the falling price of tobacco as the colony in Virginia and other Caribbean islands ramped up their production of the leaf. Bermuda produced approximately 80,000 -100,000 lbs. per year that was shipped from the island to Britain from 1620-1625 where it sold for 30 p. per pound. In comparison, Virginia's production increased from about 60,000 lbs. in 1620 to about 118,000 lbs. in 1624. Not surprisingly, the price for Bermudian leaf fell from 30 p. in 1620 to 12 p. in 1625. This market tilt away from Bermuda and to Virginia is demonstrated further by examining later figures from the year 1640: Bermuda sold 240,000 lbs. of tobacco at 2 p. per pound, while Virginia sold 1,044,554 lbs at 2.5 p. per pound. Therefore, the Bermudian investors and settlers in 1640 produced three times the quantity of tobacco they produced in 1620, yet they earned from the 1640 sale £4,800, which was about twenty percent of the £30,000 they earned in 1620.⁴²

Investors in London saw the falling numbers on the bills of lading for the tobacco coming from Bermuda, and began to feel their wallets lighten after the tobacco was sold in the British market. Many investors thought it best to limit their potential losses in the

42. Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade*, 28.

venture in the event that disputes between investors in Britain and colonists in Bermuda reach a head causing King James I to disband the Company, as he did in 1624 when the king, after hearing acrimonious disputes concerning the Virginia Company, dissolved the corporate charter with the Crown thereafter taking possession and control of the area, effectively annulling all of the shareholders' interest in that venture.⁴³ That prospect did not materialize because when the crown passed to King Charles I, his dissolution of Parliament in 1629 presented the London stockholders with more pressing issues at home than dealing with their investment far away. They were negotiating and fighting through a series of tumultuous events that eventually led to the execution of Charles I in 1649, and the establishment of Cromwell's Protectorate.

Resolution

After Charles I lost his head in 1649, most of the settlers in Bermuda initially refused to accept Cromwell's rule, continuing to hold allegiance as royalists with Charles II as their sovereign. This decision may have been influenced by the settlers' conflicted relationship with the investors in London, most of whom sided with the Commonwealth. The settlers sought to act on their loyalty by rising up in 1649 to elect their own governor, John Trimmingham, and banishing all Commonwealth supporters to the island of Eleuthra in the Bahamas.⁴⁴ This uprising was short-lived. After Cromwell's

43. Susan Myra Kingsbury, *The Records of the Virginia Company of London*, Vol. I (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1906), 66. See also Charles E. Hatch, *The First Seventeen Years: Virginia, 1607-1624* (Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press, 1957), 30-5.

44. Walter B. Hayward, *Bermuda Past and Present: A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Somers Islands* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1911), 48.

forces subdued Barbados in 1652, the Bermudian settlers and their elected governor capitulated without a fight. A Commonwealth committee for overseas possessions sent Josias Foster to Bermuda as the appointed governor for the Company with instructions to show mercy on the rebellious settlers, recalling those banished to Eleuthra and generally trying to reestablish Company control over the island.⁴⁵

The ability of the Company located in London to control the affairs in Bermuda was diminished by the growing number of investors selling their shares and land. This process began in the 1630's when dozens of investors began selling their interests to the Bermudian settlers residing and working the land. By 1680, more than 75% of the Company's shareholders resided on island.⁴⁶ These sales may have been prescient because in 1660, the Commonwealth government collapsed, with Charles II returning from abroad to retake the throne as sovereign. Those Bermudians who had remained loyal to the Crown immediately ramped up the number and vigor of their protests sent to the king asserting claims of mismanagement and corruption of the Company by its officers in London during the Commonwealth. These complaints led to a lengthy two-year investigation, followed by an even longer four-year court case in which the Crown eventually championed the Bermudian settlers claims against the Company, resulting in the Company's royal charter being revoked in 1684. The Company's remaining meager

45. Lefroy, *Memorials*, 3-8.

46. Michael Jarvis, "'In the Eye of All Trade': Maritime Revolution and the Transformation of Bermudian Society, 1612–1800" (Ph.D. diss., College of William and Mary, 1998): 180-1.

assets and property were liquidated to pay its debts.⁴⁷ The Crown took over administration of the island via the Lords of Trade and Plantations, an administrative body formed by Charles II in 1675 to provide advice to the Privy Council regarding the management of British colonies, including Bermuda. This ended the long experiment of the corporate model to plant and build a British colony in the Caribbean.

47. A detailed account of the process leading up to dissolution is discussed succinctly by Richard S. Dunn, "The Downfall of the Bermuda Company: A Restoration Farce," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (Oct 1963): 487-512. Dunn opines that the Bermudians wanted the King to take control over the island, yet did not wish to obey orders of the Privy Council. 494.

CHAPTER 2

BARBADOS

Introduction

Compared to the planned and platted settlement of Bermuda, the colonization of Barbados was a riotous affair involving Englishmen struggling over and against each other in military skirmishes for control of the island. This fighting was prompted by maneuvers being played out in the royal court where two noblemen contested their respective rightful and just claims to the patent for, and ownership of, Barbados. These messy and tumultuous events took place during the transition of rule following the death of James I in 1625 when Charles I ascended to the throne.

In 1627, Charles I granted to William Hay, 1st Earl of Carlisle (Hay) a patent to the island of Barbados, as well as other nearby islands in the Caribbean. Hay wisely selected and sent military men to take control and administer his claim to Barbados while he fended off legal challenges. Hay did not have a plan or scheme to colonize Barbados. Rather, he sent his representative governors to the island to act like ruthless agents with instructions to extract as much money from the lands and their settlers as possible and send it to Hay to fund his lavish lifestyle. Although this appears to be a recipe for chaos, strife and knavery, the lack of planning, in hindsight, allowed individual settlers the freedom to experiment with crops that could be converted into value-added commodities for export. The result was a generally prosperous community of plantation owners. The slaves and indentured servants producing the crops and commodities did not necessarily share in the economic bounty.

Description

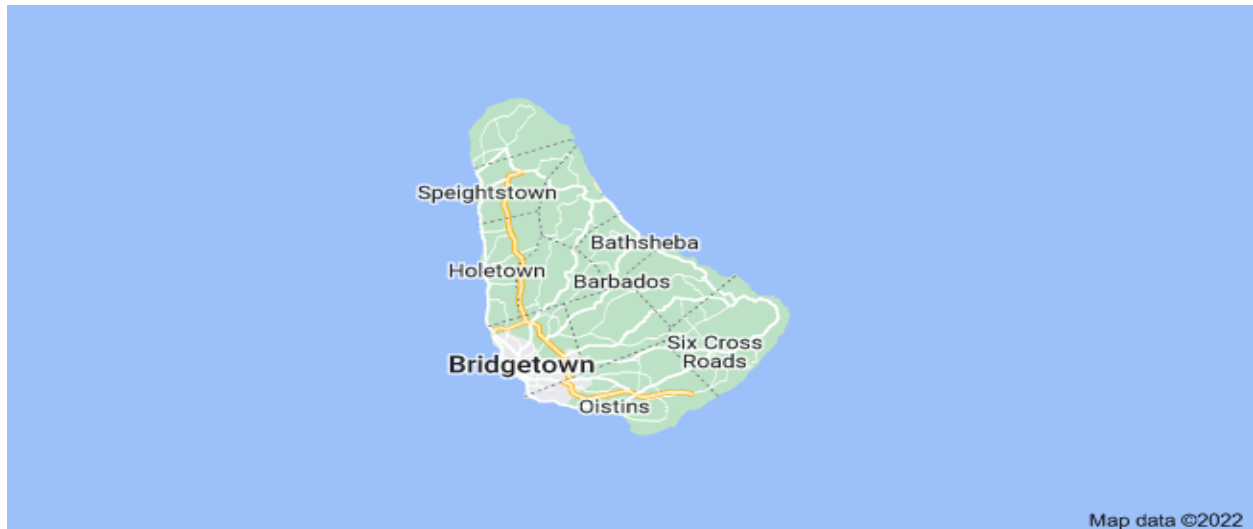


Figure 4 Map of Barbados. Created by Google, 2022.

The topography of the islands running north to south along the Windward chain of islands of the Caribbean, such as St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Grenada, are characterized by terrain rising from the coast and sloping upward to a pronounced volcano. Barbados is different, lying to east of the Windward chain, about 118 miles from its neighbor St. Vincent to its west. Although Barbados and the other islands in the chain lie over the geological area where the South American plate collides with the Caribbean plate, Barbados is the only island that arose from sediment piling up from the rubbing plates that incidentally pushed up the coral formations that laid on top of that sediment. Consequently, the geologic structure of the island is a base of coral limestone, which aside from providing a relatively flat but porous bedrock, also affected the types and qualities of the soils that developed on island. In contrast to its neighboring volcanic islands, Barbados has less fertile and thinner soils. The porous

nature of the rock prevents surface water from pooling, except in areas with impermeable soils, such as in the northeast of the island.⁴⁸ Consequently, Barbados topography is characterized by a gentling rolling landscape of well-drained lands with terraced plains separated by small hills.⁴⁹

Initial Contact

In 1536, Pedro a Campos, a Portuguese navigator, came ashore Barbados and, like Bermudez in Bermuda, let loose a few hogs to breed so that future shipwrecked mariners could have a supply of meat. Campos left because he, like other Portuguese and Spanish explorers, were searching for precious metals that were not found on the coral island of Barbados.⁵⁰ Yet, he and his fellow seamen named the island “Los Barbados”, or “bearded ones”, presumably, after the fig trees found there that have vines that create a beard-like appearance.

On May 14, 1625, the first English ship recorded to have dropped anchor in a Barbados bay was one under the command of Captain John Powell, who ran across the island by fortuitous accident. Sailing from Brazil to Britain, Powell’s vessel went off course due to a navigational error, eventually coming across Barbados. Since the island

48. Sir Robert H. Schomburgk, *The History of Barbados: Comprising a Geographical and Statistical Description of the Island; a Sketch of the Historical Events Since the Settlement; and an Account of Its Geology and Natural Productions* (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1848), 10.

49. John D. Humphrey, “Geology and Hydrogeology of Barbados”, in *Geology and Hydrogeology of Carbonate Islands*, ed. Leonard H.L. Vacher, Terrence M. Quinn (Amsterdam: Elsevier Science B.V., 1997), 381-6.

50. Otis P. Starkey, *The Economic Geography of Barbados: A Study of the Relationships Between Environmental Variations and Economic Development* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), 51-2. In support of the accuracy of this description, the author of this paper resided in Barbados from 2013-2015.

was uninhabited, he raised a cross on the island in the name of King James I, and then sailed for home. This type of claim was encouraged at that time by the British Crown which sought to expand the realm by its adventurers and explorers asserting rights to lands in the Caribbean that had historically been claimed by Spain. This encouragement was a change in policy prompted by the British going to war with Spain in 1624.⁵¹

Developing the Model

Powell was impressed with the resources on the island, sentiments he expressed to merchants and noblemen upon his return to Britain. Powell's confidence encouraged a few men to invest in a company formed to colonize the island, among whom were brothers William and Peter Courteen and Philip Herbert, the 4th Earl of Pembroke (Herbert). This type of organization was familiar to British investors, being used in the past to form other trading companies, such as the Virginia Company, in which Herbert was an investor. Because of his close connections with King James I, Herbert was tasked with obtaining a patent for the island while Powell and the Courteens provisioned a ship to return to Barbados where they landed on February 17, 1627, with about 80 planters aboard.⁵²

As settlers worked to establish company farms, they did so without any legal authority from the Crown due to Herbert being unable to secure a patent from the King.

51. In 1493, Pope Alexander VI issued the papal bull "Inter Caetera," authorizing Spain and Portugal to colonize the Americas. See, *Papal Bull Inter Caetera*, Division of the Undiscovered World between Spain and Portugal, www.papalencyclicals.net/alex06/alex06inter.htm. See also, Schomburgk, *The History of Barbados*, 12.

52. Gary Puckrein, "Did Sir William Courteen Really Own Barbados?," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (Spring 1981): 136.

Herbert was attempting to overcome or circumvent a previous patent for the island granted to Thomas Warner who, in 1624, had been given “custody” of Barbados, as well as St. Christopher (nka St. Kitts), Nevis and Montserrat.⁵³ Warner’s grant was not a conventional patent allowing him to personally develop the island. Rather, it seems his “custody” was akin to him being appointed as an agent or trustee acting for the benefit of the king. This tenuous grant would give investors pause before expending substantial sums to settle the islands. Uneasy with this arrangement, Warner assigned his claim to Hay, a Scot, who was a close friend of King James of Scotland before his ascendancy to the English Crown in 1603. Hay traveled south with the King to London where he served in the privileged position as the King’s “gentleman of the bedchamber”.⁵⁴ For his continued loyalty and service to the Crown, Hay was eventually invested as the 1st Earl of Carlisle in 1622.⁵⁵ After Charles I took the throne after his father’s death in March 1625, Hay continued to have close connections with the royal court, relations he used to convert the custody arrangement he received from Warner to an outright proprietary grant of a patent for the whole of Barbados and the other islands. This grant was awarded in July 1627. About seven months later, Herbert learned of Hay’s grant and gained an audience with the king, describing the wrongs visited upon

53. Aubrey Gwynn, “Early Irish Emigration to the West Indies, 1612-1643,” *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 18, No. 71 (September 1929): 392.

54. The duties of this position originally consisted of assisting the monarch with dressing, waiting on him when he ate, guarding access to his bedchamber and closet, and providing companionship. See also, Roy E. Schreiber, “The First Carlisle Sir James Hay, First Earl of Carlisle as Courtier, Diplomat and Entrepreneur, 1580-1636”, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society New Series*, Vol. 74, No. 7 (1984): 20.

55. Schreiber, “The First Carlisle Sir James Hay”, 22.

him and his Courteen cohorts who, by virtue of Hay's patent, would lose the substantial investment they had made to settle Barbados. Charles I sought to appease Herbert by granting him a custody arrangement for the island similar to the one granted to Warner by Charles' father three years earlier. Hay heard about this grant, and not to be out-granted, went back before the king who, on April 7, 1628, granted to Hay a second patent confirming his proprietary rights to all of Barbados.⁵⁶

This administrative struggle in London for legal control of Barbados was mirrored by the strong-armed contests on the island for physical control of the land. Initially, the Courteen group followed the organizational model employed by the Virginia Company: All land and crops belonged to the company, with the settlers working for wages. That venture was administered by the company's appointed governor, John Powell, who established five plantations for the initial 80 settlers to work growing tobacco, cotton and staple crops.⁵⁷

After obtaining the upper hand in his sparring with Herbert in the royal court, Hay took little interest in planning the settlement and development of Barbados. His sole concern was wringing as much cash as he could from the island and its settlers. His first transaction was granting a lease of 10,000 acres of prime farm land in Barbados' St. George's valley to a group of London merchants, with the rent being forty pounds of cotton annually from each settler the merchants placed on the land.⁵⁸ The

56. Puckrein, *Did Sir William Courteen*, 137-8.

57. Vincent Harlow, *The Colonising Expeditions to the West Indies and Guiana, 1623 - 1667* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1924), 30-1.

58. John Poyer, *The History of Barbados: From the First Discovery of the Island, in the*

merchants appointed Charles Wolverton to be their agent.⁵⁹ In April 1628, Wolverton set sail for Barbados, accompanied by about 80 men, with the merchants directing him to avoid conflict with the Courteen settlers, thereby limiting Wolverton's authority to the bounds of the leased land. He ignored these instructions after landing. Seeing an opportunity to improve his own position, Wolverton immediately claimed to be the representative of Hay, asserting all the rights of the lord of the land over the Courteen settlers, whom Wolverton considered to be unlawful squatters. A number of skirmishes were fought between the Courteen group and the Hay group over the next two years, with Wolverton eventually being captured and sent back to London.⁶⁰ Hay responded by sending a new governor, William Tufton, who initially was able to restore order over the Courteen group, yet later bickered with settling working lands leased to them by Hay. So began a series of Hay and his successor appointing governors who were generally mercurial, ruthless and avaricious administrators - Henry Hawley, who was replaced by William Tufton, who was moved aside by the return of Hawley, who was ousted by Henry Huncks, who eventually gave way to Philip Bell.⁶¹

Implementing the Model

The person occupying the governor's office had substantial power in the colonization of Barbados: He was the sole authority deciding the location and quantity of

Year 1605, Till the Accession of Lord Seaforth (United Kingdom: J. Mawman, 1801), 20.
59. Puckrein, *Did Sir William Courteen*, 138.

60. Eric J. McDonald, "Violent Identity: Elite Manhood and Power in Early Barbados" (PhD diss., University of Houston, 2019), 41-4.

61. Larry Dale Gragg: *Englishmen Transplanted: The English Colonization of Barbados 1627-1660* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 42.

land granted and allocated to settlers in furtherance of Hay's general desire for the island to be developed rapidly. During the first decade of settlement (1628-1638), the governors made 770 separate grants of land totaling 84,279 acres (excluding the 10,000 acres Hay previously granted to London merchants), or about 100 acres per grant.⁶² The total area of grants constituted about 80% of the island. These grants transformed the island's landscape from thick woods to cultivated estates.

The grants were in the form of a lease, with most leases being a seven-year term, with some being for life. The tenant was responsible to pay rent, as well as taxes to support the governor and clergy. The rent was initially five percent of the produce from the land in kind, such as tobacco, cotton and staple crops. Later, Governor Hawley increased the rent to the same amount charged to the London merchants - forty pounds of tobacco or cotton for each person on the leased land over the age of fourteen. Half of the rental was delivered to Hay, with the other half to Hawley, who was supposed to use his share to pay for infrastructure improvements and administrative expenses.⁶³ Failure to cultivate the land, or failure to provide one indentured servant for every ten acres leased, could result in a forfeiture of the lease with the land reverting to the proprietor, whose governor re-let it to another settler.⁶⁴

The boundaries for the granted lands were not surveyed in advance, like in

62. Richard Pares, *Merchants and Planters* (Cambridge, UK: University Cambridge Press and Economic History Review, 1960), 57. Subdivision of the 100-acre grants was common with grantees letting smaller parcels to sub-tenants, many of whom were indentured servants of the grantees rather than freemen.

63. J. Harry Bennett, "Peter Hay, Proprietary Agent in Barbados, 1636-1641", *Jamaican Historical Review*, (November 1, 1965): 12.

64. Poyer, *The History of Barbados*, 31

Bermuda, but were crudely defined. For example, the governor's office sometimes used an old form of description that delineated a tract by reference to the property abutting it:

"May 1647, to John Thompson... fifteen acres of land situate in ye parish of St. Philip situate and lying near Congar Rode, abutting on ye land of William Jackson, and the plantation of Francis Green and Jo Tompson, fallen as well as unfallen... "

This deed is for an area in the parish of St. Philip, inland and not by the coast. There is no indication of any such settlement in that area marked on a survey map made ten years later in 1657, even though the description of the abutting plots in the deed gives the reader the impression that these adjoining properties were settled. Another researcher's search of the early deeds in the area do not contain any description of any "fallen" land, i.e., land that was waste or unsettled. To compound the questionable accuracy of the deed, in 1647, the same year John Thompson supposedly acquired his fifteen acres, it was announced that there was no more land available for settlement on Barbados.⁶⁵ Other deeds described the area conveyed by boundary markers and corners designated as prominent trees, such as "the corner trees marked with an X, or, "windward on ye land of Captain Willaim Kitterick, Esq., beginning at a tree marked with G.K. at ye periode of the East".⁶⁶ These impermanent markers, and the questionable abutment descriptions, made it difficult for later surveyors to accurately establish estate boundaries for grants made during the first few decades of settlement.

Many of the early settlers were eager to plant tobacco on their modest plots in

65. Frank Cecil Innes, "Plantation and Peasant Farm: A Vertical Theme in the Historical Geography of Barbados, 1627 - 1960" (PhD diss, McGill Univ, 1967), 77.

66. Innes, "Plantation and Peasant Farm," 78.

order to share in the profits generated from the expanding market for the leaf in Britain.

This was feasible for small farmers because, as David Watts explains:

... planting techniques were primitive, basic implements being no more than a few hoes, and the ubiquitous Indian digging stick, with which the actual setting of individual plants was accomplished. Tobacco, which matured in less than a year, required fewer acres than grains to produce a profitable crop. A settler could produce a successful one on his own, although an indentured servant or two lightened the workload considerably. Even with little acreage, a settler could compete with larger planters because there were essentially no economies of scale in the production of tobacco. Increases in acres cultivated required proportional increases in capital and labour.⁶⁷

However, as in Bermuda, this boom went bust in the early 1630's due to the rapid production of tobacco in Virginia and other West Indies' islands glutting the British market, thereby causing prices to plummet.⁶⁸ As financial prospects rolled up and down with the rising and falling price of tobacco, so did settlers ebb and flow to and from Barbados, with dissatisfied settlers leaving their lands to be replaced by new settlers coming from Britain. In addition, indentured servants who had worked their seven-year period of indenture on the island were ready to take over from vacating settlers so that they could till their own plot of land.⁶⁹

By 1636, there were approximately 6,000 landholders and indentured servants on Barbados. On April 25th of that same year, Hay died owing substantial sums to his creditors. He was survived by a young son, James Hay, the Second Earl of Carlisle, for whom trustees James Hay and Archibald Hay were appointed to manage his affairs

67. David Watts, *The West Indies: Patterns of Development, Culture and Environmental Change Since 1492* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 156-7.

68. See fn. 39.

69. Alison Games, *Migrations and the Origins of the English Atlantic World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 129.

until he reached majority. The two trustees appointed their cousin Peter Hay to be the Receiver General for the proprietary estate of Barbados. Although the newly appointed Receiver attempted to serve the trustees faithfully during his four years on Barbados, he was thwarted by Governor Hawley and the landowners, both of whom persistently underpaid, and at times, refused to pay, Peter Hay the rent due to the trustees. Further, the trustees were quarreling with their young beneficiary who sought to take control of the proprietorship. Peter Hay's repeated complaints to the trustees and to the heir were met with little more than disgruntled consolations as his superiors in London did not have the means nor the military wherewithal to enforce the collection of rents on an island located 4,210 miles distant.⁷⁰

Resolution

By 1640, the island of Barbados was poised for substantial changes in the course of its development due to two events: the large scale cultivation of sugar cane and the English Civil War. These two events led Barbados to become, for a time, the world's largest producer of sugar, with those producers becoming vested with full title and ownership of their plantations following the dissolution of Hay's proprietary ownership of the island during the Civil War. These changes created a sugar monoculture that effectively displaced small diversified farming with large plantations worked by African slaves arriving by the thousands, resulting in many white workers deserting the island. So, while the workers on the island began paying substantial sums to import food and fuel, products they previously produced on island, the great sugar

70. Bennett, *Peter Hay*, 19.

cane planters of Barbados rose to great wealth and power by the profits they garnered in Britain.⁷¹

Although sugar cane was introduced to Barbadian soil soon after the British arrived in 1627, it was not considered a cash crop until 1643, about the year cane was first processed into commercial quantities of consumer grade sugar.⁷² Processing the cane was both capital intensive and time consuming. After the cane was cut, it was taken to a mill where the sugar juice was extracted by milling, or grinding the cane stalks between very heavy rolling stones. The stones in the mill were driven by the wind via windmills when it was blowing, and by oxen or men when not blowing. Next, the juice was heated in large copper pots to crystallize the sugar, with the remaining juice turning into molasses. Finally, the molasses was drained away from the crystals and the sugar dried for packing. The process of cutting of the cane to milling it had to be performed in a short period of time, a matter of days. On the other hand, the time from planting sugar cane to harvest was about sixteen months.⁷³ Therefore, about two and one-half years elapsed between first planting and when planters received any profit from the sugar, and its other related products (molasses and rum) selling in Britain. Yet, those profits were substantial enough to catch the attention of wealthy London merchants who were eager to get in on this venture.

London merchants began extending large amounts of credit to Barbadian

71. Gragg, *Englishmen Transplanted*, 95.

72. Gragg, *Englishmen Transplanted*, 100.

73. H. Panda, *The Complete Book on Sugarcane Processing and By-Products of Molasses* (Delhi: Asia Pacific Business Press, 2011).

planters so that they could acquire enough land (about 200 acres) upon which to grow a crop of sugar cane sufficient to supply a mill to be built to serve that acreage, and to acquire labor by buying African slaves to cultivate the plants and work in the mill. All of these assets were needed to assemble and operate an integrated sugar plantation. As a result of this investment from abroad, land prices escalated from B£ 1.2 per acre in 1638 to B£ 5.4 per acre in 1648.⁷⁴ These rising prices enriched early settlers holding small plots of about 10 acres, many of whom sold their land and moved to other colonies in the Caribbean or North America. These sales also allowed larger owners to expand their plantations, and hence, their operations. One consequence of these transactions was that indentured servants completing their indenture, and new arrivals to the island with little means and heaps of hope, found themselves shut out of land ownership, being resigned to tenant farming, an occupation which became less available as the number of African slaves landing in Barbados increased⁷⁵ Meanwhile, both the planters and merchants became fabulously rich. The exports from Barbados alone in 1680 were more valuable than the exports to Britain from all other North American colonies combined.⁷⁶

The increased price of land and its use in the lucrative sugar industry prompted governmental officials and landowners to be more precise in establishing boundaries and recording transfers. In 1639 an Alienation Court was established to create a system

74. Hilary Beckles, *White Servitude and Black Slavery in Barbados, 1627-1715* (Knoxville: University Tennessee Press, 1989), 156.

75. Gragg, *Englishmen Transplanted*, 150-1.

76. Richard S. Dunn, "The Barbados Census of 1680: Profile of the Richest Colony in English America," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (Jan., 1969): 4.

of recording land sales and transfers in a central repository. In 1647, another act was passed to authorize sales of land for delinquency in paying taxes, reselling escheat lands, and regularizing surveying procedures.⁷⁷

One of the first maps depicting the island of Barbados was made in 1657 under the supervision of Richard Ligon, a British aristocrat with no training in surveying. The copy of Ligon's drawing below, from the British Library, locates the various properties by the names of their respective owners, with most being clustered on the leeward (western) and southern sides of the island. The windward and northern areas of the island have very few designations, while the middle shows the 10,000 acres granted to the London merchants:

77. Vincent T. Harlow, *A History of Barbados, 1625-1685* (New York: Negro University Press, 1969), 17



Figure 5 Map of the “Yland of Barbados.”

This map is referred to as a “topographical description”, and is not a survey locating boundary lines demarking various parcels. Rather, the names of the property holders are located on the map in the general area of their respective acreage.

the Caribbean to persist in their allegiance and obedience to the Crown.⁷⁸

With political struggles percolating in Britain, Barbadians opted to stay out of the roil by remaining neutral in the political contest between Parliament and Charles. One could describe the island planters in the 1640's as essentially ignoring the king, Parliament and Hay, focusing instead on their burgeoning sugar trade. In 1645, the Barbadian Assembly, comprised mostly of wealthy planters, went one step further by making a bold declaration of self-governance. The Assembly passed an act stating that all inhabitants of the island who were then in possession of any land by virtue of a grant made by any former governor, or by any other lawful conveyance, shall thereafter hold their property in fee simple absolute.⁷⁹ The king, Parliament and Hay did not accede to this brazen act of claiming ownership of the lands, yet none of them were in a position to contest the declaration due to being immersed in the political turmoil in Britain.

That turmoil came to a head when Charles I was executed in 1649, with Cromwell's Commonwealth government taking control. Many royalists fled Britain, with some finding refuge in neutral Barbados. One refugee was Colonel Humphrey Walrond, who in 1650, rallied those sympathetic to the Crown, known as Cavaliers, to extirpate those who supported the Commonwealth, known as Roundheads.⁸⁰ Walrond and his supporters were encouraged to take such action after learning that royalists in Bermuda had banished Commonwealth Puritans from its shores. The Roundheads sought to be

78. Gragg, *Englishmen Transplanted*, 43.

79. Gragg, *Englishmen Transplanted*, 46.

80. N. Darnell Davis, *The Cavaliers and Roundheads of Barbados, 1650-1652* (Georgetown, British Guiana: Argosy Press, 1887), 141.

ousted included established and long-tenured owners of plantations who were not amenable to the newcomers' demands. This prompted a two-year struggle on Barbados, consisting of a series of plots and counterplots, armed uprisings, fines, and banishments, ending with the Cavaliers getting the upper hand in controlling the island. The Commonwealth government responded in 1652 by sending a fleet to Barbados under Sir George Ayscue, who was ordered to bring the island to heel. After blockading the island for three months, the Cavaliers sued for peace, agreeing to accept Commonwealth control of Barbados via a Parliamentary-appointed governor. In exchange, the planters received guarantees of continued self-government and restoration of all property confiscated by both sides from the other. Thereafter, the Barbadians enjoyed autonomy for the balance of the decade with Cavaliers and Roundheads settling down in their mills to make sugar.⁸¹

With the restoration of Charles II in 1660, the Barbados planters asked the king to affirm their Assembly's action annulling Hay's proprietary patent and to confirm their land acquisitions. Charles II consented. The king then assumed direct control of Barbados and sent Francis Lord Willoughby as royal governor. In 1663 Willoughby persuaded the Barbados Assembly to grant the king a permanent 4.5 percent duty on all commodities exported from the island in order to cover the costs of the local crown government. The planters agreed because, in exchange, the Crown and its Privy Council allowed the Barbadians an opportunity to manage their own internal affairs on

81. Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972), 80.

island.⁸²

Notwithstanding interludes of autonomy, Barbadians who had cast off the proprietor in favor of a royal overseer began to see their local control over economic and political affairs being chipped away by greater supervision by the Lords of Trade and Plantations, an arm of the Privy Council created in 1675. These royal bureaucrats spent much of their time scheming plans to assert greater control of the colonies by imposing numerous trade restrictions, one of which was requiring all Barbados sugar to be sold in Britain.⁸³ Planters continued to accumulate wealth, but they, like other colonists in the British Empire, had to acknowledge that they had traded independence from, to interdependence with, the imperial officials in London.

82. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 82.

83. Robert McKinley Bliss, *Revolution and Empire: English Politics and the American Colonies in the Seventeenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), 4.

CHAPTER 3

TOBAGO

Introduction

Unlike the other two islands, Tobago was, during the seventeenth century, the site of many extended settlements planted by a variety of European countries before the British deigned to settle the island. Sovereign control of Tobago was like a ball, bouncing from one failed settlement to another, with the final one being a Dutch colony displaced by the French in 1677. For the next eight decades, Tobago's flora and fauna had a blissful holiday from humanity while nominally being considered a French possession. In 1763, this hiatus ended when the small island on the periphery of the Caribbean was ceded to the British as part of an international treaty resolving the larger conflict that was the Seven Years War (1756-1763). During this same eight decades, the royal government in London had reared, trained and unleashed a behemoth of a bureaucratic machine directed to controlling colonial affairs for the benefit of the British Empire. So, when Tobago, along with Grenada, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Dominica, were formally ceded to the British as part of the Treaty of Paris, there was a cadre of technocrats ready to devise a plan to incorporate these new lands into the Realm.⁸⁴

The bureaucratic planning to settle Tobago would eventually produce results that were underwhelming. These results were not due to the plan itself, which, as it reads, is

84. D. H. Murdoch, "Land Policy in the Eighteenth-Century British Empire: The Sale of Crown Lands in the Ceded Islands, 1763-1783," *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (September 1984): 555.

thoughtful, measured, equitable and reasonable. Rather, the diminished results are pinned on the London bureaucrats appointing a Caribbean rascalion to execute the initial plan, followed by the government considering Tobago a bargaining chip to be dealt to the French in later international negotiations.

Description



Figure 7 Map of Tobago. Created by Google, 2022.

The island of Tobago is located about 156 miles south southwest of Barbados. Unlike Barbados, Tobago is an island that is volcanic in origin. It is differentiated from its neighbors of Grenada and St. Vincent because Tobago's cone has no active vents. The island stretches 26 miles in a northeasterly-to-southwesterly direction, being about 8 miles wide at its broadest, but is more generally from 3 to 5 miles wide. Its main geographical feature is a ridge starting at the northeast end of the island which extends about 13 miles southwestward until it gradually flattens out to a plain about 6 miles long. The height of the ridge reaches about 1,800 feet without any distinguishable summits or

peaks. Deep and fertile valleys run north and south from the ridge to the sea.⁸⁵

Initial Contact

The name “Tabaco” was first recorded in a Spanish royal order issued in 1511. This name refers to the shape of the island, which resembles fat cigars smoked by the Taíno inhabitants of the Greater Antilles.⁸⁶ Spanish explorers settling Trinidad on occasion would venture to Tobago to capture indigenous people, but no Spanish settlement was attempted during the sixteenth century. Although various indigenous tribes visited Tobago from time to time, there are no signs of any prolonged settlement by these tribes. They, like the Spanish, used Tobago as hunting grounds, a place to procure fresh water, game and other foodstuffs.⁸⁷

Efforts to establish European settlements on Tobago began in earnest between 1614 and 1639, when many expeditions from continental countries attempted to settle the island. Colonel John Scott, a British naval officer who resided in the island of Barbados, documented the numerous European efforts, describing Juan Rodriguez as the first to make an attempt. Rodriguez wanted to produce tobacco for the rapidly expanding European market, but he abandoned the project after four months following repeated attacks on his settlers by members of the Kalinos tribe.⁸⁸ Fourteen years later,

85. *Islands of the Commonwealth: A Regional Study*, ed. Sandra W. Meditz and Dennis M. Hanratty, Federal Research Division (Washington: Library of Congress 1989), 174-5.

86. Arie Boomert, *The Indigenous Peoples of Trinidad and Tobago: From the First Settlers Until Today* (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2016), 85 fn. 30.

87. Boomert, *The Indigenous Peoples of Trinidad and Tobago*, 96.

88. Colonel J. Scotts manuscript Description of Tobago (1669) is printed in V. T. Harlow, *Expeditions to the West Indies*, 114.

Courlanders⁸⁹ from the Baltic took an interest in Tobago, sending fifty-six settlers to the island. They met a fate similar to the Spanish before them, succumbing to disease and attacks by indigenous tribes. The Dutch made an attempt in 1632 when 200 colonists from Flushing came ashore. They faced opposition, not from indigenous tribes, but by Spanish colonists in 1636, who at the direction of the Governor of Trinidad, wanted to assert Spanish sovereignty over Tobago. The Spanish raid on Tobago, which involved some 400 Spaniards and 3,000 natives, overwhelmed the Dutch settlers.⁹⁰ Their work done, the Spanish and natives returned to Trinidad.

The British gave it a go the following year in 1637, when Rev. Nicholas Leverton led a party of Puritans from Barbados to Tobago. Again, disease and the Kalinos proved stronger than the settlers. Another British attempt at colonizing Tobago was made in 1639 by Robert Rich, Earl of Warwick, who sent out a party of colonists, many of whom met their end by succumbing to disease or at the tip of an indigenous arrow, with a few survivors retreating to Trinidad.⁹¹

In 1654, the Courlanders mounted another venture to establish a more substantial settlement on Tobago. This time, the Baltic prince sent 80 families to the island accompanied by 150 soldiers, with an additional 120 troops coming ashore two years later. The settlement was located on the leeward side of the island. Many of the

89. The Duchy of Courland is situated in the northeastern portion of modern day Latvia. It was, in the sixteenth century, a semi-autonomous region under the protection of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

90. Cornelis Che Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and on the Wild Coast, 1580-1680* (Gainesville Florida Press, 1971), 360.

91. J. Scot's description as printed in Harlow, *A History of Barbados*, 115.

families were recruited from Zeeland in the Netherlands, whom the Duke of Courland had encouraged to join the venture. The number of people settling on the leeward side increased by 1658 to about 25,000 people - 11,500 settlers, 500 soldiers and 13,000 slaves from Gambia.⁹²

In 1656, Dutch merchants also sent about 50 settlers from Zeeland to Tobago, but unexpectedly finding the leeward side settled, they ventured around to the less favorable windward side of the island to establish their settlement. Both settlements coexisted for a time while the two governments on the Continent sorted out an agreement regarding future settlement of the island. That detente ended in 1658 when Courland and Sweden went to war, with the Duke of Courland and many resupply vessels bound for Tobago being captured by the Swedes.⁹³ This interdiction, combined with Dutch ships continuing to supply the Zeelanders on their side of the island, eventually tilted the balance of power to the Dutch settlers, who eventually pressed the Courland settlement to surrender. With Zeelanders on both sides of this potential conflict, and sensing that the Duke of Courland was no longer capable of supporting his project, the Courlanders surrendered, with the Dutch taking control of the island, for a time.

As part of the Franco-Dutch War being contested on the Continent (1672-78), French warships mounted two separate attacks on the Dutch settlement in Tobago, one

92. Karin Jekabson-Lemanis, "Balts in the Caribbean: The Duchy of Courland's Attempts to Colonize Tobago Island, 1638 to 1654," *Caribbean Quarterly*; Mona Vol. 46, Iss. 2, (June 2000): 39.

93. Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean*, 364-5.

in February 1677, and the other nine months later in December 1677. After fierce fighting and much loss of life on both sides, the Dutch settlers and troops surrendered and departed the island, with the victorious French collecting their booty and sailing off to Martinique. While remaining a French island in the mane following the victory, Tobago was left alone in peace and out of the fray with no European settlers to disturb the land.⁹⁴ That natural state ended eighty-six years later when the British took control of the island.

British sovereignty of Tobago was obtained as part of the Peace of Versailles ending the Seven Years War (1756-1763). This war waged in Europe and in North America between the French and British also included combat in the Caribbean between the two countries.⁹⁵ At the conclusion of hostilities, the French agreed, as part of a much larger and global settlement, to cede to the British all interest the French had in the islands of Dominica, St. Vincent, Grenada and Tobago. The question, then, for the British Crown, was how to best use and employ the land for the benefit of post-war “King and Country”.

Developing the Model

Eschewing the corporate scheme used in Bermuda and the proprietary model used in Barbados, it appears the British authorities opted to settle Tobago by use of a scheme utilized to settle the former French portion of St. Kitts (then known as St. Christopher) that had been surrendered to the British in 1715 by the Treaty of Utrecht

94. Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean*, 376.

95. The global scope of the Seven Years War is addressed by Daniel Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War, 1754–1763* (New York: Pearson Press, 2011).

following the War of Spanish Succession. After almost a decade of debate and deferral regarding a plan to sell this newly acquired portion of St. Kitts, the British Treasury eventually decided to conduct a public sale of the lands. Three commissioners were appointed to survey the newly acquired portion of the island, divide it into 200-acre parcels and then sell them, with each sale being subject to approval by the Treasury. The Commissioner's survey estimated 10,000 acres was available for sale. After about a two-year process, the Commissioners' approved sales netted the Treasury about £100,000, or about \$25.5M in today's currency.⁹⁶ With this precedent in mind, the Treasury sought to achieve a similar result for the settlement of its four newly acquired islands. It requested the Board of Trade develop and propose a plan.

The Board of Trade ordered a survey of Tobago, giving the surveyor some detailed instructions: 1) divide the island into parishes of about 6,000 to 10,000 acres each; 2) set aside strategic locations for military purposes; 3) set aside 500 to 1,000 acres for a town in each parish, subdividing that area into lots for house with accompanying acreage for pasturage; 4) 100-200 acres as glebe for the minister in each parish; and 5) 30-60 acres for the schoolmaster; 6) set aside hilly lands not suitable for cultivation for conservation of woodlands; 7) set aside not more than 800 acres in each parish for allocation of smaller parcels of between 10 to 60 acres for use of poor settlers; Provided these lands were not suitable for sugar cane cultivation. After making all these set asides and allocations, the surveyor was instructed to divide and

96. David L. Niddrie, "An Attempt at Planned Settlement in St. Kitts in the Early Eighteenth Century," *Caribbean Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (January 1966): 10.

demarcate the remaining land into parcels, ranging from 100 to 500 acres each, for the sale.⁹⁷ The surveyor was further instructed to locate all of these areas on lands not suitable for sugar cane cultivation.

The Board of Trade deliberated on the method to sell the parceled tracts that were being surveyed. In order to expedite the process of sale and the settlement of lands, the Privy counsel approved a plan that dispensed with the requirement that the Treasury approve all bids before a grant was made. Rather, the plan allowed the buyer to obtain immediate possession following sale, subject to the Treasury possibly revoking the sale within twelve months of the sale.⁹⁸

The Privy Council appointed five commissioners to conduct the sale, with the head being Sir William Young. The Council provided Young and his cohorts detailed instructions for the sales process. Initially, the instructions allowed buyers to finance their sales by posting a bond and agreeing to pay the purchase price 20% down, 10% due in each of the first and second years after sale, with 20% due for each of years three, four and five of the financing term. In order to avoid the accumulation of lands in few hands, as occurred in Barbados, no single purchaser could acquire more than 500 acres.⁹⁹

John Byers performed the survey, per the instructions of the Board, and laid out

97. David L. Niddrie, "Eighteenth-Century Settlement in the British Caribbean," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, No. 40 (December 1966): 68-9.

98. Murdoch, "Land Policy," 557.

99. John Fowler, *A Summary Account of the Present Flourishing State of the Respectable Colony of Tobago in the British West Indies* (London: A. Grant, 1774), 24-5.

a plat defining and designating all the various set asides, allocations and parcels for sale.¹⁰⁰



Figure 8 Plan of the Island of Tobago, Laid Down by Actual Survey Under the direction of the Honorable The Commissioners of the Sale of Land in the ceded Islands by John Byers, Chief Surveyor 1776.

100. "Plan of the Island of Tobago, Laid Down by Actual Survey Under the direction of the Honorable The Commissioners of the Sale of Land in the ceded Islands by John Byers, Chief Surveyor 1776", I. Bayly Sculp, London. Republished July 14, 1794, by Robert Wilkinson No. 58 Cornhill.

Implementing the Model

On March 20, 1766, Lot 1 of 500 acres at Courland was sold. By 1770, 54,408 acres had been sold by the Crown, mainly on the lowland coral plain and along the windward coast. In that same year, the first shipment of British-bound sugar left Tobago from the 77 estates that were in the process of being developed. In 1771, Commissioner Young reported that 7,377 acres had been cleared of forest with 2,347 acres of it planted in cane. By 1773, 103 estates were settled. By 1776 exports of sugar totaled 2,357 tons which had been produced from 84 mills on the island.¹⁰¹ The energy and growth on the island at the time may be summed up in the title of John Fowler's book written in 1774 entitled, *A Summary Account of the Present Flourishing State of the Respectable Colony of Tobago in the British West Indies*.¹⁰² In that account, Fowler lists each parcel in each parish sold by the commissioners, the date of sale, the name of the purchaser and the purchase price bid for each parcel.

Although settlement of Tobago appeared to proceed quickly and orderly, the revenue finally received by the Treasury from the commissioners was underwhelming. Fowler's records of sales shows that £154,058 was bid for the various parcels that were sold. It appears that only a fraction of the sum was actually delivered to the government coffers in London. Because the sale proceeds from the Tobago sales were commingled with the proceeds from the sales on the other three islands, it is difficult to parse with

101. David L. Niddre, "Settlement in the Caribbean: A Contribution to the Historical and Social Geography of the Lesser Antilles with Special Reference to the Ceded Islands and in Particular to Tobago" (PhD diss., The University of Manchester, 1965): 183.

102. See fn. 94.

precision how much of the Tobago monies made up the total received by the Treasury. Nonetheless, after deducting expected costs of sale and commissions, the Treasury calculated the cumulative sales from the four islands should have generated about £500,000 in net proceeds, but the Treasury received only £138,851.¹⁰³ To put this in perspective, a sale of one-half of the small island of St. Kitts alone, consisting of 10,000 acres, netted close to the same sum for the sales on four islands. To be fair, many bidders at the sale failed to make their 20% payment following the sale, while others defaulted later in their five-year payment period, which may account for much of the discrepancy. Yet, historians seem to concur that Young's service in leading the commissioners was disastrous. He was a terrible businessman who was in debt. He eventually had to surrender estates.¹⁰⁴

Resolution

On June 2, 1781, Tobago's British colonists were overrun by French military forces. This assault was part of the transatlantic Bourbon War (1778-1783) waged between Britain and France, and involving other European powers. One theater of that war involved the British trying to tamp down an insurrection by pesky North American colonists seeking independence, with the French aiding the colonists. With British forces devoted to the north, France seized the moment by attacking and (re)capturing various islands in the Caribbean, including Tobago.¹⁰⁵ In the 1783 Treaty of Versailles, which

103. Murdoch, "Land Policy," 567.

104. Murdoch, "Land Policy," 568.

105. A regional perspective of the Revolutionary War in the Caribbean is addressed in Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire Divided: The American Revolution and the*

was signed in conjunction with the Treaty of Paris ending the American Revolutionary War, France got its revenge over Britain following its defeat in the Seven Years' War twenty years earlier. However, France's material gains were, in some respects, minor: France regained control of Tobago, St. Lucia, Senegal and small territories in India. One questions whether this territorial gain was worth the financial and human capital expended by France to obtain it. This question is made even more pertinent when one considers that the terms of the Treaty required France to recognize British planters' rights to their property and that France would allow the British constitution, laws and Protestant religion to remain in place and unchanged after France gained political control of the island.¹⁰⁶

The British settlers in Tobago initially paid scant attention to the change in sovereignty of the island as they continued with business as usual. Although there was a slow shift away from the production of cotton towards the exportation of sugar in the years after the flags were changed, the planters were financially keeping their heads above water. One factor causing the shift from cotton to sugar was the French *Exclusif* system that required all goods exported from Tobago to be delivered to French ports. Since France did not at the time have a robust textile market, there was little demand for cotton there. Further, British planters on Tobago continued to import goods from their homeland at an increased cost due to such goods having first to be delivered to France,

British Caribbean (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000).

106. H. I. Woodcock, *History of Tobago*, (London: Columbus Publishers, 1867), 55-6.

where a tax was imposed, before being delivered onward to Tobago.¹⁰⁷ The population on the island also increased slightly during French rule. Loss of settler lives in war and emigration following the island changing hands resulted in there being only 405 settlers and 10,530 African slaves on the island in 1782. That number increased to 541 settlers and 14,171 slaves in 1790. The large number of slaves either did not know about, or did not care about, the overthrow of the monarchy in the French Revolution in 1789 because there was no slave uprising on the island.¹⁰⁸

War between Britain and Revolutionary France broke out again on February 1, 1793. Within a few months, a British expeditionary force from Barbados landed on Tobago on April 14, 1793, and took control of the island.¹⁰⁹ The predominantly British planters were heartened and relieved by this victory that was garnered by the efforts of their brothers from Barbados. They hoped the victory would bring restoration, and not disruption, in the affairs on island and in their trade and financing with Britain. That hope was not fulfilled because the war started in 1793 continued to be fought between the two European powers until 1815, with an interlude of two years in 1802-1803 when the Treaty of Amiens was respected.

That treaty provided in Article III that Tobago and all other French possessions conquered by Britain in 1793 were to be restored to France.¹¹⁰ Napoleon, like his royal

107. K. O. Laurence, *Tobago in Wartime: 1793-1815* (Kingston: West Indies Univ Press 1995), 4.

108. Laurence, *Tobago in Wartime*, 5-6.

109. Laurence, *Tobago in Wartime*, 6-7.

110. *The Treaty of Amiens*, The Napoleon Series Archive, www.napoleon-series.org/research/government/diplomatic/c_amiens.html

predecessor in 1783, decided to leave the distinctively British status quo in place. Yet, French authorities barely had time to unpack their belongings when hostilities resumed between the two European nations in 1803, with British naval forces easily retaking Tobago.¹¹¹ Although Britain was physically in possession of the island, its international legal status as a British territory was not confirmed until the 1814 Treaty of Paris.¹¹²

Prolonged warfare between Britain and France crippled the ability of Tobago's planters to obtain financing from metropolitan bankers or entice new investors to locate on the island during the twenty-one year war. The see-sawing changes of sovereignty made bankers and investors wary about providing additional resources for the development of the island, with such skepticism increasing after the British government used the island as a bargaining chip in procuring peace in 1802. Resources on the island were further dissipated by the diversion of manpower and material to build fortifications.¹¹³ However, these reasons eventually dissipated after 1814, with financial capital resuming its flow southwest from London, with increased goods flowing northeast from Tobago, when the island was officially ceded to Britain, thereby regaining its position in, and protection by, *Pax Britannica*.

111. Woodcock, *History of Tobago*, 74-5.

112. *The Treaty of Paris*, The Napoleon Series Archive (Waterloo Association) www.napoleon-series.org/research/government/diplomatic/c_paris1.html.

113. Laurence, *Tobago in Wartime*, 277.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

If one today wanted to write a “How To Colonize” book that was mandatory reading for seventeenth and eighteenth century would-be colonizers before they embarked on their respective endeavors, then what business advice should be given? Knowing now what occurred after implementation of the three models centuries ago, the writer of the book may offer that the bureaucratic model appears to be the most sensible choice because the plan is orderly, efficient and just in design. Yet, the proprietary model’s development of Barbados, in terms of number of people settled, profits generated and government taxes raised, is impressive.

Some words of advice should be written in the “How To” book warning against using the corporate model, especially in the form used to develop Bermuda. This cautionary advice is based upon the interests of the stockholding owners in London diverging remarkably from the interests of those toiling in the soils of Bermuda. The island, or more appropriately, the seven islands, required substantial financial resources to provide the bridges, roads and other infrastructure needed to connect the islands. Unlike the early twentieth century company towns operating in the Appalachia coalfields, Bermuda as a company town did not initially enjoy public resources being expended to provide the roads, bridges, water supply and other infrastructure improvements upon which a community was planted. The corporate owners in London were, in a sense, the public purse for Bermuda. Yet, behaving like profit-motivated people, the company’s stockholders had little incentive to shell out more money for

infrastructure because there was no corresponding profit that roads and bridges would generate to justify such an investment. When the owners attempted to shift the financial responsibility for infrastructure to the workers on the island, who were operating as 50-50 sharecroppers, they resisted because they had no ownership interest in the lands benefitting from the improvements. A modern equivalent would be a business owner paying office workers a share of the profits, and then expecting the workers to pay for the computers and copying machines required to operate the business. The modern owner, like the stockholders in London, has the legal and financial power to impose such conditions. But the workers have the ability to resist, actively by simply refusing to pay and passively by being less than productive.

To be fair, the corporate model worked well for British adventurers and merchants engaged in trade with Russia (Muscovy Company) and the Middle East (the Levant Company). In these ventures, British traders heading to those regions of the globe met and engaged well-established societies with experience in selling produce and finished goods that the British bought, transported and sold in Britain for a healthy profit. The corporate model encouraged a pooling of assets and a sharing of risks that incentivized many more people to participate in such ventures than otherwise would have had each individual borne all the costs, and accepted all of the risks, to mount a single trading voyage.¹¹⁴ The financial windfalls received by pooled investors from their

114. See generally, Despina Vlami, *Trading With the Ottomans: The Levant Company in the Middle East* (London: I.B. Taurus & Co., 2015) and Maria Salomon Arel, *English Trade and Adventure to Russia in the Early Modern Era: The Muscovy Company, 1603-1649* (London: Lexington Books, 2019).

eastern trade encouraged them to invest in new companies formed to engage in what was anticipated to be similar profit-making ventures heading west. Those hopes were not met because, unlike the east, North America and the Caribbean islands were not populated by societies offering goods that could be sold in Britain. Instead, the new areas in the west offered seemingly vacant and undeveloped land on which produce could be grown and then shipped to Britain. The amount of investment and the amount of time required to plant, grow, harvest, ship and sell produce from Bermuda was much greater than the investment required to supply ships sailing to and from the Middle East and Russia. Corporate development of *terra nullis* is not good for the settlers and the investors.

Bermuda, operating as a corporate entity, was able to continue as a going concern because of an interest, desire and passion that was not profit-oriented. Investors in London had religious reasons to continue supporting their small island in the middle Atlantic. Persecution of Puritans by the Crown in 1628-29 led to some leading parliamentarians of the time, such as the Earl of Warwick, Lord Saye and Sele and Sir Nathaniel Rich, to establish places where Puritans could live and worship without fear of reprisal. These leaders were decidedly opposed to Arminianism, militantly anti-Spanish, and defenders of the rights of individual subjects. The corporate model was employed to establish additional locales for Puritans to immigrate, such as the Massachusetts Bay Company and the Providence Island Company. Bermuda and these other ports served as places of exile and organizing centers for continued

opposition to Charles II.¹¹⁵ Yet, unlike Massachusetts and Providence Island, Bermuda produced tobacco in merchantable quantities to attract traders who operated most of the commercial activities on the island.¹¹⁶ The collaboration of traders and religious exiles in Bermuda produced a more moderate expression of Puritanism than was then present in Massachusetts and Providence Island.

With the corporate model in the trash can, attention turns to the remaining contenders. Writers of the “How To” book should acknowledge that the proprietary model, as employed in Barbados, was an organizational mess from start to finish. This was to be expected because the proprietor of the colony, Hay, was also a financial mess. Grandeur and debt were the two consistent themes that ran through Hay’s life. For instance, during his lifetime he held a sumptuous banquet where over one hundred cooks worked eight days to prepare over 1,600 dishes for guests. After his death in 1636, Hay’s employees sued his executors for past due wages, and other creditors lined up to be paid, with his son eventually paying £34,000 to settle his estate.¹¹⁷

Hay was no stranger to overseas venturers. He sought to fund his lavish lifestyle by investing in the Virginia Company.¹¹⁸ In 1627, he also received a patent (proprietary)

115. Robert Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London’s Overseas Traders, 1550-1653* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 110.

116. H. G. Wilkinson, *The Adventurers of Bermuda: A History of the Island from its Discovery Until the Dissolution of the Somers Island Company in 1684*, 2nd Ed (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), 398.

117. Schreiber, “The First Carlisle Sir James Hay,” 5.

118. T. K. Rabb, *Enterprise and Empire: Merchant and Gentry Investment in the Expansion of England, 1575-1630* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), 311.

grant to a large plantation known as Byrnes County, Ireland, an area just south of Dublin. However, both investments eventually proved to be busts: the Virginia Company eventually failed when the company dissolved in 1624, while Hay mismanaged his Irish plantation by either hiring competent men who cheated him, or less capable men who themselves were cheated by others.¹¹⁹

Hays “interest in the settlement of the West Indies,” Lawrence Stone has aptly written, was “largely confined to extracting a rake-off from the real undertakers.” His hope was that he would receive “a percentage in return for a little wire-pulling in high places.”¹²⁰ Hay saw the island as an asset to be exploited. His administration and governance of the island was set up to serve that end: no local representation in decision-making; suppression of all opposition; appointed governor ruling by decree; and the imposition of a variety of poll taxes, transfer fees, levies on production, and customs on trade in an effort to maximize his returns.¹²¹ But Hay was not alone. Proprietary colonies was the preferred model in 1640, a choice that mirrored the autocratic and personal rule under Charles I.¹²²

119. Schreiber, “The First Carlisle Sir James Hay,” 168.

120. Lawrence Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1358–1641* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), 163.

121. James A. Williamson, *The Caribbee Islands Under the Proprietary Patents* (London: Oxford University Press 1926), 83-93.

122. Pestana, *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, 16.

Giving full and unfettered delegation of authority to his governor on Barbados allowed Hay the time to partake fully in his lavish lifestyle in Britain. It also allowed his governor to dictate policy and make quick decisions based upon conditions and situations on the island. In comparison, governors appointed by the Somers Isle Company to Bermuda and by the Crown to Tobago were given sets of detailed instructions promulgated by persons who had never set foot on the islands. The directives were at times inappropriate or regressive. For example, in 1620 the directors of the Somers Isle Company decreed that Bermudians were required to trade only with company vessels. The stated purpose for this restriction was to prevent pirates and foreigners an opportunity to ascertain the island's defenses. The real objective was generating more revenue for the company by requiring settlers to buy their stores from the company at inflated costs. The settlers protested by presenting their grievances to the governor to no avail because the governor was not authorized to make any modifications to the directive.¹²³

Barbados' economic successes were in spite of, and not because of, the leadership of its appointed governors on island, and in particular Henry Hawley, who served from 1630-1640. A historian years ago remarked that under Hawley, Barbados was "continually in a state of mutiny and internal diffentions owing to the arbitrary and violent difpofitions of Mr. Hawley..."¹²⁴ This impression was created by settlers bearing

123. "Complaints Against the Company 1622", in Lefroy, *Memorials*, 275-6. See also Wilkinson, *The Caribbee Islands*, 155.

124. George Frere, *A Short History of Barbados From Its Discovery and Settlement to the End of the Year 1767* (London: Dodsley Printing, 1768), 7.

increased and additional taxes and duties on their exports, and forfeiting their leases not paying the increase. Hay's creditors' demands for payment motivated additional sums being extracted from the settlers, with Hawley doing well financially by raking off for himself some of this additional revenue due the creditors. When the grumbling of the settler-planters began to resemble an insurrection in 1639, Hawley sought to defuse the situation while retaining his position by calling for the creation of the initial Barbados Parliament composed of elected representatives who supported the continuation of Hawley as governor, with Hawley reciprocating by halting the collection of proprietary rents from the planters in Parliament.¹²⁵ This new assembly became more prominent and increasingly more autonomous upon the start of the English Civil War in 1642.

Barbados' rise to prominence was facilitated by the Civil War being fought in Britain at the same time sugar plantations on island began producing and exporting this valuable commodity. With the Crown's attention focused on the war waged at home, little attention was paid to the small island thousands of miles away. This left the planters in charge of developing and implementing their own home-grown policy without the interference of the heirs and creditors of Hay who no longer had the means and the backing of the king to assert their authority as proprietor of the island.¹²⁶

Geography and topography also gave Barbados advantages that Bermuda and Tobago did not possess. Being a relatively rolling landscape, Barbados had more arable land that could be put into production. In comparison, the entire land mass of Bermuda is

125. Gragg, *Englishmen Transplanted*, 40.

126. Williamson, *The Caribbee Islands*, 97

equivalent to the 10,000 acres Hay granted to the London merchants. Planters in Tobago were limited to farming along the southwest coast and in the narrow valleys in the northeastern part of the island. Further, building roads connecting the gently rolling land of Barbados was a much easier task than building the many bridges needed to connect Bermuda, and less arduous than constructing the many switchbacks required for travelers to contend with Tobago's up-and-down hills and narrow valleys characteristic of volcanic islands.

Barbados' eventual success was due to the luck and pluck of the settlers, combined with the vision and commitment of financiers in London, to form the economic powerhouse of Barbados. The hiatus from overseas control during the Civil War, while the sugar industry was being developed, went a long way towards improving the island's economy. This progress could have been undone at the conclusion of the Civil War had the Protectorate or, later, Charles II sought to restore and resume autocratic governance of the island. That did not occur due in large part to an evolutionary change in the selection of policymakers directing policy of British overseas colonies. This change was from policies being decided by patronage to plans being made by technocrats with experience in establishing and managing colonial affairs.¹²⁷

James I and Charles I were more reactive than calculating in authorizing the growing number of overseas commercial undertakings by British merchants and adventurers. The early seventeenth century rulers did not articulate a state-directed economic policy promulgated by a group of seasoned advisors in planning the expansion

127. Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*, 111.

of British interests abroad. Instead, when a group of investors or royal courtiers approached the king asking for the right to plant a settlement abroad, the king generally acceded because those making the requests were family, friends and supporters of the Crown and the king had no substantive information about the area being given away. The patents and grants, then, were forms of patronage, rewards for those who faithfully served and supported the king. These rewards initially vested the grantees with substantial royal powers with little or no royal oversight. It is said that James I had no interest in the formation of the 1609 charter for the Virginia Company, under which the marooned Bermuda party was operating, that was shown by him surrendering to the Company full rights to territory, governance and trade, with the king reserving nothing.¹²⁸

The haphazard nature of dispensing charters and patents shows that the Crown gave these matters little thought as to whom they were given and to how the Crown could benefit. For example, the contest between Hay and Herbert (representing the Courteen interests) that was brewed in 1629 over the rightful ownership of Barbados was, in hindsight, an unnecessary controversy created by the Crown granting inconsistent and overlapping trusts and patents for the island.

When Charles II was restored the throne in 1660, he began a process of corralling the awards of charters and patents by increasing government oversight of British ventures and colonies. Initially, Charles II reformed a Protectorate-era standing committee of ten men appointed by the Privy Council to “receive, heare, examine, and deliberate upon any Petitions, propositions, Memorialls, or other Addresses which shall

128. *The Records of the Virginia Company*, 24.

bee presented or brought in by any person or persons concerning the Plantations." This standing committee was reorganized as the Lords of the Committee for Trade and Plantations both in 1675 and reorganized in 1689. Up to that point, the committees provided administrative oversight of colonies, receiving reports and making suggestions to the Privy Council and Crown for further action. Seven years later, in 1696, William III replaced the Lords with a separate Board of Trade comprised of eight salaried members and eight unpaid members selected by the Privy Council. This new Board was comprised of men experienced in the planning and execution of colonies and trade abroad. The Board of Trade managed colonial affairs until 1779.¹²⁹ The days of doling out colonial concessions as patronage to cronies and sycophants was over. The push that caused this change can be found in the British Interregnum of 1649-1660, when the Commonwealth government came to power. This began a process that can fairly be described as a move from feudalism to capitalism in the establishment of British colonies abroad, that is a transition away from commoner colonists working under the rule of landed gentry with a proprietary grant and towards a government bureaucracy directed at generating profits for its expanding empire.

In 1993, historian Robert Brenner penned a significant book that points out and elevates the rise of new merchants in London who fomented and participated in the English Civil War.¹³⁰ According to Brenner, long-term structural changes in British commerce developed due to the rise of import-oriented trades from the Levant, East

129. Ralph Paul Bieber, *The Lords of Trade and Plantations. 1675-1696* (Allentown, PA: H. Ray Haas & Co., 1919), 16-38.

130. Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*.

Indies, and the American plantations between 1550 and 1640. This new trade created an assertive class of “new merchants” with social backgrounds outside of the traditional London mercantile elite. These “new merchants”, many of whom were Puritan in their religious persuasion, traded in the unregulated waters of the Atlantic and complained about the exclusive privileges enjoyed by established merchants. Brenner offers that the commercial conflict between the old and new factions of merchants erupted in political revolution in London in 1642. The establishment of the Commonwealth represented the supposed triumph of the ‘new merchants’ in overthrowing the established City oligarchy dominated by conservative-minded company merchants. Brenner’s ‘new merchant’ elite were appointed to prominent positions within the Parliamentary administration during the 1640s, later joining the radical independent section of English political society in the second half of the decade that took down the monarchy and established the Commonwealth regime in 1649. The ‘new merchants’ were ascendant under the Commonwealth and exercised power within the committees formed to administer government finance, the navy, and the American colonies. From Brenner’s perspective, the ‘new merchants’ directed the formation of Commonwealth policy relating to the forceful reduction of the royalist rebellions in Barbados and Bermuda. Therefore, the sons and grandsons of the investors developing policy for the Somers Isle Company in Bermuda eventually stormed the castle and thereafter engaged in similar planning on behalf of the government.

After Charles II was restored to the throne in 1660, he continued the consultative bodies created by the Commonwealth. The members of these bodies, most of whom

were experienced in overseas trade, continued to provide advice and counsel to the Crown which supported the overseas ventures. One prominent member appointed to the restored king's initial committee in 1660 was Thomas Povey, whose family had extensive land holdings in Jamaica and Barbados. He came to that position after serving in a similar capacity with Cromwell during the Commonwealth. Povey was more than an advisor, authoring many of the instructions addressing trade policy that Charles II signed.¹³¹ The planters' continued participation and engagement with the Crown was advantageous to them. Before the Civil War, the Somers Isle Company and Hay were responsible for constructing ports and fortifications for their respective island. By 1763, those projects became a government concern and obligation. James I and Charles I would have laughed at the suggestion of spending Crown money to defend two small islands far away. About one hundred years later, the British government deemed it an important strategic interest to send its naval forces to take and re-take Tobago. This transition shows that those who had planted settlements in the West Indies as a private venture would later apply that same experience on behalf of the government.

The migration of business planning from corporate offices to the halls of government can be seen by comparing the private plan to sell parcels on Bermuda with the Crown's bureaucratic sale of parcels on Tobago more than a century later. The planners of both sales sought to limit the number of parcels any single person could own. The records of the Somers Isle Company do not offer any reason for limiting any single

131. Charles M. Andrews, *British Committees, Commissions, and Councils of Trade and Plantations, 1622-1675* (Frankfurt: Outlook Verlag, 2019), 49.

owner to 250 acres. It appears the investors planning the venture sought to avoid one person, or a small cadre of stockholders, becoming the equivalent of a proprietorship that would exploit the resources available on Bermuda without planting a sustainable community on the island. The plan tacitly encouraged investors to spend more money on their personal holdings, which served the dual purpose of defraying company expenses while encouraging investors to participate actively in colonizing the island. The division of Bermuda into tribes supports the notion that the planners expected groups of people to settle across the length and breadth of the island.¹³²

The eighteenth century planners of the Board of Trade's land sale in Tobago had as a possible template the corporate model deployed in Bermuda. The Board, like the shareholders 150 years earlier, set a limit on the amount any one person may own, that being 500 acres per person in Tobago, which seemed appropriate since Tobago has a land mass more than double that of Bermuda. The planners at the Board also had decades of experience with other settlement plans used in the Caribbean, such as the 1627 proprietorship of Barbados and the 1726 government sale of lands in St. Christopher. The Board recognized that although the productivity of land was desirable, soil exhaustion, soil erosion and absenteeism were not. Further, the expansion of large plantations, with consequential emigration of small planters, led the Board's planners to be concerned that such consequences could result in slaves vastly outnumbering free people which could lead to an uprising.¹³³ In addition, small farmers were needed to

132. Craven, "An Introduction", 321.

133. Tessa Murphy, "The Creole Archipelago: Colonization, Experimentation, and

produce food crops and raise livestock to feed the planters and their workers who were focused on sugar cane production. These small farmers moving away could lead to an island becoming increasingly dependent upon imported food. Finally, fewer inhabitants adversely affects the island's military capacity to defend itself because there are fewer people to serve in the militia.¹³⁴ These considerations and others influenced the terms of sale dictated by the professional bureaucrats running the Board of Trade, and the accompanying rules of sale delivered to the commissioners.

The Tobago sale was, in hindsight, a mixed bag for the Board of Trade. The bureaucrats in London implemented the sale of Tobago and the other islands to raise revenue to offset increasing costs to defend the growing empire. It was thought sale of land suitable to raise sugar cane would generate profits. Also, it was considered that the 4.5% tax levied on Barbados exports could be applied to ceded islands. At the same time, the Crown sought to avoid haphazard development which led to deforestation, soil exhaustion and chaotic land disputes. After the set asides were made for the poor, the preacher, the teacher and the parish totaling about 13% of the land, more than 73% of the island was sold by the Crown to private persons, with the remaining 14% being retained for conservation. Yet, in 1790, three decades after the sale, the census on the island showed that 541 free settlers and 14,171 slaves lived on the island. This less than anticipated number of free colonists may be attributed to prospective settlers being wary

Community in the Southern Caribbean, c. 1700-1796" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2016), 62. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing 10052848.

134. Margaret Deanne Rouse-Jones, "St. Kitts, 1713-1763: a Study of the Development of a Plantation Colony" (PhD diss. Johns Hopkins University, 1978), 32. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing 8018403.

of spending time and resources moving onto an island where another European power could displace them. The numbers also imply that some owners of plantations did not live on the island.

By most metrics, the bureaucratic model of public sales of Crown-claimed lands seems to be the more predictable and sensible model to settle a colony, as compared to the corporate and proprietary models. The fact that the Board placed a less than competent person in charge of the sale of Tobago and other islands does not negate the efficacy of the plan.

One would think, then, that the British would have learned from the past in preparing and perfecting a model for colonial settlements in the years following the commissioners' sale in Tobago. This is especially appropriate considering that technological innovations improved transportation and communications between Britain and its colonies. Such a thought would be mistaken because the British continued to use the same old models in more recent areas of colonization. The settlement of Kenya shows the British government lapsed back to using all three models within a forty-year period 1888-1922.

The Berlin Conference of 1885 is where European powers divided between themselves control over the African continent. The British government was reluctant to become involved in the direct administration of its ceded area of present-day Kenya. So, in 1888, the Crown granted the Imperial East Africa Company a royal charter that authorized it to accept existing and future grants and concessions for the administration and development of British trade in that part of the world. The financial resources of the

company, however, were inadequate for any large-scale development of the region. This financial problem was resolved in 1895 when the British government paid the company £250,000 to surrender its charter to the area that is now Kenya.¹³⁵

The area came under Crown control as the East Africa Protectorate, with a commissioner of land sales appointed to supervise the settlement of Kenya through regulated grants that were supposedly restricted by the 1902 the Crown Lands Ordinance. The initial plan was to allocate 160 acres to each settler, which could be increased to a maximum of 640 acres granted under a lease with a term of 999 years.¹³⁶ However, as in Tobago, local administration corrupted the plan. This is typified by two massive land grants being given to Lord Delamere, a 100,000 acre grant in 1903 followed by a 50,000 acre grant in 1905.¹³⁷ Such grants did not result in a growing number of British settlers to Kenya.

In order to increase the number of settlers, the British government used a bureaucratic model following World War I to settle former soldiers in Kenya. Generally, the plan was to survey and divide a large number of areas into 300-acre farms. Former British soldiers were encouraged to apply, and if approved, be placed on a list decided by a lottery to select a farm on the survey that would be granted to them at no initial

135. S. H. Fazan, *Colonial Kenya Observed : British Rule, Mau Mau and the Wind of Change* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2015), 11-13.

136. William Robert Ochieng' and Robert M. Maxon, *An Economic History of Kenya* (Nairobi: East African Publishers, 1992), 114.

137. Nicolas Best, *The Happy Valley: The Story of the English in Kenya* (London: Thistle Publishing, 2013), 41.

charge, and subject to paying rent during the years following the grant.¹³⁸ And like Tobago, external factors affected adversely the settlement plan, in Kenya those being the 1928 Depression, drought, and swarms of locusts.¹³⁹

138. C. Dunder, "The Soldier Settlement Scheme of 1919 in Kenya" (PhD diss., University of Aberdeen, 1978), 287.

139. Dunder, "The Soldier Settlement Scheme," 1076.

CONCLUSION

One can travel today to Bermuda, Barbados and Tobago and find the bright yellow sun, white sand beach, green palm trees and blue sky that were experienced by early European adventurers. Efforts to maintain the colonies on the islands ceased years ago: Tobago joined with Trinidad under the Union Jack in 1899, with the two-island country attaining independence in 1962; Barbados soon followed, gaining independence from Britain in 1966; Bermuda decided to remain an overseas territory of the United Kingdom, internally self-governing with foreign affairs and the military remaining the responsibility of the United Kingdom. The sand, the sun and the water remain as inviting today as they were 400 years ago. The process of colonization eventually led to the development of modern resorts and Tiki bars that make the vacations of present-day visitors more comfortable.

Some grace should be given to the early merchants and bureaucrats trying to establish Caribbean colonies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. They often found themselves in uncharted waters, both literally and figuratively. With transportation between Britain and the islands being precarious, and communications delayed for months, the planners of the three ventures devised a scheme they thought would be effective, sent the instructions to the island and hoped for the best. The primary objective of the instructions was to implement a model of colonization that generated revenue for the company, the proprietor and the Treasury. A secondary consideration was the welfare of the people emigrating to the islands to toil for the benefit of the planners in Britain. The motivation for profit present in the corporate office of the Somers Isle

Company and on the estates occupied by Hay, eventually migrated to the halls of government of the bureaucrats which made commercial exploitation official Crown policy.

A substantial impediment to achieving the commercial success envisioned by the planners of the three colonies is that they were not physically present and living on the islands. Therefore, those devising the plans and giving the instructions did so without a full appreciation of the conditions on the islands. Any "How To Colonize" manual for a prospective colonizer eager to profit from the venture should open with a provision in the introduction advising that local knowledge trumps corporate, absentee and imperial planning every time. Another recommendation may be akin to the warning on the gate of Hell in Dante's *Inferno* which bears the inscription, "Lasciate ogne speranza, voi ch'intrate," most frequently translated as "Abandon all hope, ye who enter here." Those offshore orchestrating a settlement with planning and financing of islands in the Caribbean generally did not fare well in the long term. In contrast, the ones who lived on and worked the land and sea had a much better chance of succeeding for themselves and for their future generations.

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APPENDIX

Letter dated March 1, 2022, by Bruce F. Day, ThD, CIP, Director
Office of Research Integrity
Marshall University

This is exempt from oversight of Marshall University Institutional Review Board.



Office of Research Integrity

March 1, 2022

J. William St Clair
605 10th Avenue
Huntington, WV 25701

Dear Bill:

This letter is in response to the submitted thesis abstract entitled "*How to Start a Colony, or Not: Different Models to Colonize Bermuda, Barbados and Tobago.*" After assessing the abstract, it has been deemed not to be human subject research and therefore exempt from oversight of the Marshall University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The Code of Federal Regulations (45CFR46) has set forth the criteria utilized in making this determination. Since the information in this study does not involve human subjects as defined in the above referenced instruction, it is not considered human subject research. If there are any changes to the abstract you provided then you would need to resubmit that information to the Office of Research Integrity for review and a determination.

I appreciate your willingness to submit the abstract for determination. Please feel free to contact the Office of Research Integrity if you have any questions regarding future protocols that may require IRB review.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Bruce F. Day'.

Bruce F. Day, ThD, CIP
Director

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