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"Expulsion of the Salvages": English Policy and the Virginia Massacre of 1622

Alden T. Vaughan

FEW events in early American history match the drama or significance of the Virginia massacre of 1622. It cost the fledgling colony the lives of almost 350 settlers; it contributed to a subsequent famine and epidemic that killed another five or six hundred; it hastened the collapse of the Virginia Company of London; and it brought on a ruthless counterattack against the Indians, in which scores of settlers and hundreds of Indians perished. It also wrought a major shift in English policy.¹ For almost a

Mr. Vaughan is a member of the Department of History at Columbia University. A preliminary version of this article was presented in October 1974 to a conference at the University of Maryland on the Chesapeake Colonies in the Seventeenth Century. The author wishes to thank Wesley Frank Craven for his helpful criticism; the Folger Library for access to its printed and human resources; and the Charles Warren Center of Harvard University for its financial, clerical, and intellectual support. The present essay is part of the author's on-going investigation into the interplay of European and Indian cultures.

¹ Many historians have recognized the massacre as a turning point in Indian-English relations, but few have explored its broader implications. Important treatments of early Indian-white relations are Wesley Frank Craven, "Indian Policy in Early Virginia," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., I (1944), 65-82, esp. 73-74, and *White, Red, and Black: The Seventeenth-Century Virginian* (Charlottesville, Va., 1971), chap. 2, esp. pp. 49-55; Gary B. Nash, "The Image of the Indian in the Southern Colonial Mind," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., XXIX (1972), 197-230, esp. 217-220, and *Red, White, and Black: The Peoples of Early America* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1974), 61-62; and Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery—American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York, 1975), 97-100. Although I differ with each of these authors on a number of specific issues, it is not my purpose to debate them here. Rather, this essay seeks to document the patterns of pre-1622 attitudes and policies, to clarify their causal relation to the massacre, and to show the massacre's impact on English perceptions of the Indian and the resultant colonial policy. I have also suggested, where relevant to my argument, the Indians' reaction to English attitudes and policies. I am not, however, attempting fully to analyze early Indian-white relations from an Indian perspective. That undertaking has been skillfully performed by Nancy Oestreich Lurie, "Indian Culture Adjustment to European Civilization," in James Morton Smith, ed., *Seventeenth-Century America: Essays in Colonial History* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1959), 33-60. I would quarrel with Lurie's findings at only a few points.

decade before the massacre, a substantial number of imperial spokesmen on each side of the Atlantic favored peaceful and cooperative contact—albeit on their own terms—with the tribes of eastern Virginia and had begun to fashion an integrated society of Indians and Europeans within the English settlements. After the assault, such a scheme was no longer advocated or attempted. Instead, there emerged a policy of unrestrained enmity and almost total separation that reflected a persistent but often repressed contempt for the American natives. Governor Francis Wyatt put the matter bluntly. "Our first worke is expulsion of the Salvages . . .," he wrote soon after the massacre, "for it is infinitely better to have no heathen among us, who at best were but as thornes in our sides, then to be at peace and league with them."²

Wyatt's judgment, widely shared by the London Company and by his fellow colonists, forecast Virginia's posture for the remainder of the century. For ten years after the massacre, the colony, abetted by the company and the crown, waged merciless war against its neighboring tribes, whether or not they had participated in the uprising. The eventual peace agreement of 1632 established separate domains for Englishmen and Indians. A very few natives, converts to Christianity or totally subservient to Anglo-American culture, were thereafter permitted to live within the colonial perimeter; for the vast majority of the Indians, however, the events of 1622 meant permanent exclusion from the areas controlled by the intruders. All prospects of an integrated society had vanished.

From the beginning of their colonial movement Englishmen held ambivalent and sometimes contradictory views of the American Indian. On the one hand, they perceived him as a fit prospect for conversion to Christianity and a desirable partner in trade; accordingly, the champions of colonization advocated settlement near sizable native populations. On the other hand, Englishmen recognized the Indians as potential enemies. Even the most ardent imperialists predicted that at some point Indian resistance was inevitable. It must not, however, thwart England's other objectives. As early as 1585 the elder Richard Hakluyt candidly stated the prevailing English position: "The ends of this voyage [to America] are these: 1. To plant Christian religion. 2. To trafficke. 3. To conquer. Or, to doe all three. To plant Christian religion without conquest will bee hard. Trafficke easily followeth conquest: conquest is not easie." But the solution was clear. "If we finde the countrey populous, and desirous to expel us . . . that seeke but just and lawfull trafficke, then by reason that we are lords of navigation, and they are not so, we [can] . . . in the end bring them all in subjection and to

² Wyatt to [?], c. 1623-1624, in "Letter of Sir Francis Wyatt, Governor of Virginia, 1621-1626," *WMQ*, 2d Ser., VI (1926), 118.

civilitie."³ Almost a generation later, when England was at last on the verge of planting a permanent colony, the expectation of Indian enmity remained. In its instructions to the expedition of 1606-1607 to Virginia, the London Company advised its settlers not to allow the Indians to live between the English outpost and the sea, for "you Cannot Carry Your Selves so towards them but they will Grow Discontented with Your habitation and be ready to Guide and assist any Nation that Shall Come to invade You."⁴

Underlying the fear of Indian resistance was a variety of European experiences in the New World. The Spanish had met with persistent hostility (Englishmen for the most part considered it well deserved), so had Portuguese and French expeditions, and so too had England's Roanoke colonists in the 1580s. The Roanoke experience intensified English ambivalence: Indian trade and assistance had been crucial to the initial success of the colony, and descriptions of the Indians by Arthur Barlowe and Thomas Hariot, as well as John White's paintings, were generally favorable, yet Indian opposition had almost certainly doomed the first English outpost.⁵

Equally important in shaping attitudes toward the Indian were preconceptions of native culture, which ethnocentric Englishmen and their European neighbors held in contempt, partly because it differed from theirs

³ E. G. R. Taylor, ed., *The Original Writings and Correspondence of the Two Richard Hakluyts*, II (Hakluyt Society, *Publications*, 2d Ser., LXXVI-LXXVII [London, 1935]), 332, 329-330. Why the Elizabethan mind harbored such contempt for Indian culture is a question which has yet to be answered satisfactorily and is outside the scope of this essay. The Elizabethan image of the Indian undoubtedly owed something to the prevailing Spanish attitude as reflected in the publications of Richard Eden, Richard Hakluyt, and others. It may also have drawn on England's experience with Ireland, though I am less convinced of the Irish parallels than are some scholars. On that issue see especially William C. MacLeod, *The American Indian Frontier* (New York, 1927), chap. 13; David Beers Quinn, "Ireland and Sixteenth-Century European Expansion," in T. Desmond Williams, ed., *Historical Studies: Papers Read before the Second Irish Conference of Historians* (London, 1958); and Nicholas P. Canny, "The Ideology of English Colonization: From Ireland to America," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., XXX (1973), 575-598. English contempt for Indians did not, however, have a basis in color prejudice, for Englishmen believed the Virginia Indians to be approximately as white as themselves.

⁴ Philip L. Barbour, ed., *The Jamestown Voyages under the First Charter, 1606-1609* (Hakluyt Soc., *Pubs.*, 2d Ser., CXXXVI-CXXXVII [Cambridge, 1969]), I, 50, hereafter cited as Barbour, ed., *Jamestown Voyages*.

⁵ On the fate of the Roanoke colony see David Beers Quinn, *England and the Discovery of America, 1481-1620: From the Bristol Voyages of the Fifteenth Century to the Pilgrim Settlement in Plymouth* (New York, 1974), chap. 17. On Indian-white contact at Roanoke see Morgan, *American Slavery—American Freedom*, chap. 2. The sources are conveniently collected and expertly edited in David Beers Quinn, ed., *The Roanoke Voyages, 1584-1590* (Hakluyt Soc., *Pubs.*, 2d Ser., CIV-CV [London, 1955]).

and partly because it had certain characteristics—nakedness, for example—which to English eyes seemed barbarian or savage.⁶ Moreover, as a people wholly unfamiliar with Christ's message, the Indians were heathens at best, the devil's minions at worst. And so, without ever seeing an American native, English writers decried his customs and his religion. In the mid-sixteenth century William Cunningham believed the Indians to be in some ways "comparable to brute beastes"; half a century later, Robert Johnson considered them "wild and savage people, that live . . . like heardes of Deare in a Forrest."⁷ King James's judgment was harsher still. His *Counter-blaste to Tobacco* (1604) did more than damn the "filthie novelitie" of smoking; it also revealed a virulent antipathy to the natives of America. Indians brought by English explorers, the king contended, had introduced "the corrupted basenesse" of smoking into the British Isles. "What honour or policie," he wondered, "can moove us to imitate the barbarous and beastly manners of the wilde, godlesse, and slavish *Indians*, especially in so vile and stinking a custome? . . . Why doe we not as well imitate them in walking naked as they doe? in preferring glasses, feathers, and such toyes, to golde and precious stones, as they do? Yea why do we not denie God and adore the Devill, as they doe?" "It seemes a miracle to me," he professed, "how a custome . . . brought in by a father so generally hated, should be welcomed."⁸

Most English spokesmen were less vituperative. Many of them were clergymen who longed to convert the Indians to Christianity. Clerical opinion was accordingly more sympathetic and hopeful than its secular counterpart. The elder Hakluyt, lawyer and geographer, predicted conquest of the natives; his clerical cousin and namesake saw matters somewhat differently. "The people of America," the younger Hakluyt insisted, "crye oute unto us . . . to come and helpe them, and bringe unto them the gladd tidinges of the

⁶ During the Tudor era, scores of books—some by English authors, others in translation—described for English readers the appearance and character of the American Indians. Some notable examples of this literature included André Thevet, *The New Found Worlds*, trans. T[homas] Hacket (London, 1568); George Peckham, *A True Reporte of the late discoveries of the Newfound Landes . . .* (London, 1583); René de Laudonnière, *A Notable Historie containing foure Voyages unto Florida*, trans. R[ichard] H[akluyt] (London, 1587); Jan Huygen von Linschoten, *His Discours of Voyages into the Easte and West Indies*, trans. [William Phillip] (London, 1598); and Abraham Ortelius, *Abraham Ortelius his Epitome of the Theatre of the Worlde*, trans. James Shawe (London, 1603).

⁷ William Cunningham, *The Cosmographical Glasse* (London, 1559), fols. 200-201; [Robert Johnson], *Nova Britannia: Offering Most Excellent fruites by Planting in Virginia* (London, 1609), in Peter Force, ed., *Tracts and Other Papers . . .* (Washington, D.C., 1836-1847), I, no. 6, II, hereafter cited as [Johnson], *Nova Britannia*.

⁸ [King James I], *A Counterblaste to Tobacco* (London, 1604), B1-B2. "A father" refers collectively to the Indians.

gospell."⁹ Hakluyt and his fellow clergymen were undoubtedly sincere. They had no desire to destroy the Indians—that would make conversion impossible—and they repeatedly insisted that the Indians were children of God whom all Christians had an obligation to help. But clerical pamphleteers nonetheless viewed Indian society as pejoratively as did their secular compatriots. In 1609 the Reverend William Crashaw offered a concise summary of the churchmen's position. "Out of our humanitie and conscience," he promised, "we will give them . . . 1. *Civilitie* for their bodies, 2. *Christianitie* for their soules The first to make them *men*: the second *happy men*."¹⁰

England's colonial advocates merged the elder Hakluyt's premise that the English had a natural right to trade with the Indians and Crashaw's belief that until they acquired English "civilitie" they would not be quite human into a further assumption: England had an obligation to establish the foothold that would facilitate commerce and conversion. Perhaps the land belonged to the natives, perhaps not; Englishmen were undecided on that point. But they were certain that the Indians misused their territory. "The Lord," asserted Robert Gray in a sermon of 1609, "hath given the earth to the children of men, yet . . . is the greater part of it possessed and wrongfully usurped by wild beasts, and unreasonable creatures, or by brutish savages, which by reason of their godles ignorance, and blasphemous Idolatrie, are worse then those beasts which are of most wilde and savage nature." England, at the same time, was overcrowded and needed desperately to export "such unnecessarie multitudes as pester a commonwealth."¹¹ Under such circumstances, neither clerical nor lay imperialists doubted England's right to plant settlements in the American forest.

Once in the New World, Englishmen would begin the social and spiritual conversion of the natives. It would be, their spokesmen claimed, benign conversion—"by faire and loving meanes" insisted Robert Johnson, "suiting to our English natures."¹² Yet he and Robert Gray, like the elder Hakluyt, saw the possibility of bloodshed. "A wise man, but much more a Christian," Gray cautioned, "ought to trie all meanes before they undertake warre: devastation and depopulation ought to be the last thing which Christians should put in practice." But if the Indians rejected trade and the gospel, the Bible provided a rationale for action: "forasmuch as everie example in the scripture . . . is a precept," Gray contended, "we are

⁹ Taylor, ed., *Writings of the Two Richard Hakluyts*, II (Hakluyt Soc., *Publ.*, 2d Ser., LXXXVI-LXXXVII [London, 1935]), 216.

¹⁰ W[illiam] Crashaw, *A Sermon Preached in London before the right honorable the Lord Lawarre . . . Febr. 21, 1609* (London, 1610), D4.

¹¹ [Robert Gray], *A Good Speed to Virginia*, ed. Wesley F. Craven (New York, 1937 [orig. publ. London, 1609]), B1^r, C1.

¹² [Johnson], *Nova Britannia*, 14.

warranted by this direction of Joshua, to destroy wilfull and convicted Idolaters, rather then to let them live, if by no other meanes they can be reclaimed." Gray assured his readers that Englishmen, unlike Spaniards, would not force the Indians off the land or wage offensive war; he nonetheless quoted with approval St. Augustine's opinion that "warre is lawfull which is undertaken . . . for peace and unities sake: so that lewde and wicked men may thereby be suppressed, and good men maintained and relieved."¹³

Armed with this logic, Jamestown's early colonists made more use of the sword than the olive branch. During the first several years they treated the Indians as real or potential foes, seldom as prospective converts. The colony had too few clergymen to serve its own sick and unruly population, the language barrier proved more formidable than expected, and the Indians showed far more interest in English goods than in the English god. The missionary objective was therefore temporarily set aside; politics, not theology, dominated early Indian-English relations.¹⁴ When, for example, Christopher Newport explained to suspicious Indians the meaning of a cross the settlers erected on Indian soil, he made no mention of its religious symbolism. Rather, he contended, the arms represented himself and Chief Powhatan, and the junction point symbolized their bond of unity.¹⁵ Thus while writers back home continued to insist that conversion of the natives was the principal purpose of colonization, the men on the scene—John Smith, Thomas Dale, Thomas Gates, and the other early leaders of Virginia—acted on a different premise.¹⁶ They were military men and saw the Indians as essentially a military problem. John Smith later summed up his experience in terms that

¹³ [Gray], *Good Speed to Virginia*, ed. Craven, C2, C4^v.

¹⁴ Most of the evidence on early Indian-white contact in Virginia can be found in Edward Arber and A. G. Bradley, eds., *Travels and Works of Captain John Smith, President of Virginia, and Admiral of New England, 1580-1631* (Edinburgh, 1910), and in Barbour, ed., *Jamestown Voyages*.

¹⁵ Arber and Bradley, eds., *Travels and Works of Smith*, I, xlvi-xlvii; also in Barbour, ed., *Jamestown Voyages*, I, 88.

¹⁶ The primacy of the missionary objective was stressed in the charters of 1606 and 1612 and in most of the company's instructions to resident governors as well as its propaganda pamphlets. See, for example, Samuel M. Bemiss, ed., *The Three Charters of the Virginia Company of London, with Seven Related Documents, 1606-1621*, Jamestown 350th Anniversary Historical Booklets, no. 4 (Williamsburg, 1957), 2, 15, 73, 76; [Gray], *Good Speed to Virginia*, ed. Craven, C2^v; [Johnson], *Nova Britannia*, 6, 12; [London Company], *A True and sincere declaration of the purpose and ends of the Plantation . . .* (London, 1609), in Alexander Brown, ed., *Genesis of the United States . . .* (Boston, 1890), I, 337-353, esp. 339, 347; and [London Company], *A True Declaration of the estate of the Colonie in Virginia . . .* (London, 1610), in Force, ed., *Tracts*, III, no. 1, 5. John Smith saw the hypocrisy of the company's leaders who made "religion their colour, when all their aime was nothing but present profit" (Arber and Bradley, eds., *Travels and Works of Smith*, II, 928).

applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to all of the colony's leaders—hardened veterans to a man. "The Warres in *Europe, Asia, and Affrica*," he recalled, "taught me how to subdue the wilde Salvages in *Virginia*."¹⁷

This is not to say that the colonists resorted at once to murder and rapine. Neither they nor the company were so witless as to purposely enrage a people who vastly outnumbered them and from whom they must obtain badly needed food and information. The London Company, in fact, ordered Captain Newport to treat the natives well. It also admonished Captain Smith when it thought he acted too brusquely.¹⁸ But the company's primary concern was for the survival and eventual prosperity of the colony, and for the present the Indians appeared more a hindrance than a help. The company shaped its policy accordingly.

The evolution of that policy reflected the disdainful English attitudes toward native culture as well as the colony's immediate needs. Initially, the company, through its resident leaders, tried to keep the Indians from understanding the colonists' intentions and thus from resisting with full force the planting of a permanent colony. Smith, among others, tried to allay Indian apprehension by foisting a cock-and-bull story on Powhatan. The English had not come to stay, Smith told him, but had landed to escape a Spanish squadron; Newport had gone back to England for help and would soon bring an expedition to carry the survivors home. Newport returned all right, but with additional men to strengthen the garrison and with the company's latest strategem to divert potential Indian resistance. He would place a crown on Powhatan's head, symbolic of the chief's supremacy over his own people but indicative, too, of his subservience to King James. Powhatan saw through the ploy. He refused to go to Jamestown for the ceremony, and he refused to kneel to accept the crown when Newport brought it to his village. Although it was eventually placed on his head, Englishmen could take little comfort in the event.¹⁹ The Indians remained, as they had been from the outset, skeptical of English intentions. They wanted trade; they did not want Christianity or encroachment on their lands.

Since the founding of Jamestown, the Indians had made clear their opposition to extensive English colonization. As early as August 1607 Sir Walter Cope wrote to Lord Salisbury—on the basis of information brought home by Newport—that the Indians "used our men well untill they found they begann to plant and fortifye, Then they fell to skyrmishing and kylled 3 of our people." George Percy, a member of the original expedition, concurred. "The Savages murmured at our planting in the Countrie," he recalled, but he took consolation in a petty chief's assurance that all would be

¹⁷ Arber and Bradley, eds., *Travels and Works of Smith*, II, 925.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 435, 442-444.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, I, 19, 121-123, II, 433-438.

well if the English did the Indians no harm and took only "a little waste ground, which doth [neither] you nor any of us good." But the colony grew. A Dutch chronicler reported that within two years of the founding of Jamestown, "the Indians, seeing that the English were beginning to multiply, were determined to starve them and drive them out."²⁰ Intermittent warfare between the colonists and Tidewater tribes dragged on for seven years. On several occasions the natives attacked English expeditions probing the interior; the capture of John Smith and his subsequent rescue by Pocahontas stemmed from one such episode. On other occasions Indian forces assaulted the English plantations. Their lack of firearms, and the settlers' use of cannon in their forts and on ships tied up nearby, prevented the Indians from annihilating the colony, though they inflicted substantial losses on English stragglers.²¹ Still, throughout the early years English spokesmen insisted that relations with the Indians would soon be amicable and that conversion would readily follow. "In steed of Iron and steele," Robert Johnson, a staunch member of the company, advised the colonists, "you must have patience and humanitie to manage their crooked nature to your form of civilitie."²²

Neither patience nor "humanitie" was plentiful in Jamestown. During most of its first two and a half years, John Smith dominated relations with the Indians; he believed the colony would do better under a firm and aggressive policy than under Newport's mollycoddling. Smith was seldom ruthless—especially compared to his successors—and he managed to avoid open clashes that would have been devastating to both the colonists and the Indians. But his handling of the natives was high-handed at best, and he often threatened force with every apparent intention of using it. An early settler summed up the situation: "To express all our quarrels, trecheries and incounters amongst those Salvages, I should be too tedious: but in breefe, at all times we so incounered them, and curbed their insolencies, that they concluded with presents to purchase peace; yet we lost not a man: at our first meeting, our Captaine ever observed this order, to demaund their bowes and arrowes, swordes, mantells and furr, with some childe or two for hostage, whereby we could quickly perceive, when they intended any villany."²³

²⁰ Barbour, ed., *Jamestown Voyages*, I, 110, 141, II, 276. On the reliability of the Dutch chronicler and his sources see John Parker, *Van Meteren's Virginia, 1607-1612* (Minneapolis, Minn., 1961).

²¹ The conflicts of the early years are described by Smith and others in Arber and Bradley, eds., *Travels and Works of Smith*, in various documents reprinted in Barbour, ed., *Jamestown Voyages*, and in Brown, ed., *Genesis of the United States*.

²² [Robert Johnson], *The New Life of Virginea . . .* (London, 1612), in Force, ed., *Tracts*, I, no. 7, 18-19.

²³ Arber and Bradley, eds., *Travels and Works of Smith*, I, 113, II, 419. There have been numerous attempts to explain John Smith's attitudes toward the Indians; none of them, in my opinion, is satisfactory. See William Randel, "Captain John

Smith allowed no Indian recalcitrance. On one occasion he seized Opechancanough, leader of the Pamunkey tribe and half-brother of Powhatan, by the hair. "You promised to fraught my Ship [with corn] ere I departed, and so you shall, or I meane to load her with your dead carcasses."²⁴ A few weeks later, Smith grappled with another chief, dragged him into a nearby river, and almost drowned him. He spared the Indian, however, when "having drawne his faucheon to cut off his head, seeing how pittifully he begged his life, he led him prisoner to *James Towne*, and put him in chaynes."²⁵ Such tactics prevented open warfare. They did not promote cordiality or conversion.

Smith's success was insured by the feebleness of Powhatan's efforts to dislodge the colony. Not that the chief misunderstood the settlers' objectives. Smith recorded a revealing conversation of early 1609: "Captaine *Smith*, (saith the king) some doubt I have of your comming hither . . . for many do informe me, your comming is not for trade, but to invade my people and possesse my Country." Powhatan wanted peace. "Having seene the death of all my people thrice . . . I knowe the difference of peace and warre better than any in my Countrie." If he fought the English, Powhatan predicted, he would "be so hunted by you that I can neither rest eat nor sleepe, but my tired men must watch, and if a twig but breake, everie one crie, there comes Captaine *Smith*: then must I flie I knowe not whether, and thus with miserable fear end my miserable life."²⁶ Reluctantly the chief accepted the English presence, especially since the colony remained small and rent by dissension.

In 1609 the London Company promulgated a new plan. The trouble, it decided, lay not with the Indians at large but with their leaders; by controlling them the colony could control their followers. The company's instructions to Sir Thomas Gates, newly appointed colonial governor, conceded that Powhatan "loved not our neighbourhood and therefore you may no way trust him." The solution: "if you finde it not best to make him your prisoner yet you must make him your tributary, and all other his weroances [subordinate chiefs] about him first to acknowledge no other Lord but Kinge

Smith's Attitudes toward the Indians," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, XLVII (1939), 218-229; Keith Glenn, "Captain John Smith and Indians," *ibid.*, LII (1944), 228-248; and the innumerable biographies of Smith, especially Philip L. Barbour, *The Three Worlds of Captain John Smith* (Boston, 1964). My own assessment of Smith's Indian policy, in more detail than can be presented here, appears in Alden T. Vaughan, *American Genesis: Captain John Smith and the Founding of Virginia* (Boston, 1975), esp. chap. 3. See also Morgan, *American Slavery—American Freedom*, esp. 76-79.

²⁴ Arber and Bradley, eds., *Travels and Works of Smith*, I, 142-143, II, 459.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, I, 150-151, II, 467.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 134-136.

James." By shifting their allegiances from Powhatan to the English, the lesser chiefs would contribute much needed provisions to the colony, for they must pay the English for releasing them from Powhatan's tyranny and for protecting them from other enemies. Such tribute in corn, dye, and skins, and in labor, would not only provide desired commodities but also "be a meanes of Clearinge much ground of wood and of reducing them to labour and trade." Should the Indians flee into the country on the approach of the English, Gates was to capture their chiefs and all known successors. If their future leaders were trained in English manners and religion, and installed at the head of tribes, "their people will easily obey you and become in time Civill and Christian."²⁷

Indian religious figures, the company thought, were as dangerous as the chiefs. Gates's instructions advised him to "remove from them their Quiocasokes or Priestes by a surprise of them all and detayninge them prisoners." This tactic seemed reasonable to ardent Christians who believed that the Indian priests so beguiled and terrified their subjects that "while they live amoung them to payson and infecte them their mindes, you shall never make any greate progres into this glorious worke, nor have any Civill peace or concurre with them." That, in turn, justified more drastic measures. "In case of necessity, or conveniency," the company informed Gates, "we pronounce it not crueltie nor breache of Charity to deale more sharply with them and to proceede even to dache [death] with these murtherers of Soules."²⁸ The Indians were probably unimpressed by the distinction between Smith's threats while taking temporary hostages and seizing food, and the company's ostensible kindness while exterminating their chiefs and priests.²⁹

²⁷ Susan Myra Kingsbury, ed., *The Records of the Virginia Company of London* (Washington, D.C., 1906-1935), III, 18-19, hereafter cited *Va. Co. Recs.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 14-15. In comparing the original manuscript of the Virginia Company Records with the published version, Philip Barbour found that Miss Kingsbury incorrectly transcribed "Quiocasokes," a common Indian term, as "Iniocasokes." I have incorporated Barbour's correction in the above quotation.

²⁹ Some sense of the Indians' reaction can be gleaned from William Strachey's description in c. 1611: "straunge whispers (indeed) and secrett at this hower run among these people and possesse them with amazement [to know] what maie be the yssue of these straung preparations, landed in their Coasts, and yearely supplied with fresher troupes: every newes and blast of rumour strykes them, to which they open their eares wyde, and keepe their eyes waking, with good espiall upon every thing that sturrs, the noyse of our drumms of our shrill Trumpetts and great Ordinance terrefyes them so as they startle at the Report of them, how far soever from the reach of daunger, suspicions have bredd straung feares amongst them, and those feares create as straunge Construccions, therefore begett strong watch and guard, especially about their great king, who thrusts forth trustye Skowtes and carefull Sentynells . . . which reach even from his owne Court downe almost even to our Palisado-gates"

Before Gates could implement the new policy, the Indians—abetted by famine and the settlers' ineptitude—almost exterminated the colony. During the horrendous winter of 1609-1610, Powhatan, by direct assaults and withholding food, contributed appreciably to the ghastly mortality of the "starving time."³⁰ The chief no doubt rejoiced when the famished English remnant evacuated Jamestown in the spring of 1610. He must have been equally disappointed when Lord de la Warr arrived at the last moment to reestablish the colony. For de la Warr brought more than fresh supplies and more colonists; he brought the resources and determination to end Indian resistance once and for all.³¹ His commission as captain general, as well as governor, authorized him to attack the colony's enemies. War already existed when he arrived. He prosecuted it more vigorously than his predecessors because he had the necessary men and equipment.

During the next several months English forces under George Percy, Thomas Gates, and Thomas Dale demonstrated the elder Hakluyt's dictum that control of navigation would be a major advantage in war against the Indians. Still the natives remained elusive, well aware that their own advantage lay in isolated ambushes rather than open confrontations. Harassed and frustrated, the English rapidly abandoned all regard for customary rules of war and gained much of their success by guile and merciless treatment of captives. Gates lured some Indians into the open with a music-and-dance act by his drummer, then slaughtered them. Percy routed the Paspahugh tribe, destroyed its village and fields, and allowed his men to throw the Indian queen's children into the river and shoot out their brains for sport. Lord de la Warr wanted to burn the queen; Percy convinced him to let her die by the sword instead.³²

Hostilities lasted until 1614, when Dale used a combination of strength and cunning to extort a treaty from Powhatan. Samuel Argall provided the scheme. He would seize Pocahontas, Powhatan's favorite daughter, and hold

(*The Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania*, ed. Louis B. Wright and Virginia Freund [Hakluyt Soc., *Pubs.*, 2d Ser., CIII (London, 1953)], 105).

³⁰ Indian hostility during the "starving time" is well documented in Arber and Bradley, eds., *Travels and Works of Smith*, II, 497-499; George Percy, "A Trewe Relacyon of the Proceedinges and Occurentes of Momente which Have Hapened in Virginia . . .," *Tyler's Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, III (1922), 260-282, esp. 264-269; *True Declaration of the estate of the Colonie in Virginia . . .*, in Force, ed., *Tracts*, III, no. 1, 15-18; and H. R. McIlwaine, ed., *Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1619-1658/9* (Richmond, 1915), 29.

³¹ De la Warr's instructions were very similar to Gates's because the company did not know that the latter had finally reached Virginia. In some respects de la Warr's instructions were less belligerent toward the Indians, for they did not urge the killing of Quiocasockes but rather sending them to England where "we may endeavor theire Conversion here" (*Va. Co. Recs.*, III, 27).

³² Percy, "Trewe Relacyon," *Tyler's Quarterly*, III (1922), 270-273.

her until the chief met the colony's demands. With the assistance of some pliable Indians, whom he bribed into reluctant cooperation, Argall enticed the princess on board his ship; he then demanded that Powhatan release all English captives (a dozen or more), return all English weapons taken by his warriors, and agree upon a lasting peace. In the meantime Pocahontas would remain a prisoner, and English forces would continue to wage offensive war.³³

Powhatan succumbed. He did not, of course, get his daughter back. She married John Rolfe, sailed to England to meet the king and promote English colonization, and died before she could return to Virginia. But Powhatan would fight no longer. "I am now olde," he told Resident Secretary Ralph Hamor, "and would gladly end my daies in peace, so as if the English offer me injury, my country is large enough, I will remove my selfe farther from you." That satisfied the English, especially when the neighboring tribes followed Powhatan's lead and signed treaties of amity and trade.³⁴ The colony now had peace, abundant land (for the moment), and evidence, in Pocahontas, that Indians could be made civil and godly.

By April 1614—the date of the Rolfes' marriage—Virginia at last enjoyed a modicum of ethnic harmony, which in turn brought a shift in English outlook and policy. The new approach, never universal but increasingly advocated by company leaders and their agents in Virginia, employed kindness, not the sword, to win over the Indians. Earlier predictions seemed to be coming true: an initial welcome from some of the Indians, resistance from a few leaders, a just war (by English interpretation), the inevitable victory and spoils, and finally the Indians' conversion and acceptance of English ways. The process had taken longer than expected and only one convert could be claimed, but all signs now pointed to a hopeful future. Virginia's Indian policy for almost a decade after 1614 reflected the new optimism.

If the initial Virginia policy had been personified by John Smith, who bullied the Indians but rarely attacked them, and if the more belligerent approach of 1610-1614 found its symbol in Thomas Dale or Samuel Argall, Virginia's new emphasis on humanitarianism between 1614 and 1622 was best embodied in George Thorpe. "That worthy religious Gentleman, . . . some-

³³ Arber and Bradley, eds., *Travels and Works of Smith*, II, 511-514; Ralph Hamor, *A True Discourse of the Present Estate of Virginia . . .* (Amsterdam and New York, 1971 [orig. publ. London, 1615]), 3-6; Samuel Argall to Nicholas Hawes, June 1613, in Brown, ed., *Genesis of the United States*, II, 640-644; Norman Egbert McClure, ed., *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, I (American Philosophical Society, *Memoirs*, XII [Philadelphia, 1939]), 470-471.

³⁴ Hamor, *True Discourse*, 42, II-16, 55-57.

times one of his Majesties Pensioners," had social standing, political influence, and an unusual degree of public conscience. Arriving in the colony in 1620, Thorpe quickly became identified with all phases of the new conciliatory disposition. According to Smith's *Generall Historie*, Thorpe "did so truly effect [the Indians'] conversion, that whosoever under him did them the least displeasure, were punished severely. He thought nothing too deare for them, he never denied them any thing; in so much that when they complained that our Mastives did feare [frighten] them, he to content them in all things, caused some of them to be killed in their presence, to the great displeasure of the owners, and would have had all the rest guelt to make them the milder, might he have had his will." Thorpe also built an English-style house for Opechancanough, with a lock which the bemused Indian reputedly opened and closed a hundred times a day.³⁵

Thorpe's principal responsibility was management of the territory set aside by the company to support an Indian college which would eventually be affiliated with an English university, both to be built at the inland town of Henrico.³⁶ When completed, the college would, its backers hoped, train preachers to spread Christianity among the tribes. Financial support came from England, both from private gifts and from collections taken at the king's command in the Church of England. Early in 1616 James directed the archbishops of Canterbury and York to make semiannual solicitations for the next two years in every parish, toward "the erecting of some Churches and Schooles, for the education of the children of those Barbarians."³⁷ By 1619 the church had forwarded £1500 to the company treasurer.³⁸ The company spent some of the contributions in the early 1620s to send farmers to the thousand acres set aside as "college lands," where Thorpe supervised their labors. Other funds went for bricklayers and carpenters to erect a college building. And even before Thorpe arrived, the colonial government had taken the first steps toward recruiting students. "Be it enacted by this present assembly," decreed Virginia's first legislature in 1619, "that for laying a surer foundation of the conversion of the Indians to Christian Religion, eache towne, citty Borough, and particular plantation do obtaine unto themselves

³⁵ Arber and Bradley, eds., *Travels and Works of Smith*, II, 574; Samuel Purchas, *Hakluyt Posthumus, or Purchas His Pilgrimes*, XIX (Glasgow, 1906 [orig. publ. London, 1625]), 153, hereafter cited *Purchas His Pilgrimes*.

³⁶ Most of the evidence on the proposed Indian college and the company's fundraising is scattered through *Va. Co. Recs.*, esp. I and III. A modern discussion is Robert Hunt Land, "Henrico and Its College," *WMQ*, 2d Ser., XVIII (1938), 453-498.

³⁷ The king's letter to the Archbishop of York and related documents are printed in Peter Walne, "The Collections for Henrico College, 1616-1618," *VMHB*, LXXX (1972), 259-266.

³⁸ *Va. Co. Recs.*, I, 220.

by just meanes a certaine number of the natives Children to be educated by them in true Religion and civile course of life. Of which children the most towardly boyes in witt and graces of nature [are] to be brought up by them in the firste Elements of litterature, so as to be fitted for the Colledge intended for them, that from thence they may be sent to that worke of conversion."³⁹

While Thorpe labored to make the lands profitable, the London Company sought further financial contributions to underwrite buildings and teachers' salaries. It met with considerable success, for optimism over the eventual anglicization of the Indians had spread in England even more thoroughly than in the colony. Nicholas Ferrar, whose brother John was for a time deputy treasurer of the company, bequeathed £300 to the college, payable when it enrolled ten Indians. He had earlier contributed £24 to each of three Virginia clergymen for raising Indian youths "in Christian Religion, and some good course to live by." And under the pseudonym of "Dust and Ashes" an anonymous donor gave £550 for Indian conversion and vocational training. At the age of twenty-one, the donor stipulated, the Indians were to "enjoye like liberties and pryveledges with our native English in that place." Rather than disburse the principal, the company invested the munificent gift in a colonial ironworks (a poor choice, it turned out); profits were reserved for the education of thirty native children.⁴⁰

Raising funds proved easier than obtaining students. Initially, Indian parents refused to part with their children, and partly for that reason the colony postponed construction of mission buildings. To overcome parental reluctance, Governor George Yeardley contrived a more ambitious plan of integration: he arranged with Opechancanough to bring whole families into the English plantations and to provide them with houses, clothes, cattle, and cornfields. The adults would acquire English ways while the children received religious and secular instruction. Yeardley expected, he reported to London, "to draw in others who shall see them live so hapily."⁴¹ How many Indians lived among the colonists in the early 1620s is impossible to gauge—probably a few score at most. But the trends were hopeful. Funds continued to flow from England; bricklayers were at last beginning the first educational buildings; and thanks largely to the efforts of Yeardley and Thorpe, race relations were so cordial that when Sir Francis Wyatt assumed the governorship in 1621 he found "the houses generally set open to the Savages, who were alwaies friendly entertained at the tables of the English, and commonly lodged in their bed-chambers."⁴² All in all, prospects seemed bright for turning Virginia's Indians into facsimile Englishmen.

³⁹ McIlwaine, ed., *Jour. of Burgesses*, 10.

⁴⁰ *Va. Co. Recs.*, III, 117, 576, I, 585-588; quotation is on I, 307-308.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 588, III, 128-129.

⁴² [Edward Waterhouse], *A Declaration of the State of the Colony and Affaires*

England's imperial spokesmen hailed the colony's progress toward racial harmony. Samuel Purchas later recalled that "Temperance and Justice . . . kissed each other, and seemed to blesse the cohabitations of English and Indians in Virginia." And in the spring of 1622 the Reverend Patrick Copland, a London minister and rector-designate of the Indian college, made racial harmony a theme of his sermon to the London Company. Among "the *Wonderful workes* of the Lord," Copland reminded his audience, was "a happie league of Peace and Amitie fondly concluded and faithfully kept, betweene the *English* and the *Natives*, that the feare of killing each other is now vanished away."⁴³

Copland misjudged the situation in Virginia. What appeared to be a new era of peace and cooperation masked underlying tensions that boded ill for Indian-English amity. Those tensions came partly from the settlers' pejorative attitude toward Indian culture, partly from their increasing pressure on Indian lands, and partly from changes within Powhatan's tribe.

Perhaps George Thorpe best reflected the persistence of English ethnocentricity. Thorpe's concern for the natives was undoubtedly genuine, but his fundamental aim, as Smith pointed out, was "insinuating himselfe into this [Indian] Kings favour for his religious purpose"—the temporal and ecclesiastical conversion of the Indians.⁴⁴ Thorpe's acts of kindness—whether building houses, gelding mastiffs, punishing miscreant colonists, or promoting the Indian college—were dedicated to the larger goal of transforming Indian society. That theme of English imperial thought had not changed appreciably despite the several shifts in overt policy. Even Rolfe, who had set an impressive example of cultural amalgamation, revealed in his request for permission to marry Pocahontas that he, too, held Indian society in low esteem. He wanted, he told Governor Dale, to honor God, England, and Virginia; only such motives would permit him "to be in love with one whose education hath bin rude, her manners barbarous, her generation accursed,

in Virginia . . . (London, 1622), 12. A similar version of Wyatt's statement appears in Arber and Bradley, eds., *Travels and Works of Smith*, II, 573. For other examples of apparent missionary and fund-raising success see *Va. Co. Rec.*, III, 575-577, 642-643, and *Purchas His Pilgrimes*, XIX, 147-148. A drastically different view of the Virginia missionary effort is in Francis Jennings's *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1975), 53-56, which argues that "so far as the company and planters were concerned, the Indians were irrelevant to the whole business except as a pretext to extract money from the gullible English faithful." That philanthropic funds were unwisely and ineptly used cannot be denied, but the surviving evidence does not, I think, support such a cynical and conspiratorial interpretation.

⁴³ *Purchas His Pilgrimes*, XIX, 229; Patrick Copland, *Virginia's God be Thanked* . . . (London, 1622), 8-9, 25.

⁴⁴ Arber and Bradley, eds., *Travels and Works of Smith*, II, 575.

and so discrepant in all nurtriture from my selfe." Pocahontas accepted Christianity, changed her name to Rebecca, and took on a veneer of English manners. Only then did she become acceptable to English society.⁴⁵

The Rolfe-Pocahontas marriage did not, of course, establish a pattern of ethnic fusion. Almost a century later, historian Robert Beverley expressed regret at the early Virginians' failure to intermarry with the Indians.⁴⁶ But he and other critics of the early settlers underestimated the depth of Jacobean England's cultural myopia. Most colonists implicitly agreed—even before the massacre—with a pamphleteer of 1624 who explained why few of them took Indian wives. Indian women, he contended, were neither "handsome nor wholesome"; intermarriage would not be "profitable and convenient (they having had no such breeding as our women have)."⁴⁷

More serious than the Englishman's reluctance to intermarry with natives was his unwillingness to leave them as they were. During the early years the colonists had seized Indian corn, exacted tribute, and wherever possible forced Indian submission to English authority. The colonists admitted as much. The Virginia assembly of 1624 described Sir Thomas Smythe's regime (1607-1619) with remarkable candor: "We never perceaved that the natives of the Countrey did voluntarily yeeld them selves subjects to our gracyous Souvraigne, nether that they took any pride in that title, nor paide at any tyme any contributione of corne for sustentation of the Colony, nor could we at any tyme keepe them in such good respect of correspondency as we became mutually helpful each to the other but contrarily what at any [time] was done proceeded from feare and not love, and their corne procured by trade or the sword."⁴⁸ In sum, English colonial policy had sought the subordination and transformation of native society. As William Strachey articulated the imperial goal: "we shall by degrees chaung their barbarous natures, make them ashamed . . . of their savadge nakednes, informe them of the true god, and of the waie to their salvation, and fynally teach them obedience to the kings Majestie and to his Governours in those parts."⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Hamor, *True Discourse*, 64; Arber and Bradley, eds., *Travels and Works of Smith*, II, 529.

⁴⁶ Robert Beverley, *The History and Present State of Virginia*, ed. Louis B. Wright (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1947), 38-39.

⁴⁷ Richard Eburne, *A Plaine Path-way to Plantations . . .* (London, 1624), 110.

⁴⁸ Lyon Gardiner Tyler, ed., *Narratives of Early Virginia, 1606-1625*, Original Narratives of Early American History (New York, 1907), 425. More outspoken than the assembly, Peter Arundel in 1623 asserted that "wee our selves have taught them [the Indians] how to bee trecherous by our false dealinge with the poore kinge of Patomecke that had alwayes beene faythfull to the English" (*Va. Co. Recs.*, IV, 89-90).

⁴⁹ Strachey, *Historie and Travell*, ed. Wright and Freund [Hakluyt Soc., *Pubs.*, 2d Ser., CIII], 91.

Strachey wrote in 1612. A decade later the goal remained the same, and so did the contempt for Indian culture that all too often became an excuse for maltreating individual natives. Despite the colonists' claims that they and the Indians "lived together, as if wee had beene one people,"⁵⁰ the years of relative harmony from 1614 to 1622 were tranquil only on the surface. When, for example, the assembly of 1619 passed laws to protect the Indians from abuse, its motives appear to have been similar to those of the London Company in 1607. "Noe injury or oppression [is to] be wrought by the *English* against the Indian whereby the present peace might be disturbed and ancient quarrels might be revived," the assembly insisted, but it also decreed the death penalty for selling any weapons to the Indians, set a limit of five or six Indian laborers per plantation, and warned "that good guard in the night be kept upon them, for generally (though some amongst many may prove good) they are a most trecherous people, and quickly gone when they have done a villany."⁵¹ Two years later—only ten months before the massacre—Thorpe complained that "there is scarce any man amongst us that doth soe much as afforde them a good thought in his hart and most men with their mouthes give them nothinge but maledictions and bitter execrations. . . . [I]f there bee wronge on any side it is on ours who are not soe charitable to them as Christians ought to bee, they beinge (esppeciallye the better sort of them) of a peaceable and vertuous disposition."⁵² Even the clergy had lost some of its earlier hope and restraint. In 1621 a Virginia minister saw no prospects of converting the Indians "till their Priests and Ancients have their throats cut."⁵³

The period of ostensible concord also saw the rise of a new and irreconcilable issue. During the first years of English settlement the territorial needs of the colony had been small. Few records survive to tell exactly how the early colonists acquired their land from the Indians, but scraps of evidence suggest that some had been freely given, some purchased with tools and beads, and some—probably the greater part—seized as spoils of war.⁵⁴ But coinciding with the rapprochement of 1614, English appetite for land

⁵⁰ Arber and Bradley, eds., *Travels and Works of Smith*, II, 529.

⁵¹ McIlwaine, ed., *Jour. of Burgesses*, 8-10, 12-15.

⁵² *Va. Co. Recs.*, III, 446. Survivors of the massacre were not reluctant to blame the tragedy in substantial part on Thorpe and the officials who supported him. One settler complained that Thorpe "hath brought such a misery upon us by letting th' Indians have their head and none must controll them. The Governor stood at that tyme for a Cypher whilst they [the Indians] stood ripping open our gutts" (*ibid.*, IV, 76).

⁵³ Arber and Bradley, eds., *Travels and Works of Smith*, II, 564.

⁵⁴ See, for example, *Va. Co. Recs.*, III, 304, 556-557; *Purchas His Pilgrimes*, XIX, 229; and John Rolfe, *A True Relation of the State of Virginia lefte by Sir Thomas Dale Knight . . .* (New Haven, Conn., 1951 [orig. publ. 1616]), 6.

became insatiable. A rapid rise in population and the sudden profitability of tobacco triggered a land boom that threatened every neighboring tribe. Again, the records are frustratingly sparse, but Rolfe left a clue to how the colony acquired vast new stretches of the Tidewater. As early as 1615, he observed, several minor chiefs mortgaged to the colony all their lands, some nearly the size of an English shire, in exchange for wheat.⁵⁵ Less than three years later, Governor Samuel Argall reported to the company (only a summary of his letter survives), "Indians so poor cant pay their debts and tribute."⁵⁶ It is impossible to estimate how much land the Indians lost through their inability to redeem their mortgages, but the statements by Rolfe and Argall suggest that the total may have been considerable. Whatever the amount, it added another item to the swelling list of Indian grievances. As an English observer acknowledged after the massacre, the Indians had attacked largely out of "dayly feare" that the English would push them off their lands altogether, much as the Spanish had done to the natives of the West Indies.⁵⁷

Not all the changes in policy were undertaken by the English. Powhatan, too, had shifted his strategy from time to time—from cautious friendship to warfare to reluctant acquiescence. His tribe made further alterations between 1614 and 1622. When Powhatan died in 1618 (the year after Pocahontas succumbed to disease in London), tribal leadership passed to Powhatan's younger and bolder half-brothers. His immediate successor, Itopan, survived only briefly; Opechancanough followed, and although he promised that "the Skye should sooner falle" than peace with the English be broken,⁵⁸ his subsequent actions revealed a profound distrust of the English and a readiness to fight if their encroachment and effrontery became unbearable.

By the early 1620s they had. As land pressure increased and the signs of English disdain for Indian culture mounted, the Indians—especially those between the James and York rivers—faced several unsavory alternatives. They could accede to the demands for land and for social and religious transformation; they could keep retreating inland as the English settlement expanded; or they could make a desperate attempt to rid Virginia of Englishmen. These alternatives were unequal. Acceptance of English demands meant cultural suicide, and even passive acquiescence to missionaries and land speculators offered no sure protection against tribal disintegration.

⁵⁵ Rolfe, *True Relation*, 6.

⁵⁶ *Va. Co. Recs.*, III, 92.

⁵⁷ [Waterhouse], *Declaration*, 22. The Smythe-Warwick faction of the company, bitterly critical of the Sandys administration, charged that the massacre "seemes first to be occasioned by our owne perfidiouse dealing" (*Va. Co. Recs.*, IV, 118).

⁵⁸ *Va. Co. Recs.*, III, 13, IV, 11.

Movement inland had equally serious drawbacks: it not only required desertion of tribal lands but would bring conflict with enemies in the interior who might destroy the tribe as thoroughly as the English could. And although an attack on the colonists involved frightful risks, the possibility of success in 1622 must have impressed Opechancanough and his advisors. Besides his own substantial forces, he could count on assistance from the Chickahominy tribe, which, according to later English testimony, had been alienated from its 1614 treaty with the colony by a "perfidious act" of Governor Yeardley in which thirty or forty Chickahominies were killed without provocation. Moreover, mortality among the Virginia settlers remained scandalously high; although some 3,570 Europeans arrived between 1619 and 1622 to jump the colonial total to approximately 4,370, only 1,240 were alive on the eve of the massacre.⁵⁹ Most of these survivors were inexperienced in forest combat, and they were scattered among eighty-odd plantations, some of them miles from the nearest help.⁶⁰ In 1619 the Virginia assembly had cautioned that "in these doubtful times between us and the Indians, it would behoove us not to make so lardge distances between Plantation and Plantation."⁶¹ The warning went unheeded.

By the early 1620s Virginia had every ingredient for an explosion except the spark. That was provided in the spring of 1622 in what John Smith called "The Prologue to this Tragedy":

Nemattanow otherwise called *Jack* of the *Feather*, because hee commonly was most strangely adorned with them; and for his courage and policy, was accounted amongst the Salvages their cheife Captaine, and immortall from any hurt could bee done him by the *English*. This Captaine comming to one *Morgans* house, knowing he had many commodities that hee desired, perswaded Morgan to goe with him to *Pamaun/see* to truck, but the Salvage murdered him by the way; and after two or three daies returned againe to *Morgans* house, where he found two youths his Servants, who asked for their Master: *Jack* replied directly he was dead; the Boyes suspecting as it was, by seeing him weare his Cap, would have had him to Master *Thorpe*: But *Jack* so moved their patience, they shot him.⁶²

Jack of the Feather died soon after. When Opechancanough threatened revenge, Smith reported, "the *English* returned him such terrible answers,

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, IV, 118, 158-159.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁶¹ McIlwaine, ed., *Jour. of Burgesses*, 7.

⁶² Arber and Bradley, eds., *Travels and Works of Smith*, II, 572.

that he cunningly dissembled his intent, with the greatest signes he could of love and peace."⁶³ Two weeks later, Opechancanough struck.

On the morning of March 22, 1622, scores of Indians came to the settlers' homes to trade or converse, "yea in some places sat downe at breakfast." Suddenly the visitors seized their hosts' weapons, or drew knives concealed in their own clothing, and attacked every white man, woman, and child they could reach. Friendship proved no shield. The Indians slew George Thorpe along with the rest, and "with such spight and scorne abused his dead corps as is unfitting to be heard with civill eares."⁶⁴ At many of the outlying plantations everyone perished. The list of victims showed seventeen slain at the College lands, twenty-seven at Captain Berkeley's Plantation, seventy-five or more at Martin's Hundred—only seven miles from Jamestown—and scores of others throughout the colony. Among the dead were several members of the council and other prominent residents, as well as many of humbler station, some of them scarcely identified: "The Tinker," "Mary, and Elizabeth, Maidservants," "6 Men and Boyes," "Henry a Welchman," and "A French boy." A few of the communities, including Jamestown, survived because of timely warning by a Christian Indian. By the end of the day the toll reached 347, or more than one-fourth of the population.⁶⁵ In the weeks that followed, the Indians picked off stragglers and small parties of settlers. "Since the massacre," Argall reported, "they have killed us in our own doores, fields, and houses."⁶⁶

In mid-June *Seaflower* arrived in England with the chilling news. The initial response was military. King James donated arms and ammunition from the Tower of London, though his contribution proved to be only some old arms that were "altogether unfitt, and of no use for moderne Service."⁶⁷ The London Company also gathered weapons and supplies, and Smith offered to return to Virginia to "inforce the Salvages to leave their Country,

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 572-573.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 573-575.

⁶⁵ *Va. Co. Recs.*, III, 565-571. Despite historians' frequent assertion that John Rolfe was among the victims, the evidence is overwhelming that he was not. He did die in 1622 (in October of that year his brother requested settlement of the estate), but most likely of natural causes. His will, dated Mar. 10, 1622, complained of ill health. Had Rolfe fallen in the massacre, his name would have appeared on the lists of dead; moreover, the irony of Pocahontas's husband dying at Indian hands would not have been missed by the many contemporary commentators. See John Melville Jennings, "Biographical Sketch," in Rolfe, *True Relation*, xxv-xxvi.

⁶⁶ *Purchas His Pilgrimes*, XIX, 210. A detailed and reliable account of the massacre is Richard Beale Davis, *George Sandys, Poet Adventurer: A Study in Anglo-American Culture in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1955), chap. 6.

⁶⁷ W. L. Grant and James Munro, eds., *Acts of the Privy Council of England, Colonial Series, 1613-1680, I* (Hereford, Eng., 1908), 52

or bring them in[to] feare and subjection."⁶⁸ The company turned a deaf ear to the captain's proposition, but it acted on the same premise that he did. The Indians must be crushed.

During the next decade the colony waged total war. Before the massacre it had distinguished between friendly and unfriendly tribes; now it viewed all natives as foes. Armies of settlers set out to destroy every vestige of Indian presence in the areas between the James and York rivers and beyond. In January 1623 the Virginia Council of State claimed that "by Computacione and Confessione of the Indyans themselves we have slayne more of them this yeere, then hath been slayne before since the begininge of the Colonie." Governor Wyatt saw the task starkly as the "extirpating of the Salvages."⁶⁹

So thoroughly had the colonists been taken by surprise, and so completely did they project the responsibility onto their enemies, that Wyatt and his council dispensed with conventional methods of warfare. When Opechancanough eluded all attempts to capture him, they invited the chief to a sham peace parley, "to be concluded in a helthe or tooe in sacke which was sente of porpose in the butte with Capten Tucker to poysen them." Perhaps two hundred Indians succumbed to tainted drink; many of them were slaughtered by Tucker's men, who "brought hom parte of ther heades." Opechancanough escaped, but in the opinion of one settler the slaughter was "a great desmayinge to the blodye infidelles."⁷⁰

Such tactics disturbed the London Company. Of course, the Indians must be defeated, the company advised Governor Wyatt in the spring of 1623, but by honorable means. The colonists, however, insisted on a free hand. "Wheras we are advised by you to observe rules of Justice with these barberous and perfidious enemys," the Virginia council retorted, "wee hold nothinge injuste, that may tend to their ruine, (except breach of faith)[.] Stratagemes were ever allowed against all enemies, but with these neither fayre Warr nor good quarter is ever to be held, nor is there other hope of their subversione, who ever may informe you to the Contrarie."⁷¹ The company did not agree, but in fact its own advice of a few months earlier had encouraged such a policy. In August 1622 it had called for "a perpetuall warre without peace or truce." Children only were to be spared. The company recommended that soldiers pursue the adults, "surprisinge them in their habitations, intercepting them in their hunting, burninge their Townes, demolishing their Temples, destroyinge their Canoes, plucking

⁶⁸ Arber and Bradley, eds., *Travels and Works of Smith*, II, 588-589.

⁶⁹ *Va. Co. Recs.*, IV, 10; Wyatt to [?], in "Letters of Francis Wyatt," *WMQ*, 2d Ser., VI (1926), 118.

⁷⁰ *Va. Co. Recs.*, IV, 221-222. For the settlers' devious tactics see also *ibid.*, 98-99, 102.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 451.

upp theire weares, carying away theire Corne, and depriving them of whatsoever may yeeld them succor or relief."⁷² In October the company advocated "rooting them out for being longer a people upon the face of the Earth."⁷³

While colonial forces attempted the "rooting out," the company made a frantic effort to restore public enthusiasm for its Virginia venture. In the year following the massacre it issued several propaganda pamphlets, some under its own authorship, some by its friends. Partly the tracts sought to explain how the massacre happened in the first place (the Indians' treachery and God's wrath at the colonists' sinful ways were stock explanations); mainly, they tried to find a silver lining in the war clouds. In both efforts the Indians fared poorly. Gone were the occasional noble qualities that had been credited to them before 1622; gone, too, was any recognition of Indian rights to land and freedom. As Edward Waterhouse, author of the company's apologia of 1622, stated the case: "our hands which before were tied with gentlesse and faire usage, are now set at liberty by the treacherous violence of the Savages . . . so that we, who hitherto have had possession of no more ground then their waste, and our purchase . . . may now by right of Warre, and law of Nations, invade the Country, and destroy them who sought to destroy us. . . . Now their cleared grounds in all their villages (which are situate in the fruitfulest places of the land) shall be inhabited by us." Other benefits could be expected, Waterhouse promised, in the form of bondservants, "because the *Indians*, who before were used as friends, may now most justly be compelled to servitude and drudgery, and supply the roome of men that labour." Waterhouse considered them especially suited for "inferiour workes of digging in mynes, and the like, of whom also some may be sent for the service of the Sommer Ilands [Bermuda]." His conclusions fulfilled his

⁷² *Ibid.*, III, 672. Governor Wyatt, who was in charge of the colony's forces, received military advice from his father as well as from the company. See J. Frederick Fausz and Jon Kukla, eds., "A Letter of Advice to the Governor of Virginia, 1624," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., XXXIV (1977), 104-129.

⁷³ *Va. Co. Recs.*, III, 683. The company's chronic misunderstanding of the settlers' circumstances, and its unwillingness to accept any responsibility for the consequences, appear frequently in the correspondence concerning the massacre. Not surprisingly, the colony objected to bearing the blame for a policy set in England. "Wheras . . . you pass soe heavie a Censure upon us as yf we alone were guiltie," the colony complained with obvious disgust, "You may be pleased to Consider what instructions you have formerly given us, to wynn the Indyans to us by A kinde entertayninge them in our howses, and yf it were possible to Cohabitt with us, and how ympossible it is for any watch and warde to secure us against secrett Enemies that live promiscouslie amongst us, and are harbored in our bosomes, all Histories and your owne Discourse may Sufficently informe you" (*ibid.*, 10).

premise "that the Countrey is not so good, as the Natives are bad, whose barbarous Savagenesse needs more cultivation then the ground it selfe."⁷⁴

As Waterhouse's pamphlet suggested, the massacre of 1622 had reversed the trend of English attitudes toward the Indians. The earlier view of many spokesmen that the natives were redeemable, both religiously and culturally, yielded to a belief that they were hopelessly debased. And with that shift in perception came a drastic reversal in policy. Plans for the Indian college were shelved, and voices such as John Donne's and Patrick Copland's that had earlier pleaded for the wholesale conversion of the American natives fell silent or were ignored. Even England's leading champion of imperial Christianity, Samuel Purchas, joined the verbal assault on the Indians. They "bee not worthy of the name of a Nation," Purchas proclaimed, "being wilde and Savage: yet as Slaves, bordering rebels, excommunicates and outlaws are lyable to the punishments of Law, and not to the priviledges." The massacre, he believed, "hath now confiscated whatsoever remainders of right the unnaturall Naturalls had, and made both them and their Countrey wholly English." Like other clergymen, Purchas still hoped to convert some of the Indians; he was no longer sanguine, however, about the prospects of "so bad a people, having little of Humanitie but shape, ignorant of Civilitie, of Arts, of Religion; more brutish then the beasts they hunt."⁷⁵

The crown and the company took a similar stance. In a pamphlet of 1622, designed primarily to tell Virginians how to raise silkworms and other agricultural crops, John Bonoecil, a French horticulturalist employed by the company, voiced what had apparently become the official English viewpoint on the Indian. Bonoecil's treatise carried endorsements from the king and from the earl of Southampton, the company's treasurer. Tucked away in the last part of the book, but conspicuous enough to have caught the eye of any reader, lurked an invitation to enslave the Indian remnant. "I utterly disclaime them," Bonoecil wrote, for they "know no industry, no Arts, no culture, nor no good use of this blessed Country heere, but are meere ignorance, sloth, and brutishnesse, and [are] an unprofitable burthen. . . . [They] are naturally borne slaves. . . . There is a naturall kind of right in

⁷⁴ [Waterhouse], *Declaration*, 22-23, 25-26, 11. Waterhouse's animosity toward the Indians was almost boundless. He did not, however, advocate using "Mastives to teare them"; historians who thus quote Waterhouse have overlooked the errata at the beginning of his pamphlet.

⁷⁵ *Purchas His Pilgrimes*, XIX, 224, 229, 231. For evidence of a sparse but continuing effort to convert and educate the Indians of Virginia after 1622 see W. Stitt Robinson, Jr., "Indian Education and Missions in Colonial Virginia," *Journal of Southern History*, XVIII (1952), 152-168. On the Indians and colonial law see Robinson, "The Legal Status of the Indian in Colonial Virginia," *VMHB*, LXI (1953), 247-259.

you, that are bred noble, learned, wise, and virtuous, to direct them aright, to governe and to command them."⁷⁶ Bonoel's pamphlet, widely distributed in Virginia, was not publicly challenged. The subsequent record of Indian-colonial relations suggests that its message fell on receptive ears.

Despite its propaganda campaign, the company failed to revive public confidence in Virginia. It failed, too, to convince the king that it deserved to survive as England's agent of colonization. Not merely because of the massacre, for that could be blamed on the stealth of the Indians and the carelessness of the settlers. But the company had unquestionably been irresponsible in recruiting new settlers who perished in frightful numbers. During the remainder of 1622 and throughout the following year it sent hundreds of men and women to a colony that suffered from a severe shortage of food and shelter and in which disease again took a heavy toll.⁷⁷ Many of the recruits died at sea, for conditions of passage had become worse than ever (Lady Wyatt complained that on her crossing in 1623 "our Shipp was so . . . full of infection that after a while we saw little but throwing folkes over boord"). Sir Edwin Sandys's brother wrote from the colony that since the massacre a "generall sicknes" had taken almost five hundred lives, "and not manie of the rest that have not knockt at the doores of death." Letters from the colony rang with plaintive pleas for deliverance: "I am quite out of hart to live in this land[,] god send me well out of it"; "we lyve in the fearefullest age that ever christians tyved in"; "we are all undone." The future of the colony, recently so promising, now seemed bleaker than ever. "The last massacre killed all our Countrie," lamented one survivor; "beside them they killed, they burst the heart of all the rest."⁷⁸

The colony's plight convinced James to disband the London Company. He had long been disappointed with its performance, and since 1619 he had been at odds with its leadership. Between 1606 and 1619 the company had been headed by Sir Thomas Smythe. In the latter year a coalition under Sir Edwin Sandys gained control.⁷⁹ Because of pressure from the king, who resented his opposition in Parliament, Sandys served as treasurer for only a

⁷⁶ [John Bonoel], *His Majesties Gracious Letter to the Earle of South-Hampton* . . . (London, 1622), 85-86. For another scheme to force the Indians to labor see *Va. Co. Recs.*, III, 704-707.

⁷⁷ Conditions in the colony are poignantly described in the correspondence and other documents of the Virginia Company. See *Va. Co. Recs.*, III and IV, *passim*. An exaggerated description of post-massacre conditions is Nathaniel Butler, "The Unmasked face of our Colony in Virginia as it was in the Winter of the yeare 1622," *ibid.*, II, 374-376.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, IV, 232, 74, 233-235, 38.

⁷⁹ My summary of the company's collapse is drawn from the standard work on the subject, Wesley Frank Craven, *The Dissolution of the Virginia Company: The Failure of a Colonial Experiment* (New York, 1932).

year, but he managed to secure the election of the earl of Southampton, a loyal follower, for the next three years. Sandys and Southampton now had to face charges of gross mismanagement, for however incompetent the administration of Smythe, it had avoided—out of blind luck, perhaps—the tragedies of recent years. In 1623 the crown began to investigate the company. A year later the Court of King's Bench revoked the company's charter; Virginia became the first royal colony. The impact of the massacre had been far-reaching indeed.

Changes in its government in no way altered the colony's pursuit of the Indians. In the spring of 1623 the governor and council promised "to geve them shortly a blow, That shall neere or altogether Ruinate them." In 1624 the assembly ordered "that at the begininge of July next the Inhabitanes of every Corporation shall falle upon theire adjonyinge Salvages as we did the last yeere."⁸⁰ Such campaigns became so customary that the colonists were divided into four units, each to attack assigned targets every November, March, and July.⁸¹ In 1629, seven years after the massacre, the governor and council reminded the colonists to keep Indians out of the plantations altogether and to "esteeme them utter Enemies."⁸² That same year the colony gained an unexpected ally. "A certaine Indian," reported Reverend Joseph Mead, "offered himself, his wife, and four children wholly to become English both in affection and religion; and to assure them of his fidelity, he conducted their little army this harvest to the secret habitations of the Indians their enemies; upon whose corn and persons, by his guidance, they wrought more spoil and revenge than they had done since the great massacre."⁸³ Still the Indians resisted. The major tribes did not capitulate until 1632.⁸⁴

In one sense, the shift in English policy after the massacre was slight; it merely reflected the profound prejudice that had clouded Indian-English contact from the beginning. Many Englishmen, especially those in the colony, could at last admit a conviction briefly and incompletely suppressed:

⁸⁰ *Va. Co. Recs.*, IV, 102, 384.

⁸¹ McIlwaine, ed., *Jour. of Burgesses*, 52.

⁸² H. R. McIlwaine, ed., *Minutes of the Council and General Court of Colonial Virginia, 1622-1632, 1670-1676* (Richmond, 1924), 185. As late as September 1632 the Virginia legislature declared the neighboring Indians "our irreconcilable enemyes." William Waller Hening, ed., *The Statutes at Large; Being a Collection of all the Laws of Virginia . . .*, I (New York, 1823), 193.

⁸³ Joseph Mead to Sir Martin Stuteville, Jan. 23, 1630, in Thomas Birch, ed., *The Court and Times of Charles the First*, II (London, 1848), 53-54.

⁸⁴ For a detailed discussion of the post-massacre conflict see William S. Powell, "Aftermath of the Massacre: The First Indian War, 1622-1632," *VMHB*, LXVI (1958), 44-75.

the Indians were a nuisance to be pushed aside or forced to labor. Thus, Opechancanough's assault of 1622 not only released the Indians' long-suppressed hostility but also unmasked the colonists' covert disdain. The massacre simply hastened the inevitable confrontation of incompatible positions.

In another respect, however, 1622 marked a turning point. Until then, leading English imperialists, both secular and missionary, assumed that some Indian tribes would live in friendly proximity to the colony and that many individuals and families would mix—economically, socially, and perhaps biologically—with the settlers. Those who held such a view may have been a minority in England, as they almost certainly were in Virginia, but from 1614 to 1622 they were influential enough to take the first hesitant steps toward an integrated community. London policymakers such as Robert Johnson, Edwin Sandys, and Patrick Copland, and Virginia colonists such as John Rolfe, George Thorpe, and George Yeardley expected colonial society to consist of Europeans and Indians, all speaking the English language, adhering to English customs, abiding by English authority, and worshipping in the English church. In 1622 the Indians served unmistakable notice that they would not accept such terms. In frustration and anguish, even former champions of integration—Samuel Purchas and Francis Wyatt, for example—threw the whole blame onto the Indian; they concluded that he was too treacherous to befriend, too savage to civilize, too superstitious to convert. He must be expelled from the English sphere, and as that area expanded the Indian must retreat. English Virginia and Indian Virginia were henceforth to be separate domains.

Virginia's experience helped to shape Indian-colonist relations throughout British America. "Hapie is he whom other mens harmes doth make to beware," advised the writer who informed Plymouth, the only other mainland colony at the time, of the massacre of 1622. In the next few months the Pilgrims built a sturdy fort and posted continual watch. "Since the massacre in *Virginia*, . . . wee are more wary of them [the Indians] then before; for their hands hath beene imbrued in much English blood," noted one of the settlers; and early in 1623 Miles Standish slew several Indians suspected of conspiring against the colony.⁸⁵ And yet Plymouth's relations with most of its

⁸⁵ William Bradford, *History of Plymouth Plantation, 1620-1647*, I (Boston, 1912), 273, 275-276, 292-295; Phineas Pratt, "A Declaration of the Affairs of the English People that First Inhabited New England," Massachusetts Historical Society, *Collections*, 4th Ser., IV (1858), 474-487; E[dward] Winslow, "Good Newes from New England," in Edward Arber, ed., *The Story of the Pilgrim Fathers* . . . (London, 1897), 530, 561-574; John Pory to the Governor of Virginia (Sir Francis Wyatt), Autumn 1622, in Sydney V. James, Jr., ed., *Three Visitors to Early Plymouth: Letters about the Pilgrim Settlement in New England during the First*

neighboring tribes remained generally cordial, for the Pilgrims rejected Virginia's corollary that Indians, by definition, must be tributaries or enemies.

So did the leaders of Massachusetts Bay. In 1636 the Pequot War taught them that some tribes would resist Puritan expansion, but the colonists emerged so triumphant and had so many Indian allies that the danger of a major uprising seemed more remote than before.⁸⁶ Then in 1644, Opechancanough led a second Virginia massacre, almost as destructive as the first, on the outlying plantations. John Winthrop saw the latest Virginia calamity as an explicit warning to New England, although he stopped short of laying full blame on the Indians. "The massacre came upon [the Virginians] soon after they had driven out the godly ministers we had sent to them," Winthrop observed.⁸⁷ He and other Puritan leaders smugly assumed that they would succeed in pacifying and converting the Indians, where their southern compatriots had failed, because God would foster only the *true* faith and the *right* forms of civility. Still, the Puritans acted with a caution born partly of Virginia's tragedies. Separation, not integration or amalgamation, characterized the missionary efforts led by John Eliot and Daniel Gookin—the latter a Puritan refugee from Virginia who had lost heavily in the massacre of 1644. New England's Christian Indians were confined to "Praying Towns," and civil and military officials kept a close eye on the unconverted.⁸⁸ Indians were prohibited from owning firearms, serving in the militia, or entering English settlements without permission.⁸⁹ Harvard College lodged its few Indian students in a separate building.⁹⁰ Despite some sincere attempts at ethnic concord, New England remained suspicious of its Indian neighbors both individually and collectively. And in 1675 King

Seven Years (Plymouth Plantation, Mass., 1963), 16; Emmanuel Altham to Sir Edward Altham, September 1623, *ibid.*, 30-32; Thomas Morton, *New English Cannan* (New York, 1972 [orig. publ. Amsterdam, 1637]), 106-112; Arber and Bradley, eds., *Travels and Works of Smith*, I, 760-766, quotation on p. 760.

⁸⁶ Divergent interpretations of the Pequot War are Alden T. Vaughan, *New England Frontier: Puritans and Indians, 1620-1675* (Boston, 1965), chaps. 4-5, and Jennings, *Invasion of America*, chaps. 12-13.

⁸⁷ John Winthrop, *The History of New England from 1630 to 1649*, ed. James Savage, II (Boston, 1826), 164-165.

⁸⁸ Vaughan, *New England Frontier*, chaps. 9-11; Neal E. Salisbury, "Red Puritans: The 'Praying Indians' of Massachusetts Bay and John Eliot," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., XXXI (1974), 27-54. For a sharply critical view of Puritan missionary programs see Jennings, *Invasion of America*, chap. 14.

⁸⁹ For examples of restrictive legislation against Indians see J. Hammond Trumbull, ed., *The Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut*, I (Hartford, 1850), 2, 46, 52, 73-74, 79, 106, 138, 163, 235, 284, 294, 351.

⁹⁰ Samuel Eliot Morison, *Harvard College in the Seventeenth Century*, I (Cambridge, Mass., 1936), 342-344.

Philip's War convinced most New Englanders of what some had long suspected: the Indians, with few exceptions, were inexorably heathen, savage, and demonic—"Monsters shapt and fac'd like men."⁹¹

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, in Virginia and elsewhere, the disintegration of the coastal tribes and the resurgence of missionary ardor partially revived earlier expectations of the Indians' social and religious transformation. It was too late. The cultures had lived so long apart and animosities had so long festered that the efforts of a few missionaries and educators made little dent in the larger pattern of Indian-European relations, a pattern that lasted the lifetime of British America and predisposed the Indian policy of the new nation. For in keeping with traditional English attitudes, in the mother country and the colonies, champions of the Indians' welfare still insisted that to be acceptable they forsake their native culture. Most Indians, of course, would not.

⁹¹ Benjamin Tompson, *New England's Crisis* (Boston, 1676), 19.