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MARKETS AND MERCHANTS: ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION IN COLONIAL VIRGINIA, 1700-1775

PETER VICTOR BERGSTROM

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University of New Hampshire

PH.D.

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MARKETS AND MERCHANTS:
ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION IN COLONIAL VIRGINIA, 1700-1775

BY

PETER V. BERGSTROM
M.A., Marquette University, 1973

A DISSERTATION

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in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of

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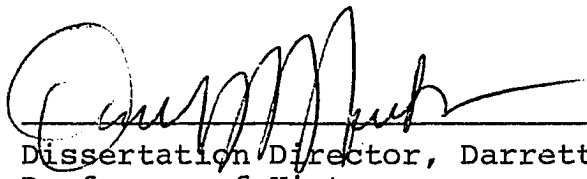
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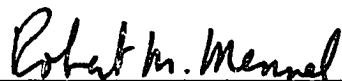
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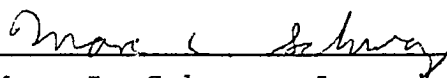
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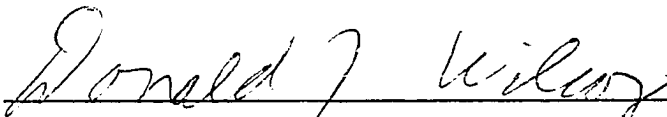
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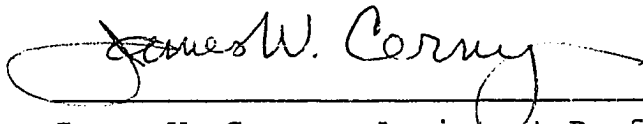
Robert M. Mennel, Professor of History



Marc L. Schwarz, Associate Professor of History



Donald J. Wilcox, Professor of History



James W. Cerny, Assistant Professor of Geography

April 7, 1980

Date

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ABSTRACT

MARKETS AND MERCHANTS:
ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION IN COLONIAL VIRGINIA, 1700-1775

by

PETER V. BERGSTROM
University of New Hampshire, May 1980

While the literature detailing the intricacies of the colonial tobacco trade is extensive, and often quite persuasive, its conclusion that Virginia's economy began and ended in the production of tobacco is misleading. Virginia's expansion into previously unsettled lands, and the tremendous increase in the size of its labor force during the first three quarters of the eighteenth century did produce a gigantic growth in the tobacco trade, but it had other effects as well. Grain and meat products along with naval stores and iron contributed little to the colony's economic output in 1701, yet by 1774 they accounted for better than a third of the value of her exports.

In tandem with the growth and diversification of her export products, Virginia's marketing structure underwent a series of changes during the eighteenth century which helped ease her ultimate transition from a colony dependent upon a distant mother country for her economic services into an independent state ready to compete in the international marketplace. These changes included both the substitution of direct sales marketing for complicated consignment systems, and the replacement of part-time merchants who appeared in the

colony only seasonally with a permanently resident merchant community. In time these merchants came to represent a Virginian, rather than a British, point of view when making economic decisions.

The sources for this study are many and varied. The primary evidence for export expansion and diversification is the collection of Virginia Naval Office Lists located in the Colonial Office Papers of the British Public Records Office which is now available in the United States on microfilm. These records, when computer processed to remove multiple recordings of the same cargoes, can serve as an accurate measure of Virginia's exports. The evidence concerning merchants and marketing practices is drawn from the extensive collections of mercantile papers to be found in the Library of Congress, the Virginia State Library, the Virginia Historical Society and the Alderman Library of the University of Virginia. The collections of the Research Department of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation were also indispensable.

The conclusions of this study are threefold. First, the extent and variety of non-tobacco exports grew at an increasing rate as the eighteenth century progressed. Second, the nature of the mercantile community changed from non-resident to resident and its role in Virginia's economic and political society changed from passive to active. Third, and perhaps most important in the ongoing development of American economic history, the evidence of actual per capita growth in export earnings between 1700 and 1775 is incontrovertible.

CHAPTER 1

Historians, Economists, and the Economic Development of the Colonial Chesapeake

The complex inter-relationships of economic activities, especially those which determine the balance of trade, the relative value of the national currency and, ultimately, the real disposable income of the individual, are rarely understood by the man in the street. When he ponders them it is more often in dread of security lost than in confidence of inevitable improvement. Much of the historical literature which has appeared in the last decade suggests that this was as true in the eighteenth century as it is today. Social and political malaise were intertwined with economic uncertainty, and by the third quarter of the century accommodation of all of these ills --real and imagined-- could no longer be achieved within the British imperial structure, and a revolution ensued. The leaders who emerged from this upheaval believed that theirs was more than a political act; that the republic they were creating had conscious social and economic aims. Yet if one is to understand, much less judge, the success of the changes their revolution had upon the American economy, one must first examine that which came before.¹

The more reflective economic historians are the first to admit that there exists a seductive impulse in their profession to deal with economies in the aggregate rather than

consider their constituent parts. National (or in the present case, imperial) syntheses tend to obscure rather than clarify the inter-relationship of individual and regional components. As a result, the uneven spread of strengths, weaknesses and potential for growth and change remain unexplored. It is a primary purpose of the present study to bridge this gap in so far as the economy of the colonial Chesapeake is concerned.²

Conventional Wisdom about the Chesapeake Economy

While much has been written on the history of the region during the eighteenth century, its economy has often been summarized with a single word: "tobacco." Colonials believed the truth of such a summary description as early as 1616, while historian Jacob Price calculated as recently as 1964 that this single commodity accounted for 90% of the value of the region's exports to England.³ The description of the Chesapeake's economic development, as a consequence, has evolved into a conventional recitation of the cycles of boom and depression in the tobacco trade. The availability of labor, accessibility and productivity of tobacco land, and fluctuations in the profit margin in European tobacco markets have all been considered as possible explanations for these cycles. But concentration upon this staple crop has precluded the development of a comprehensive model explaining the overall development of the Chesapeake region during the colonial period.⁴

Before such a model for the region's economy can be proposed, however, some unconventional factors need to be

considered. First, the Chesapeake Bay region must be understood as a series of differentiated sub-regions, each in a process of diversification but among which diversification was neither uniform in character nor continuous in time. In some parts of the Eastern shore of Maryland, for example, wheat as a commercial crop was introduced as an alternative to tobacco during the first quarter of the eighteenth century. In the area of the upper James River basin, however, tobacco was never forsaken as a staple product during the colonial period. Second, the exact role of the non-tobacco crops must be explored. Grains, meat products, and naval stores added significantly to the value and volume of the export sector after 1730, although none of them ever challenged the supremacy of tobacco. Nevertheless, on the eve of the American Revolution they accounted for between one-third and one-half of the value of the region's total export. Third, the role of the colonial merchant must be reconsidered. While his counterpart in Britain commanded such capital as to dominate, even in large measure to monopolize, the tobacco trade the Britishers all but exempted themselves from the colonial trades in provisions and building supplies. The profits to be earned in the North American and West Indian marketplaces for these commodities were smaller than those in the European arena of tobacco sales, to be sure, but the expertise needed to deal with their more rapidly fluctuating demand was no less than that required to reap profits from the sale of tobacco. A side benefit for the colonials came at the end of the period when the small but highly efficient

merchant class of the Chesapeake made its skills available to help finance and manage the American Revolution.

Marc Egnal, David Klingaman, and Jacob Price have all suggested possibilities for further study in these areas, but only Klingaman has seriously questioned the dominant role of tobacco in the export economy.⁵ Carville Earle's recent work on Maryland challenges the notion of tobacco supremacy within the local economy of the plantation and parish, but makes little effort to explore the export sector. Paul Clemens, also studying Maryland, has found evidence of a shift from tobacco to grain on the Eastern Shore of that colony, while Gloria Main has further restricted the participants in this form of diversification to the wealthiest one percent of Maryland's planters.⁶ Nevertheless, most historians have failed to consider the role of non-tobacco agriculture in the region's economy.

The hesitancy to deal with this part of the export sector stems from the difficulties associated with gathering and organizing the evidence of exports other than tobacco. Price, for example, relied primarily upon English Customs records which have two shortcomings. First, they combine all imports from Virginia and Maryland into aggregate figures, leaving little opportunity to explore the possibility of sub-regional specialization in agriculture within the Chesapeake region. Second, and in the long run more crucial for the study of the colonies, they do not record the majority of the Chesapeake's exports other than tobacco. Corn, wheat, beef and pork --the chief exports after tobacco--

were rarely, if ever, imported into England and therefore never appear in the English records. Most of the lumber exported also went to ports outside of Great Britain. Although virtually all of the iron produced in the Chesapeake went to England, most was bound for the outports rather than London, and for these ports the English records are the least complete.

The Documents of Diversification

One solution to this problem may be found in the systematic examination of the Naval Office Lists --a series of documents containing the reports of the Naval Officers and Customs Collectors of each customs district within the colonies.⁷ These officers were required by law to record the entry and clearance of all ships, and certify their compliance with the acts of trade and navigation. The result is a compilation of all ship entries and departures, their port of origin and destination, and a summary of the cargoes they carried. That such a detailed source of information regarding exports and imports should long pass unnoticed would be unlikely, and indeed it has not. Yet because of the special problems associated with the interpretation of these reports, they have received considerably less attention than they deserve. It is a primary concern of this study to overcome those problems and utilize the important data which they contain to provide a more comprehensive picture of the dramatic changes which occurred within the export sector of Virginia's economy during the eighteenth century.

The problems associated with the use of the Naval Office Lists fall into three broad categories. First, they have not survived the ravages of time in an orderly fashion. They do not, in other words, form a continuous run with reports from all of the districts for all years.⁸ Although all the documents which survive were produced in compliance with the Act for Preventing Frauds and Regulating Abuses in the Plantation Trade of 1696 (7 & 8 William III, c. 22), no reports exist prior to 1698. Between 1698 and 1706 only three years are complete for all of the districts. From 1707-1724 no reports survive from any of the districts. Not until after 1725 and continuing until 1765 is the coverage almost complete with only an occasional report missing. After 1765 the coverage again becomes spotty, ending entirely with the collapse of British rule in 1774.

A second and more serious problem evident in even the most cursory examination of the lists is that two and even three copies of the returns appear for some quarters in some districts. This results from the requirement that all reports be transmitted in triplicate (each copy by a different ship) in the hope that at least one copy would arrive safely.⁹ In many instances the fates were kind and all the copies arrived at the Board of Trade where they were bound into volumes and preserved for future reference. Apparently the binding was a low priority operation carried out by the most junior clerks when no other more important, or more interesting, business was to be done. The consequence of this rather lackadaisical method of preservation is that the lists

are arranged neither chronologically nor by district.¹⁰ And for some as yet unexplained reason not all of the copies are exact duplicates of each other. Beyond the transpositional errors to be expected from hand copying, duplicate entries often differ slightly in dating and occasionally in the detail of other information they contain.¹¹ The combination of these circumstances makes it possible for "ghost" entries --that is slightly variant copies-- to be added into tallies made from the records without the researcher becoming aware that any error has been made. In the past the historian's reaction to the defects has been frustration and confusion. Most have simply noted the existence of the Naval Lists, offered the caveat that their accuracy was questionable, then passed on to other types of evidence.¹²

In spite of all these difficulties, the lists are not unusable. True, coverage is not continuous through the years. Yet, for those years in which the coverage is not complete, the tendency is for lists from all of the districts to be present for the same quarter of the years. Thus, even for partial years, the data can be used to some extent to document the sub-regional trends among the Virginia Districts. True, too, "ghosts" abound, but these can be coped with as well.

All of the entries and clearances found in the Naval Office Lists have been prepared for computer analysis by converting them to a series of sixty-nine coded variables which describe the ship, its place of origin, its registration, its most recent arrival or departure, and the kind and quan-

tity of its cargo. The entries were subsequently screened by machine, each entry being compared with every entry which appeared after it in the original document. If six or more of eight designated key variables matched, the identity numbers of the paired cases were printed and these suspected duplicates were further compared by hand. In this analysis, the Naval Lists for Virginia were found to have an overall duplication rate of 24% --at least one ship in four appears two or more times in the manuscripts.¹³ Admittedly, many of the duplicates could have been discovered without the aid of the computer but at least 10% would have remained undetected.¹⁴ If even the smaller number of duplicates were to be included in the tallies of the unwary researcher, the traditional caveat about the lists' problems would appear to be an understatement. As it is, the removal of the duplicate entries from the Lists turns a highly suspect record into a highly useful source of evidence.

The third problem which has inhibited a greater use of the lists is the apparent misunderstanding of the historical context in which they were produced. Colonial historians of no less reputation than Charles M. Andrews and Lawrence Harper have questioned the accuracy of many of the individual entries. They believed that while the lists might be generally reflective of the pattern of colonial shipping, they might not be exact in their accounts of certain imports and exports. Oliver Dickerson was more blunt in his criticism when he stated that most Naval Officers and Collectors in the colonies were known to have been guilty of

fraud. Percy Flippin echoed Dickerson's charge with particular reference to the revenue officers of Virginia whom he accused of taking bribes and presenting altered accounts.¹⁵

Chapter 3 of the present study examines these charges from three points of view. First, it considers the backgrounds and careers of the known incumbents who held the post of Naval Officer in Virginia during the eighteenth century. The quality of these men suggests that, unlike some of their colonial and English counterparts, they neither purchased their offices in speculation of personal profits, nor held them by deputy as a sinecure. Instead they consistently performed their duties in these as well as other offices of trust within the Virginia government. Second, the seventeenth century heritage of the legal regulation of the colonial trade and the mechanisms by which it operated are examined. The habit of registration --long established-- plus the payment of salary and fees to the revenue officers on the basis of the volume of collections they report all suggest that systematic violation or avoidance of the Act of 1696 was unlikely. Third, the evidence of Flippin's charges as well as the actual activities of the Naval Officers and Collectors are examined. Nearly all of the complaints that Flippin cites as having been lodged against the revenue officers can be traced to a handful of men who had political and/or economic motives behind their action. Moreover, among the records of the Council of Virginia, the executive agency charged with the immediate oversight of the revenue officers, little evidence can be found of proven corruption or mal-

feasance --although a large number of charges (not mentioned by Flippin) were made by parties who believed that they had been overcharged duties or otherwise aggrieved. In the few cases where the officers were at fault, prompt action was taken to reprimand or remove them. It would seem then, that the milieu in which the Naval Officers operated did little to encourage or condone corruption in the preparation of accounts, at the same time that it provided positive incentives for the presentation of accurate returns.

Some Economic Underpinnings

Before proceeding with the narrative of the development of the Virginia economy as elaborated in the Naval Office Lists, a few statements of principle and definition are in order. First, following the work of Richard Brown, I believe that colonial America, like England and the rest of Western Europe, was undergoing a process of modernization during the eighteenth century.¹⁶ As man became more aware of himself as an individual, his society became more complex. New problems produced by his broadened geographic and intellectual horizons demanded new solutions. This in turn produced a host of new institutions to deal with new modes of behavior. As Brown points out, however, the process was hardly all-pervasive in either location or time. Much that was old and familiar continued to flourish alongside that which was new and strange.

Second, as a corollary to the process of modernization, man became preoccupied with the notion of progress. In the view of the eighteenth century, change was not neutral,

but oriented toward creating a better state of affairs than that which existed before. In economic terms change was inevitably linked with growth --the idea that it was better to produce more goods, more services, and earn greater rewards. Third, and most important in the economic realm, was the greater emphasis placed upon the role of the individual. Growth consisted not simply of more things, but of more things produced by each individual. The individual's goal was to gain the most for himself with the least risk. In other words, man had come to accept as a positive good the pursuit of the main chance.¹⁷

Douglas North and Lance Davis, among other economists, suggest that any economy can be explained in terms of two elements: inputs and outputs. Inputs are the basic factors of production: labor, capital, and resources. Outputs are the goods, services, wages and profits produced. They are linked by what North and Davis term the "production function" which includes all the aspects of human and mechanical skills that transform the raw materials into the finished goods. Moreover, the production function includes the managerial skills of agricultural and industrial organization as well as the entrepreneurial skills which perceive and/or create markets for new products and processes. In short, it is the "production function" which turns the demand for something into a delivered supply at a competitive price. This general economic model can be represented by the formula:

$$O = P (L, K, T)$$

where O is the output, L, K, and T, the elements of input --

land, capital, and resources-- and P, the "production function."¹⁸

Within the context of the North and Davis model, growth, or the enlargement of output (O) must be understood in two ways. The first, and more properly termed "economic expansion," simply means that the output has been enlarged by an increase in any or all of the inputs (L, K, or T). The second, which economists sometimes call "true economic growth," or more commonly, "economic growth," refers to an increase in output caused by a change in the production function. This occurs when some new application of technology, improved labor skills, or some new technique in marketing can be applied to the same amount of inputs. In both cases the equilibrium between the inputs fed into the model and the outputs produced will be determined by a balancing of supply and demand.

Application of the input-output model to the economy of the colonial Chesapeake can be facilitated by another, but related, stream of economic thinking exemplified by the work of Melville Watkins.¹⁹ This is the staple theory of development which proposes that a newly settled area (such as colonial America), if rich in resources but poor in capital and labor, can achieve economic growth through the production of one of more cash crops for a foreign (or in this case, imperial) market. The comparative advantage --the economist's term for maximized profit at minimized cost-- for the producer stems from the continuing demand for a staple which cannot be produced at all, or at least not with as great a

comparative advantage, in any other location available to the demand market. Traditionally this implies a plantation form of society, although R.E. Baldwin has developed an alternative model employing the family farm as the production unit.²⁰ Capital to start the production of the staple is supplied from the demand market which is outside the producing area, and the production function turns on the abilities of middlemen who secure the capital and provide the marketing and transportation system needed to move the staple from the producing to the consuming region.

According to Watson the staple output remains dominant as its producers accumulate enough capital from their earnings and consider the opportunities for re-investment. Their options include more investment in staple production (for example, by importing an increased labor supply, or by opening more lands for production); new investments in other forms of economic activity (other crops or manufactures); or an increased consumption of consumer goods (that is, buy more luxuries). So long as the comparative advantage of continued staple production remains high, either the first or the third options for re-investment seem the more likely. Only as the comparative advantage of the staple crop is perceived to be dropping will the tendency to re-invest in the second option become a reality.

The Models and the Chesapeake

Application of these ideas to the tobacco economy of the Chesapeake is relatively easy. When the tobacco price increased, or remained steady, as it had near the beginning

of the eighteenth century, more slaves were imported, more lands were opened for settlement, and more luxuries were purchased from England. As the tobacco prices shifted downward, other farm products were given more serious consideration. The problem for most tobacco planters, however, was that the return from their tobacco sales was never great enough to cause capital accumulation on a scale which made all of the options for re-investment equally available. Instead, as the planters tended to fall farther into debt to their British sources of credit, they had to channel what resources they had into increased inputs of labor and land merely to produce a return great enough for them to break even. The real profits from this economic equation were siphoned off by the British merchants who supplied the credit and the marketing services. They were the men of talent and ambition whom Joseph Schumpeter and his disciples in economic history would have credited as having provided the entrepreneurial component in the production function.²¹ Jacob Price has offered the case of the Glasgow merchants as a prime example of entrepreneurialism in the revitalization of the tobacco trade which took place during the middle years of the eighteenth century.²²

In spite of this gloomy prospect of the tobacco economy, which was indeed held by many Chesapeake planters during the eighteenth century, the outlook for Virginia's economy was not hopeless. From the evidence presented in the following chapters, it is clear that tobacco never dominated the economy as completely as has been suggested. Merchant

capital, as well as planter capital, did find its way into diversified agricultural productions, and even into a limited amount of manufacturing. Moreover, in the process of diversifying their activities, some planters found themselves becoming more like merchants, at the same time that some merchants became as least quasi-planters. While the resulting shifts in production and marketing activities caused economic dislocations, and even depressions for some Virginians, the overall trend was towards greater prosperity for all.

The model for the tobacco economy as given above is, therefore, too simplistic an explanation of the development of Virginia's colonial economy, and it needs further modifications. First, the evidence presented in Chapter 2 shows that while the availability of agricultural lands generally kept pace with the increases in the size of Virginia's laboring population, the produce of tobacco did not. Second, in spite of the long accepted view that the British imperial system discouraged diversification in the colonial economy, the documents discussed in Chapter 4 give no hint that Virginians who produced staples other than tobacco suffered any official consequences. To the contrary, the analysis of the Naval Lists given in Chapter 5 shows a steady, albeit uneven, trend in Virginia's exports away from tobacco and towards food crops and lumber products. In terms of the North and Davis model, the inputs of land, labor, resources and capital all expanded and all contributed to an overall increase in Virginia's output.

More than mere economic expansion, however, the evidence suggests a per-capita growth in Virginia's economic output as well. The changes in colonial marketing practices outlined in Chapter 6 which paralleled the export diversification show that a change occurred in the production function as well. The explanation offered in Chapter 7 is that the "Americanization" of the merchant class --its increasing amalgamation into the political and social life of Virginia-- facilitated this crucial economic transformation. Although the process was hardly begun in 1775, and Virginia's economy remained fragile and unbalanced, the efforts of its emerging commercial class contributed to the ultimate success of the American Revolution.

NOTES

CHAPTER 1

¹For an excellent summary of the economic and political thought of the Revolutionary generation as well as that of a number of its modern commentators, see Drew R. McCoy, "Benjamin Franklin's Vision of a Republican Political Economy for America," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd. ser., XXXV (1978), 605-628. See also Kenneth A. Lockridge, "Social Change and the Meaning of the American Revolution," Journal of Social History, VII(1973), 403-439, for a general statement of the social malaise prevalent in the colonies before the Revolution.

²Henry W. Broude, "The Significance of Regional Studies for the Elaboration of National Economic History," Journal of Economic History, XX(1960), 588-596; especially 591-594.

³Melvin Herndon, Tobacco in Colonial Virginia, "The Sovereign Remedy", (Williamsburg, Va., 1957), 6. Jacob M. Price, "The Economic Growth of the Chesapeake and the European Market, 1697-1775," J Econ Hist, XXIV(1964), 496.

⁴Price, "Economic Growth," 497. John M. Hemphill II, "Virginia and the English Commercial System, 1689-1733," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton, 1964, chap. 4.

⁵Price, "Economic Growth," passim. Marc Egnal, "The Economic Development of the Thirteen American Colonies, 1720-1775," WMQ, 3rd. ser., XXXII(1975), 191. David Klingaman, "The Significance of Grain in the Development of the Tobacco Colonies," J Econ Hist, XXIX(1969), 269.

⁶Carville Earle, The Evolution of a Tidewater Settlement System: All Hallows Parish, Maryland, 1650-1783, (Chicago, 1975), chap. 2. Paul G.E. Clemens, "The Operation of an Eighteenth Century Tobacco Plantation," Agricultural History, XLIX(1975), 525. Gloria L. Main, "Maryland and the Chesapeake Economy, 1670-1720," in Law, Society and Politics in Early Maryland, ed. by Aubrey C. Land, Lois Green Carr and Edward C. Papenfuse, (Baltimore, 1976), 148.

⁷Ms Naval Office Shipping Lists, Virginia, 1698-1769, with continuations to 1774, microfilmed by Micro Methods, Ltd., London from: Great Britain Public Record Office, C.O. 5/1441-1450 (covering the years 1698-1769 with a hiatus between 1706 and 1725) and T. 1/480-510 (Treasury Papers: In Letters) for the years 1769-1774.

⁸See Walter E. Minchinton's "Introduction" to the microfilm edition of the Ms lists.

⁹ See for example Executive Journals of the Council of Virginia, ed. H.R. McIlwaine and W.L. Hall, 5 vols., (Richmond, 1925-1945), II, 362. Hereafter cited as EJC.

¹⁰ For example C.O. 5/1441 begins with the first quarter clearances for the Upper James River District in 1700. This is followed by a summary listing for Upper James and one for the Rappahannock River District in 1700. These in turn are followed by four lists from the York River District, four from the Rappahannock, three from the Lower District of the Potomac River, and one from the Accomack District (Eastern Shore). Not until folio 19 do entries from 1699 begin to appear; and not until folio 51 do the 1698 entries from the York River District appear. Rappahannock lists are located at folios 4, 12-16, and then not until folio 64.

¹¹ Compare for example C.O. 5/1441 folio 15 with folio 16 or folio 62 with folio 70.

¹² See for example Lawrence Harper, The English Navigation Laws, 259 n.88. Arthur P. Middleton, Tobacco Coast: A Maritime History of Chesapeake Bay in the Colonial Era, (Newport News, Va., 1953), the basic maritime study of the Chesapeake, makes no use of the Naval Office Lists.

¹³ This calculation is based upon a sample of 2,790 entries from all of the Virginia districts.

¹⁴ In the sample used in the pilot study for this research approximately 15% of the duplicates were found on adjacent pages.

¹⁵ Charles M. Andrews, The Colonial Period of American History, (New Haven, 1934-1938, rpt. 1964), IV, 197. Harper, English Navigation Laws, 259. Oliver M. Dickerson, The Navigation Acts and the American Revolution, (Philadelphia, 1951, rpt. 1974), 208, 211-221. Percy Flippin, Royal Government in Virginia, 1624-1775, (New York, 1918, rpt. 1966), 255.

¹⁶ Richard D. Brown, Modernization: The Transformation of American Life, 1600-1865, (New York, 1976), 6-22, 49-73.

¹⁷ Ibid., 12-13

¹⁸ Lance E. Davis and Douglass C. North, Institutional Change and American Economic Growth, (Cambridge, Ma, 1971), 13.

¹⁹ Melville H. Watkins, "A Staple Theory of Economic Growth," Canadian Journal of Economic and Political Science, XXIX(1963), 141-158.

²⁰ R.E. Baldwin, "Pattern of Development in Newly Settled Regions," Manchester School of Economic and Social Studies, XXIV(1956), 161-179.

²¹Joseph A. Schumpeter, "Economic Theory and Entrepreneurial History," reprinted in Hugh G. J. Aitken, ed., Exploration in Enterprise, (Cambridge, Ma, 1965), 45-64. Arthur H. Cole, "An Approach to the Study of Entrepreneurship," reprinted in Ibid., 23-29. Arthur H. Cole, Business Enterprise in Its Social Setting, (Cambridge, Ma, 1959), 1-97.

²²Jacob M. Price, "The Rise of Glasgow in the Chesapeake Tobacco Trade, 1707-1775," WMQ, 3rd. ser., XI(1954), 179-199. For additional comments by Price on this topic see his France and the Chesapeake, (Ann Arbor, Mi, 1973), 604-617.

CHAPTER 2

Geographic Expansion and Population Growth During the Eighteenth Century

From the moment the first tree was felled by the Englishmen who settled at Jamestown in the spring of 1607, expansion was a fact of life for all Virginians. During the seventeenth century population growth was neither continuous nor without setbacks such as those caused by the Indian uprisings of 1622, 1644 and 1676. Nevertheless, the four corporations founded in 1617 had evolved into twenty-four counties by 1701, and the population had grown from a few hundred to almost 60,000.¹ During the eighteenth century both processes continued at an ever increasing rate. American statesmen of no less reputation than Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson argued at the time of the American Revolution that the seemingly limitless supply of land on the American continent would create permanent prosperity for a virtuous yeoman farmer populace whose economic roots could remain firmly planted in rich agricultural soil. Jefferson, at least, pointed to the experience of Virginia's planters and farmers for examples of what this new American lifestyle might be.² The actual experience of geographic and population expansion, as the Virginians had undergone it in the seventy-five years preceding the Revolution, was somewhat different however. Instead of improving agricultural opportunities in the planting and harvesting of their staple

crop, tobacco, most Virginians found increasing restrictions upon the amount and quality of land available to them. The comparative economic advantage which tobacco had afforded them in 1700 was fast slipping away.

Geographical Definition of the Region

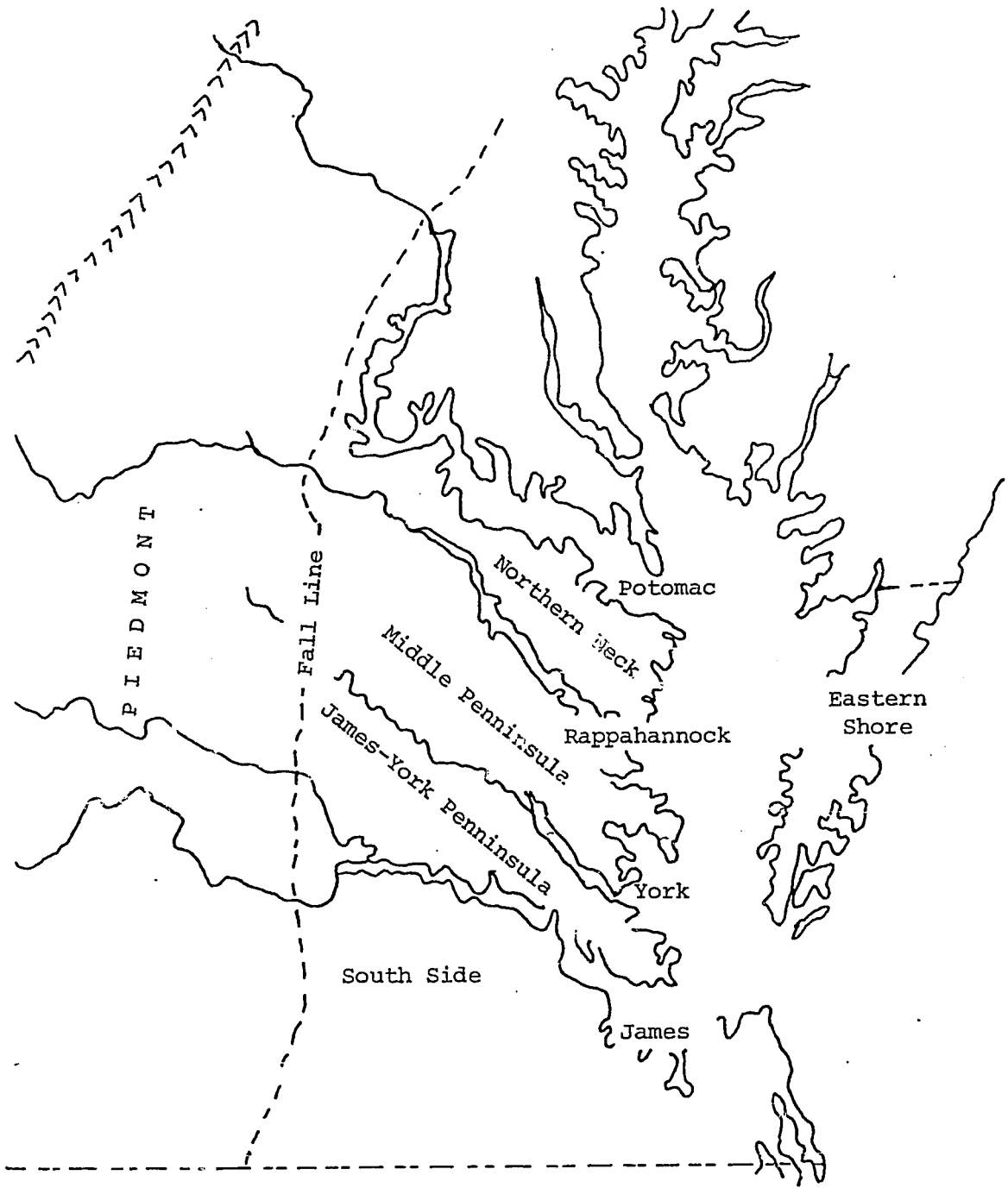
Before examining in detail the implications of Virginia's expansion, it is necessary to consider the geographer's view of regions and sub-regions. Henry Broude, the proponent of the regional approach to economic analysis outlined in Chapter 1, stressed the need for homogeneity in any definition of what constitutes a region. Roger Minshull's extensive study of regional definitions suggests that this is the only quality of regionality upon which geographers are likely to agree.³ For the present work, let it be understood that a region is an area which can be defined by common characteristics (climate, terrain or economy, for example) and at the same time can be easily delimited from its immediate surroundings. In practice this means that a region has some physical feature such as a river valley or a plain which provides a center of focus for the activities of its inhabitants. A region should also be bounded by mountains, desert or a body of water sufficiently wide to make travel beyond the demarcating feature impossible without the traveler's awareness that he is leaving the region. A sub-region would be that part of the region which, while sharing in the general focus of the region and lying within its boundaries, is nevertheless marked off by geography or by economic endeavor (perhaps mining as opposed to farming) which makes it

distinct from the larger region.

In the case of Virginia, Chesapeake Bay clearly is the center of focus during the colonial period. It is also obvious that Maryland is part of the larger Chesapeake Bay region of which Virginia is more properly a sub-region. While this is true, Maryland has been arbitrarily removed from further consideration in this study (except by implication) for reasons of time and quantity of the materials involved. In strictly geographical terms at least a portion of northern North Carolina ought to be considered a part of the Chesapeake Bay region as well. Certainly many colonials believed that it was a natural part of Virginia that had been excluded from the ancient and proper bounds of the colony for purely political reasons. The continued struggle over the problem of Carolinian attempts to market their tobacco through Virginia adds evidence to this notion. Nevertheless, North Carolina has been excluded from the defined region for the same reasons that apply to Maryland.

Having established that the region in question is only that part of the Chesapeake Bay watershed encompassed by Virginia, it remains to define the sub-regions. Two possible schemes of classification are available: the river valleys, or the peninsulas. Reference to Map 2.1 will clarify the discussion and definitions which follow.

The Virginians first viewed the great rivers as means of communication which properly formed the centers of their counties. This quickly proved impractical to those forced to cross wide and wind-swept stretches of water in all

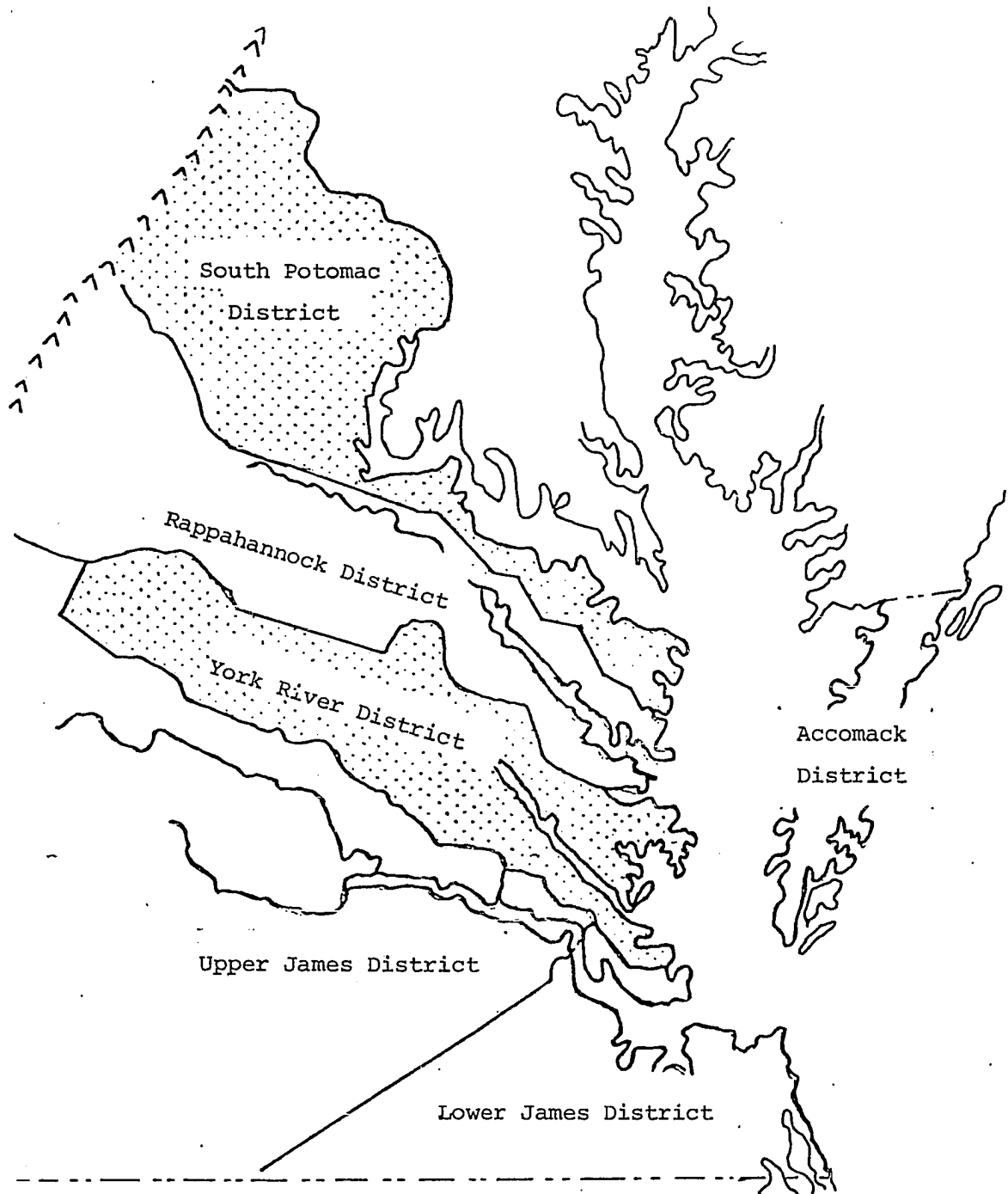


Source: Geographic data: U.S. Geological Survey; Base map: Richard L. Morton, Colonial Virginia, (Chapel Hill, 1960), 450.

MAP 2.1 Virginia Penninsulas and Rivers

seasons to reach courts and churches. In actuality the rivers were more boundaries than highways. As soon as sufficient population permitted, New Norfolk County was formed from the portion of Elizabeth City County south of the James. Similarly, Gloucester County was broken off from York County on the York River, and Middlesex County was separated from Lancaster County on the Rappahannock.⁴ As land travel improved and settlement progressed inward from the water's edge, the Peninsulas became, from one standpoint, the foci of Virginia's sub-regions. Escheators, the agents responsible for the retrieval of lands which reverted to the Crown when the grantee died intestate and without heirs, were appointed for each of the peninsulas rather than for the river valleys.⁵ Recently Darrett and Anita Rutman have demonstrated that by the end of the seventeenth century there existed a definite pattern in which the ratio between the tithes or taxables and the total population of a given county correlated with the peninsula on which the county was located.⁶

But from the point of view of the water-borne trade, the rivers remained the foci of the sub-regions. By 1700 these were designated by the Commissioners of the Customs as the six Naval Districts into which Virginia was divided. Since the Naval Office Lists form the primary record source for the trade statistics to be presented in the following chapters, the Naval Districts have been chosen as the sub-regions for all purposes of analysis. They can be defined with reference to Map 2.2 as they were described by Robert



Source: Geographical data, U.S. Geological Survey, Base map: Richard L. Morton, Colonial Virginia (Chapel Hill, 1960), 450; Naval Districts: Robert Beverley, The History and Present State of Virginia, ed. by Louis B. Wright, (Chapel Hill, 1947, rpt. 1968, [orig. publ. London, 1705]).

MAP 2.2 Virginia Naval Districts

Beverley in 1702.⁷ The Upper James River District was all that portion of the James River basin above Hog Island which lies approximately at the boundary of Isle of Wight and Surry Counties on the south side of the river. On the north shore the dividing point was the boundary of Warwick and James City Counties. The Lower James River District was all that portion of the James River basin below Hog Island, including Lynnhaven Bay and around the Capes of Virginia to Curituck Inlet on the border with North Carolina. Curituck was considered another port and maintained its own Naval Office in North Carolina. The northern boundary of the Lower James was Back River, the line between Elizabeth City and York Counties. The York District included all of York River, Mobjack Bay and Piankatank River. The Rappahannock District included Rappahannock River while the South Potomac District encompassed all of the Virginian shore of the Potomac. The exact division between the Rappahannock and South Potomac Districts was often in dispute, but it appears to have been settled for the most part at the boundary between Lancaster and Northumberland Counties. During the seventeenth century, the South Potomac District was divided into an upper and lower portion at Weocomico Creek, but it had become unified into a single district by 1710. The Eastern Shore, which Beverley erroneously identified as the Pokomoke District (actually a Maryland district), encompassed Accomack and Northampton Counties and was generally known as Accomack District.⁸

Table 2.1 lists the six districts and all the counties

TABLE 2.1

Constituent Counties of the Virginia Naval Districts

<u>Upper James River District^{a)}</u>		<u>Rappahannock River District</u>	
<u>County</u>	<u>Parent County^{b)}</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Parent County^{b)}</u>
Tidewater Counties:		Tidewater Counties:	
James City		Middlesex	
Charles City		Essex	
Henrico		Caroline	1728 Essex
Surry		Spotsylvania	1721 Essex
Prince George	1703 Charles City	Piedmont Counties:	
Chesterfield	1749 Henrico	Orange	1734 Spotsylvania
Piedmont Counties:		<u>Rappahannock-Northern Neck Proprietary^{f)}</u>	
Goochland ^{c)}	1728 Henrico	Tidewater Counties:	
Albermarle	1744 Goochland	Lancaster	
Amherst	1761 Albermarle	Richmond	
Cumberland ^{d)}	1749 Goochland	King George	1721 Richmond
Buckingham	1761 Albermarle	Piedmont Counties:	
Brunswick ^{e)}	1732 Prince George	Culpeper	1749 Orange
Amelia	1737 Prince George	Fauquier	1759 Prince William
Lunenburg	1746 Brunswick	<u>South Potomac District - Northern Neck Proprietary^{f)}</u>	
Dinwiddie	1752 Prince George	Tidewater Counties:	
Halifax	1752 Lunenburg	Northumberland	
Bedford	1754 Lunenburg	Westmoreland	
Sussex	1754 Surry	Stafford	
Prince Edward	1754 Amelia	Prince William	1731 Stafford
Charlotte	1765 Lunenburg	Fairfax	1742 Prince William
Mecklenburg	1765 Lunenburg	Piedmont Counties:	
Pittsylvania	1767 Halifax	Loudoun	1757 Fairfax
<u>Lower James River District</u>		<u>Valley of Virginia & Mountains-Royal</u>	
Tidewater Counties:		Augusta	1745 Orange
Elizabeth City		Botetourt	1770 Augusta
Warwick		Fincastle	1772 Botetourt { no }
Princess Anne		Dunmore	1772 Frederick { data }
Norfolk		<u>Valley of Virginia & Mountains-Proprietary^{f)}</u>	
Nansemond		Frederick	1743 Orange
Isle of Wight		Hampshire	1754 Augusta
Back Country:		Berkeley (W.Va.)	1772 Frederick
Southampton	1749 Isle of Wight	<u>Accomack District (Eastern Shore)</u>	
<u>York River District</u>		Accomack	
Tidewater Counties:		Northampton	
Gloucester			
King and Queen			
King William	1702 King and Queen		
York			
New Kent			
Hanover	1721 New Kent		
Piedmont Counties:			
Louisa	1742 Hanover		

- Notes: a) For a definition of the Naval Districts see p.24 and text note 7.
b) If the county was organized after 1700, this denotes the year formed and the county from which it was formed.
c) Goochland-Amherst counties north of James River.
d) Cumberland and Buckingham counties between the James and Appomattox Rivers.
e) Brunswick-Pittsylvania counties south of the James River.
f) All lands between the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers (the Northern Neck) and all lands north of a line drawn from the mouth of the Rapidan River to the headwaters of the Potomac were granted to the Culpeper family in 1680. See p. 31 and text note 16. For customs purposes, however, they were considered parts of the Rappahannock or South Potomac Districts. The Valley and Mountain counties were not, strictly speaking, part of any Naval District since they did not have direct access to shipping.

Source: Martha W. Hiden, How Justice Grew, Virginia Counties: An Abstract of Their Formation, (Williamsburg, 1957), 83-87.

which have been assigned to each, along with the dates of establishment of those counties formed during the eighteenth century and their parent counties. Because the Naval Districts followed the river valleys and were presumed to divide approximately along the watershed lines between the rivers, they did not always coincide with the lines of the counties. Classification of the counties has therefore been arbitrary and in most cases based upon the district in which the largest portion of the county lay. Caroline County, for example, has been assigned to the Rappahannock District since most of its trade centered there in spite of the fact that it stretched across the Mattaponi Branch of York River and bordered on the Pamunkey Branch.

In a similar vein, the fall line counties span the rough natural boundary dividing the Tidewater and the Piedmont. Chesterfield, Henrico, Hanover, King William, Caroline and Spotsylvania Counties all have been defined as Tidewater even though sizable portions of their acreage and population lived above tidewater. During the process of county evolution certain parent counties straddled rivers and they have been classified according to the location of the remaining parent. Charles City County, for example, retained what is now Prince George County until 1703, but its 1701 designation in the material which follows considers all of the county as lying on the north side of the James River. The same is true of Henrico and Goochland Counties.

The Documents of Expansion

Eighteenth century Virginians, like most of their

contemporaries in the Colonies, in England and throughout Europe, were suspicious of list makers and record keepers. Enumerations of population and land were inevitably linked with taxes. Exact figures of lands claimed and utilized and of population growth and distribution simply do not exist. From the records which were kept and have survived, however, estimates can be constructed with a fair degree of completeness. With respect to Virginia land and population these records are of two types: quit rent returns and tithe lists.

From the fall of the Virginia Company in 1624 all lands in the colony were held in tenure from the King. As part of his feudal dues the monarch claimed a quit rent of two shillings annually for every hundred acres granted to a private individual. With the payment of this rent, the grantee had the use of his land free from further dues or services to the King.⁹ In practice, if not in precise fact, land in Virginia was held either in fee simple or fee tail. In the first instance it could be rented, traded, bequeathed, or sold at the grantee's wish so long as he or his assignees continued to pay the annual quit rent. In the second case, the land was entailed according to the terms of the original grantee and could be alienated or sold only in accordance with the restrictions he had imposed. Entailments could be, and often were, broken by legislative act of the Virginia assembly.¹⁰

The first attempt to collect the quit rents was made in 1639 when Jerome Hawley arrived in the colony to be the Secretary of State for Virginia. He brought specific orders

from the Privy Council with regard to collections. But since the instructions to Governor Sir William Berkeley in 1662 again stressed the need to collect all rents without exception, it is doubtful that Hawley succeeded in his earlier efforts. The first records of returns of quit rent collections are found in the accounts of Thomas Stegg, Virginia's Auditor from 1663 until 1670.¹¹ From then until 1704 a controversy continued between the Virginia Assembly and the Crown as to who was to supervise the collection and allocation of the money collected. Charges and counter charges made by many parties suggest that at best the quit rents collected represented a minimal measure of the lands actually claimed and patented in the colony.¹²

The first and perhaps only comprehensive rent roll of all the lands held in the counties was prepared in the fall of 1704 and sent to England in spring of 1705.¹³ Complaints about inaccuracies and uncertainties in the collection of these revenues continued until 1720. After that date the collection process took on a more regularized form, and if the returns are not representative of all the lands patented in the colony, they offer a fair statement as to the relative amount of land which was actually being utilized for planting and grazing at any point during the eighteenth century.¹⁴ More important for this study is the changing pattern in land holding which the returns document over the course of the century.

The actual returns of the collections as made up by the Receiver-General of Virginia's royal revenues and pre-

served by the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations in England give three basic pieces of information.¹⁵ First, they report the number of acres in each county for which the quit rents were paid. Second, they give the method of payment, either money or tobacco. And third, they report the number of acres, by county, for which arrears in payments from previous years were paid. Thus, while in any given year a county's return was likely to fall short of anything near its real patented acreage, examination of returns for a number of years allows one to compute a composite figure reflective of something near the actual acreage. As a side benefit, one also quickly senses patterns and volume in the lack of present payments and subsequent back payments which offer a rough index to the success or failure of the tobacco crops in various parts of the colony over the years.

One major limitation of the use of the quit rent returns must be stressed at the outset. Because the rights to the soil in the Northern Neck --that portion of Virginia between the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers-- were granted to the Fairfax family in the form of a proprietorship, no royal quit rents were paid in the counties in that area.¹⁶ Without these rents, there is no easy estimate of the progress of land disbursement north of the Rappahannock. The South Potomac District and the northern half of the Rappahannock District can, therefore, be described only in terms of population growth.

With the exception of an enumeration made by Governor Francis Nicholson in 1699, no attempt was made to prepare a

comprehensive census of Virginia's population prior to the state census of 1783-1785.¹⁷ But since Virginia's primary revenue source at the colony-wide level was a rate assessed upon tithables, or taxable persons, some attempt at determining population growth can be made from tithable lists. Tithables were defined variously during the seventeenth century, but by 1700 a common definition had been agreed upon. White males over the age of fifteen and all blacks over the age of fifteen were classed as taxable.¹⁸ Given that this definition would fit most members of the laboring class who were responsible for Virginia's agricultural output, it is actually a better measure of productivity than total population in the long run. Further, while not all white males were actually active in labor which contributed to the economy, and some such as ministers, councillors, and the indigent were exempted altogether, a certain number of whites and blacks who were younger than sixteen were active in the fields. In practice these two groups should tend to cancel each other out. Undoubtedly the number of tithes, as reported to the colonial government, was lower than the actual number of people who were legally tithable, but as with the case of land, a minimum is acceptable if it is the trend in growth and distribution of the labor force which is to be considered.

The Particular Documents

Although some tithe lists survive from virtually every county for at least one year, they are complete for all the counties in only a few years. Six of these "complete" years

--1701, 1714, 1728, 1749, 1755 and 1773-- have been chosen for detailed analysis for three reasons. First, reasonable estimates of land utilization for each year can be calculated from the extant quit rent lists. Second, they can be related to substantially complete returns of the Naval Office Lists --the documents from which the export statistics are drawn-- for the same years. Third, each of the years in question marks a change in the pattern of geographic expansion.

The data for 1701 was actually drawn from the Civil List for 1702.¹⁹ This document, which also contains a complete listing of the colony-wide and county level officers, was prepared in July of 1702 and therefore represents the number of tithables and acres actually taxed in 1701. Tithe lists were prepared in the fall of each, so clearly this data was from 1701. Similarly, the quit rents were collected in April for each year based upon the acreage held during the preceding twelve months. Although the 1701 list of tithables does include 805 eligible persons in King William County, they have not been included in the calculations because no quit rent acreage is listed for the county that year.²⁰

The year 1714 falls in the middle of the twenty year hiatus in the Naval Lists (1705-1725), which unfortunately makes impossible any detailed analysis of the economy at that time. The year does, however, fall toward the end of Virginia's confinement to the Tidewater region, and for that reason has been included in the analysis of geographic ex-

pansion. As with the case of 1701, the data concerning the number of tithables and the number of acres reported for the payment of the quit rent were drawn from a Civil List --this time the List of 1714.²¹ While it is not precisely dated, comparison of the quit rents it reports with the actual quit rent list of 1714-1715 shows that this Civil List must actually have been prepared sometime after April 25, 1715 when the quit rent revenues were reported by the Receiver-General of Virginia. It was not forwarded to England until January 1716.²²

While 1725 is the first year after the hiatus in the Naval Lists for which those returns plus tithe lists and quit rent returns survive, 1728 has been chosen as the next year for analysis because that year marks the beginning of the expansion into the Piedmont. The data for 1728 was drawn from the Civil List of 1729. Comparison of the quit rent acreage found therein with that reported in the quit rent returns for 1728-1729 shows them to be identical.²³

The years 1749 and 1755 are the next years after 1728 for which county-by-county tithe lists are available. Quit rents could be compiled for both years, although those for 1755 must be adjusted against surrounding years to offset the near crippling effects of a drought experienced in Hanover, King William, and parts of Caroline Counties that year. Quit rent collections fell to almost nothing in these counties in 1755, and were only made up at the end of the Seven Years' War.²⁴

From the standpoint of the documents, 1773 might be

termed the closing year of Virginia's colonial existence, for this is the last year for which tithe lists and quit rent returns survive. As was the case with the quit rents of 1755, those returns for 1773 cannot be used as they were reported. Much of the colony was in the throes of a depression which resulted from the British credit crisis of 1772. The citizens of many counties made no payment at all, and those who did paid their dues for approximately 27% of the land which was subject to quit rents. To compensate for this the data from 1773 has been adjusted to reflect the greatest acreage reported in each county during the years 1769-1773. Due to the tentative nature of these figures, the evidence for 1773 will be analysed separately.²⁵

Eighteenth Century Expansion

Given the biases of the records in general, and the limitations of the evidence found in the particular documents, it is still possible to show that Virginia's expansion during the eighteenth century, as measured in terms of land claimed and laborers (tithables) reported, occurred in a pattern that had far-reaching effects on the course of the colony's economic development. Francis Nicholson estimated the whole population of Virginia to be 57,596 in 1701. In 1756 Governor Robert Dinwiddie put the figure at 293,472.²⁶ This suggests a growth in population at a rate of 3.1% per year.²⁷ In 1770 John Henry's map of Virginia was published with marginal notes descriptive of the colony, including a population estimate of 447,008. Using this 1770 figure, an average growth rate of 3% per year can be calculated for the

eighteenth century.²⁸ Population estimates drawn from Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1957 produce rates of growth of 2.9% and 3.0% per year for Virginia during the same periods. Also from Historical Statistics, estimates of the population of the colonies as a whole suggests growth rates of 3.1% for each period.²⁹ Even using the lower Virginian rates determined from Historical Statistics, the colony's growth was substantial and comparable to that of the colonies as a whole.

By substituting tithables for total population, the evidence changes from that of "best guesses" to concrete tabulations. In 1701 there were 24,291 tithables in the whole of Virginia. By 1755 this number had increased to 103,404 with the resulting calculation of a 2.7% annual growth rate. In 1773 there were in the whole of the colony 155,278 tithables which computes to a growth rate of 2.6% per year for the longer period. If one removes the tithable population of the Northern Neck --that area owned by the Fairfax family and for which there are no land records-- the growth rates remain 2.7% per year between 1701 and 1755 and 2.6% per year between 1701 and 1773.³⁰ Over the longer periods of the century the Northern Neck gained tithables at the same rate as the whole of the colony, although this was not so for some of the intermediate periods. The increase in tithables is summarized in Table 2.2. In this table and all of those which follow within the chapter, the unit of categorization is understood to be the Naval Districts as defined above (see p. 24 and Map 2.2) with the exception of

TABLE 2.2

Tithables by Naval District

Naval District ^a	1701	1714	1728	1749	1755	1773
Upper James	4,120	5,783	9,076	22,570	30,374	57,184
Lower James	4,309	5,499	7,767	11,034	12,272	16,705
York	6,899	9,091	13,961	17,839	19,704	21,332
Rappahannock (South Side)	1,848	2,579	4,802	12,022	11,682	13,442
Eastern Shore	1,734	1,886	2,507	3,883	4,152	5,660
Mountains				1,423	2,313	4,806
SUBTOTAL	18,910	24,838	38,113	69,000	80,497	119,129
Northern Neck ^b	5,381	6,702	10,135	16,966	22,907	36,149
ALL VIRGINIA	24,291	31,540	48,248	85,966	103,404	155,278

Source: Civil Lists of 1702, 1714, and 1729: see text, notes 19, 21 and 23; 1749: C.O. 5/1327, 174; 1755: see text, note 26; 1773: see text, note 28.

^aFor definition of Naval Districts see text, p. 24.

^bCounties north of the Rappahannock River in Rappahannock and South Potomac Naval Districts were not part of the Royal Domain and are listed separately.

the Northern Neck which is meant to include both the counties of the South Potomac Naval District as well as those in the Rappahannock District located on the north side of the river. The category Mountains, found in Table 2.2, is also used to encompass Augusta and Botetourt Counties which lie to the west of the Blue Ridge Mountains and were not, practically speaking, part of any naval district.

In terms of land, as summarized in Table 2.3, the expansion of Virginia during the first half of the century was also remarkable. From 2,129,550 acres recorded for quit rents in 1701 the colony grew to 6,902,146 acres recorded in 1755 --a net expansion of 224.1%³¹ Broken apart into shorter periods, the phenomenon becomes more astonishing. Between 1701 and 1728 virtually all expansion was confined to the Tidewater region. The expansion in acreage was a more modest 58.9%. So long as only the Tidewater was being filled, expansion would remain small. Between 1728 and 1749 the first wave of expansion into the Piedmont occurred, and acres reported for quit rents increased by 90.3%. By 1755, only six years later, another 72.4% jump in the number of acres reported took place.

At first glance, the tripling of Virginia's acreage reported for quit rents would seem to imply a tremendous opportunity for the average laborer. But, in fact, this was not necessarily so. The overall growth rate in lands recorded for quit rents was only 2.2% per year between 1701 and 1755. Given that the tithable population, and by inference the laboring force, grew at a rate of 2.7% per year,

TABLE 2.3

Quit Rent Acreage by Naval Districts, 1701-1755

Naval District ^a	1701	1714	1728	1749	1755
Upper James	527,342	637,025	903,534 ^b	2,746,165	3,150,347
Lower James	537,587	612,628	662,247	772,804	822,859
York	588,111	733,086	905,484	1,251,498	1,254,816
Rappahannock (South Side)	173,550	261,616	475,966	961,065	956,244
Eastern Shore	302,960	343,302	330,919	339,440	337,813
Mountains				365,411	379,567
ALL VIRGINIA	<u>2,129,550</u>	<u>2,558,377</u>	<u>3,383,085</u>	<u>6,436,383</u>	<u>6,902,146</u>

Source: See text notes 19, 21, 23 and 24.

^aFor definition of Naval Districts see text, p.24.

^bGoochland and Brunswick Counties with 104,935 acres are not included because no tithables were given.

less land was actually available per laborer by mid-century than at its beginning. The land to labor ratio (the acres per tithable) was 112.62 for the whole of Virginia in 1701. By 1728 this had dropped to 88.76 acres. The net loss was 21.2% in the amount of land available per laborer with the decrease occurring at a rate of .9% per year.

The opening of the Piedmont brought little relief. By 1749 the average acreage recorded per tithable had increased to 91.19, but the gain was only 2.7%. In spite of continued expansion to 1755, population growth brought another drop in acreage available per laborer --this time to 82.58 acra-- for an overall loss of 26.7% since 1701.

Expansion and Sub-regional Concentration of Population

Taking the aggregate figures for all of Virginia and breaking them down by Naval Districts and then by Tidewater and Piedmont suggests that conditions were not equal throughout the colony. In general, however, the trend was the same for all sections over the course of the first half of the eighteenth century. Reference to Tables 2.4, 2.5, and 2.6 will help to clarify this.

From Table 2.4 it can be noted that the Eastern Shore Counties had by far the largest land to labor ratio for agriculture. Given that this sub-region also recorded the fewest tithables, this is no surprise. In a sense this sub-region was still part of the frontier. While the tithable population grew slowly but steadily, the amount of land in these two counties was finite. By 1728 the land-laborer ratio had fallen by 24.5% (Table 2.6), which was approximately the same

TABLE 2.4

Acres Per Tithable (Land-Laborer Ratio) by Naval District

Naval District ^a	1701	1714	1728	1749	1755
Upper James	128.0	110.2	99.6	120.7	103.7
Lower James	124.8	111.4	85.3	70.0	67.0
York	85.3	80.6	64.9	70.0	63.7
Rappahannock (South Side)	93.9	101.4	69.8	79.9	81.9
Eastern Shore	174.7	182.0	132.0	87.4	81.4
Mountains ^b				256.8	164.1
ALL VIRGINIA	112.6	103.0	88.8	91.2	82.6

Source: Tables 2.3 and 2.2. The values in Table 2.3 are divided by those in Table 2.2. N.B. The tithables of the Northern Neck were excluded from the ALL VIRGINIA calculation.

^aFor definition of the Naval Districts see text, p.24.

^bThe area west of the Blue Ridge Mountains was not specifically part of any Naval District.

TABLE 2.5

Acres Per Tithable (Land-Laborer Ratio) by Area

Area ^a	1701	1714	1728	1749	1755
Tidewater:					
Upper James	128.0	110.2	99.6	71.3	82.0
Lower James	124.8	111.4	85.3	53.2	60.6
York	85.3	80.6	64.9	57.3	53.5
Rappahannock (South Side)	93.9	101.4	69.8	79.5	73.5
Eastern Shore	174.7	182.0	132.0	87.4	81.4
ALL TIDEWATER	112.6	103.0	82.3	65.9	66.5
Piedmont:					
Upper James				181.9	114.6
York				206.6	148.9
Rappahannock (South Side)				81.4	132.8
ALL PIEDMONT				165.7	118.8
Other Areas:					
Lower James (Southampton Co.)					92.3
Mountains				256.8	164.1
ALL OTHER AREAS				256.8	134.3
ALL VIRGINIA	112.8	103.0	88.8	91.2	82.6

Source: Table 2.4. Data in Table 2.4 was divided by tithables grouped by area classes. See text notes 19, 21, 23 and 24.

^a"Area" is here used to distinguish the Tidewater from the Piedmont portions of the Naval Districts as defined in the text (p. 24). Southampton County in the Lower James Naval District without direct access to the Tidewater is listed separately. Similarly, the mountain counties and those in the Valley of Virginia which were not part of any specific Naval District are listed separately.

TABLE 2.6
 Percent Change in Acres Per Tithable (Land-Laborer Ratio)
 by Naval District

Naval District ^a	1701-1728	1728-1749	1749-1755	1701-1755
Upper James	-22.2	+21.3	-14.1	-19.0
Lower James	-31.7	-17.8	- 4.3	-46.3
York	-24.0	+ 7.9	- 9.0	-25.3
Rappahannock (South Side)	-25.7	+14.6	+ 2.4	-12.8
Eastern Shore	-24.5	-33.8	- 7.0	-53.4
Mountains ^b			-36.1	
ALL VIRGINIA	-21.2	+ 2.7	- 9.4	-26.6

Source: Table 2.5. For method of calculation see text, note 31.

^aFor definition of the Naval Districts see text, p. 24.

^bThe counties west of the Blue Ridge Mountains were not part of any specific Naval District and are listed separately.

decrease noted in the other districts. However, during the years between 1728 and 1749, when the districts of the western shore were beginning to expand into the Piedmont, the population of the Eastern Shore had nowhere to go and it became concentrated more quickly. By 1755 the land-laborer ratio had dropped to slightly less than the colony-wide average and the district experienced a rate of decline of 1.4% per year --almost twice that of the colony as a whole.

In the four districts of the western shore the experience was more uniform. The district with the greatest access to the frontier --the Upper James River-- consistently displayed the greatest acreage available per tithable laborer. With the exception of the period 1701-1714 this was true whether the Upper James is considered as a whole (Table 2.7) or divided into its Tidewater, Piedmont and mountain constituents (Table 2.5). The slight edge held by the Lower James District in 1714 undoubtedly stems from the larger areas available for development in the inland portions of its all-Tidewater counties. In each of the James River Districts in 1714 the largest ratios of land to laborer are found in those counties on the south shore of the river and in Henrico County, which stretched across the river.

What is more striking about the four western shore districts is that, like the Eastern Shore, they all declined between 24% and 33% in acres per tithable between 1701 and 1728. The Lower James River District, with no access to the Piedmont, suffered the greatest decline while the Upper James River District, with the greatest access, suffered the

TABLE 2.7

Quit Rent Acreage by Area - Tidewater and Piedmont

Area ^a	1701	1714	1728	1749	1755
Tidewater:					
Upper James	527,342	637,025	903,534	897,572	826,961
Lower James	537,587	612,628	662,247	587,446	622,126
York	588,111	733,086	905,484	937,693	941,011
Rappahannock (South Side)	173,550	261,616	475,966	742,908	738,087
Eastern Shore	302,960	343,302	330,919	339,440	337,813
ALL TIDEWATER	2,129,550	2,588,377	3,278,150	3,505,059	3,465,998
Piedmont:					
Upper James			104,935 ^b	1,848,593	2,323,886
York				313,805	313,805
Rappahannock (South Side)				218,157	218,157
ALL PIEDMONT			104,935 ^b	2,380,555	2,855,848
Other Areas: ^c					
Lower James (Southampton Co.)				185,358	200,733
Mountains				365,411	379,567
ALL OTHER AREAS				550,769	580,300
ALL VIRGINIA	2,129,550	2,558,377	3,383,085	6,436,383	6,902,146

Source: See text notes 19, 21, 23 and 24.

^aArea is here used to distinguish between the Tidewater and Piedmont portions of the Naval Districts as defined in the text (p. 24).

^bGoochland and Brunswick Counties not included in calculations in text because no tithables are listed.

^cSouthampton County had no direct access to Tidewater, while the counties west of the Blue Ridge Mountains were not part of any specific Naval District.

least. The York and Rappahannock Districts, both with land available in the Piedmont which had not yet been developed, fell in the middle. During the period between 1728 and 1749 this availability factor further differentiated the western shore districts. The Lower James River District lost another 18% in terms of acres available per laborer while the other three districts all registered gains. Nevertheless, these gains were short lived as were those found in the colony-wide averages. Between 1749 and 1755, as Piedmont development and expansion continued especially in the area south of the James River, all the districts except the Rappahannock District again recorded fewer acres on the average available per laborer. Over the course of the half century all of the western shore districts had fewer acres available per tithable than in 1701. The Lower James River District and the York District with few, if any, Piedmont lands available suffered the greatest losses. The Rappahannock District experienced the smallest loss per laborer on the average, but this appears to be accounted for by slow growth during the early part of the Seven Years' War rather than by greater expansion into the Piedmont. The drought of 1755 and the general undesirability of frontier lands in this area because of the tensions of the war appear to be the real cause of the slowdown in population growth.

Expansion 1755-1773

During the eighteen years between 1755 and 1773, seven new counties were created. Four of these were in the Piedmont area of the Upper James River District, one in the

Piedmont of the South Potomac District (and hence part of the Northern Neck), and two in the mountains. Overall the number of tithables increased by 50.2%. Both the Upper James and Eastern Shore Districts recorded gains of at least one-third in tithables reported. The York and Rappahannock Districts each made gains of approximately 15% while the Northern Neck area of the South Potomac and the northern half of the Rappahannock District had the greatest increase of all, 57%. In all of the districts except the Eastern Shore, the bulk of this growth was confined to the Piedmont, the mountains, and the Valley of Virginia.

In spite of the fact that, overall, the land reported for quit rents increased by slightly more than 50% from the acreage level of 1755, there was less land available per worker in nearly all parts of the colony. Given the tentative nature of the quit rent returns for 1773, the summary given in Table 2.8 must be viewed as a hypothetical approximation.³² Nevertheless, the trend it suggests is probably quite close to the actual conditions that prevailed, at least for the Tidewater areas. All districts experienced further reductions in the amount of land available per laborer. The phenomenon of unlimited lands for agricultural expansion which had dominated the thinking of many planters earlier in the century clearly had become a thing of the past.

Consequences of Expansion and Concentration

Before moving to a detailed consideration of the economic development of Virginia during the eighteenth century, several consequences of the expansion of land and the

TABLE 2.8

Hypothetical Distribution of Tidewater Lands, 1773

Naval District ^a	Projected 1773 Acreage	Acres per Tithable	Percent Change 1755-1773	Percent Change 1701-1773
Upper James	941,793	68.0	-17.1	-46.9
Lower James	696,243	50.3	-17.0	-59.7
York	960,132	50.9	- 4.9	-40.3
Rappahannock (South Side)	774,351	68.1	- 7.3	-27.5
Eastern Shore	335,049	59.2	-27.3	-66.1
ALL VIRGINIA	<u>3,727,568</u>	<u>58.4</u>	<u>-12.2</u>	<u>-48.3</u>

Source: For the rationale of the projected 1773 acreage see text, p.34 and text, note 25. For method of calculations see text, note 31.

^aFor definition of Naval Districts see text, p. 24.

concentration of population need to be considered. The first is self-evident. Population as estimated in the aggregate and as measured by way of tithables was growing at a faster rate than new lands were being opened to accomodate it. While the concentration of more tithables on fewer acres was more pronounced in the Tidewater, the trend occurred throughout the colony.

A second consequence is outlined in the work of Paul Clemens. While he was studying the transition of Maryland's Eastern Shore from a tobacco to a grain economy during this same period, he calculated that at least ten acres were needed for a slave to plant tobacco, exhaust the land, let it rest and have new land to plant, and then return to the first patch after it had rested. Further, he suggested three additional acres were needed to keep the slave (or other laborer) in food. The average Maryland planter, however, seemed to allot fifty acres per laborer to ensure that the growing cycle could be maintained without undue loss from soil depletion.³³ Using the fifty acre norm, Virginia's 112 acre land to laborer ratio in 1701 was far above the land needed for successful tobacco planting. By 1749, however, the land-laborer ratio had fallen to 65 acres in the Tidewater which left the planter with little margin for error in the management of his lands to produce continuing profits. By 1773, all Tidewater areas had, on average, less than 60 acres available per laborer. In York County only 28 acres could be given each laborer. Clearly, the old system of tobacco planting had to be changed if the colony was to survive.

A third consequence stems from a consideration of the amount of tobacco actually produced over the course of the eighteenth century. Table 2.9 summarizes the number of Virginia and Maryland tithables and the amount of tobacco they produced in 1701, 1755 and 1773-1775.³⁴ Since the 1701 compilation does not include Maryland's black population, the actual number of tithables would have been higher, and the true amount of tobacco produced per tithable somewhat lower. Nevertheless, the numbers are highly suggestive. If all laborers produced tobacco in each of the three years, then the average amount of tobacco produced per worker would have been as follows: 877 pounds in 1701, 421 pounds in 1755 and 422 pounds in 1773-1775. Clemens has demonstrated that, in reality, the average laborer actually produced about 1,200 pounds of tobacco annually.³⁵ Using this figure it can be calculated that 73% of the labor force was actually engaged in growing tobacco in 1701. By 1755 the number of laborers engaged in tobacco planting had fallen to 36% of the work force. By 1773-1775 35% of the laboring population actually worked in the tobacco fields.

In theory, land was available in almost unlimited quantities in America. In practice, at least insofar as Virginia was concerned, it was not. By the third quarter of the eighteenth century, the comparative advantage of tobacco production as a single staple export was almost nonexistent. Its production, which had once supported nearly three-fourths of the labor force, could now only employ one-third of the potential workers. Tobacco may have remained

TABLE 2.9

Tobacco Production and the Labor Force, 1701-1775

Year	Virginia Tithables	Maryland Taxables	Total Laborers	Tobacco Produced (pounds)	Pounds per Laborer	Laborers at 1200# each	Percent Tobacco Laborers
1701	24,291	12,214	36,505	32,000,000	877	26,667	73.1
1755	104,404	48,811	152,215	64,000,000	421	53,333	35.0
1773-1775	155,278	74,350	229,628	97,000,000	432	80,833	35.2

Source: See text note 33.

king in terms of the gross revenues it produced for the colony, but it no longer dominated the lives of the majority of its agricultural workers. Virginians were turning in ever greater numbers to other forms of agricultural employment to maintain their standard of living.

NOTES

CHAPTER 2

¹Martha W. Hiden, How Justice Grew, Virginia Counties: An Abstract of Their Formation, (Williamsburg, Va., 1957), 1-36, 83-87.

²Benjamin Franklin, "Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind," 1751, Leonard W. Labaree, et al, eds., The Papers of Benjamin Franklin, (New Haven, 1959-), IV, 225-234, especially 228. Thomas Jefferson, Notes of the State of Virginia, ed. by William Peden, (Chapel Hill, 1954, rpt. 1972, [orig. publ. Paris, 1784]), 164-169.

³Henry W. Broude, "The Significance of Regional Studies for the Elaboration of National Economic History," Journal of Economic History, XX(1960), 589. Roger Minshull, Regional Geography: Theory and Practice, (Chicago, 1967), 18. For a large collection of geographers' opinions as to what constitutes a region see H.W. Odum and H.E. Moore, American Regionalism, (New York, 1938), passim.

⁴Hiden, How Justice Grew, 6, 10-11, 13, 15. For documents illustrative of this process using the example of the separation of Rappahannock County from Lancaster County see Warren M. Billings, The Old Dominion in the Seventeenth Century: A Documentary History of Virginia, 1606-1689, (Chapel Hill, 1975), 82-83.

⁵Percy Flippin, Royal Government in Virginia, 1624-1775, (New York, 1918, rpt. 1966), 221-223.

⁶Darrett B. and Anita H. Rutman, "'More True and Perfect Lists': A Note on the Reconstruction of Censuses for a Virginia County, 1668-1704," Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, forthcoming.

⁷Robert Beverley, The History and Present State of Virginia, ed. by Louis B. Wright, (Chapel Hill, 1947, rpt. 1968, [orig. publ. London, 1705]), 244.

⁸Ibid..

⁹The classic study of quit rents is Beverly W. Bond, The Quit-Rent System in the American Colonies, (New Haven, 1919). For Virginia see chap. 8.

¹⁰For examples of land transfers see Billings, Old Dominion, 90. Private bills for the docking of entails can be found in William Waller Hening, ed., The Statutes at Large, Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia, (Richmond, 1819-1823, rpt. 1969), passim.

¹¹ Bond, Quit-Rent System, 222-223. Stegg's "Accounts" have been published in VMHB, III(1895), 42-47 (partial), and VMHB, LI(1943), 173-184, 355-365 (complete). These are transcripts from William Byrd I's Ms. Letterbook in the Virginia Historical Society, Richmond.

¹² Bond, Quit-Rent System, 223-226.

¹³ "Rent Rolls for the Several Counties of Virginia, 1704," C.O. 5/1314, 394-435, Public Record Office.

¹⁴ Bond, Quit-Rent System, 230-241. For a more detailed account of Governor Alexander Spotswood's attempts to reform the registration of land patents and collection of the quit rents see Leonidas Dodson, Alexander Spotswood, Governor of Colonial Virginia, 1710-1722, (Philadelphia, 1932), chap. 7. Spotswood's letters to the Board of Trade on this subject can be found in R.A. Brock, ed., The Official Letters of Alexander Spotswood, 2 vols. (Richmond, 1882-1885, rpt. 1973), passim.

¹⁵ Accounts of the quit revenues were prepared annually by the Receiver-General in April and transmitted to the Board of Trade. Returns for most years survive and can be found in C.O. 5/1312-1334, passim. After 1765 the accounts were transmitted directly to the Secretary of State and can be found in C.O. 5/1349-1352, passim. The last account is for 1773.

¹⁶ The Northern Neck was first granted to John Lord Culpeper and six associates in 1649 and by 1688 Thomas Lord Culpeper had secured a new grant making him the sole Proprietor. After his death this grant passed by marriage into the Fairfax family who held it until the Revolution. As part of the grantee's rights, all quit rents due therein belonged to the Proprietor and not the Crown --hence the lack of returns from the Northern Neck counties in the quit rent accounts. For a summary of the Northern Neck grants see W. Stitt Robinson, Mother Earth -- Land Grants in Virginia, 1607-1699, (Williamsburg, Va., 1957), 66-72. Many of the grants survive in the Ms Northern Neck Grants, which begin in 1690, and are located in the Virginia State Library, Richmond. They have not been considered for the purposes of this study. See also Bond, Quit-Rent System, 65-69.

¹⁷ Governor Francis Nicholson, "List of Tithables and Untithables," C.O. 5/1312, #19xi, printed in H. Noel Sainsbury, et al, eds., Calendar of [British] State Papers, America and the West Indies, 1574-, (London, 1860-), 1701, #1040xi. Hereafter cited as CSPC. The 1783-1785 Virginia census is abstracted in Evarts B. Greene and Virginia D. Harrington, American Population Before the Census of 1790, (New York, 1932, rpt. 1967), 152-153.

¹⁸ Hening, ed., Statutes at Large, III, 258-261 gives this definition in the law of 1705, but this is the same as

that given in Henry Hartwell, Edward Chilton, and James Blair, The Present State of Virginia and the College, ed. by Hunter D. Farish, (Williamsburg, 1949, rpt. 1964, [orig. publ. London, 1727]), 53-54 which was written in 1697. Beverley also uses this definition. History and Present State, 252.

¹⁹"Civil List of 1702," C.O. 5/1312, pt. 2, 85-88, printed in VMHB, I(1893), 362-377.

²⁰Two alternative tithable counts might be used. The first, C.O. 5/1312, pt. 1, 134, is undated but was accompanied by Nicholson's cover letter of December 2, 1701. This gives a total of 21,712 tithables which seems too low for 1701. The second, C.O. 5/1313, #16ix is dated March 13, 1702/3 and gives a total of 26,225 tithables. This list is obviously based upon the 1702 count, not the 1701 count. For a discussion of the many tithable lists of this period see Rutman and Rutman, "Censuses."

²¹"Civil List of 1714," C.O. 5/1317, #27vi, printed in VMHB, II(1894), 1-15.

²²"Quit rents for the year 1714," C.O. 5/1317, 242.

²³"Civil List of 1729," C.O. 5/1322, 126-134. "Quit rents for the year 1728," C.O. 5/1322, 15.

²⁴The actual quit rent collections for the year 1755, including the arrears collected in 1757 and 1758 was for 4,196,776 acres. "Quit rents for the year 1755," C.O. 5/1329, 25-26, "Quit rents for the year 1757," C.O. 5/1329, 107, and "Quit rents for the year 1758," C.O. 5/1330, 10. No return exists for the year 1756. Four counties show no payments in 1755 or in the years that followed, while nine counties made payments on substantially less acreage than they had in 1749. Assuming that at least as many acres should have been reported in 1755 as were reported in 1749, it would appear that the actual returns for 1755, including the arrears paid in 1757 and 1758 amounted to only 61% of that which was due. In the York District, where the effects of the drought were the greatest, the counties reported only 39% of their 1749 payments.

²⁵As was the case in 1755, the return for 1773 is far below what appears should have been its minimum collection. By using the highest value reported for any county during the period 1769-1773, the projected return of 1773 should have been for 8,872,185 acres (the value shown in the tables), yet the actual return was for 2,422,186 acres. "Quit rents for the year 1769," C.O. 5/1349, 26-27, "Quit rents for the year 1770," C.O. 5/1350, 15, "Quit rents for the year 1771," C.O. 5/1351, 44-45, "Quit rents for the year 1772," C.O. 5/1352, 124-125, "Quit rents for the year 1773," C.O. 5/1353, 97-98. On average, the Tidewater counties appear to have been hit the hardest, since collections there averaged only 20% of the

projected minimums, while collections in the Piedmont averaged 34%. There were no returns made for any of the counties in the Rappahannock District.

²⁶Nicholson, "List of Tithables and Untithables," C.O. 5/1312, pt. 1, #19xi, printed in CSPC-1701, #1040xi, R.A. Brock, ed., The Official Records of Robert Dinwiddie, 2 vols., (Richmond, 1883-1884, rpt. 1971), II, 352-353.

²⁷All rates of growth have been determined using the formula for compound interest and solving for R: $P_2 = P_1(1+R)^{t_2-t_1}$ where P_1 is the initial population, P_2 the subsequent population, R the rate of growth, t_1 the initial time in years and t_2 the subsequent time in years.

²⁸"Henry's Map of Virginia in 1770," William and Mary Quarterly, 1st ser., XIV(1906), 85.

²⁹Virginia population data from Table Z:14, Total colonial population from Table Z:1, Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1957, (Washington, D.C., 1960).

³⁰"A List of Tithables in Virginia Taken 1773," VMHB, XXVIII(1920), 81-82. This list was apparently transcribed from the rear flyleaf of the Ms Amelia County Order Book, 1766-1769.

³¹The percent change in acreage was calculated by solving for C in the formula:

$$C = \left(\frac{A_1 - A_2}{A_1} \right) * 100$$

where C is the percent change, A_1 the initial acreage, and A_2 the subsequent acreage.

³²See note 25 for the method of determining the 1773 values. If one uses the counter argument that all of the land, at least in the Tidewater counties could have been occupied by 1773, and substitutes modern values --the acreages of 1950-- then the pattern would be the same, although the net losses would be somewhat smaller. The land-laborer ratio would then be: Upper James, 73.2, Lower James, 50.9, York, 56.8, Rappahannock (South Side), 75.1, and the Eastern Shore, 78.7. Overall the ratio would be 64.3 acres/laborer. The slight gains which might have occurred in the York and Rappahannock Districts using this hypothesis would come from the western portions of Hanover, King William, Caroline and Spotsylvania Counties which were, in fact, part of the Piedmont region. The projected 1773 acreage suggests that about 91% of the Tidewater was occupied, 67% of the Piedmont, and overall, approximately 75% of the lands east of the Blue

Ridge were occupied in 1773. Modern data taken from Raus M. Hanson, Virginia Place Names: Derivations; Historical Uses, (Verona, Va., 1969).

³³Paul G.E. Clemens, "From Tobacco to Grain: Economic Development on Maryland's Eastern Shore, 1660-1750," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1974, 49-50.

³⁴All estimates of tobacco exports were drawn from Table Z:230, Historical Statistics. The labor force estimates were devised as follows:

- 1701: Virginia: "Civil List of 1702" --see notes 19 and 20.
 Maryland: William H. Browne, et al, eds., Archives of Maryland, (Baltimore, 1885-), XXV, 255.
- 1755: Virginia: Brock, ed., Dinwiddie Records, II, 352-353.
 Maryland: "An Account of the Number of Souls in the Province of Maryland in the Year 1755," A Century of Population Growth, (Washington, D.C., 1909, rpt. 1967), 185.
- 1773: Virginia: "A List of Tithables in Virginia Taken 1773," 82.
 Maryland: "Taxables for 1775," Greene and Harrington, American Population, 131-132.

CHAPTER 3

"Plums for the Picking": Virginia Naval Officers and the English Patronage System

On June 13, 1711 Gawin Corbin, Naval Officer and Receiver of the Virginia Duties for the Rappahannock River District, was dismissed from his post by Governor Alexander Spotswood "finding too much cause to be dissatisfied with his conduct." Corbin had been called before the Council of Virginia to answer the charge that he had allowed the Robinson of London to sail for England in February 1710 in spite of an embargo which was in force at that time. Corbin offered the defense that the master of the Robinson presented a special license from the Queen which authorized the sailing, but in the judgement of Spotswood, the document had been altered and, furthermore, Corbin had been a party to the fraud. To compound his difficulties, Corbin arrived in Williamsburg to make his defense after the Council had recessed and left town, an occurrence which the governor held as an additional affront to both his dignity and that of the Crown.¹

Corbin appealed his case to the Board of Trade in London where he was given a hearing in January 1712. Facts brought out at that time shed additional light on the dispute between the Naval Officer and the governor. The Queen's license had been altered so as to be valid in February rather than in the previous September, as the copy recorded

in London proved.² There was no direct proof that Corbin had been a party to the alteration, yet there was considerable circumstantial evidence. Corbin was a part owner of the vessel, a situation that was considered to be a conflict of interest for a Naval Officer. Moreover, his brother, Thomas Corbin, was a prominent London merchant, and he himself was an agent for the Royal Africa Company in Virginia, both of which made it more than likely that he had "an interest in trade" --another strike against the integrity of an Officer of Her Majesty's Revenue.³ Finally, it was discovered during the hearing that Corbin had had words with Spotswood over the timing of the proposed sailing of the Robinson, and that Spotswood believed that he had not been given adequate warning to prepare his reports for dispatch to England.⁴ Given all the evidence, the Board exonerated Corbin of any wrong doing, but they did not see fit to restore him to his lost places of Naval Officer or Receiver.⁵

The Naval Officer and the Patronage System

Upon first consideration, the case of Gawin Corbin appears to be a typical example of the commonly understood character and interest of an eighteenth century colonial official. He used his public office for private gain --even to the extent of condoning fraud. He held his appointment through the patronage of the governor, or after mid-century, from his connection with the Secretary of State in England. If he lost favor with the governor or the ministry, he could expect to lose his place. James Henretta characterized the situation thusly:

In the home country, those appointed to government posts had an interest in the society they served. In America, however, there was no such automatic identification between the political hierarchy and the gradations of the economic and social order. Only in the case of elected representatives and of the officials appointed by them was there a "natural" identification of state and society.⁶

Charles Andrews and Percy Flippen both believed that the quality of the incumbants continued to decline as time passed. Like Henretta they assumed the appointees to the Naval Office became less interested in service and more interested in profits. For his part, Thomas Barrow has suggested that the loss of the power of appointment to these posts by the colonial governor to the Secretary of State in England made the office especially susceptible for distribution as a patronage plum; appointees stayed in England, sending deputies to carry out their duties overseas, but with little regard for the quality of those they sent.⁷

A further consideration of the career of Corbin and that of his fellow Naval Officers who served in the six districts of Virginia during the eighteenth century suggests that this view is not at all reflective of the place of the Naval Officer in Virginia society. Virtually all of them were members of the landed gentry and the church establishment. Most held political offices at both the county and provincial levels. In all respects they were members of Virginia's social elite.

When Corbin returned to Virginia in 1712, he was secure in the upper stratum of the colony's society independent of any advantage the post of Naval Officer might have

given him. He had been a justice of the Middlesex County Court since the 1690's which gave him a voice in local matters as diverse as the planning of roads and the punishing of criminals. Since 1701 he had been the Colonel and Commander of the county's militia.⁸ By 1704, at the latest, he was the owner of at least 6,000 acres of land in three counties. Moreover, he already had sat as a member of the House of Burgesses for several terms.⁹ By 1715 he would move his residence to King and Queen County where he would become the senior member of the County Court in 1723. He would also return to the House of Burgesses as delegate from that county, and continue to speculate in frontier lands. Before his death in 1745 he would obtain title to over 25,000 acres of land.¹⁰ The only honor which would be denied him was a seat in the Council of Virginia --something his father, father-in-law, and eventually, his son possessed-- although he was proposed for this post by Governor Sir William Gooch in 1729.¹¹

Corbin's achievements were perhaps greater than most of his fellow Naval Officers who served between the passage of the Plantation Duty Act of 1668 (which created the post) and the end of British rule in 1775. Nevertheless, his successes and failures were typical of the group of men of which he was a prominent member. All of the aspects of commercial control which Naval Officers exercised within the imperial system can be illustrated and evaluated in his career.

The Heritage of the Naval Office

When Corbin became a Naval Officer the institution was barely a quarter-century old, yet its roots went back several centuries. Since the time of Edward III, the English had sought to be complete masters of their maritime trade. Until the 1670's, however, they had not been able to surmount their rivals, the Dutch. This was especially true of the carrying trade to the continent and the Chesapeake colonies. Whether under chartered company or as a royal colony, Virginia, and to a lesser degree Maryland, suffered from a chronic lack of shipping to carry away tobacco and a concomitant lack of English mercantile credit to provide enough European manufacture to satisfy the growing American market.¹² To combat these woes, the English government attempted to regulate the colonial trade along three lines. First, they attempted to force all commercial activity to and from the Chesapeake through controlled entrepôts in England. Initially this meant confining all trade to London, but the vagaries of seaborne transportation in the age of sail soon proved this to be impossible.¹³ By the early 1630's any English port was a legitimate point of departure and return for American traders. To insure the entrepôts would be the real destination of colonial tobacco, and thus enhance the collection of royal revenues, a second element of control was introduced in the form of bonding. The fear of incurring the royal displeasure for breaching the regulation of the trade was reinforced with the real threat of forfeiting hard cash pledged for compliance with the law. This is known to

have occurred as early as 1627 and continued to be the major topic of litigation for all Naval Officers, Collectors and Receivers until the outbreak of the American Revolution.¹⁴ The third element was necessitated by the desire to exercise direct control over the most valuable product of the North American trade: tobacco. At first, ships not carrying tobacco needed no bonds to insure their direct return to England. The opportunity to smuggle tobacco aboard ships ostensibly carrying only grain or lumber products was all too evident and the temptation all too great. Enumeration, or the registration of designated cargoes considered most valuable to the English government, was the solution. If the amount and kind of a cargo were duly registered in the colonies, and bond taken for its prompt delivery in England, the chance of the stated amount of goods actually arriving in the home country was vastly improved.

With enumeration came the need for an enumerator, or registrar, and hence the roots of the Naval Office. A simple system of registration was tried in Virginia as early as 1636. With the Restoration of the Stuart monarchy in 1660 the system was revived and refined. Additional bonding and enumerations culminated in the Navigation Acts of 1663, 1673, 1676 and their successor in 1696.

Corbin and his fellows shared an additional heritage as Receivers of the Virginia duty of two shillings assessed upon each hogshead of tobacco exported from the colony. This was tried experimentally in 1658 and made permanent in 1662.¹⁵

Naval Officers in the Seventeenth Century: The Governor's Clients

From the outset it was obvious that the success of all measures which aimed at controlling the colonial trade depended upon the character and integrity of the individuals appointed to enforce them. As Paul G.E. Clemens has pointed out, the unscrupulous among the merchants were the first to realize that the bribery of a revenue agent was almost always simpler than smuggling.¹⁶ But at the edges of the empire, good men were not always easy to find, and once found some means had to be devised to insure the continuance of their loyalties. Thus, it became a custom to offer the revenue agent substantial fees for his services which he could collect himself rather than having him dependent upon the treasury in England.

The appointment and supervision of the Naval Officers was assigned to the governor to whom the Naval Officers quickly became allied. When the Customs Service was also extended to America in 1673, the governors managed to secure the recommendation, if not the outright appointment, of the Customs officers as well. By acts of the Virginia Assembly, the governor also held the appointment of the Receivers of the two shilling imposts, and of other Virginia duties which gave him a great deal of patronage indeed. The members of the Council of Virginia, however --the men whose support the governor needed most-- had no salary for their services. Thus, by the 1680's, the governors customarily granted to individual members of the Council all three

revenue collecting posts for the Naval Districts in which the councillor lived.¹⁷

In theory the Naval Officers and Collectors presented their individual collections and accounts to the Receiver-General, who was also a member of the Council. The Receiver-General, in turn, had all of the revenue accounts audited before the Auditor-General, still another member of the Council. Finally, the Collectors and Naval Officers came before the whole Council and the Governor to answer upon oath that their accounts were correct.¹⁸ In practice this meant that instead of a series of officials cross checking the work of one another, the revenues were collected and accounted for by a group that was responsible only to itself. This system on the one hand, offered convenience for the shipper who needed to find only one individual to do his business, and gave the governor a practical political advantage; on the other hand, however, there was immense conflict of interest and potential for fraud.

Four individuals --all with connections beyond Virginia and none with patronage ties to the governors-- were particularly vocal in their campaigns to see these practices ended. Much of the bad reputation that has been attached to Naval Officers and Collectors over the years can be laid directly at the doors of these men. What is often passed over is that each had his own particular political or economic end to be served if the intimate relationship between the governor and the revenue establishment were destroyed.

Edward Randolph, the Surveyor-General of the Customs

in America, the most outspoken of the group, had little good to say about any colonial revenue agent anywhere in America. For over twenty-five years from 1676 and continuing to his death in 1703, Randolph pursued smugglers and illegal traders in every colony on the Continent.¹⁹ He was convinced that there was not a fair trial for the Crown's interest to be found in any court in the colonies, and not an honest man either, one suspects. Considering that the size of his income was based directly upon the number of successful prosecutions he produced, it appears that no matter how zealous the colonial agents might have been in seizing and prosecuting customs violators, Randolph would have found more reasons to complain.²⁰

The other three critics of the Virginia system were Henry Hartwell, Edward Chilton, and James Blair, the authors of The Present State of Virginia and the College.²¹ In this unflattering account prepared for the Board of Trade in 1697 and published in 1727, they accused virtually every official below the governor of financial malfeasance and political corruption. Blair and Hartwell were members of the Council, but not part of the privileged half-dozen who were Collectors and Naval Officers. Chilton was for a time the Attorney General who also would have had more financial rewards had there been more prosecutions for trade violations. Apparently unconcerned that these gentlemen had conflicting economic and political motivations which may have colored their views, the Board of Trade in September 1698 ordered Governor Francis Nicholson to separate the various offices of

Collector, Naval Officer and Receiver of the two shilling impost and Virginia Duties. From that time on, no members of the the Council were to hold any of those posts of profit.

In spite of the protests of some of the Councillors, Nicholson made an extensive change of personnel in the revenue establishment on June 8, 1699. Seven new Naval Officers and four new Collectors were appointed. Because of the comparatively small remuneration associated with the post of Naval Officer, Nicholson continued to appoint them jointly with the Receiver of the Virginia Duties (two shilling impost) his instructions to the contrary notwithstanding. He justified this action to the Board of Trade in his letter of July 1, 1699 and although he was rebuked for this by the Board, the practice continued.²² Governor Alexander Spotswood gave similar arguments for continuing the practice of the dual appointment in 1711. By the time Governor Hugh Drysdale reported his Civil List to the Board of Trade in 1726, the arrangement had become customary.²³

Naval Officers, 1700-1740: The Country Gentlemen

With the reforms of 1699, Naval Officers were no longer a part of the select group of individuals drawn from the highest ranks of Virginia society which dominated the Council. Nevertheless, the basic quality of the men who served in the districts changed little. Bernard Bailyn has argued that two centers of power emerged from the colony's upper class during the seventeenth century: the one located in the Council and General Court, and the other located in the House of Burgesses and the County Courts.²⁴ When the

Naval Officers were barred from the first group, the governors attempted to use their appointment powers to secure a new constituency in the second group. The line of demarcation between the two groups, however, was never very distinct in the first place, and members of the County "party" --if indeed it was that clearly defined-- easily moved into the Council group as vacancies arose. As the eighteenth century progressed, increased pressure from English politicians seeking to usurp the prerequisites of Virginia offices for imperial patronage tended to blur these vague distinctions even further as the Virginians pulled closer together in the face of a common threat to their interests.²⁵

Thirty-seven men were appointed by the governors to be Naval Officers in Virginia's six districts before the offices were converted to patent posts under the King's sign manual in the mid-1740's.²⁶ Of these, the exact term of office can be calculated for twenty-six. The mean length of service was seven years and nine months, while the median fell between five and seven years. Clearly the majority of these men were firmly embedded in the power structure of the County Courts with thirty-two Naval Officers, 89% of the total, serving as Justices of the Peace. Only six men, 17%, gained their commissions as justices after they became Naval Officers. Two individuals who were not justices were certainly of court quality and the reason they were never appointed to a county bench is unclear. William Robertson was Clerk of the James City County Court and for more than thirty-seven years was Clerk of the Council of Virginia.

Robert Carter, Jr., son of Robert "King" Carter, died at the age of twenty-seven, premature even for the eighteenth century. If these two men had become justices, the percentage of Naval Officer-Justices would be increased to 95%.²⁷

While Naval Officers were barred from simultaneous membership in the Council after 1699, there was no impediment to their being elected to the House of Burgesses. Given that only two men could be chosen from each county to serve in the House, the availability of these places was more restricted than those in the County Courts. Nevertheless, twenty-three Naval Officers, 64% of the total group, served as Burgesses at some time during their careers.²⁸ Two of the Burgesses, Robert "King" Carter and John Holloway, served as Speakers of the House and, as such, were also the Treasurer of the Colony. Four Naval Officers eventually resigned their posts to join the Council. Three, Robert "King" Carter, Thomas Lee, and John Blair, eventually became Presidents of the Council and served as acting Governors for short periods. Nathaniel Harrison, the fourth Naval Officer to become a Councillor after 1699, for a short time had been William Byrd II's deputy Receiver-General before he became the Auditor-General in 1722. He was succeeded by Blair in this post in 1732. Ralph Wormeley, one of two hold-over Naval Officers who had been appointed prior to June 1699, also served as the Secretary of State of Virginia.²⁹

When the Naval Officers are grouped according to the districts in which they served, several patterns of power relationships appear which pass unnoticed when the group is

considered in the aggregate. The Upper James River District --that portion of the river above Hog Island-- was dominated by incumbents from two of its five riverside counties. All five of the Naval Officers who served this district prior to 1740 lived in either Surry or James City Counties. All five were justices and three were Burgesses. Two went on to become members of the Council. The average term of service for the Naval Officers of the Upper James River District was ten years and a month, two years and four months longer than the average for all Naval Officers. Only John Blair, who served just over six months, had a tenure of less than seven years.³⁰

In the Lower James River District the pattern of geographic domination of one part of the district by another is more pronounced. All of the incumbents in the Naval Office came from three counties --York, Elizabeth City and Warwick-- all of which were on the north side of the river. On the one hand this should be no surprise for the port of entry was located in the town of Hampton in Elizabeth City County. On the other hand, Norfolk, the largest port in the district, was located on the opposite side of Hampton Roads, and as might be expected, its inhabitants presented many petitions to the Council for the removal of the Naval Office to their location.³¹

All five of the officers who served in the Lower James River District prior to 1740 were justices of the peace and four served as members of the House of Burgesses as well. Of the four officers whose term of office can be calculated,

the average tenure was six years and eight months, just a few days less than a full year under the colony-wide average. The fifth incumbent appears to have served for slightly more than thirty-five years, which if correct, would increase the average term substantially.³²

The four incumbents of the York River District were also prime examples of Virginia's social and political elite. Three of these were both justices and Burgesses while the fourth, William Robertson, was the Clerk of the Council. Robertson's term of office --slightly over twenty years-- was one of the longest of any of Virginia's Naval Officers, while that of William Buckner --nine days-- was the shortest. Buckner, who was actually the Royal Collector of York River, was empowered to grant clearances during the interim between the death of Miles Cary and the appointment of Nathaniel Burwell.³³

The Rappahannock River District, like the Lower James River District, was dominated by the men of one county. Six of the eight incumbents lived in Middlesex County, and the two who lived across the river in Lancaster County, Robert "King" Carter and his son Robert Jr., held the office for only three years between them. Seven of the officers, 86.5% of the total, were justices of the peace. The only non-justice, Robert Carter, Jr., died young. Six of the officers were also members of the House of Burgesses. One of the exceptions was Robert Carter, Jr., while the other, Corbin Griffin, died while Gawin Corbin was sitting in the House. Six of the incumbents were appointed and served the

entirety of their terms between 1700 and 1740. They averaged five years and seven months in office which was almost two years less than the term served colony-wide. However, it should be pointed out that Ralph Wormeley actually served as Naval Officer for twenty-two years, although only five months of it fell within the period after Governor Nicholson's great reform. Armistead Churchill, who was appointed in 1733, continued in the post until 1761 --a total of seventeen years and seven months.³⁴

The situation in the South Potomac District was the most unique. Richard Lee had been appointed to the post in 1697, but two-thirds of his district was taken away from him in 1699 when Governor Nicholson appointed two additional officers for the South Potomac. By 1701 the two extra officers had died or been discontinued leaving Lee in sole control of the territory until 1710. He retired in favor of his son Thomas who, when he was elevated to the Council in 1733, turned the office over to his brother Henry Lee who held the post until his death in 1747. All of the Lees were justices and members of the House of Burgesses, as were Rice Hooe and Isaac Allerton, the two incumbents who temporarily held the splinters of the district. Among themselves the Lees averaged thirteen years and four months in office, approximately twice the colony-wide average. Stability was clearly the watchword for the South Potomac River District.³⁵

By contrast with all the other Districts, the Eastern Shore, or Accomack District as it was referred to in the Naval Lists, was the scene of the greatest instability in

terms of Naval Officer representation. Seven incumbents served in this district, representing nearly 20% of the total sample. Five of these, 71%, were justices either in Accomack or Northampton Counties --the two units which comprised the district-- while four, 57%, served as Burgesses. All of the Naval Officer-Justices were members of three of the ancient families of the Eastern Shore. Two were Custises, two were Scarboroughs, and the fifth was William Waters. Waters resigned his post in October 1720 in favor of his son William, Jr. Had the son not gone to England in March of 1721, he too may have become a justice and perhaps even a Burgess. Little is known of the seventh Naval Officer, James Torse or Forse. Although he served for five years with no record of complaints against him, he has left no other mark upon the records.³⁶ Together the seven incumbents averaged six years and six month in office, one year and a month less than the average term for all of the Naval Officers.

The Royalization of the Virginia Naval Office, 1740-1775

During the 1740's the Naval Offices of Virginia, like those in most of the other continental colonies, underwent a transformation that could have had profound effects upon the future performance of their incumbents. The Duke of Newcastle, as Secretary of State for the Southern Department, exercised practical control over the government of the colonies. As James Henretta has pointed out, the need for increased patronage posts at home led Newcastle to exercise his colonial power to effect a series of "reforms" in the operation of the Naval Offices. In point of fact this meant

that he systematically removed the offices from the control of the colonial governors by converting them to patent offices granted under the Great Seal. By so doing he gained the additional offices he needed to dispense to his followers at home without putting any additional burdens upon the Treasury. In Henretta's judgement this action caused a marked decline in the quality of colonial officeholders, and the amount of respect which they had in the eyes of the colonial populace. In the case of Virginia, however, there is no evidence to suggest that either the quality of the incumbents, who now served as deputies to principals in England, or the desirability of holding these posts actually declined markedly during the remainder of the colonial period.³⁷

The death of William Robertson, Naval Officer of the York River, in October 1739 marked the beginning of a crisis for Governor, Sir William Gooch. Gooch appointed his son, William, Jr., to fill Robertson's post but slightly over a year later Head Lynch of Caroline County presented a warrant bearing the King's signature which commanded that he be appointed Naval Officer of the York River.³⁸ Gooch had already departed for the West Indies as the commander of the American regiment in the expedition against Cartagena, and the matter was brought before the Council. In December 1740, and again in February and April 1741 the Council debated the issue as to whether Lynch or the younger Gooch had a better claim to the office. Finally in May 1741 James Blair, the President of the Council, Acting Governor, and one of the staunchest defenders of the joint power of appointment held

by the governor and the Council wrote to Newcastle defending Gooch's right to the post and seeking the King's "further pleasure" on the case.³⁹ When Governor Gooch returned the following September, he too wrote hurriedly to Newcastle disclaiming any knowledge of the Council's obvious attempt to obstruct the Royal will, but he too continued to back his son's appointment.⁴⁰

William Byrd II, an outspoken critic of Lynch, maintained that he (Lynch) was a "mere placeman" who had gained the favor of Lord Albermarle --Virginia's absentee governor-- through the intervention of Lynch's brother, the Dean of Canterbury. This may have been the case, but Lynch was both a Justice and a substantial landholder in Caroline County for some years before he was appointed to the Naval Office. Moreover, he had served a term as sheriff which, given the lucrative nature of the sheriff's fees, meant that he must have held some favor with his fellows on the Caroline Court. His right to the office was eventually upheld, but there is no evidence in the Naval Lists that he ever entered upon its duties to enter or clear a single ship.⁴¹ His concurrent appointment as Deputy Post Master General further supports the suspicion that he acted by deputy, and that the deputy was William Gooch, Jr. It was Gooch who succeeded to the post of Naval Officer of the York District, by Royal warrant of April 7, 1742, "in the Room of Head Lynch, decd."⁴²

The younger Gooch's death in the fall of 1742 marks the beginning of the second phase of the York River controversy. In October Governor Gooch, with the consent of the

Council, appointed Ralph Wormeley, grandson of the Secretary of State of Virginia, to the Naval Office post.⁴³ In spite of this reasonable course of action (or perhaps because of it) Newcastle arranged to have Letters Patent drawn in January 1743 making Undersecretary of State John Couraud Naval Officer for York District under the Great Seal of England. Couraud, a long-time Newcastle supporter, had no intention of coming to America and apparently sent instructions to Gooch to find him a suitable deputy.⁴⁴ Gooch in turn replied to Couraud that given the nature of the office --no salary, only fees and a place which demanded the daily attentions of the incumbent-- it might be better for him to dispose of it outright by selling his rights to a Virginian. Wormeley, Gooch suggested, might be willing to give £1,000 for the post. Couraud, however, complained to Newcastle about the affront from a mere deputy governor and Gooch found himself in trouble with the Secretary of State.⁴⁵ Gooch was informed most strongly that the post was now a royal gift; it had been granted to Couraud, and it would be disposed of by him as he saw fit. The exchange of letters continued until the winter of 1745 when Gooch was forced to accept Couraud's deputy, James Pride.⁴⁶

Pride was the first genuine placeman to serve in a Virginia Naval Office and it appears he served Couraud well. His tenure lasted from 1746 until 1768. At sometime he gained the honor of a justiceship in the York County Court, although this is documented only by the notice of his removal from office. His downfall came in March 1767 when he

had the bad judgement to demand that a process be served upon a member of the House of Burgesses during its time of privilege. For this he spent a year in the York County jail, lost his justiceship, and within three months of his release signed the final Naval List of his tenure. Ironically, he joined the Williamsburg Association of 1770 and became a supporter of the colonial cause in the Revolution.⁴⁷

Shortly after Couraud was granted the York River Naval Office, Newcastle arranged that the Upper James River District should be granted to Edward Tredcroft, another supporter, upon the death of Lewis Burwell. Burwell's successor was his son, Lewis Burwell, Jr., who apparently offered to buy the post from Tredcroft for £500. Whether Tredcroft accepted the lump sum or settled for an annual percentage of Burwell's fees is uncertain, but Burwell was the winner in the end for he held the office until the end of British rule in 1775. Unlike Pride, Burwell was born to the Virginia gentry. He was a Justice and a Burgess, and in all respects emulated his pre-1740 predecessors in the Naval Office.⁴⁸

In the Lower James River District, the Rappahannock District and the South Potomac District royalization is claimed to have taken place, but there is little evidence that anyone other than Virginians gained in the process. The Lower James was overlooked by English office-seekers until the 1750's at which time it was decided that the incumbent, Wilson Cary, would be allowed to retire or resign when he chose. Not until 1762 does Cary's name disappear from the Naval Lists only to be replaced by that of his son

Wilson Miles Cary. This Cary too was a Justice and a Burgess, and he continued the family service in the Lower James District down to the time of the Revolution.⁴⁹ In the South Potomac the situation was virtually the same. The death of Henry Lee in 1747 brought about the issuance of a royal patent for the post, but the next incumbent to serve as joint patentee was Richard Lee, Henry Lee's son. Like all of the other Lees who held the South Potomac post, Richard Lee was a Justice and a Burgess from Westmoreland County, and he too served until the Revolution.⁵⁰ In the Rappahannock, the English patentee was served up the cruelest joke of all. Henretta implies he was given the "expectation" of the Naval Office at the same time that Tredcroft was given the Upper James River District in 1744.⁵¹ Armistead Churchill by that time had been the incumbent for eleven years and was not expected to continue for many years more. Yet Churchill did not resign the Rappahannock Naval Office to Charles Neilson, the first appointee to serve under a royal warrant, until June 1761. Like Churchill, Neilson never achieved a seat in the House of Burgesses but he served for a number of years on the Middlesex County Court. Unlike most of his fellow Naval Officers, he remained a loyalist at the outbreak of the Revolution.⁵²

Apparently the altercation over the York River post had caused Governor Gooch to give up any thought of trying to regain the right to appoint Naval Officers on his own authority. In 1744, shortly after Pride had been forced upon him by Newcastle, Henry Scarborough died creating a

vacancy in the Accomack District. Gooch immediately wrote to Newcastle that he had appointed James Delpeche, a man who had been "recommended" to him by Lord Albermarle, to the post, one which he declared was worth only £20 per annum, hence he assumed no one else would speak for it. Although Gooch declared that Delpeche had lived for five years in the colony before his appointment, there is no record of his activities either before or after.⁵³ Within a year he was replaced by Adam Muir, a former Tobacco Inspector. Whether Muir was a deputy appointed by an absentee patent holder in England is uncertain, but this seems unlikely given his background and the circumstances under which he eventually lost the Naval Office. He was neither a Burgess, which would have been illegal while he was a Tobacco Inspector, nor was he a Justice. Given the small value of the Accomack post, it appears that only by doubling as an Inspector was he able to make a viable living. During some years of his tenure in office, no fees were collected at all.⁵⁴

On March 13, 1760 Muir was expelled from the Accomack Naval Office. Governor Francis Fauquier, acting under the instruction of a warrant from the King, appointed David Bowman to the post.⁵⁵ Like Pride in York River, Bowman was clearly an English placeman. Not until 1771 was he appointed by the governor to the Accomack County Court --at his and not the Court's request. He, along with the Collector and Controller of the Customs, was added in an effort to check the smuggling operations in the area's shallow inlets. As Justices they could sign their own search warrants and more

easily and quickly gain access to warehouses and barns where the presence of contraband was suspected. Despite the logic of their appointments, they were greeted coolly by the other members of the Accomack Court who considered them wholly unfit in character and estates for the dignity of the County bench. Unfortunately the Journals of the Council are silent as to the outcome of this dispute.⁵⁶

Fees and Frauds

Naval Officers, as Governor Gooch tried to make plain to Couraud in 1744, earned no regular salaries but were paid in fees. Table 3.1 outlines what these fees were during the eighteenth century and shows that they changed little in the seventy-five years before the Revolution. After 1748 no changes were made in the fee structure.⁵⁷ In addition to the established fees, Naval Officers were allowed to keep 6% of their collections from the duties on skins and furs and 6% of their collections from the impost on liquors.⁵⁸ The greatest portion of their fees, however, came from the 10% commission they were allowed to keep from the collection of the two-shilling impost. Table 3.2 lists an estimate of the sterling value of these commissions over the course of the century.⁵⁹

During the controversy over the royalization of the Naval Office posts, Governor Gooch apparently prepared a general estimate of the fees which the various offices earned in order to show that the offices were not as valuable as Newcastle and his friends seemed to believe. By comparing these values as they are listed in Table 3.3 with

TABLE 3.1
 Naval Officers' Fees, 1700-1775

Service Rendered	1699			1705			1749		
	f	s	d	f	s	d	f	s	d
Clearance fee									
50 tons or less	0	02	6	0	07	6	0	07	6
51 to 99 tons	0	10	0	0	10	0	0	10	0
100 tons or more	1	05	0	1	05	0	1	05	0
Bonding Fee	0	07	6	0	02	6	0	02	6
Permit to trade	0	02	6	0	02	6	0	02	6
Loading coquets (ea.)	0	00	1				0	00	6
Permit to load							0	02	6
Permit for overland transfer of goods	0	02	6	0	02	6	0	02	6

N.B. All fees assessed in sterling money. Virginia vessels to receive discount of 50% on all fees.

Source: William Waller Hening, ed., The Statutes at Large, Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia, (Richmond 1819-1823, rpt. 1969), 1699: III, 195-197; 1705: III, 349-354; 1748: VI, 94-101.

TABLE 3.2

Naval Officer Commissions - Two Shilling Impost, 1705-1760 (in £ Sterling)

District	1704-05	1709-10	1714-15	1720-21	1730-31	1739-40	1750-51	1758-59
Upper James River	12	48	45	76	67	74	145	165
Lower James River	25	9	10	4	49	25	77	78
York River	119	136	118	170	124	124	132	116
Rappahannock River	65	80	70	134	68	122	166	137
South Potomac River	50	29	58	60	32	60	74	76
Accomack (Eastern Shore)	19	-	3/4	9	2	7	2	-

Source: These estimates are based on 10% of the reported payments to the Receiver-General. As such they are actually slightly less than the true amount that the Naval Officers were entitled to deduct by about .8-1.0%. 1704-05 (Oct.-Oct.) C.O. 5/1317, 25; 1709-10 (Oct.-Oct.) C.O. 5/1317, 29; 1714-15 (Apr.-Apr.) C.O. 5/249, 475; 1720-21 (Oct.-Oct.) C.O. 5/1319, 147, 151; 1730-31 (Apr.-Apr.) C.O. 5/1322, 206-207; 1739-40 (Apr.-Apr.) C.O. 5/1324, 185, C.O. 5/1325, 11; 1750-51 (Apr.-Apr.) C.O. 5/1327, 124, 182; 1758-59 (Apr.-Apr.) C.O. 5/1329, 101, 145.

TABLE 3.3

Gooch Estimate of Value of Naval Offices, 1735-1740

<u>District</u>	<u>£ Sterling</u>
Upper James River	90
Lower James River	150
York River	150
Rappahannock River	60
South Potomac River	50
Accomack (Eastern Shore)	20

Source: "Account of Naval Officer in Virginia," n.d., C.O. 5/1337, 313. By its location in the records, this document was prepared in 1744, however, the internal evidence --the Naval Officers names-- suggests that it represents conditions no earlier than 1733 and no later than 1740.

those of the two-shilling impost in Table 3.2 for the same period (1735-1740), it would appear that Gooch may have overestimated the value of the Upper James River Naval Office, while underestimating that of the Rappahannock River. Nevertheless, the Upper James post was the second to fall under direct royal control so the placemen in England accepted Gooch's estimates.⁶⁰

Consideration of all the fees over the course of the period, however, leads one to wonder what the demand for offices at home must have been. At no time were the Virginia posts so valuable that they provided sufficient income to be the sole means of support for their Virginian incumbents. In 1705 Hancock Custis earned £20 from his collection of the two-shilling impost on the Eastern Shore, while his successor William Waters, Jr. earned only £9 from the same collection in 1721. Adam Muir collected only £2 from the two-shilling impost in 1750 and nothing at all in 1759. It comes as little surprise that he was forced to augment this income with the £30 (current money) which he earned as a Tobacco Inspector. It seems highly unlikely that he ever earned the £20 sterling that Gooch suggested was normal for the Naval Officer on the Eastern Shore.⁶¹

Across the Chesapeake, Naval Officers fared much better. On the Potomac, the Lee clan earned £50 in 1704 and averaged approximately that amount until 1750 when the collection rose to about £75. On the Rappahannock, Gawin Corbin earned £65 in 1705 while his successor, Christopher Robinson, made nearly £135 in 1720. The depression of the late 1720's

and early 1730's cut Charles Carter's income to slightly less than £70, but Armistead Churchill was able to clear £125-165 consistently during the following twenty years. In the York River, the lure of large profits makes the fervor of the Gooch-Lynch controversy understandable. William Robertson had consistently earned between £135 and £175 during his twenty year tenure. Although James Pride appears never to have topped the £140 mark during his incumbency, he never fell below £125 annually. The income of the officers in the Upper James District never rose above £75 before 1740, but with the opening of the back country on the south side of the James after that date, it never dropped below £150 annually. As with the York District, there can be little doubt of the interest that the Upper James generated in the minds of place seekers both in Virginia and England.

The financial affairs of the Lower James suggest the potential for more sinister dealings. Since little tobacco was actually shipped from the lower counties of the James, little return could be expected from the collection of the two-shilling impost. This was a mere £25 in 1705 and had only risen to £75 by the 1750's. This district, however, contained the port of Norfolk which became the center of the trade to Bermuda and the West Indies.⁶² Moreover, with the official port of entry at Hampton across the river from Norfolk, the area became a natural haven for potential smugglers. With profits to be made from the import of Caribbean rum and sugar relatively far from the prying eyes of the

Collector and Naval Officer, and the possibility of slipping out a few extra hogsheads of tobacco without paying the two-shilling impost, this port generated special attention among the merchants and revenue agents. More than one Naval Officer was accused of complicity in extra-legal entries and clearances here. William Wilson, the first eighteenth century incumbent, was accused of fraud on several occasions, but Governor Spotswood could never marshal enough evidence to bring charges in court.⁶³ George Luke, the Collector at the same time, however, was dismissed in what proved to be one of the messier scandals of Virginia commerce. Henry Irwin, the Naval Officer during the first half of the 1720's, resigned his post in the Lower James when his securities were no longer willing to countersign his £2,000 performance bond. While the record shows no specific charges brought against Irwin, he was accused on numerous occasions by Collector Richard Fitzwilliam of having had a part in the clearance of questionable and probably fraudulent cargo manifests.⁶⁴

Other than the possible transgressions of Irwin, and the proven irregularities of Luke, there is little evidence to suggest that the Naval Officers were, as a group, either corrupt or inefficient agents of the Crown's policies. The most common complaint brought against them was the double assessment of fees. A vessel which had cleared in one district stopped to load more tobacco in another river, and the officer in the second instance tried to assess the two-shilling impost on the entire cargo rather than that part which had been added.⁶⁵ It seems more likely that this was

the reason for the continued agitation upon the part of the merchants and shippers for more stringent requirements for officers to give accurate receipts than Flippin's view that this practice was symptomatic of the chronic overcharging by the officers.⁶⁶ A Naval Officer would be liable to discipline, fines, and even loss of office if he were found guilty of charging less than the full amount of duties and excises due upon a cargo. It is little wonder that he would prefer to risk the ire of a ship's captain whom he knew could make appeal to the Council for the return of double fees, than to risk dismissal by the Surveyor-General of the Customs for failure to enforce the Acts of Trade.⁶⁷

The seizure of ships by Naval Officers for violating the Acts of Trade in Virginia waters was not common. Nevertheless, it occurred often enough and in all of the districts to suggest that this aspect of law enforcement was uniform. Lack of a proper registration certificate was the most common cause of a seizure, rather than attempts to smuggle goods or import European goods without coquets which proved that they had paid English duties. As in the case of the double charging of export duties, the Naval Officers appear to have accepted few excuses for lost registration papers, no matter how well they knew the masters involved. While many of the questions of lost or forged registration papers were settled upon hearing before the Council, there is no record of any rebuke of a Naval Officer who brought a case only to have it thrown out for insufficient grounds.⁶⁸ In the 1690's, when Edmund Randolph charged virtually every shipper with

some violation or another, there may have been a large measure of technically illegal trade. At that time it was customary for Scottish merchants who were barred from the colonial trade in general by the Acts of 1675 and 1696 to move to the ports of northwest England --Whitehaven, Workington and Lancaster-- and there to charter English ships for the Virginia trade. After the Act of Union this became unnecessary, and the old nemesis of the Scottish interloper vanished.⁶⁹

Burdens of Office: Duties of the Naval Officer

The primary function of the Naval Officer was to be a registrar of all ships that entered or cleared colonial ports to guarantee their compliance with the Acts of Trade. He, along with the Royal Customs Collector, examined all coquets and bills of lading to be sure that no contraband was being smuggled into the colonies and that no enumerated goods were being smuggled out. He took bonds and other security from shippers, as well as examining them under oath to be sure they acted in all matters according to law. He issued permits to load, unload and transfer cargoes from district to district within the colony. He collected the two-shilling impost on each hogshead of tobacco exported, and six pence on each immigrant or slave arriving in Virginia. Finally he collected the duty on furs which was used to support the College of William and Mary, the duty on liquors imported from places other than Britain and the duty assessed upon the purchase of newly imported slaves.⁷⁰

In addition to all of these activities, which absorbed

many hours and produced many documents, he was the official channel of communication between the governor and the captains of the merchant fleet. The Naval Officer was charged with communicating the endless notices of embargoes, convoys, and delays in sailings brought about by the frequent wars fought during the first six decades of the eighteenth century. With the establishment of the Virginia Gazette, however, these chores were eased somewhat, and there is evidence of considerably less communication between the Naval Officers and the Council regarding the effective dates of embargoes and the sailing dates of convoys.⁷¹

Another and considerably less attractive non-regulatory duty of the Naval Officer was to act as the governors' procurement agents for the necessities of the Royal Navy's guard ships when they were on station in the Chesapeake. One finds it hard to comprehend the double standard which must have existed when the Naval Officers were to be men with little interest in trade, and yet were expected to produce twenty barrels of packed port or fifty kegs of ships' biscuit on ten days notice at the best possible price. This function could extend to men as well as supplies. On several occasions, the Naval Officers of the James and York Rivers were ordered to impress carpenters and other laborers to make emergency repairs upon the Crown's vessels in the shortest possible time. Ironically, they were never charged with impressing men for sea duty in the King's service. This particularly unpleasant task was reserved for the members of the county court.⁷²

Gawin Corbin, like his fellows, exercised most of these functions during his nine and one-half years as Naval Officer. In addition to these regular activities, Corbin was asked to take charge of French prisoners of war in 1706 and to see that they were employed to the benefit of the colony. In 1705 he was one of the principals in another of the many misunderstandings between Virginia and Maryland over the regulation of the tobacco trade. Since Maryland had made it a policy not to assess any export duty upon tobacco that had been grown in Virginia, but shipped from Maryland, the Naval Officers of the South Potomac and Rappahannock had long reciprocated by not charging the two-shilling impost upon Maryland tobacco which was shipped on vessels cleared from their districts. Although none of the Naval Officers was ever ordered to make good the lost duties, the Council ordered this practice stopped as contrary to "her Majesties pleasure signified in [her] instructions." In 1707 Corbin, along with his fellow officers, Miles Cary and Arthur Allen, took a stand in favor of the merchants whom Flippen would have one believe they did their best to misuse. A Virginia law passed in that year mandated a new form of tonnage measurement which would have increased the rated tonnage of all ships and thus enhanced the collections of the tonnage duties. The Naval Officers joined the merchants in successfully opposing this law on the grounds that it would be impossible to measure the ships in the fashion proposed without removing them from the water, which would have been a serious hardship on all parties

concerned given the lack of dockyard facilities in the colony.⁷³

Virginia Naval Officers in Retrospect

Thirty-seven men served as Naval Officers in Virginia between the time of Governor Nicholson's reform in 1699 and Newcastle's royalization of the officers in the 1740's. All were clearly members of the Virginia social and political elite with ties to the ruling class that were not dependent upon their appointment as Naval Officers. Nevertheless, they acted in these posts as they did in the other offices they held: conscientiously, honestly and faithfully. They took their just rewards, but no more, for the services they performed.

In spite of Governor Gooch's five year struggle with the Secretary of State, all six of Virginia's Naval Office posts were converted to patent appointments. The ruling elite of the colony, however, quickly adapted to the new situation. In three districts the new Deputy Naval Officers came from the same families as had their immediate predecessors, and one of these held his post by a joint appointment with his English principal. Four other Deputy Naval Officers were merchants. Two of them were also from Virginia families. Out of a total of nine Naval Office appointments made for the colony after 1744, seven appointees were also justices of the peace, and two were Burgesses. Only two -- a mere 5% of all Virginia's eighteenth century incumbent Naval Officers -- could be called

placemen in the sense that Flippen, Andrews, or Henretta define them. If the posts in Virginia were indeed plums, ripe for patronage picking, few had the misfortune of falling into the hands of mercenary Englishmen, to be filled by unworthy placemen of low birth and "little interest" in Virginia's economy.

NOTES

CHAPTER 3

¹Governor Alexander Spotswood to the Commissioners of Trade and Plantations (commonly styled the Board of Trade), July 28, 1711. R.A. Brock ed., The Official Letters of Alexander Spotswood, (Richmond, 1882-1885, rpt. 1973), I, 96. Corbin had appeared before the Council April 25, 1711 and given his answer to the charges laid against him by the Governor. H.R. McIlwaine, ed., The Executive Journals of the Council of Virginia, (Richmond, 1925-1945), III, 269. Hereafter cited as EJC. On June 13, 1711 Corbin was dismissed by the Council according to the Governor's direction and Christopher Robinson was appointed as his successor. Ibid., 276. Spotswood presented his version of the affair to the Commissioners of Customs in his letter of May 5, 1711. Brock, ed., Spotswood Letters, I, 77-79.

²Journal of the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, Preserved in the Public Record Office, (London, 1920-1938), 1708-1714, 291-292. Hereafter cited as JBT.

³"You shall not committ the care of those different Employments [Naval Officer and Collector] unto one and the same person, or any of those persons much concerned in Trade, who may be apt thereby to be Biassed from their Respective duties unto members of the said Council." "Instructions to Francis Nicholson, [September 6, 1698]," Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, IV(1896), 52.

⁴Brock, ed., Spotswood Letters, I, 96.

⁵Corbin appeared before the Board of Trade on January 8, 1711/2. JBT-1708-1714, 325.

⁶James A. Henretta, "Salutary Neglect": Colonial Administration Under the Duke of Newcastle, (Princeton, N.J., 1972), 260.

⁷Charles M. Andrews, The Colonial Period of American History, (New Haven, 1934-1938, rpt. 1964), IV, 186-188. Percy S. Flippin, Royal Government in Virginia, 1624-1775, (New York, 1918, rpt. 1966), 253-257. Thomas C. Barrow, Trade and Empire: The British Customs Service in Colonial America, 1660-1775, (Cambridge, MA, 1967), 82.

⁸Corbin was a Justice of the Peace at least as early as April 26, 1698. "Civil List of 1698-1699," C.O. 5/1310, C.16. Public Record Office. A printed copy of this list may be found in VMHB, I(1893), 226-242, 244-246. Corbin's military commission is dated April 25, 1701. EJC, II, 138.

⁹"Rent Rolls for the Several Counties of Virginia, 1704," C.O. 5/1314, 394-435. The printed editions of the Rent Rolls list Corbin's lands as follows: Middlesex: 2260 acres, Essex: 2000 acres, King and Queen: 2000 acres, Thomas J. Wertenbaker, The Planters of Colonial Virginia, (Princeton, N.J., 1922, rpt. 1958), 234, 238, 226. VMHB, XXXIII(1925), 47, 366, Ibid., XXXII(1924), 144. Corbin was a Burgess for Middlesex, 1698, 1702-1705 and 1718-1720, William G. and Mary Stanard, comps., Colonial Virginia Register, (Albany, NY, 1902, rpt. 1965), 94, 96, 102, 103. Jack P. Greene, The Quest for Power: The Lower Houses of Assembly in the Southern Royal Colonies, 1689-1776, (Chapel Hill, 1963), 469, lists Corbin as a member of the first rank in the sessions of 1702, 1704, 1718 and 1720.

¹⁰Corbin was made "first of the Commission" April 1, 1723, EJC, IV, 30. He was a Burgess from King and Queen for the 1715 session, Green, Quest for Power, 469. Patents for 28,500 acres of land in Spotsylvania appear between 1720 and 1725. EJC., 3:538-539, 4:81.

¹¹Henry Corbin, his father, was a member of the Council from 1663 to his death in 1675. Ralph Wormeley, his father-in-law, was a member from 1677-1701. His son Richard Corbin served from 1750-1787. Stanard, Register, 38, 41, 48. Governor Sir William Gooch to Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, Jan. 9, 1730. C.O. 5/1322, 136-138v. An abstract of this letter appears in Noel Sainsbury, et al, ed., Calendar of [British] State Papers, America and the West Indies, 1545-, 45 vols. to date, (London, 1860-). 1730, #7. Hereafter cited as CSPC.

¹²Lawrence Harper, The English Navigation Laws, (New York, 1939), 19. Harper cites the earliest English law dealing with international trade as 27 Edward III, st. 2, C.15. (1353). Arthur P. Middleton, "The Chesapeake Convoy System, 1662-1763," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd ser., III (1946), 188. For a specific example see William Byrd I to Perry and Lane, July 19, 1690, Marion Tinling, ed., The Correspondence of the Three William Byrds of Westover, Virginia, 1684-1776, (Charlottesville, 1977), 114. Hereafter cited as Byrd Correspondence

¹³George Louis Beer, The Origins of the British Colonial System, 1578-1660, (New York, 1922), 197, cites Thomas Rymer, Feodora, (London, 1727-1735), XVII, 621-624, 670-671 for "Orders" of Sept. 29, 1624 and Mar. 2, 1624/5 requiring all tobacco to be shipped directly to London. CSPC 1574-1660 does not calendar them. "Proclamation Touching Tobacco," Feb. 17, 1626/7, CSPC 1574-1660, 83. "Privy Council to Farmers and Officers of the Customs," Jan. 6, 1630/1, Ibid., 125. Nevertheless the "Petitions of John Delbridge," of Jan. 13, 1631/2, Ibid., 138-139 shows that exceptions to these rulings were fairly common, as do the statistics for outport importations of tobacco given in "American Tobacco Imported

by England: 1616-1693," Tables Z:238-240, Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957, (Washington, D.C., 1960).

¹⁴ Bonding is first required in "Attorney-General Heath to Governor Sir Francis Wyatt," Nov. 1627, CSPC 1574-1660, 86, and "King to Governor and Council of Virginia," Sept. 12, 1628, VMHB, VII(1899), 267-268.

¹⁵ This concept was first suggested by Jerome Hawley, the Secretary of State of Virginia, "Hawley to Sec. Windebank," June 27, 1636, CSPC 1574-1660, 239. The King commanded its imposition shortly thereafter. "King to Governor and Council of Virginia," Aug. 4, 1636, Ibid., 239. The Virginia government went one step further by establishing the office, and fees for the incumbent --2 shilling/hhd of tobacco or other cargo registered. "Act 20 of the Assembly of Virginia of 20 February 1636/7," Ibid., 245-246. Unfortunately none of the acts of this session are found in William W. Hening, ed., The Statutes at Large, Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia, (Richmond, 1819-1823, rpt. 1969). "Act 128, Imposition of 2s/hhd," March 1657/8, Ibid., 1:491-492.

¹⁶ Paul G.E. Clemens, "From Tobacco to Grain: Economic Development on Maryland's Eastern Shore, 1660-1750," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1974, 15.

¹⁷ No complete list of Naval Officers exists for all of the Districts prior to Apr. 29, 1692. EJC, I, 224. It is apparent, however, from the list of 2 shilling imposts collected in 1676 and 1677 that all but two of the Collectors were members of the Council. C.O. 5/1355, 73, 74. Moreover, it appears that John Washington, who was a Burgess rather than a Councillor, was actually the Deputy Collector and Naval Officer for the Potomac acting in concert with Nicholas Spencer, who was the Collector, Naval Officer, Secretary of State for Virginia, and a Councillor. John Stringer, the other non-Councillor who was a Collector in 1676 and 1677 was a Burgess from Northampton County on the Eastern Shore. Stanard, Register, 74-76.

¹⁸ Flippin, Royal Government, 251, 256-257.

¹⁹ Michael G. Hall's biography, Edward Randolph and the American Colonies, 1676-1703, (Chapel Hill, 1960), especially chapters 6-9, gives a detailed account of Randolph's successes and failures in the Chesapeake.

²⁰ "Edward Randolph to the Commissioners of Customs," June 27, 1692, Robert N. Toppan and Alfred T.S. Goolrick, ed., Edward Randolph: Including His Letters and Official Papers from New England, Middle, and Southern Colonies in America, and the West Indies: 1678-1700, 7 vols., (Boston,

1898-1909), 7:356-392. Robert Quarry, Randolph's successor as Surveyor-General, wrote of Randolph's final seizure in the Chesapeake, "Mr. Randolph since his last coming over seized two ships without the least ground that I could find, one in Maryland, which was cleared, and the owners sued him for damage, the other a little before his death on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. I have examined into the matter and can't find the least culler for it..." Robert Quarry to the Commissioners of Customs, October 15, 1703, C.O. 323/5, #19ii, abstracted in CSPC 1702-1703, #1150ii.

²¹Hunter D. Farish, ed., The Present State of Virginia and the College, (Charlottesville, 1940). Farish's introduction details the trials of Hartwell, Blair and Chilton.

²²"Nicholson's Instructions," VMHB, IV(1896), 52. For Nicholson's new appointment see EJC, 1:449-450. A slightly different arrangement of the officers for the Potomac River occurs in the Civil List for 1699, "C.O. 5/1310, C.16, which appears in print in VMHB, I(1894), 226-227. For Councilors' objections see C.O. 5/1310, #2xxxii, abstracted in CSPC 1699, #579xxxii. Nicholson's justification is in "Nicholson to Commissioners for Trade and Plantations," July 1, 1699, C.O. 5/1310, #2. This is abstracted in CSPC 1699, #579.

²³"Spotswood to the Commissioners of Customs," May 5, 1711, Brock, ed. Spotswood Letters, I, 80. "The Present State of Virginia with Respect to the Colony in General," enclosed with "Governor High Drysdale to the Board of Trade," June 29, 1726, C.O. 5/1320, R.14. This has been reprinted in VMHB, XLVII(1940), 141-152, 207-208.

²⁴Bernard Bailyn, "Politics and Social Structure in Virginia," in James M. Smith, ed., Seventeenth-Century America: Essays in Colonial History, (Chapel Hill, 1959), rpt. 1972), 102-103. See also Warren M. Billings, The Old Dominion in the Seventeenth Century: A Documentary History of Virginia, 1606-1689, (Chapel Hill, 1975), 69-70.

²⁵Bailyn, "Politics and Social Structure," 111-113.

²⁶Since the Naval Officer was technically appointed by the Governor with the consent of the Council, the basic source for Naval Officer commissions is EJC. For the Governor's power of appointment see Leonard W. Labaree, ed., Royal Instruction to British Colonial Governors, 1670-1760, (New York, 1935), #1036. After 1697 the Naval Officer was also to be approved of by the Commissioners of Customs, but there is no record of any Virginia appointee being rejected.

²⁷Membership of the county courts was determined from the Civil Lists of 1680: VMHB, I(1893), 225-226, 246-252; 1699: C.O. 5/1310, C.16, printed in VMHB, I(1893), 244-246, 226-242; 1702: C.O. 5/1312, pt. 2, 85-88, printed in VMHB,

I(1893), 362-377; 1714: C.O. 5/1317, #27vi, printed in VMHB, II(1894), 1-15; 1726: C.O. 5/1320, R.20, printed in VMHB, XLVII(1940), 141-152, 207-208; 1729: C.O. 5/1322, 126-134. Other appointments were found in EJC, passim. Given that all appointments were made by the Governor with the consent of the Council upon the recommendation of the county courts, a search of the ms records of the counties might well turn up more commissions. The figures given herein are, therefore, only minimum values.

²⁸Membership in the House of Burgesses was determined from Stanard, Register, passim, and Greene, Quest for Power, Appendix III, 467-474. In terms of Greene's ranking of the leadership of the House, ten Naval Officers were of the second rank, two of the first rank, and five served in both the first and second ranks during their careers.

²⁹Other county level offices held were determined from the Civil Lists (see note 27) and from EJC. Other colony wide offices were determined from EJC.

³⁰The names of all the Virginia Naval Officers, their districts, and terms of service are given in Appendix 1.

³¹For example: "Petition of Merchants and Masters...", April 23, 1735, "Petition of the Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council of Norfolk," June 16, 1737. EJC, IV, 348, 398. Hampton was still the official port of entry as late as 1770. "Ports of North America (1770)," British Museum Add. Mss. 15484, partially reprinted in Barrow, Trade and Empire, 269-272.

³²See Appendix 1: Lower James River District.

³³See Appendix 1: York River District.

³⁴See Appendix 1: Rappahannock River District.

³⁵See Appendix 1: South Potomac District.

³⁶See Appendix 1: Accomack District.

³⁷Henretta, Salutary Neglect, 234-261 discusses the royalization process in all of the colonies. Other than to show how and when the Virginia Naval Offices were converted to patent posts, he makes no attempt to analyze either the new or the earlier incumbents.

³⁸William Gooch, Jr., was appointed October 23, 1739, EJC, IV, 442. The warrant for Lynch's appointment, to be made under the seal of Virginia, was dated January 10, 1740. C.O. 324/37, 152-153. This warrant Lynch presented to the Council December 10, 1740. EJC, V, 39.

³⁹The controversy with the Council and its debates upon the matter are in the EJC, V, 39, 40, 42, 53 and 67. For Blair's letter to Newcastle, May 2, 1741, see C.O. 5/1337, 247-248. For Lynch's letter to Blair agreeing to wait for a clarification from England, May 2, 1741, see C.O. 5/1337, 249.

⁴⁰Gooch to Newcastle, September 15, 1741, C.O. 5/1337, 252-253.

⁴¹William Byrd II to Francis Otway, February 10, 1740/1, Tinling, ed., Byrd Correspondence, II, 577-579. Lynch's commission of a Justice is dated May 1, 1736 (EJC, IV, 39). In September 1736 he patented 800 acres of land in Spotsylvania County --presumably for speculation-- which had formerly been granted to William Robertson (Ibid., 381). He became sheriff of Caroline County in June 1739 and served for one year (Ibid., 439). There are no Naval Lists signed by either Gooch or Lynch.

⁴²C.O. 324/37, 188-189.

⁴³Wormeley's appointment is mentioned October 23, 1742 (EJC, IV, 101). It should be noted that as in the case of Gooch and Lynch, there are no Naval Lists bearing Wormeley's name. All the Naval Lists from September 1736-June 1746 are signed by James Pride, although they are all back-dated from June 5,6,7,9,10 or 11, 1746 (C.O. 5/1444, 6-12).

⁴⁴Couraud's appointment was to be under the Great Seal rather than the seal of Virginia, thus taking the post completely out of the governor's control. The warrant, dated January 7, 1743, C.O. 324/37, 197, stated that Couraud would hold the office for life and had permission to serve by deputy. For Gooch's initial response to this foreclosure of his powers of appointment, and Newcastle's reaction see Gooch to Newcastle, June 27, 1743, C.O. 5/1337, 283, and Newcastle to Gooch, September 18, 1744, C.O. 5/1337, 303-304.

⁴⁵Gooch to Newcastle, December 27, 1744, C.O. 5/1337, 307-308.

⁴⁶Newcastle to Gooch, December 31, 1744, C.O. 5/1337, 309.

⁴⁷Pride ran afoul of the House for causing a warrant to be served upon Edward Ambler, Burgess from Jamestown. The matter was considered in the House from March 23-March 30, 1767 when the House ordered that Pride be censured first for his insult to Ambler, and second for his insult to the Committee on Privileges by refusing to attend on the grounds of a feigned illness. H.R. McIlwaine and John P. Kennedy, ed., Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, (Richmond, 1905-1925), 1766-1769, 91, 97, 99-100, 103. Pride apparently tried to take his case to the people with an article in the

Virginia Gazette at the beginning of April, for he was further censured and committed to the York County jail by the House on April 9, 1767 (Ibid., 120-121), where he stayed at least until April 1768, (Ibid., 175). On April 3, 1767 he was removed from the York Commission for the Peace, (EJC, VI, 684). He is listed among the signatories of the Williamsburg Association of 1770. Virginia Historical Register, III(1850), 17-24.

⁴⁸Gooch asked Lord Albermarle, Virginia's governor-general, to secure the confirmation of Lewis Burwell, Jr. as Naval Officer for the Upper James on November 21, 1743. British Museum, Add. Mss. 32, 701, 267. The Council confirmed Burwell on December 14, 1743. EJC, V, 139. In spite of these actions, Newcastle secured a warrant for Edward Tredcroft to serve "in the room of Lewis Burwell, [Sr.], decd.," May 3, 1744. C.O. 324/37, 250-251. Peter Leheup transmitted Burwell's offer to Mr. Stone, Newcastle's secretary, September 24, 1746. British Museum, Add. Mss. 32, 708, 365. Clearly, Burwell was seeking to buy out Tredcroft's right to the patent, but it appears he was unsuccessful for Tredcroft is still corresponding with Newcastle about his patent in 1753. Tredcroft to Newcastle, October 16, 1753, British Museum Add. Mss. 32, 733, 96-97. James Roberts secured a royal warrant for the Naval Office of the Upper James October 27, 1758, C.O. 324/38, 504, which was reconfirmed March 2, 1761, C.O. 324/40, 52. In spite of these political machinations in England, Burwell continued to serve as Naval Officer --for he never signed his returns as "Deputy"--until the outbreak of the Revolution.

⁴⁹Henretta, Salutary Neglect, 255n77. Barrow, Trade and Empire, 118-119. William Berkeley received a warrant to hold the Lower James Naval Office under the seal of Virginia, March 24, 1761, C.O. 324/40, 79-80. While no resignation can be found for Wilson Cary, his last Naval List was signed March 25, 1761, C.O. 5/1448, 47. While no appointment is extant for Wilson Miles Cary, either as Naval Officer or Deputy to Berkeley, his first Naval List is signed on March 25, 1762, C.O. 5/1449, 2, and continue until the Revolution. No Lower James Lists survive for the period March 25, 1761-March 25, 1762.

⁵⁰Richard Lee and William Crouch jointly held the patent for the South Potomac Naval Office under the Great Seal of England. November 20, 1747. C.O. 324/37, 398-399. This is the only joint patent for a Virginia Naval Office and suggests the tremendous influence that the Lee family must have been able to exert upon Newcastle.

⁵¹Henretta, Salutary Neglect, 257.

⁵²Churchill's last Naval List is dated June 24, 1761, C.O. 5/1448, 56. Neilson, who gained his patent under the seal of Virginia, March 24, 1761, C.O. 324/40, 80-81, con-

tinued to serve until the Revolution. Landon Carter charged Neilson with being a Loyalist in his diary, May 1, 1776. Jack P. Greene, ed., The Diary of Colonel Landon Carter of Sabine Hall, 1752-1778, (Charlottesville, 1965), II, 1029.

⁵³Gooch to Newcastle, December 27, 1744, C.O. 5/1337, 307-308. See also Appendix 1: Accomack District.

⁵⁴Muir was first appointed Tobacco Inspector for Accomack and Pungoteague warehouses October 31, 1743 (EJC, V, 132) and became a Naval Officer November 4, 1745 (Ibid., 192). He was again appointed an Inspector for Nassawaddow and Pungoteague warehouses June 11, 1750 (Ibid., 327). Apparently the provision in the Tobacco Laws that Inspectors could take no other officer's fees did not apply to Crown offices other than Quit Rent collector. In any event this provision was repealed in 1752. Hening, ed., Statutes at Large, V, 226. See Table 3.2 for Muir's fees.

⁵⁵"Mr. David Bowman succeeded to Mr. Adam Muir by warrant of his Majesties sign manual on the 13th of March 1760," endorsement by Governor Francis Fauquier on Accomack Naval List, December 25, 1759-March 25, 1760, C.O. 5/1448, 31. This appears to be the only time an incumbent Naval Officer was actually fired. For Bowman's warrant for a Virginia patent of November 26, 1759 see C.O. 324/39, 17-18. This was renewed March 24, 1761, C.O. 324/40, 69-70.

⁵⁶Bowman was appointed a Justice in Accomack County February 1, 1771. EJC, VI, 388. The complaint was made May 8, 1771, Ibid., 410.

⁵⁷The three basic laws governing Naval Officer Fees are given in Hening, ed., Statutes at Large. 1699: III, 195-197, 1705: III, 349-354; 1748: VI, 94-101.

⁵⁸The basic act dealing with duties on skins and furs was passed in 1705, Ibid., III, 356. It was amended from time to time, but the 6% commission to the Naval Officer-Collector remained unchanged. The duties on various liquors began in 1691 and by 1699 the Naval Officer-Collector's commission was standardized at 6%. Ibid., III, 229. These laws were also amended, but without any change in the commission structure.

⁵⁹Although the fees were legally due in sterling according to the act of 1705, it seems more likely that they were collected in foreign coin or current money appropriately discounted to its sterling equivalent. See for example, EJC, V, 221, 245 for the Council's approval of specific exchange rates to be used by Naval Officers.

⁶⁰Henretta, Salutary Neglect, 257.

⁶¹See note 53.

⁶²In 1755, for example, the Lower James River District exported only 908 hhds of tobacco, but nearly 89,000 bushels of corn and 5,000 barrels of pork and beef. C.O. 5/1447, 24v-27v. Virtually all of the provisions were bound for the West Indies or Bermuda.

⁶³Spotswood to the Commissioners of Customs, October 24, 1710, Brock, ed., Spotswood Letters, I, 29-31.

⁶⁴George Luke was William Fitzhugh's brother-in-law and a distant relation of Nicholas Spencer, Councilor and Secretary of State for Virginia (and formerly a Collector and Naval Officer). Fitzhugh had tried to secure the Collectorship of the Potomac for Luke in 1690, but he was unsuccessful. Richard B. Davis, ed., William Fitzhugh and His Chesapeake World, 1676-1701: The Fitzhugh Letters and Other Documents, (Chapel Hill, 1963), 269n. Fitzhugh to Luke, October 27, 1690, Ibid., 284-288. Luke managed to secure an appointment from the Commissioners of the Customs for the Collectorship of the Lower James, where he took office October 27, 1700. EJC, II, 113-114. In May 1702 he was ordered to turn over his records to William Wilson, the Naval Officer, after his second wife ransacked his house while he was at church. Ibid., 238. In October 1703, Robert Quarry, the Surveyor-General of the Customs, accused Luke of leaving his records "with one who keeps a punch house." C.O. 323/5, #19ii, abstracted in CSPC 1702-1703, #1150ii. In October 1708 Luke was charged with not turning over to the Visitors and Governors of the College of William and Mary his collections of the 1 pence/pound impost on tobacco. EJC, III, 200-201. Quarry and Spotswood joined in proposing a plan for the reorganization of the Customs Districts of the York and James Rivers in 1711, in part hoping to have Luke's job abolished. Brock, ed., Spotswood Letters, I, 75-76. Finally Luke was dismissed by Surveyor-General William Keith in June 1714. C.O. 5/1317, #1i, abstracted in CSPC 1714-1715, #483i.

Irwin's troubles stemmed from his over-zealous confiscations of property which was alleged to be pirate's contraband. EJC, IV, 42-43. He was also chronically behind in the payment of his accounts to the Receiver-General. Ibid., 19. Fitzwilliam claimed that as Royal Collector he had the sole right of seizure under the Acts of Trade, and hence claimed that Irwin's seizures and awards of informer's fees were illegal. Ibid., III, 466-467.

⁶⁵Nehemiah Jones made such a complaint against Gawin Corbin for 25 hhds of tobacco he shipped from Accomack District via the Rappahannock District in 1704. EJC, II, 369. It might be noted that while the Auditor (William Byrd I) returned the second collection to Jones, and credited Corbin's account appropriately, Corbin was not asked to return the five shillings he made on the transaction.

⁶⁶Flippin, Royal Government, 254-255.

⁶⁷Andrews, Colonial Period, IV, 214-215.

⁶⁸For example, EJC, II, 8-9.

⁶⁹Edward Randolph believed this to be the most common infraction of the Acts of Trade in the Chesapeake region. Toppan & Goodrick, Randolph Letters, VII, 349, 356, 361. Jacob M. Price, "The Rise of Glasgow in the Chesapeake Tobacco Trade, 1707-1775," WMQ, 3rd ser., XI(1954), 182-183.

⁷⁰See note 56 and 57. See also Flippin, Royal Government, 255-256.

⁷¹In the early part of the eighteenth century, convoys were irregular and subject to frequent delays. In 1701 the tobacco fleet was embargoed from May to June 12. On June 10, the embargo was extended to June 20. Not until June 27 did the fleet actually sail. EJC, II, 139, 147, 172. In September 1701 an embargo was laid until October 15. This was extended until October 21, and then to November 14. Not until November 21 were all the ships ready to sail. Ibid., 185, 199, 204, 214. By 1756, however, the fleet was readied on the first try. This date was simply announced in the Virginia Gazette. Ibid., VI, 597-598.

⁷²Ibid., II, 219, III, 171, 215.

⁷³Ibid., III, 134, 32, 145.

CHAPTER 4

"Queries" and "Answers": The Governors'

View of the Virginia Trade

On September 29, 1750, Thomas Lee, President of the Council of Virginia and acting governor, prepared his "Answers" to the recent "Queries" he had received from the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, that is, the Board of Trade.¹ Lee had been the Naval Officer for the South Potomac District for twenty-three years before he was appointed to the Council in 1733. As such, he had been responsible for recording and reporting the cargoes of all ships that entered and cleared his district. He had been preceded in this post by his father, and had been succeeded by his brother. His nephew was at the moment the incumbent in the district.² Clearly, Lee had an intimate knowledge of the Chesapeake's trade, yet when he was asked to make specific comment upon it, he demurred. Instead, he tersely referred the Board to the reports of the Naval Officers.³ Perhaps he found irony as well as annoyance in the fact that, in spite of their continued harping upon the form and accuracy of the Naval Lists, the Commissioners now appeared to be ignoring the documents which they needed most.⁴ It must have appeared that the Board was less interested in the actual facts of the colony's trade than the governor's attitude towards it. A consideration of the "Answers" given by Virginia's governors to the Board's periodic "Queries"

presented during the eighteenth century suggests that this could well have been the case.

The Governors and the Board of Trade

If Lee had had access to the records of his predecessors in the governor's chair, he would have been aware of the significant departure that his report took from those which had preceded it. No previous governor had been willing to admit that accurate statistics detailing Virginia's trade could even be gathered, let alone that they were readily available in England for the Board's perusal. Past experience had shown that too much information about the exact state of affairs in Virginia in the hands of the Board could be dangerous to the future security of the governor's position.

This insecurity on the part of Virginia's governors can be traced to two phenomena: one institutional, the other personal. The office of the governor was peculiarly subject to pressures both from England and Virginia. On the one hand, the incumbent had to satisfy the legal demands of the Board and the commercial demands of the English merchant community. On the other, he had to live with the desires and demands of Virginia's planter elite. On top of this, each of the six governors and five acting governors who served between 1696 and 1750 was forced to deal with the strident personality and continuous political intrigues of the Reverend James Blair, Commissary of the Bishop of London in Virginia. Blair and his faction, supported by wide personal and family connections on both sides of the Atlantic, were responsible for the re-

removal of three of the six governors. Of the three who escaped their wives, two died after short terms in office and the third coped with Blair until his death in 1743. In each of the three cases of removal, issues of trade and its regulation had played a part.⁵

If the demands of the Board were more straightforward, they were no less vexing. Throughout the seventeenth century Virginia's governors had been plagued by demands from the Board's predecessor committees requiring the diversification of the colony's economy.⁶ As late as 1670 Governor Sir William Berkeley tried vainly to establish silviculture and silk as export productions in spite of the fact that the large planters were interested only in tobacco.⁷ In fact, his use of the public revenue to support these ill-fated efforts is often cited as one of the contributory causes of Bacon's Rebellion which brought about Berkeley's fall in 1676.⁸ Not until 1683, when the government began to realize that no greater revenues could be generated from anything other than tobacco duties, were the governors freed from the dictum to diversify.⁹ Ironically, as the change in policy at home made this great reversal, and the Board began to demand that the governors block any attempts at diversification, the large planters in the colony began to seek alternatives to tobacco.

During the eighteenth century matters became increasingly complex for the governors as they tried to satisfy the multiple demands placed upon them. When Governor Edward Nott complained that due to depressed tobacco prices and a dearth of English goods available in Virginia some planters were

being forced to raise cotton in order that they might clothe themselves, he met with a strong rebuke.¹⁰ Neither the Board, nor the English merchant community, would accept this state of affairs which might lead to economic independence for Virginia. Similarly, a proposal for the encouragement of Naval Stores' productions in North America had to specifically exclude Virginia and Maryland before it could win the Board's approval.¹¹ The disallowance of the Tobacco Act of 1713, a measure enthusiastically supported by Governor Alexander Spotswood as a way to enhance the price of tobacco and thus Virginia's economy in general, was brought about because of the complaint made to the Board by Micajah Perry, London's leading tobacco merchant. Similarly, the Virginia law passed in 1720 which provided for a duty upon imported slaves and liquor was overturned at the recommendation of the Board, again under pressure from the merchants who had no desire to see additional colonial taxes cut into their profits.¹²

The Board of Trade could not remove the governor on its own authority, even if he disobeyed its instructions. Nevertheless, it was the agency through which all information from and about the colonies was transmitted to the members of the Privy Council who would make the ultimate decisions about a governor's tenure. Moreover, it was the Board which framed the commission and instructions under which the governor was empowered and enjoined to act. Even though these instructions never carried the weight of law in any constitutional sense, the governor could be held responsible for their execution in the manner which the Board chose

to define. Hence, failure to heed the Board's directions was, in fact, grounds for dismissal and it was the Board, not the governor, which held the Privy Council's ear,¹³

To make matters more complicated for the governor, the members of the Virginia government --not to mention the population at large-- felt no obligation to heed the Board's commands; in fact, the governor was usually instructed not to reveal his orders to them.¹⁴ The activities of Blair and his faction demonstrated only too clearly to the governor the lengths to which the Virginians were willing to go to achieve their own ends. Thus, when the planters began to diversify their crops, there was little which the governors could do to stop them. Yet if they displayed their weakness in this matter to the Board, they could be sure it would be held against them. Their only defense was to try to cater to the interests of each party in turn --the Virginians, the merchants, and the Board-- by telling each group what the governors believed they wanted to hear, all the while downplaying those bits of information which might anger their listeners.

The Governors and the Queries from the Board of Trade

In 1696 the new Commission for Trade and Plantations established by William III began an extended inquiry into Virginia's economic life with a set of "Queries" addressed to Governor Sir Edmond Andros. Ten of the twenty-one "Answers" which Andros returned in 1697 dealt specifically with trade and commerce. He named tobacco planting as the dominant agricultural industry and cited the fact that it was

tied to British merchants and shippers for marketing and delivery. He also mentioned "inconsiderable" trade with New York, New England and Barbados in which the Virginians exchanged pork, beef, corn, staves and small amounts of tobacco for rum, sugar, molasses, salt and Madeira wine. Naval stores --pitch, tar and turpentine-- were produced in Virginia, but these too were dismissed as "of little consequence." Andros credited a small number of ships to Virginia construction and mentioned a future potential for Virginia timber products in general, if the labor were available to prepare them. Manufactures other than a small amount of homespun linen and woolen cloth were all of English import. In sum, Andros told the Commissioners exactly what good mercantilists should have wanted to hear --Virginia was primarily a producer of a single staple commodity which was desired by the mother country, and a consumer of manufactured goods produced there for export to her colonies.¹⁵

Just over a decade later, Edmund Jennings, President of the Council and acting governor, prepared the answers to a second set of "Queries" sent out by the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations. Five of the eight headings Jennings presented dealt directly with trade and manufactures. Tobacco was still the only export from Virginia which was sent to England, and she in turn was still the major source of all the imported manufactured goods. Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Bermuda had joined Virginia's earlier colonial trading partners, while wheat, pitch and tar had been added to her list of exports. Significantly, flour and bread were now

being imported from Pennsylvania and New York, at the same time that Virginia was exporting flour to South Carolina and Bermuda. It would appear that Virginia had started a commercial enterprise in the form of the re-export business, although neither Jennings, nor the Commissioners chose to acknowledge its significance at the time.

In spite of Jennings' confirmation of an increasing tobacco production, and thus the continued growth of the Crown's income from tobacco duties, the Commissioners found cause for alarm in his admission that woolen, linen and even cotton cloth was being produced in the colony. Although Jennings dismissed this as an effort by a few impoverished individuals who hoped to offset the high cost of English fabrics needed to clothe themselves and their servants,¹⁶ the Commissioners, influenced by the pressure of English merchants, endorsed an immediate remedy. They ordered strict enforcement of the laws prohibiting the transportation of colonial manufactures of woolen and linen cloth from one colony to another, thus curtailing any commercial undertakings which might be considered by Virginia weavers.

The arrival of Governor Sir William Gooch in 1727 marked the beginning of a twenty year period during which the Commissioners displayed their greatest interest in Virginia's economy. No formal "Queries" had been sent out to the colony for twenty-three years when Gooch received his first set in 1730. These would be followed by another set in 1734, and six during the decade of the 1740's. The statistics which can be derived from these reports are

summarized in Table 4.1. In each report Gooch's "Answers" included evidence that the Virginians were devoting increased energies to the production of non-tobacco products for the export market. Yet, with each proof that tobacco planting was no longer the exclusive concern of Virginia's planters, Gooch reaffirmed that tobacco was still the dominant product.

Six of the twenty "Answers" which Gooch gave in his first report to the Commissioners in 1730 dealt with trade and commerce. Clearly tobacco was still the major export sent to England at this time. In addition, Gooch reported with some optimism that the bounties for naval stores recently announced by the Admiralty appeared to be stimulating an increase in the production of pitch, tar and turpentine in Virginia. In this way, he hoped that the colony might contribute to the effort which aimed at ending the empire's long dependence upon the Baltic monarchies for these strategic goods.

At the same time Gooch acknowledged that there had been a recent attempt to market wheat in Portugal; the effort had failed and was now discontinued. Similar efforts to trade with the Dutch Caribbean colonies of Surinam and Curaçao, along with the French islands of Guadalupe and Martinique had also been suspended. Only an occasional shipload of grain sent to Surinam remained as a vestige of these interests. A modest trade in corn, peas and candle wax to Madeira was continuing, however, in return for that island's wines.¹⁷ In short, Virginia's commerce was still directed primarily to England.

TABLE 4.1

Trade Statistics from Governors' Reports, 1730-1763 (£ *Sterling*)

Commodities	1730	1742	1744	1747	1749	1755	1763
Naval Stores		2,670	2,835	1,667	4,000	4,000	2,548
(barrels)		8,000	8,500	5,000	10,000	10,000	5,524
Iron Ore		4,500	3,500	3,500	20,000	20,000	2,820
(tons)		1,500	700	700	4,000	4,000	470
Skins	1,500	2,000	2,000	2,000	-	20,000	-
(units vary)							
Wheat	2,500	2,000	2,000	1,000	5,000	5,000	1,524
(bushels)	20,000	20,000	20,000	10,000	40,000	40,000	15,240
Corn	3,000	5,600	5,000	2,800	-	12,500	7,790
(bushels)	40,000	112,000	100,000	56,000		250,000	155,815
Beef & Pork	3,750	44,000	44,000	25,000	60,000	60,000	343
(barrels)	3,000	20,000	20,000	10,000	30,000	30,000	7,360
Staves & Lumber	1,000	150	150	100	10,000	10,000	10,540
Wax, Snake-root, Ginsings	2,250	400	400	200	2,500	2,500	-
SUBTOTAL	14,000	61,320	59,883	36,267	101,500	134,000	44,804
Tobacco	176,755	130,000	170,000	216,000	300,000	200,000	223,840
(hhds)	27,726	34,000	34,000	36,000	50,000	50,000	22,384
TOTAL	190,755	241,320	227,883	253,276	401,500	334,000	268,644

Source: See text notes 16, 22 and 23.

N.B. 1763 represents six months only.

In contrast with this neat mercantilist assessment of Virginia's trading economy, Gooch continued his report with a description of the trades with other British colonies. In these markets, no less than £1,000 worth of Virginia's lumber products --masts, yards, clapboards, shingles and staves-- were sold each year. Beef and pork exports amounted to 3,000 barrels annually while 60,000 bushels of wheat and corn were also being sent to other colonies. Furs, sassafras and snakeroot also passed in intercolonial trade. The total value of all these products Gooch estimated to be £12,000.¹⁸ An estimated export of 28,000 hogsheads of tobacco during the same period with a value of £150-200,000 suggests that Virginia's non-tobacco products accounted for 6.5%-8.7% of the export earnings.¹⁹ In 1730 Andros' earlier judgement that these productions were "inconsiderable" was still valid.

Gooch presented his second report to the Commissioners in 1734, but unlike his earlier efforts, this document lacks the details which permit an accurate assessment of Virginia's exports during the year. Nevertheless, it is evident that the relative mix of products had changed little. Iron ore was now being mined and smelted in quantities great enough to warrant its export, but evidently Gooch considered this not worthy of mention. Instead, he concluded, "our exports for Great Britain are all the labor of the Inhabitants and their Negroes on tobacco, pitch, and tarr, and such skins and Furrs as are purchased from the Indians...."²⁰

A very abbreviated report was offered by Gooch in 1739 and, although it was not a formal set of "Answers", it did

acknowledge that iron exports had climbed to 1,500 tons that year, while the tobacco crop was 33,300 hogsheads.²¹ Given that other exports held approximately the same level as they had in 1730, even the addition of iron exports would not have resulted in any major shift in the export economy. It seems likely that Virginia's non-tobacco products accounted for no more than 8.4% of the total value of the colony's exports at the end of the decade.²²

The 1740's, as documented in Gooch's reports, were years of dramatic change in Virginia's export economy. In all, he produced six sets of "Answers" --three during peacetime and three spanning the period of King George's War. The first of these came in 1741 and like that of 1734 cannot be neatly broken apart into specific evaluations of the various commodities produced for export. It has not been included in Table 4.1 and will be considered separately. The reports of 1742 and 1743 are exact duplicates, including the arithmetical errors of the clerk who prepared them in the first instance.²³ Nevertheless, the statistics they contain, when properly tabulated and compared with those derived from the "Answers" of 1744, 1747 and 1749, suggest that a move away from tobacco as an all-pervasive staple crop was beginning.

Between 1730 and 1742/1743 tobacco exports increased by 21.4% or about one-fifth. At the same time corn and wheat exports doubled while pork and beef production quadrupled. Even with a slight improvement in tobacco prices as opposed to no gains in the sale prices of grains and animal products, the overall effect was dramatic. The value of non-

tobacco products had increased threefold and now accounted for 25.4% of Virginia's total export earnings.

The war which continued during the second half of the decade had an effect on the export economy, but Gooch's final report of 1749 suggests that this was not permanent. At the beginning of the war, tobacco prices dipped slightly, although the volume exported remained constant. The result was a slight increase in the relative value of the non-tobacco portion of the export earnings which rose to 26.5%.²⁴ By 1747, however, conditions changed sharply as tobacco production increased in response to rising prices while grain and meat exports fell off. This was caused by no sudden fall in prices, but rather by the conditions of the war itself. Arthur P. Middleton has shown that even with increased convoy protection from the Royal Navy, the tobacco fleet suffered great losses during the war years.²⁵ With no convoy protection of any kind available for shipping bound for the West Indies --the major market for the colony's grain and meat-- it should be little surprise that Virginians chose to avoid these trades for the duration. With the return of peace in 1749, the balance of tobacco and non-tobacco exports returned to its previous level. While prices and production increased in all categories, the combined non-tobacco earnings again rose to 25.3%.²⁶

In spite of his own calculations demonstrating the continuing growth of the non-tobacco agriculture in the Virginia economy, Gooch consistently tried to downplay this fact in his reports to the Commissioners. In his 1730

report he characterized the growth of all crops other than tobacco as "not considerable." In 1741 he lists them as "Hardly worth mentioning." Finally in 1749 Gooch held that the trade of Virginia outside of tobacco was "so inconsiderable and uncertain ... as not to be worth the notice."²⁷

Whether the Commissioners took Gooch at his word or examined his figures is uncertain, but there appear to have been no complaints forthcoming about his management (or lack of it) of the Virginia economy during his tenure as governor. Indeed, the Board could hardly complain about a 69.7% increase in the value of the tobacco produced, even if it was aware that this was in conjunction with a growth in other agricultural sales of 625%.²⁸ For the moment at least all parties concerned with Virginia's economy were pleased.

When Governor Robert Dinwiddie prepared his "Answers" to the Board's "Queries" at the beginning of 1755, conditions in the colony had changed dramatically. The onset of another war, this time on the very borders of Virginia, had depressed tobacco prices by at least a third. At the same time the production of food products nearly tripled even though there had been no advance in farm prices. Since the combined value of Virginia's non-tobacco exports now represented 40% of the colony's total export earnings, Dinwiddie made no attempt to continue the polite fiction that trade in these products was really inconsequential.²⁹ Two years later, not in a set of formal "Answers" to the Board, but in an appeal for more naval protection for the colony, Dinwiddie declared that it was not only 100,000 hogsheads of tobacco

that were at stake, but "Grain, Pitch, Tarr and other Produce to a great Value" as well. In Dinwiddie's mind, at least, tobacco was not the sole product of interest in the Virginia economy.³⁰

The forthright manner in which Dinwiddie characterized the changes which had come about in Virginia's agricultural economy was not continued by his successor. Instead Governor Francis Fauquier's report of September 1763 fell back upon the style of rhetoric common to Gooch's reports. Subtle changes had occurred during the decade of the 1750's, however, which Fauquier could neither minimize nor hide. First, he openly cited the Naval Lists as his source of information and suggested to the Commissioners that this was the best source available. Second, while he concluded that "the Inhabitants seem contented with their staple tobacco," he went on to complain that they "cannot as yet be brought to cultivate those articles for which the Society for the Encouragement of Arts and Manufactures in London offers us [?] large premiums."³¹ Although Fauquier gives no hint as to the "articles" that the Society had in mind, his remark is significant. It would appear that after five decades of official encouragement of the tobacco trade --even to the detriment of other economic endeavors in the colony-- the Board was coming to accept and perhaps encourage the situation in which tobacco was losing its exclusive claim upon the energies of Virginia planters. Unfortunately Fauquier made no further comprehensive "Answers" to the Board which might have illuminated the extent to which this was a permanent shift in policy.

The statistics which Fauquier offers cover only the six month period in the middle of the year which makes it difficult to estimate the true size of the exports he discusses. It is obvious that tobacco production for the whole year would have been at least 50,000 hogsheads. Moreover, its price had climbed steadily since 1755 and was more than double what it had been at the time of Dinwiddie's report. Grain and meat prices, however, remained at approximately the level of 1755. Since the majority of produce exports occurred in the January-March quarter, a part of the year not included in Fauquier's estimate, it is difficult to tell whether they had increased any, if at all, since the 1755 level. If one argues that the proportions of all the commodities Fauquier mentions remained constant over the year as a minimum estimate of export production, the value of non-tobacco products would be 17.0%, well below even the 1730 level.³²

The last set of "Answers" given by a colonial governor to the Commissioners' "Queries" was that prepared by Governor John, Earl Dunmore in May 1774.³³ They are at one time both the least useful and the most suggestive of all the "Answers" that were prepared during the colonial period. Like Thomas Lee, Dunmore gave no statistics, but chose to reference the Naval Lists for all three of the questions dealing with trade and shipping. He did, however, offer a casual estimate of the total value of Virginia's exports which he set at slightly more than one million pounds sterling. Besides tobacco this included corn, wheat, lumber and cotton.³⁴ In making

these statements, Dunmore's tone was neither hesitant nor defensive. He merely stated what, in Virginia at least, was an accomplished fact: diversification of the economy, albeit on a limited scale, had been accomplished. Moreover, whether Dunmore was aware of it or not, the value of the colony's exports had nearly doubled in the short span of eleven years.³⁵

The Governors and Their Answers to the Board of Trade

Taken as a group, the thirteen reports prepared by Virginia's governors between 1696 and 1774 confirm three observations. First, prior to 1750 the governors did not (perhaps would not) acknowledge the existence of precise statistics by which to measure the value of Virginia's exports. Second, with the exception of Governor Dinwiddie, they made positive statements to the Board of Trade that there were no significant exports other than tobacco. Third, and perhaps paradoxically, they all offered evidence to suggest that non-tobacco products not only existed, but were increasing in importance within the export economy. It has been suggested that these contradictions were consciously included by the governors in an effort to please all parties which might read their reports.

The removal from office of three governors between 1698 and 1721, at least in part for their actions regarding the regulation of the colony's trade, must have stood as a warning for the six governors who served from then until the Revolution. At the same time, since the downfall of each of the three governors could be linked to the activities of the Blair faction in Virginia politics, it should be no surprise

that the other three governors who held office before Blair's death in 1743 should have been especially sensitive to planter opinion. Lastly, although the English merchants may have seemed far away, their complaints against the trade and economic policies undertaken by the Virginia legislature with the governors' consent came back to haunt more than one chief executive.

The possibility of paranoia on the part of the governors seems well founded, but if this was the case, two questions remain to be answered. First, it must be explained why the governors included any information at all which might counter their assertions that tobacco was the only export of value. Second, it needs to be demonstrated that the estimates of the trades which they did include satisfied the members of the Board. These questions may be answered by considering two additional documents to which the Commissioners had access during the eighteenth century.

In 1721 the Council for Trade and Plantations was asked by the Privy Council to prepare a comprehensive report on the state of the colonies for the King. This they did by making extensive reference to statistics gathered by the Commissioners of Customs detailing the state of England's import trades. The value that this report placed upon the Virginia and Maryland trade was £251,000.³⁶ Pitch, tar, staves and furs were mentioned as Virginia exports but the conclusion of the Council was that Virginia's economic "dependence [was] almost wholly on the produce of tobacco."³⁷ In 1740, Robert Dinwiddie, while still serving as Surveyor-

General of the Customs for the Southern Districts of America, made a similar report to the Council for Trade and Plantations. His findings regarding the value and character of the Virginia trade confirmed those made in the earlier report. It was Dinwiddie's estimation that Virginia's exports had an average value of £250,000 per year and this was earned chiefly from tobacco.³⁸ Thus, when the Council received reports from the governors, it had two bench marks against which they could be judged. Each report suggests a value for the Virginia trades which reference to Table 4.1 shows the governors' statistics confirmed. Had the governors offered no value for the trade, or had the value they offered differed significantly from those figures the Council already had, the actions of the governors would have been called into question. Moreover, each of the governors reported that the Virginia trade, however it was broken down, was still dominated by tobacco. This too the Council's other data confirmed.

If the ability to express the proper attitudes towards Virginia's economy --whatever they might have been-- had been enough to avert a crisis, then the evidence of the "Answers" could be used to argue that a revolution should never have occurred. The attitudes that were expressed by the governors, however, had less and less to do with the reality of Virginia's agriculture and trade as the eighteenth century progressed. In spite of the English merchants' desires, and the Board's demands, the governors were unable to control what the planters produced. But to demonstrate this

does not explain what significance the non-tobacco agriculture really had in the Virginia economy as the eighteenth century progressed. To do that it will be necessary to find an estimate of the value and quantity of these products which is independent of both the governors' and the Council's calculations. As Thomas Lee first suggested in 1750, these can be computed from the Naval Lists. In the chapter that follows such a calculation will be presented and evaluated in light of what the governors had offered in their "Answers" as the official view of the colonial economy.

NOTES

CHAPTER 4

¹Thomas Lee, "Answers to Queries Regarding the Present State of the Colony," September 29, 1750, C.O. 5/1327, 105-113. Public Record Office.

²Lee was commissioned Naval Officer November 3, 1710 upon the resignation of his father, Richard Lee, who had held the post since April 20, 1697. H.R. McIlwaine, ed., The Executive Journals of the Council of Virginia, 6 vols., (Richmond, 1925-1945), III, 263; I, 364. Hereafter cited as EJC. After Thomas Lee became a member of the Council, his brother Henry Lee became the Naval Officer of the South Potomac District. Ibid., III, 263. Henry Lee died sometime after March 25, 1747, the date of the last Naval List which he signed. C.O. 5/1445, 47. Richard Lee succeeded his father Henry Lee to the South Potomac post, although his commission has not been located. His first surviving Naval List is dated June 24, 1749. C.O. 5/1445, 48. There are no extant Naval Lists for the South Potomac District for the period March 1747-March 1749.

³Lee, "Answers," C.O. 5/1327, 110.

⁴Commissioners for Trade and Plantations to Governor Francis Nicholson, November 4, 1702, C.O. 5/1360, 320-326, which is given in a long abstract in W. Noel Sainsbury, et al, eds., Calendar of [British] State Papers, America and West Indies, (London, 1860-), 1702, #1117. Hereafter cited as CSPC. "Order of the Council of Virginia to Collectors and Naval Officers," August 26, 1703, EJC, II, 333. "Commission and Instructions to the Earl of Orkney for the Government of Virginia," (as copied from the Randolph Ms in the Virginia Historical Society), Virginia Magazine of History and Biography XXII(1914), 20. This copy of Orkney's "Instructions" was notarized April 20, 1722, but the section dealing with the Acts of Trade was prepared in April 1715, and it does not reflect the changes brought about by the Act of Union with Scotland. Nevertheless, the section dealing with the preparation of Naval Office Lists would have been applicable in 1750.

⁵Blair's first victim, Governor, Sir Edmund Andros, was removed in 1698. Blair's charges against him are found in "Some of the Chief Grievances of the Present Constitution of Virginia, with an Essay towards the Remedies thereof," which he prepared for John Locke, a member of the Council for Trade and Plantations, in August 1697. This is reprinted in full in Michael G. Kammen, ed., "Virginia at the Close of the Seventeenth Century, An Appraisal by James Blair and John Locke," VMHB LXXIV(1966), 141-169. These charges were subsequently enlarged upon in Henry Hartwell, Edward Chilton,

and James Blair, The Present State of Virginia and the College, Hunter D. Farrish, ed., ([London, 1727] Williamsburg, Va., 1940, rpt. 1964). This manuscript was presented to the Commissioners in October 1697, but it was not printed until 1727. In both works Andros is accused of making the plural appointment of members of the Council as Collectors and Naval Officers. Neither Blair nor Hartwell, who were also Councillors, shared in these appointments.

Andros was followed by Francis Nicholson who was governor from 1698 until his removal in 1705. Although Nicholson had been Blair's choice in 1698, and had appointed Nathaniel Harrison, Blair's brother-in-law, as a Naval Officer, they became enemies by 1704 when Nicholson fired Harrison and ceased to support Blair's policies as Commissary and President of the College of William and Mary. Blair's charges against Nicholson are found in Samuel C. McCulloch, ed., "The Fight to Depose Governor Francis Nicholson -- James Blair's Affidavit of June 7, 1704," Journal of Southern History, XII(1946), 403-422.

Governor Edward Nott arrived in Virginia in 1705 and died in August 1706 before he had had any opportunity to quarrel with Blair. Edmund Jennings, the President of the Council and acting governor from 1706 until 1710 was a member of Blair's faction and thus had no trouble with Blair. Alexander Spotswood, Blair's third victim, was governor from 1710 until 1721. It is hard to document Blair's expressions of animosity towards Spotswood, although the causes are clear. Spotswood fired Nathaniel Burwell, another Blair relative, from the post of Naval Officer of the York District in 1719 to make way for his own confidant, William Robertson, the Clerk of the Council. EJC, III, 512. Blair and his faction were also in opposition to the Tobacco Act of 1713 which was pushed through Virginia's assembly with the strong support of Spotswood. Leonidas Dodson, Alexander Spotswood, Governor of Colonial Virginia, 1710-1722, (Philadelphia, 1932), 51-57. Spotswood also quarreled with Blair over the appointment of judges to the newly created Court of Oyer and Terminer. Spotswood sought to use these posts for patronage beneficial to himself while Blair and his group wanted them to be given to Councillors. Richard L. Morton, Colonial Virginia, 2 vols., (Chapel Hill, 1960), II, 472-474.

Like Nott, Governor Hugh Drysdale died in office in 1726 while he was still on good terms with Blair. Sir William Gooch, Blair's last opponent served from 1727 until 1749, and thus outlived Blair who died in 1743. Gooch, however, wisely avoided quarreling with the aged Blair, believing he could not have much longer to live. Parke Rouse, Jr., James Blair of Virginia, (Chapel Hill, 1971), 247.

⁶The order to diversify the Virginia economy was common to the governor's instructions during the seventeenth century. See for example clause #7, "Instructions for Governor [Sir George] Yeardley," April 19, 1626, C.O. 5/1354, 257-264, abstracted in CSPC-1574-1660, 79-80; clause #27, "Instructions for Sir William Berkeley, Esq.," August 9, 1641, C.O. 5/1354, 219-236, printed in VMHB, II(1894), 281-288; clause #2, "Instructions for Sir William Berkeley, Governor of Virginia," September 12, 1662, C.O. 5/1354, 265-276, printed in VMHB, III(1895), 15-20. For a general discussion of the effort to diversify the economy in the later part of the seventeenth century, see Harold L. Hitchens, "Sir William Berkeley, Virginia Economist," William and Mary Quarterly, 2nd ser., XVIII(1938), 158-173, and Sr. Joan deL. Leonard, "Operation Checkmate: The Birth and Death of a Virginia Blueprint for Progress, 1660-1676," WMQ, 3rd ser., XXIV(1967), 44-75. See also John C. Rainbolt, From Perscription to Persuasion: Manipulation of Seventeenth Century Virginia Economy, (Port Washington, NY, 1974), passim.

⁷Governor Sir William Berkeley, "Answers to Inquiries from the Lords Commissioners of Foreign Plantations," June 20, 1671, C.O. 1/26, #77i which was reprinted by William Waller Hening, ed., The Statutes at Large, Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia, (Richmond, 1819-1823, rpt. 1969), II, 511-520. Another copy is found in Virginia Historical Register, III(1850), 6-13. It is mentioned, but not calendared in CSPC-1669-1674, #565i. While this document is similar to the "Answers" to "Queries," it appears to be an isolated occurrence, not common to the methods of the Commissioners. It is also impossible to make anything more than a very general assessment of the Virginia economy from Berkeley's answers. Silk, the commodity that Berkeley lauds greatly in his report never flourished in Virginia without heavy government subsidies.

⁸Wilcomb E. Washburn, The Governor and the Rebel, A History of Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia, (Chapel Hill, 1957), 139-152.

⁹Governor Thomas, Lord Culpeper estimated the revenue to the Crown from tobacco to be at least £50,000 in 1633. Culpeper to the Commissioners for Foreign Plantations, September 20, 1683. C.O. 1/48, #11 which is given in a long abstract in CSPC-1681-1685, #1258 and reprint in full in VMHB, III(1894), 225-238. Culpeper's estimate is probably on the low side since it is based upon approximately 15,000 hhds. of tobacco, while the crop of 1675 was 23,036 hhds. Robert Beverly, "Collection of Virginia Accounts," June 1675, C.O. 5/1355, 73.

¹⁰Governor Edward Nott to the Council for Trade and Plantations, December 24, 1705. C.O. 5/1315, #11, given in extended abstract in CSPC-1704-1705, #1534. Council of

Trade and Plantations to Governor Edward Nott, March 11, 1705/6. C.O. 5/1362, 6-8, abstracted in CSPC-1706-1708, #149.

¹¹For example the Commissioners for Trade wrote to Governor Seymour of Maryland, March 26, 1707, "Tho' the encouragement of the production of naval stores in the Plantation be[ing] of the highest importance to England, yet it is not fitting to be encouraged in those places which are proper for the production of tobacco...." C.O. 5/726, 427-443, abstracted in CSPC-1706-1708, #825.

¹²Leonard W. Labaree, Royal Government in America, (New York, 1930), 231. For Perry's testimony on May 10, 1717, see Journal of the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations Preserved in the Public Record Office, (London, 1920-1938), III, 229. Hereafter cited as JBT.

¹³For a complete review of the Board's relationship with the Privy Council see Oliver M. Dickerson, American Colonial Government, 1696-1765: A Study of the Board of Trade in Its Relation to the American Colonies, Political, Industrial, Administrative, (New York, 1912, rpt. 1962), 81-107.

¹⁴Labaree, Royal Government, 434-438. Leonard W. Labaree, ed., Royal Instructions to British Colonial Governors, 1670-1760, (New York, 1935), #82.

¹⁵Commissioners of Trade and Plantations to Governor Sir Edmond Andros, September 24, 1696, C.O. 5/1359, 15-18, abstracted in CSPC-1696-1697, #265. "Answers of Sir Edmond Andros to Queries Sent by the Council of Trade and Plantations," April 22, 1697, C.O. 5/1309, #16i, abstracted in CSPC-1696-1697, #956i. Andros expanded his "Answers," July 1, 1697, C.O. 5/1309, #24, abstracted in CSPC-1696-1697, #1131.

¹⁶"Reply of the Council of Virginia to the Enquiries of the Council of Trade and Plantations," May 7, 1707, C.O. 5/1316, #16i, abstracted in CSPC-1708-1709, #216i.

¹⁷"Lieutenant Governor Gooch Replies to Queries by the Council of Trade," July 23, 1730, C.O. 5/1322, 68-73v, abstracted in CSPC-1730, #348i. The bulk of the trade material is located in Query VI.

¹⁸Ibid., Query VIII.

¹⁹This estimate is based upon the assignment of £14,000 as the maximum value of the non-tobacco exports. Of the goods for which Gooch suggests a value, he gives a range of £10,000-12,000. It is unlikely that the other goods he mentions --the furs, snakerool, sassafras, and other lumber exports-- exceeded £2,000 in value. The tobacco estimate is based upon the known collections of the two shilling impost.

Edmund Morgan, American Slavery American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia, (New York, 1975), 416n40, calculates that in 1698-1699 80% of the two shilling impost collections came from the tobacco duty, while the rest came from the 15d/ton and 6d/poll imposts. My calculations using these and other years given in the "Byrd Accounts" suggests that 81% is a more appropriate value. Hence if the two shilling impost for 1730 is £3,458.55 (C.O. 5/1322, 206,207), 81% is £2,772.6 or 27,726 hhds of tobacco. This works out to 23,567,355 pounds of tobacco using Gooch's average of 850 pounds/hhd. (Gooch to Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, February 22, 1738/9, C.O. 5/1324, 156). Given a minimum price for tobacco of 1.5d/pound (Melvin Herndon, The Sovereign Remedy, Tobacco in Colonial Virginia, (Williamsburg, 1957), 48), the value would be £147,256. From Anne Bezanson, Prices in Colonial Pennsylvania, (Philadelphia, 1935), 363, 364, 268, 274, a range of prices from 15-17s/Cwt (1.8-2.04d/pound) for the years 1727-1731 produces a value range of £176,755-200,322.5.

²⁰Gooch to Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, May 24, 1734, C.O. 5/1323, 120.

²¹Gooch to Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, February 22, 1738/9, C.O. 5/1323, 156, given the 1738-1739 tobacco crop as 33,300 hhds.

²²At 850 pounds/hhd, this is the equivalent of 28,305,000 pounds. At 2d/pound, the 1739 price (Herndon, Sovereign Remedy, 48), it had a value of £235,875. Using the £14,000 calculated in note 18 for non-tobacco products other than iron, and taking 1,500 tons of iron (Gooch, "A State of the Colony and Its Trade as it Stand at Present," July 3, 1739, C.O. 5/1324, 167-168) with a value of £5/ton (William Byrd, "A Progress to the Mines in the Year 1734," The Prose Work of William Byrd, ed. by Louis B. Wright, (Cambridge, Mass., 1966), 348), this gives £7,500. The totals being £21,500 out of £257,375 coming from non-tobacco products.

²³Governor William Gooch, "Answers to Queries," August 26, 1741, C.O. 5/1325, 42-49; "Replies to Queries of the Board of Trade," August 11, 1742, C.O. 5/1325, 113-119; "Replies to Queries from the Board of Trade," August 22, 1743, C.O. 5/1326, 13-16.

²⁴Governor William Gooch, "Replies to Queries from the Board of Trade," December 21, 1744, C.O. 5/1326, 101-110; "Answers to Queries from the Board of Trade," April 20, 1747, C.O. 5/1326, 235-244; "Answers to Queries," 1749, [endorsed, "rec'd 7 May 1750"], C.O. 5/1327, pt.1, 78-83. A poorly transcribed version of the 1749 "Answers" was printed in VMHB, III(1895), 113-123.

²⁵ Arthur P. Middleton, "The Chesapeake Convoy System, 1662-1763," WMQ, 3rd. ser., III(1946), 192-194.

²⁶ Gooch, "Answers," 1749, C.O. 5/1327, pt. 1, 83.

²⁷ Gooch, "Replies," 1730, C.O. 5/1322, 72; "Answers," 1741, C.O. 5/1325, 46; "Answers," 1749, C.O. 5/1327, pt. 1, 80.

²⁸ This computation is based upon the following values:

	<u>1730</u>	<u>1749</u>	<u>% change</u>	<u>annual increase</u>
Tobacco:	176,755	300,000	69.7	2.8%
Other exports:	14,000	101,500	625.0	11.0%
TOTAL:	190,755	401,500	110.5	4.0%

Source: 1730; see note 22; 1749: Gooch, "Answers," see note 26. Percent change calculated as:

$$P = \left(\frac{n_2 - n_1}{n_1} \right) * 100$$

Annual increase (rate of growth) calculated as:

$$R = \left[t_2^{-t_1} \sqrt{\frac{n_2}{n_1}} \right] - 1$$

²⁹ "Report from Governor [Robert] Dinwiddie on the Present State of Virginia," January 1755, R.A. Brock, ed., The Official Records of Robert Dinwiddie, (Richmond, 1883-1884, rpt, 1971), I, 380-390, especially 386.

³⁰ Dinwiddie to Henry Fox, Esq., January 4, 1757, Ibid., II, 577-578. Fox was Paymaster-General of the Forces. Dinwiddie also made the same statement to the Lords of Trade and the Lords of the Treasury, although with slightly different wording, in letters of the same day. Ibid., II, 575-576, and 576-577.

³¹ Governor Francis Fauquier, "Answers to Queries," January 7, 1763, C.O. 5/1330, 261-284, especially 267.

³² Ibid., 269.

³³ John, Earl Dunmore, "Answers to the Heads of Inquiry relative to the present State and Condition of H.M. Colony of Virginia in America," March 18, 1774, C.O. 5/1352, 5-15.

³⁴ Ibid., 11.

³⁵ This is assuming that the total value of the 1763 exports was approximately double that given by Fauquier for six months, or about £540,000. Dunmore's estimate of

£1,000,000 (C.O. 5/1352, 11) is substantiated by an account of colonial trade printed in the Virginia Gazette, Pinkney, September 29, 1774 which values Virginia's exports for the year at £1,040,000.

³⁶Council of Trade and Plantations to the King, September 8, 1721, C.O. 324/10, 296-431, printed in extended abstract in CSPC-1721, #656. The Virginia and Maryland imports into England were valued at £250,994.10.6 (see printed version, p. 421).

³⁷Tobacco was valued at £236,588.18.1, Ibid., 421.

³⁸"Report of Robert Dinwiddie to the Lords of Trade -- on the Trade of the British Empire in America," April 29, 1740, C.O. 322/8, #N. 45. printed in full in William A. Whitehead, ed., The Archives of New Jersey, 1st. ser., (Newark, NJ, 1882), VI, 83-91. The estimate of Virginia's produce is at p. 87 in the printed version.

CHAPTER 5

"How Much and How Many?": The Export Trade of Virginia

While Virginia's governors and the Board of Trade debated the terms of a proper policy with respect to the colony's trade, and the British merchants tirelessly lobbied to protect their interests, the colonial planters continued to earn their livelihoods from the produce of their acres. Since Virginia's economy was dominated by farmers, most of the cash crops had to be sold in the export market. Thus, a reasonable estimate of its economic output can be determined from the evidence found in the Naval Office Lists. In spite of the claims made to the contrary by various governors, the picture which emerges from this evidence is one of increased production of the traditional crops, the introduction of new crops, and regional specialization in the variety of crops grown.

Because of the poor condition of many of the Naval Lists, which was discussed in Chapter 1, it is difficult to develop statistical information for many aspects of the economy at fixed points in time. For the period before 1727 this is especially true because of two additional problems. First, due to the great hiatus between 1706 and 1727, not to mention the many smaller gaps in between, it is impossible to construct a complete sample of all the districts only in 1701 and then not again until 1727. Second, the data drawn from

the 1701 lists is further limited by the fact that quantities of exports were not mentioned in all cases for items other than tobacco.¹ Even after 1727 gaps continue to occur in many years and it has been necessary in several cases to resort to adjusted averages compiled from evidence spread over several years. Nevertheless, the years included in the analysis between 1733 and 1773 have been chosen for their comparability (in so far as the Naval Lists permit) with the evidence presented in the previous chapter which was drawn from the governors' "Answers to Queries."

The issues of commodity prices-current, fluctuating rates of sterling exchange, and the general inflationary trends during the eighteenth century have further complicated the attempt to produce truly comparable measures of export values over the course of the century. For the period after 1720 both a standardized price series and a wholesale price index are available for Philadelphia prices, and these have been employed in an arbitrary attempt to produce comparability.² Unfortunately, the only evidence relative to commodity prices for 1701 which is currently available is a series of prices drawn from a variety of Virginia sources and based on a severely limited number of observations.³ Moreover, there is not enough data currently available which could be employed to link these prices into the post 1720 price index.⁴ Rather than attempt an unnatural linking of these pieces of evidence, a compromise solution has been employed which splits the analysis of the export data into three parts. The first of these deals with the period 1701-1727; the second examines

the changes in the economy during the period 1727-1733 which might be linked to the tobacco inspection legislation passed in 1730; and the third details the clearly documented patterns of growth and diversification which occurred after 1733.

The Domination of Tobacco: 1701-1727

At the beginning of the eighteenth century tobacco was clearly the life-blood of Virginia's export economy. In 1701, alone, nearly 20.5 million pounds of tobacco were sent from Virginia to England.⁵ Nevertheless, the colonial planters were already aware of the possibilities of producing other crops for export. The urge to sell grain away to the West Indies and New England was apparently so great during the 1690's that legislation had to be passed embargoing further exports lest Virginians face a severe food shortage at home.⁶ This law had been renewed in 1700 and was supposed to continue until 1705, but periodic proclamations from the governor calling for its better enforcement suggest that it was, for the most part, ignored.⁷ Table 5.1 clearly shows that the Naval Officers of all of the Virginia districts, with the exception of South Potomac, paid little heed to the law. Corn, wheat, and even some flour were shipped openly from their districts.⁸ Pork, beef, shingles, and even some tar were also exported in 1701, but the combined value of all of these products was so small as to constitute not even 1% of the total value of the colony's 1701 exports.⁹

By 1727 the combined effect of a long war (1701-1713) followed by a period of rapid expansion in land and slave

TABLE 5.1
Exports 1701 and 1727

Product	Amount Exported in 1701	Rate	Total Value (Va. money)	Percent of total	Amount Exported in 1727	Rate	Total Value (Pa. money)	Percent of total
Tobacco	20,547,950 lbs.	1.2d	£ 102,739	99.4	25,303,850 lbs.	2.1d	£ 226,090	86.8
Corn	735 bu.	18d	145		112,783 bu.	2s	11,391	
Wheat	259 bu.	30d	157	.3	18,541 bu.	3.3s	3,031	5.9
Flour	4 bar.	a)	2		37 bar.	a)	25	
Peas/beans					9,847 bu.	2s	985	
Pork	97 bar.	35s	170	.2	4,662 bar.	47.8s	11,140	4.3
Beef	11 bar.	35s	19		68 bar.	32.0s	109	
Pitch					1,234 bar.	18.4s	1,135	
Tar	20 bar.	12s	12	.1	3,261 bar.	18.0s	2,935	3.0
Staves	25,060	£4/M	100		568,625	£5.3/M	2,985	
Iron					86 tons	£6.25	537	
TOTAL			£ 103,344	100.0			£ 260,363	100.0

Source: Export data: C.O. 5/1441, 1442, 1443. 1701 prices: See text note 9; 1727 prices: Anne Bezanson, Prices in Colonial Pennsylvania, (Philadelphia, 1935) Table 10.

Note: a) Flour is priced at the equivalent of 4.5 bu. of wheat per barrel.

holdings (1714-1727) produced a new market situation which proved to be a turning point in Virginia's economy. Landholdings had increased by almost 60%, while the number of tithable laborers was up 98%.¹⁰ Although tobacco exports reached an all time high of 25 million pounds, this was an increase of only 17% since 1701.¹¹ Clearly, other forms of agriculture had begun to have an impact upon the colony's export production.

Given the tentative nature of the evidence regarding non-tobacco crops exported in 1701, it would be fruitless to attempt any calculations measuring the extent of their growth. Nevertheless, the gross increase in exports as reported in Table 5.1 is suggestive. Grain exports appear to have increased a hundredfold; naval stores a hundredfold; and meats fiftyfold. In terms of their relative value within the cumulative total of 1727 exports, non-tobacco products had also made significant gains. In 1701 tobacco had accounted for more than 99% of the value of all of Virginia's exports. In 1727 tobacco earnings made up only 87% of the total.¹² The bulk of Virginia's export earnings still came from tobacco, and would continue to do so for many years, but even at this early date, it is clear that there were alternatives to tobacco planting, and a significant number of Virginians were taking advantage of them.

The Tobacco Inspection Controversy: 1727-1733

Between 1727 and 1730 the price of tobacco fell in all markets between 15% and 25% while the volume of exports fell off by 20%-30%.¹³ The Virginia Assembly with the blessing of

Governor Gooch enacted legislation in 1730 calling for mandatory tobacco inspection, and the immediate destruction of all such tobacco as was not of a sufficient quality as to be "merchantable."¹⁴ The aim of the inspection law, as Gooch quite frankly explained to the Board of Trade, was to improve the quality and hence the market price of Virginia's tobacco, and only incidently to reduce the quantity of the export.¹⁵ Although modern scholars have questioned Gooch's sincerity as well as that of the larger planters who dominated the House of Burgesses, the evidence from the Naval Lists tends to support the colonials rather than the modern cynics.¹⁶

After 1731, the year inspection went into effect, prices did increase slightly in both the Dutch and the Philadelphia markets. They did not reach and maintain pre-1727 prices, however, until after 1738. In Virginia where most of the smaller planters sold their tobacco directly to British consignment merchants, however, prices only dipped briefly in 1729 and 1730. By 1732 they had returned to 1727 levels, but they never rose beyond this plateau for the rest of the colonial period.¹⁷ What is more pertinent to the view of the scholars, however, is the fact that by 1733 the volume of tobacco exports had returned to its 1727 level. Thereafter it continued to grow slowly but steadily throughout the colonial period.¹⁸ If, on the one hand, the real aim of the Burgesses was to limit the production of tobacco, they failed. On the other hand, if their purpose was no more than they claimed --to increase tobacco prices by improving the quality of their product-- they achieved some modest success.

This second conclusion, when considered in conjunction with a look at the rest of the export sector, is further strengthened. Table 5.2 outlines the evidence. In terms of cumulative value, that is the total value of the combined export product, tobacco lost more ground between 1727 and 1733. Its share of the export earnings dropped from about 87% to slightly under 76%.¹⁹ Yet, in terms of gross output, the grain and meat exports registered no uniform gains. Corn exports were up about 17%, but these were balanced by a fall in the wheat export of about the same amount. Pork, beef and tar exports all increased by factors of from two to ten, but these were offset by drops in pitch and beans.²⁰ Only the surge in pig iron exports could be viewed as a real advance in Virginia's economy, but the continued unsteadiness of the production of this commodity prevented it from becoming a true staple export.²¹ In the long run, the inspection legislation neither increased tobacco prices dramatically by curtailing production, nor did it apparently foster the shift of more planter investment into non-tobacco products. The basis for commercial enterprise in non-tobacco products had been laid some time before 1730, but the time when real profits could be earned from these crops was still a decade away.

The Growth Phenomenon: 1733-1773

Between 1733 and 1773 both the quantity and the value of Virginia's exports increased substantially. The tobacco crop, which continued as the colony's largest single export, increased from approximately 32,000 hogsheads annually to 80,000 hogsheads, or by about 150%.²² At the same time, its

TABLE 5.2
Virginia Exports 1701-1773
(selected)^{a)}

Year	Tobacco hds.	Iron tons	Corn bu.	Wheat bu.	Staves	Pork bar.	Beef bar.	Pitch bar.	Tar bar.	Peas/beans bu.	Shingles M
1701	40,587		1,735	1,559	25,060	97	11		20		
1727	38,929	86	112,783	18,541	568,625	4,662	68	1,234	3,261	9,847	
1733	30,313	1,529	131,800	15,217	699,293	8,412	899	18	9,597	3,087	
1739	35,051	1,143	116,148	48,028	831,109	10,608	433	486	10,478	3,699	
1744	42,963	877	117,490	15,533	866,783	9,399	1,600	669	11,785	10,116	1,516
1749	47,620	719	195,650	10,723	1,990,273	6,333	351	754	10,459	9,872	1,330
1752	54,382	1,258	309,974	40,178	2,071,161	8,017	760	975	15,123	2,031	2,705
1758	49,268	2,953	275,374	11,932	2,801,797	13,598	60	399	22,444	14,580	1,211
1768	36,840	1,016	430,142	140,252	688,008	1,882	25	469	5,225	19,474	2,693
1773	80,140	2,000	556,672	254,517	2,400,000	4,000	500	500	16,000	10,000	4,000

Source: C.O. 5/1352, 1441-1450, C.O. 390/5, C.2/passim, C.16/1, T.1/482-512

Notes: a) In addition to these major exports, oats, bread, flour and a variety of other commodities were exported in some years. All data for 1773 are composites from the Naval Lists and C. 16/1. The quantities of tobacco for 1727 and 1768 were adjusted in conjunction with the accounts of the tobacco revenue, C.O. 5/1321:33,58, 1347:19,95.

value when converted to a sterling base and adjusted by the wholesale price index grew by 284%.²³ Corn, the largest produce crop, grew in volume by 226% and increased in value by 537%.²⁴ Wheat, however, was the crop which most nearly came to rival tobacco in the minds of many planters. Harvests of this cereal grain increased by 870% while its cash value in the economy increased by an incredible 3,235%.²⁵ Overall, the adjusted sterling value of Virginia's major exports increased by 410%.²⁶

Despite the difficulties in determining the exact causes of this expansion, something can be said about its chronology. Reference to Table 5.2 which summarizes the export volumes of the major crops between 1733 and 1773 shows that most of the expansion in the cultivation of non-tobacco crops took place between 1744 and 1758. While tobacco output increased by only 16% during these years, corn exports grew by 134%. Assuming for the moment that wheat cultivation in the late 1750's was closer to the 1752 level than to the recorded 1758 level --say 40,000 bushels-- then wheat cultivation also grew about 150%.

Two factors suggest the logic for both the decline in tobacco and the apparent setback to wheat cultivation in 1758. First, the years 1744-1758 were marked by almost continuous warfare between England and France. In spite of the fact that an ever larger part of the tobacco export was bound for Scotland and was thus less subject to the dangers of war, French privateers took an immense toll on this staple.²⁷ Convoy protection for the tobacco fleet was never adequate

and many planters simply chose to eschew tobacco for the duration.²⁸ By contrast, the intercolonial market in grain became more attractive during the wars. In the mid-1750's when a large British military force was stationed in North America, grain was in great demand. Similarly, while the voyage to the West Indies was more than usually hazardous during wartime, the profits to be gained by delivering grain to the hungry islanders were substantial.³⁹

The second circumstance which affected the growth of both tobacco and wheat during the later 1750's was the prevalence of droughts in Virginia.³⁰ The tobacco crops of 1755 and 1758 which were shipped in 1756 and 1759 respectively were among the smallest on record.³¹ Wheat, likewise, suffered from the lack of water while only the hardier corn survived the inclement weather. The fourfold jump in stave production, which occurred at the same time, can also be linked to the increased number of farmers seeking a salable commodity in the woods when it could not be found in the fields.

Economic Diversification in Virginia

Economic growth came not only from the expanded production of the basic staples, but from the increased growth and marketing of the lesser crops as well. Here the numbers become less precise as the units of recording become many and uncertain, but some estimates can be presented by way of example. Perhaps 3,000 bushels of field peas and beans were exported in 1744. By 1773 this had increased to the neighborhood of 20,000 bushels for an increase of about 570%. Oats, which were not exported at all before 1739, were shipped to

the West Indies at the rate of 20,000-25,000 bushels annually by 1773.³² The exact number of skins shipped in any one year is uncertain, but the volume of this export probably increased from about 20,000 items to 170,000 items while its value increased tenfold from £2,000-£20,000.³³ Shingles and staves showed the largest increase among the minor exports with an increase from 699,000 to about 6.4 million items annually. Overall, the share of the total value of all exports contributed by the minor products increased from about 7.5% to 11%.

Like the major export crops, much of the expansion of the minor products came during the troubled 1740's and 1750's. The export of wood products, however, grew more rapidly after 1768, probably in response to the diminishing wood lots in England brought about by the increased demand for industrial charcoal there. The tremendous increase in British shipping in general after the peace of 1763 also meant an increased demand for wooden containers for packaging of all kinds. Whatever the reason, Virginia's woodcutters were responsive to the demand.

The Regionalization of Production

The most interesting aspect of the economy documented by the Naval Lists is the regionalization of Virginia's export productions. Because of the more extensive records relating to tobacco it is possible to trace the regionalization process back as far as 1676.³⁴ Unfortunately, the earliest evidence regarding the other crops begins only in 1701. Not until 1733, by which time regionalization was

already well underway, can meaningful measures be attempted.³⁵ Nevertheless, it is clear that by the eve of the Revolution not all sections of the colony were alike in terms of their export produce.

Table 5.3 documents the shift in the concentration of tobacco production during the century before the Revolution. At the beginning of the eighteenth century the James River Valley (including both the Upper and Lower Districts) dominated tobacco production, but not by a very large margin. The York and Rappahannock Valleys contributed almost as much tobacco to the total crop while the lesser populated region of the Potomac produced considerably less. The Eastern Shore, known as the Accomack District, produced very little tobacco and by 1739 would produce virtually none at all.³⁶

From the turn of the century until approximately 1740 the center of tobacco production was in the York and Rappahannock regions, and consisted primarily of the highly valued sweet scented variety.³⁷ Tobacco export from the Lower James District practically ceased during these years as the planters of this long-farmed region began to shift more and more to raising grains as their soils yielded ever smaller crops of tobacco.³⁸ In this region, perhaps more than any other, the quality controls of the inspection legislation may have hastened the shift away from what was surely known to be a poorer quality of tobacco.³⁹

Beginning about 1740 and continuing into the 1760's tobacco production became continuously more concentrated in the Upper James River District. Two factors seem to explain

TABLE 5.3
Distribution of Tobacco Exports by District
(Percent of Hogsheads)

Year	Upper James	Lower James	York River	Rappa-hannock	South Potomac	Accomack	Source ^{a)}
1676	12.1	26.4	28.6	15.0	12.8	5.1	C.O. 5/1355:73
1686	21.3	16.2	24.3	20.0	14.0	4.2	Blathwayt Papers, BL 89
1699	18.3	14.8	28.8	20.4	15.8	2.0	Byrd Accounts
1701	19.7	10.5	29.5	26.7	12.4	1.2	C.O. 5/1441
1707	10.5	14.6	45.6	22.3	3.9	3.3	C.O. 5/1317:27,28
1715	11.6	8.9	38.1	29.0	10.9	1.5	C.O. 5/1317:241,275
1724	18.0	9.3	32.2	20.3	15.8	4.4	C.O. 5/1319:220
1727	19.0	11.1	36.6	21.9	11.3	0.1	C.O. 5/1442, 1443
1733	24.9	3.1	34.9	15.6	20.9	0.6	C.O. 5/1442, 1443
1739	19.6	2.1	33.6	30.6	14.1	0.0	C.O. 5/1444, 1445, 1446
1744	27.8	2.6	27.1	27.2	15.3	0.0	C.O. 5/1444, 1445, 1446
1749	24.6	5.9	27.2	27.1	15.2	0.0	C.O. 5/1444, 1445, 1446
1752	30.0	4.5	24.1	28.5	13.0	0.0	C.O. 5/1444, 1445, 1446
1758	27.1	3.9	24.3	27.6	17.1	0.0	C.O. 5/1447
1763	37.4	10.5	19.7	19.8	11.8	0.8	C.O. 5/1330:323,324
1768	37.4	10.1	14.6	20.4	17.5	0.0	C.O. 5/1450
1773	38.7	14.7	12.1	19.5	15.0	0.0	C.O. 5/1352:40, 126

Note: a) 1707,1715,1763 and 1773 are drawn from Revenue Accounts. See Chapter 4, note 19. Blathwayt Papers are in Huntington Library, San Marino, Ca. (MF, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation). Byrd Accounts, Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, XXIV(1916), 405.

this movement away from the former centers of production in the York and Rappahannock Valleys. First, as was documented in Chapter 2, it was during this period that the rapid expansion into the Piedmont region of the Upper James River Valley occurred. The rich, undepleted soils of this area yielded great crops of tobacco while those of the more heavily farmed Tidewater areas continued to lose their fertility when planted in tobacco.⁴⁰ Second, it was at this time that the Scottish tobacco traders began buying immense quantities of Orinocco tobacco, the variety grown in the Piedmont, for resale to France.⁴¹ The sweet scented tobacco of the York and Rappahannock Valleys could only be sold in the smaller, if higher priced, market centered in London.⁴² By 1771 these factors caused the Upper James District to become the dominant center of the tobacco export trade.

If the chronology is less ancient regarding the regionalization of crops other than tobacco, the process is, nevertheless, equally in evidence. Table 5.4 disaggregates the annual export totals by individual naval districts. As the long planted soils of the Lower James District yielded smaller and smaller crops of tobacco, corn and wheat proved to be more attractive substitutes for the region's farmers. This District accounted for about 50% of the total Virginia corn export during the entire period after 1733. At no time did its nearest competitor produce more than 18% of the corn crop.⁴³ Most significantly, in 1768 when only first-quarter data is available for the Lower James District, its corn exports were only 6,000 bushels short of the entire year's

TABLE 5.4

Major Exports by Naval District

Year	District	Tobacco hhds.	Iron tons	Corn bu.	Wheat bu.	Staves	Pork bar.	Beef bar.	Pitch bar.	Tar bar.
1701	Upper James	8,014		135	1,000	12,000		11		
	Lower James	4,271		900	54	13,060	90			20
	York	11,981		700	205					
	Rappahannock	10,841		a)	a)					
	South Potomac	5,022								
	Accomack	458			300		7			
	TOTAL	40,587		1,735	1,559	25,060	97	11		20
1727	Upper James	7,412		15,050	8,585	120,241	1,027			
	Lower James	4,336		58,968	5,514		3,276	54	546	3,621
	York	14,260	21	15,428	2,300	180,121	140	8	688	
	Rappahannock	8,519	68	3,000		144,083	a)		a)	
	South Potomac	2,528 b)		4,000	168	84,780	89			
	Accomack	12		16,783	1,974	39,400	130	6		
	TOTAL	37,067	86	112,783	18,541	568,625	4,662	68	1,234	3,621
1733	Upper James	5,180 c)	40	7,819	300	117,040	310			900
	Lower James	936		64,800	9,165		7,704	877	16	7,987
	York	10,585	893	20,327	50	312,532	186			710
	Rappahannock	4,729	369	8,291	680	122,891				
	South Potomac	6,339	227	7,758	710	126,300	138			
	Accomack	176		22,805	4,312	20,530	74	22		
	TOTAL	27,945	1,529	131,800	15,217	699,293	8,412	899	16	9,597

NOTES: a) uncertain quantity.
 b) returns from 2 quarters only; estimate total export 38,929 hhds.
 c) returns from 3 quarters only; exact return from Webb's County Justice, 338: 30,313 hhds.

TABLE 5.4 (cont'd)
 Major Exports by Naval District

Year	District	Tobacco hhds.	Iron tons	Corn bu.	Wheat bu.	Staves	Pork bar.	Beef bar.	Pitch bar	Tar bar.
1739	Upper James	6,833		20,237	17,841	162,099	1,635	37		127
	Lower James	723	1	59,155	21,866	194,725	8,648	394	476	10,341
	York	11,784	646	14,726	7,481	180,120	300	2	10	10
	Rappahannock	10,716	385	5,500	300	187,965				
	South Potomac	4,945	110	7,800	780	102,200	15			
	Accomack			8,770	100	4,000	10			
	TOTAL	<u>35,051</u>	<u>1,142</u>	<u>116,148</u>	<u>48,028</u>	<u>831,109</u>	<u>10,608</u>	<u>433</u>	<u>486</u>	<u>10,478</u>
1744	Upper James	11,958		20,830	8,234	127,900	1,720	284		
	Lower James	1,113		66,330	497	247,260	7,420	516	466	11,222
	York	11,643	356	18,280	3,722	181,200	226		203	515
	Rappahannock	11,687	476	6,250	508	216,762				
	South Potomac	6,571	45	5,300	2,572	93,661	33			46
	Accomack	d)	d)	d)	d)	d)	d)	d)	d)	d)
	TOTAL	<u>42,963</u>	<u>877</u>	<u>117,490</u>	<u>15,533</u>	<u>866,783</u>	<u>9,399</u>	<u>800</u>	<u>669</u>	<u>11,783</u>
1749	Upper James	11,700	59	18,938	3,851	340,860	247	100	342	
	Lower James	2,840	40	135,011	6,535	629,293	5,976	201	412	10,459
	York	12,930	333	35,790	320	288,770	110	50		
	Rappahannock	12,916	272	3,911	15	264,690				
	South Potomac	7,234	15	2,000	2	125,800				
	Accomack	d)	d)	d)	d)	d)	d)	d)	d)	d)
	TOTAL	<u>47,620</u>	<u>719</u>	<u>195,650</u>	<u>10,723</u>	<u>1,990,273</u>	<u>6,333</u>	<u>351</u>	<u>754</u>	<u>10,459</u>

NOTES: d) no returns for Accomack, 1744, 1749.

TABLE 5.4 (cont'd)

Major Exports by Naval District

Year	District	Tobacco hnds.	Iron tons	Corn bu.	Wheat bu.	Staves	Pork bar.	Beef bar.	Pitch bar.	Tar bar.
1752	Upper James	16,289	144	15,434	1,550	547,477	838	43	166	1,069
	Lower James	2,456	40	162,492	28,729	636,555	6,736	711	803	12,048
	York	13,100	385	48,591	7,375	302,600	400	6	6	2,006
	Rappahannock	15,492	306	20,225	1,700	369,315				
	South Potomac	7,042	30	18,472	824	195,264	18			
	Accomack	3		44,400		19,950	25			
	TOTAL	54,382	1,258	309,974	40,178	2,071,161	8,017	760	975	15,123
1758	Upper James	13,346	831	40,718	5,365	814,451	3,771			
	Lower James	1,912		149,986	1,927	790,974	9,454		274	18,215
	York	11,987	1,152	28,837	16	435,500	144	10	125	2,389
	Rappahannock	13,578	690	30,399	3,924	422,722	57			1,840
	South Potomac	8,445	280	21,284	500	338,150	172	30		
	Accomack			4,150	200			20		
	TOTAL	49,268	2,953	275,374	11,932	2,801,797	13,598	60	399	22,444
1768	Upper James	16,520	310	84,650	91,302	495,766	57		346	96
	Lower James	177 e)		78,774	23,278	482,098	1,618	25	123	4,129
	York	6,272	272	78,108	6,201	160,900	4			1,000
	Rappahannock	8,956	292	83,764	5,273	288,210	183			
	South Potomac	4,908 f)	142	27,702	1,525	169,755	5			
	Accomack	7		77,144	12,673	55,460	15			
	TOTAL	36,840	1,016	430,132	140,152	1,652,599	1,882	25	469	5,225

NOTES: e) Lower James District, first quarter only.
 f) South Potomac District, three quarters only.

TABLE 5.4 (cont'd)

Major Exports by Naval District

Year	District	Tobacco hhds.	Iron tons	Corn bu.	Wheat bu.	Staves	Pork bar.	Beef bar.	Pitch bar.	Tar bar.
1773	g) Upper James	12,018		24,672	41,094	214,200	177			
	Lower James	1,426		54,872	59,748	566,944	1,243	184	7	4,818
	York	h)	h)	h)	h)	h)	h)	h)	h)	h)
	Rappahannock	2,176	13	15,011	486	46,430				
	South Potomac	1,843		2,447	47,989	27,180				
	Accomack									
	TOTAL	17,463	13	107,467	157,397	862,454	1,434	184	7	4,818

NOTES: g) Upper James District, first quarter only, all other districts, fourth quarter only.
 h) no returns exist for York District.

SOURCES: 1701: C.O. 5/1441.
 1727: C.O. 5/1442, 1443.
 1733: C.O. 5/1442, 1443, George Webb, Office of the Justice of the Peace, Williamsburg, 1736), 338 gives the total tobacco export for 1733.
 1739: C.O. 5/1444, 1445, 1446.
 1744: C.O. 5/1444, 1445, 1446.
 1749: C.O. 5/1444, 1445, 1446.
 1752: C.O. 5/1444, 1445, 1446.
 1758: C.O. 5/1447.
 1768: C.O. 5/1450.
 1773: T.1/482-512.

export by its nearest competitor, the Upper James District. At the same time, this District in only the first quarter surpassed the exports of all the remaining districts for the year.⁴⁴

The situation with wheat was not nearly so clear-cut. While the Lower James District led wheat exports in most years, it was outstripped by the Upper James District by a factor of four in both 1744 and 1758. The growth of wheat in the other Districts was even more sporadic. In 1733 the York District exported only fifty bushels, while six years later it exported over 7,000 bushels. Then in 1744 the amount fell back to less than 500 bushels. In the Accomack District the same sort of thing occurred, although here production had jumped to a substantial 55,000 bushels by 1768.⁴⁵

The export of pork, beef, pitch and tar centered in the Lower James District throughout the last 40 years of the colonial period. Pitch and tar were readily produced from the pitch pines which thrived along the edges of the Great Dismal Swamp which engulfed much of the land in the District.⁴⁶ They found a ready market in the West Indies which was the destination of much of the Lower James District's shipping. Likewise, pigs foraged handsomely along the borders of the swamp. They, too, were a popular food item in the diets of slaves on West Indian sugar plantations.⁴⁷ In fact, the corn, packed pork, and lumber exports of the Lower James District accounted for nearly all the food consumed and much of the shelter built for the slaves of the West Indies.⁴⁸

Additional lumber and iron exports tended to follow the

tobacco trade, as both were prized for their usefulness as a form of ballast which could also be sold off at the end of the voyage to Britain.⁴⁹ This is evident from the fact that, while iron production centered near the falls of the James and Rappahannock Rivers, with lesser amounts mined in the hills along the Potomac River, the bulk of the iron exported was shipped from the York River District.⁵⁰ Since most of Virginia's iron was purchased in the London Market, it should be no surprise that it was usually shipped there in conjunction with the high-priced sweet scented tobacco produced in the York District for the London market.⁵¹ Thus, it might be said that iron was the only product of Virginia whose export became regionalized not because of factors related to production, but because of factors related totally to its sale.

The Governors and the Naval Lists

Having considered the kinds and quantities of exports actually shipped from Virginia during the latter years of the colonial period, the question arises as to the accuracy of the gubernatorial reports discussed in Chapter 4. A comparison of the exports in Table 5.2 drawn from the Naval Lists and those in Table 4.1 drawn from the governors' "Answers" shows that, in general, the governors did give correct information to the Board of Trade. Several points should be emphasized, however,

First, the governors tended to overstate the amount and usually the value of the tobacco exports. Second, they tended to understate the amount of the grain exports. This was especially true in the years 1742-1755, although the corn

estimates are usually closer to being correct than are the wheat estimates.⁵² In 1749 and 1755 the wheat figures given by Governor Gooch appear to be greatly inflated. Third, his estimates of pork and beef exports bear no similarity with reality.⁵³ Fourth, iron exports, even if the governors included both pig and bar iron, are over-rated.⁵⁴ Fifth, lumber exports are generally undervalued.⁵⁵ The conclusion must be drawn that the governors probably "pushed up" their estimates of those products which went to Britain, and in which they believed the Board would be most interested, at the same time that they "pushed down" their figures concerning items which they believed were of less importance. In spite of these distortions of their data, the picture they presented indicates the same view as that which comes from the Naval Lists: the Virginia economy was growing and diversifying over the course of the century.

The Changing Balance in the Virginia Economy

During the years between 1733 and 1773 Virginia's economy not only grew and diversified, its balance changed as well. Table 5.5 lists the value and percent of total value of the major exports of 1733 and 1773. Unlike the data in Table 5.1, all the prices used in the 1733-1773 table have been standardized to sterling values to assure comparability. The exchange rate for these years was 165 and 165.8 respectively, while the Philadelphia wholesale price index advanced from 59.7 to 90.0.⁵⁶

Tobacco, the most valuable single item in Virginia's export economy throughout the colonial period, accounted for

TABLE 5.5
Exports 1733 and 1773

Product	Amount Exported in 1733	Rate	Total Value (Pa. money)	Percent of total	Amount Exported in 1773	Rate	Total Value (Pa. money)	Percent of total
Tobacco	24,250,200 lbs.	2d	£ 202,127	76.6	80,140,000 lbs.	1.7d	£ 560,980	61.0
Corn	131,800 bu.	2s	13,180		566,672 bu.	3s	70,834	
Wheat	15,217 bu.	3s	2,283		254,217 bu.	7s	95,331	
Bread/flour				5.9	2,901 tons	50s/cwt.	72,525	26.3
Peas/beans	3,087 bu.	2s	309		10,000 bu.	3s	1,500	
Oats					10,000 bu.	3s	1,500	
Pork	8,412 bar.	55s	23,133		4,000 bar.	85s	17,000	
Beef	899 bar.	40s	1,798	9.5	500 bar.	55s	1,375	2.0
Pitch	18 bar.	16s	15		500 bar.	14s	350	
Tar	9,597 bar.	12s	5,758		16,000 bar.	15s	12,000	
Turpentine					2,250 bar.	18s	2,025	
Staves	699,000	£3.5/M	2,447	7.2	2,400,000	£6/M	14,400	8.5
Shingles					4,000,000	£6/M	24,000	
Iron: pig	1,529 tons	£7	10,703		1,500 tons	£8.25	12,375	
bar					500 tons	£27	13,500	
Skins	a)		2,000	.8	a)		20,000	2.2
TOTAL			£ 263,753	100.0			£ 919,675	100.0

Source: Export data: C.O. 5/1444, 1445, 1352, 1450, T.1/482-512. Price data: Anne Bezanson, Prices in Colonial Pennsylvania, (Philadelphia, 1935), Table 10.

Notes: a) Values of skins of various kinds and quantities based on estimates made for the Board of Trade, C.O. 390/5.

better than 99% of the export value in 1701.⁵⁷ In 1733, tobacco still accounted for about 77% of the value of all the colony's exports. By 1774, tobacco value had fallen to about 61%. The major elements contributing to this change in the economic balance were the grain crops and the lumber exports. Corn and wheat, which had produced a mere 6% of the export revenue in 1733, accounted for 26% of the export earnings in 1773. Stave sales had represented a little less than 1% of the export value of 1733. In 1773 staves, along with their new companion export, shingles, accounted for just over 4% of the total earnings. Other, minor exports had increased in total value from 7% to 11%.

More striking than the simple expansion --to use the economists' technical term-- in the Virginia economy is the actual growth that is achieved during the last forty years of the colonial period. The annual rate of expansion in export values was 4.4% per year. By contrast, the advance in the wholesale price index was only 1.05 per year.⁵⁸ Thus price inflation was not responsible for more than 25% of the expansion in value. Moreover, during the same period, the tithable population of Virginia, that is its labor force, increased at an annual rate of only 2.6%.⁵⁹ While the reasons for this considerable increase in productivity remain unclear, the conclusion is inescapable. Colonial Virginia not only experienced economic expansion during the eighteenth century, it achieved real economic growth as well.

In no sense could the mix of exports in 1773 be called an integrated, or even a balanced, economy. Regional special-

ization was apparent in some areas, but this did not necessarily reflect an interactive economy, since each specialization was still closely tied to an external market. Nevertheless, the variety of basic products which appeared in the export market made it possible for a rapidly maturing colony to transform itself into an independent commonwealth.

NOTES

CHAPTER 5

¹The extant Naval Office Lists for Virginia constitute C.O. 5/1441-1450, P.R.O. This series includes lists between 1698 and 1769. Additional lists from the years 1769 to 1774 are found in T. 1/481, 482, 488, 494, 501, 506 and 512. Several lists from 1770 to 1771 are found in C.O. 5/1352. Prior to 1727 many cargo items other than tobacco and Negro slaves were listed by name only. The lists from the South Potomac and Rappahannock Districts for 1701 give cargoes by name only. Some of the 1701 lists from Accomack District include quantities of exports while some do not. All of the 1701 lists from the York River and the two James River Districts give both the name and the amounts of cargoes exported.

²Prices current and exchange rates for Philadelphia have been compiled from newspapers and mercantile accounts beginning in 1720 by Anne M. Bezanson, Prices in Colonial Pennsylvania, (Philadelphia, 1935), Tables 10 and 17. Similar information concerning Virginia is only partially available from the Virginia Gazette beginning in 1736, and the small number of mercantile advertisements make detailed compilations impossible. In short, the Philadelphia series is the best available.

A second rationale for using the Philadelphia price series stems from the pervasive influence that Philadelphia merchants acquired over the Virginia commodity market after 1750. See for example the letters of Robert Pleasants, a Pennsylvania Quaker merchant who moved to the James River in order to superintend his family's interest in the wheat trade. "Letters of Robert Pleasants, Merchant at Curles, 1771-1774," William and Mary Quarterly, 2nd ser., I (1921), 257-274, II (1922), 107-113. See also David Klingaman's "The Development of the Coastwise Trade of Virginia in the late Colonial Period," Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, LXXVII (1969), 26-45.

The price index used throughout this chapter is drawn from Historical Statistics of the United States, from Colonial Times to 1957, (Washington, D.C., 1960), Table Z:336.

³The grain and meat prices used herein are based upon an average of the admittedly sporadic quotations found in extant parish vestry books and county records. Churchill G. Chamberlayne, trans. and ed., The Vestry Book of St. Peter's Parish, New Kent and James City Counties, Virginia, 1684-1786, (Richmond, 1937), 51, 60, 164. _____, The Vestry Book of St. Paul's Parish, Hanover County, Virginia, 1706-1786, (Richmond, 1940), 29, 43. _____, The Vestry Book of Petsworth Parish, Gloucester County, Virginia, 1677-1793, (Richmond, 1933), 12, 23, 31, 120. York County Virginia, "Deeds, Orders,

Wills," vol. 11, (1698-1702), 177-178. Ibid., vol. 12, (1702-1706), 11-12, 59-65, 178-179, 255, 267. All original volumes of the York records are preserved in the Clerk's Office, York County Courthouse, Yorktown, Virginia (microfilms, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation). Official commodity prices as established by law in 1662 and 1682 are found in William W. Hening, ed., The Statutes at Large, Being a Collection of all the Laws of Virginia..., (Richmond, 1819, rpt. New York, 1965), II, 233, 306. For the relationship between official commodity prices and their actual values at the end of the seventeenth century, see William Byrd II, "On Suspending the Laws for paying Debts in Country Commodities of Virginia," in Thomas H. Wynne, ed., History of the Dividing Line and Other Tracts from the Papers of William Byrd of Westover, in Virginia, Esquire, (Richmond, 1860), 160, which is Byrd's testimony to the Board of Trade, c. 1692.

⁴While an effort to establish such a price series for seventeenth and early eighteenth century Maryland is being made by the St. Mary's City Commission, Annapolis, Maryland, as part of its ongoing investigation of the Chesapeake economy, based upon a massive analysis of Maryland probate records, such a project has not been undertaken for Virginia.

⁵This estimate: 20,547,950 pounds, is based upon 40,587 hogsheads of tobacco reported in the Naval Office Lists for 1701 (C.O. 5/1441) at an average weight per hogshead of 500 pounds (see C.O. 5/1441, 204, 239) and 2,544.5 hundredweight of bulk tobacco.

⁶"An Act Prohibiting the Exportation of Indian Corn until the 25th Day of December, 1700," Hening, ed., Statutes at Large, III, 185.

⁷The law was renewed in December 1700 to run until December 25, 1705. Ibid., 200. In April 1700 Governor Francis Nicholson had partially lifted this ban by allowing the export of grain previously sold abroad, but his general embargo on shipping imposed in the spring of 1701 in effect cut off corn exports once again. H.R. McIlwaine, ed., The Executive Journals of the Council of Virginia, (Richmond, 1925-1945), II, 67, 147. It should be noted from the Naval Lists that only in the Accomack and South Potomac Districts is there any evidence that all shipping was halted during the period of the embargoes in the spring and summer of 1701.

⁸C.O. 5/1441, 2, 24, 99, 117-118, 134, 137, 158, 190.

⁹The estimate value of the tobacco export in 1701, £102,739, is based upon the 20,547,950 pounds as calculated in note 5, above, at a rate of 1.2 pence/pound. For tobacco price see note 3, above.

¹⁰Land and Population, 1701-1728:

	<u>1701</u>	<u>1727</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Quit Rent Acres	2,129,550	3,383,085	+58.9%
Tithable Population	24,291	48,248	+98.6%

Sources: 1701: "Civil Lists of 1701," C.O. 5/1312, pt.2, 85-88.

1728: "Civil List of 1729," C.O. 5/1322, 126-134. 1728 data has been substituted for 1727 data because no complete records of tithables are available for 1727. For a discussion of the determination of % change, see above, Chapter 2, note 31 (p.56).

¹¹The estimated tobacco crop for 1727 is 25,303,850 pounds, which was determined as follows. The Naval Lists (C.O. 5/1442, 1443) show an export of 37,067 hogsheads. Given that the South Potomac District, from which the returns from two quarters of 1727 are missing, normally produced about 10-15% of the total Virginia export (see Table 5.3) this total has been adjusted upwards to 38,929 hogsheads based upon the reported collections of the two shilling per hogshead tobacco impost (C.O. 5/1321, 22, 58). For convenience, a hogshead has been assigned an average weight of 650 pounds, although Governor Hugh Drysdale's report on tobacco production in 1724 gives evidence that the actual weight of an average hogshead was nearer to 670 pounds. C.O. 5/1319, 220.

¹²This estimate is based on Philadelphia prices as shown in Table 5.1.

¹³Tobacco Production and Prices, 1727 and 1731:

	<u>1727</u>	<u>1731</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Tobacco Volume (pounds)	25,303,859	20,794,500 (1730)	-17.8%
Virginia Price (Va. pence/#)	1.56	1.32	-15.4%
Philadelphia Price (Pa. pence/#)	2.10	1.60	-23.8%
Amsterdam Price (guilders/Dutch#)	.21	.18	-14.3%

Sources: Tobacco: 1727: C.O. 5/1442, 1443, 1731: C.O. 5/1322, 205-207.

Virginia Prices: John M. Hemphill, "Virginia and the English Commercial System, 1689-1733," (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton, 1964), Appendix II. Philadelphia: Bezanson, Prices in Colonial Pennsylvania, Table 10. Amsterdam: Jacob M. Price, France in the Chesapeake, (Anne Arbor, MI, 1973), 852. 1731 data has been substituted for 1730 because no 1730 prices could be determined for Virginia and Philadelphia. This creates no great distortion since it was the crop of 1730 that was being sold in 1731.

¹⁴"Act for Ammending the Staple of Tobacco, and for Preventing Frauds in His Majesty's Customs," Hening, ed., Statutes at Large, IV, 247-271.

¹⁵Governor William Gooch to the Board of Trade, July 23, 1730, C.O. 5/1322, 52-66.

¹⁶Most scholars now agree that the effect that the act had upon the quantity of tobacco that was exported was minimal. Robert P. Thompson, "The Merchant in Colonial Virginia," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1955), 107-117, argues that Gooch over stated the potential benefits that the act might produce for the colony. David Allen Williams, "Political Allignments in Colonial Virginia Politics, 1698-1750," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1959), 273-274, believes that Gooch was more concerned with the act's potential benefits to him, as governor, in that it created new patronage positions. John M. Hemphill, "Virginia and the English Commercial System," 150, 158-159, suggests most strongly that Gooch and the members of the House of Burgesses were consciously trying to limit the size of the tobacco export, even though they knew that the Crown would disallow such an action if they tried to do it openly.

¹⁷Tobacco Prices, 1733-1775:

<u>Location</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Number of Observations</u>
Virginia 1: "Herndon" (Va. pence/#)	1.50	1.55	4.2	34 years
Virginia 2: "York" (Va. pence/#)	1.44	2.67	3.6	44 years
Philadelphia (Pa. pence/#)	1.52	2.33	3.9	38 years
Amsterdam (guilders/ Dutch #)	.16	.21	.27	44 years

Source: Virginia 1: Melvin M. Herndon, Tobacco in Colonial Virginia, "The Sovereign Remedy", (Williamsburg, 1957), 48-49. Virginia 2: Harold B. Gill, "Tobacco Culture in Colonial Virginia: A Preliminary Report," unpublished Research Report, Research Department, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1972. Appendix: Tobacco Price Series: 1732-1775. All of Gill's figures are drawn from York County Records, the Account Books of the Carter Burwell, Carters Grove Plantation, James City County, or the Vestry Book of Blissland Parish, New Kent County. All prices are for Sweet Scented tobacco which consistently brought higher prices than Orinocco.

¹⁸ Given a 1727 export of 38,929 hogsheads and a 1733 export of 30,313 hogshead, there was an apparent decline of 22% in tobacco exports. Nevertheless, the 150 pound increase in the average weight of a hogshead which occurred during this same period meant an actual export of 25,793,350 pounds, for a gain of 17.4%. The 1739 estimate is based upon 35,051 hogsheads (C.O. 5/1444, 1445, 1446) at 850 pounds each (Governor William Gooch to the Board of Trade, July 1, 1739. C.O. 5/1324, 167).

After 1733 the continuing trend to heavier hogsheads tends to mask the actual extent of the increase in tobacco exports as shown in Table 5.2 since this lists only the number of hogsheads exported. In actuality the 1733 hogshead weighed nearly 1000 pounds, 53.8% heavier than the 1727 hogshead. Thus the real increase in the size of the tobacco export was 216.7%, not 105.9% as would appear from the data in Table 5.2. Thus, the real rate of growth of the tobacco export was 2.48% per year.

¹⁹ It must be stressed that these percents are relative to the total value of the exports within the given year. Converted to sterling money and adjusted by the wholesale price index, the actual values of the Virginia exports were as follows:

Virginia Export Values in Constant £ Sterling: 1727-1733

	<u>1727</u>	<u>1733</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Tobacco	99,932	73,133	-26.4%
Non-tobacco	<u>15,148</u>	<u>22,297</u>	+47.2%
TOTAL	115,080	95,430	-17.2%

Source: Exchange rates (Bezanson, Prices in Colonial Pennsylvania, Table 17): 1727: 150.0, 1733: 165.0.

Wholesale Price Index: (Historical Statistics, Z:336): 1727: 66.3, 1733: 59.7.

Commodity Prices (current Pa. money): Table 5.1 and Table 5.5.

²⁰ The changes in the volumes of the non-tobacco exports between 1727 and 1733 were as follows: corn: +16.9%, wheat: -17.9%, peas/beans: -68.7%, pork: +80.4%, beef: +1222.4%, pitch: -9854.1%, tar: +1943.0%. Source: Table 5.2.

²¹ Pig iron exports increased in volume 1677.9% at the same time that the sterling price increased from £6.25/ton to £7/ton. Thus, while iron accounted for only .2% of the cumulative value of the export product in 1727, it amounted to 4.1% of the cumulative value in 1733, an increase of 1950%

²² The 1733 export of tobacco given in the Naval Office Lists (C.O. 5/1442, 1443) is 27,945 hogsheads. The returns from two quarters of the Upper James River District are missing, but George Webb, The Office and Authority of a

Justice of the Peace, (Williamsburg, 1734), 338, reports the total 1733 export to be 30,313 hogsheads. This is substantiated by the estimate of the October 1733-April 1734 tobacco export drawn from the Revenue Accounts of the Two Shilling per Hogshead export duty, C.O. 5/1323, 131. Using the modified Morgan formula, described in Chapter 4, note 19, this export was estimated to be 993 hogsheads of tobacco. The 1774 value of 80,000 hogsheads is based upon an estimated export of 80,140 hogsheads if the Upper James River District's export of 29,251 hogsheads drawn from Naval Officer Lewis Burwell's Tobacco Manifest Book (Mss in the Virginia State Library, Richmond) is 36.5% of the total Virginia export --the average Upper James export computed from the Naval Lists.

²³Virginia Tobacco Exports, 1733 and 1773 (adjusted f Sterling)

<u>1733</u>	<u>1773</u>	<u>% Change</u>
73,133	303,558	+320.5%

Source: Exchange Rates (Bezanson, Prices in Colonial Pennsylvania, Table 17): 1733: 165.0, 1773: 165.8.
Wholesale Price Index (Historical Statistics, Z:336): 1733: 59.7, 1773: 90.9.

Current Tobacco Values: Table 5.5.

²⁴Corn prices in 1733 were two shillings per bushel and rose to three shillings in 1774. Bezanson, Prices in Colonial Pennsylvania, Table 10.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶The total value of £263,753 in 1733 adjusted to £115,080 while that of 1773, £919,675, became £504,213 sterling.

²⁷Arthur P. Middleton, "The Chesapeake Convoy System," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd ser., III(1946), 192-195. Jacob M. Price, "The Rise of Glasgow in the Chesapeake Tobacco Trade, 1707-1775," Ibid., XI(1954), 187-188.

²⁸During the years 1740, 1744-1747 and 1755-1759, when the French had many privateers at sea, the English import was down sharply. Historical Statistics, Table Z:224. At the same time, Scottish imports fell off only in the years 1755-1759. Ibid., Table Z:234.

²⁹Richard Dunn has calculated that as early as 1660 the sugar planters of the West Indies had all but ceased planting food crops in order to maximize their growth of sugar. Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713, (New York, 1973), 272. Middleton found no evidence of convoy protection on the North America-West Indies route. "Convoy System," 192.

³⁰For a description of these natural calamities, see David Mays, Edmund Pendleton, 1721-1803, A Biography, (Cambridge, Ma., 1952), I, 95-96. See also Richard L. Morton, Colonial Virginia, (Chapel Hill, 1960), 681.

³¹Naval Office Lists for 1756 and 1759, C.O. 5/1445, 1446, 1447. See also Historical Statistics, Tables Z:224 and Z:234.

³²Virtually all of the oats exports came from the Accomack District. See Table 5.4.

³³Skins are variously defined in the Naval Office Lists by the piece, by the pound, and by the barrel. Thus it has been necessary to rely upon the governors' valuations of the skins trade as given in Table 4.1 (p.111). These are substantiated by a report on the fur trade prepared for the Board of Trade in January 1774, C.O. 390/9 by the Inspector General of the Customs.

³⁴The tobacco export for 1676 is given in C.O. 5/1355, 73. Other seventeenth century exports have been calculated by Edmund S. Morgan in American Slavery, American Freedom, (New York, 1975), 415. See Chapter 4, note 19 for a discussion of Morgan's methodology.

³⁵See note 1 for the inadequacies of the early Naval Office Lists. By 1733, it is clear that the tobacco v. grain split in the Accomack and Lower James Districts as compared with the other Districts had already been established.

³⁶See also Paul Clemens, "From Tobacco to Grain: Economic Development on Maryland's Eastern Shore, 1660-1750," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1974), for a discussion of the same phenomenon in Maryland.

³⁷For a county by county breakdown of tobacco types as of 1724, see C.O. 5/1319, 220. From 1676 until about 1750 these two Districts accounted for not less than 43%, and usually over 50%, of the annual tobacco export of Virginia (see Table 5.3). Sweet scented tobacco was consistently valued higher than Orinocco tobacco. G. Melvin Herndon, Tobacco in Colonial Virginia: "The Sovereign Remedy", (Williamsburg, Va., 1957), 20-22.

³⁸Avery O. Craven, Soil Exhaustion as a Factor in the Agricultural History of Virginia and Maryland, 1606-1860, (Urbana, Il., 1925), remains the classic study of this problem. Craven, however, does not acknowledge the early date of the change over to grain which is apparent from the export tallies found in the Naval Office Lists. David Klingaman, "The Significance of Grain in the Development of the Tobacco Colonies," Journal of Economic History, XXIX(1969), 271-272 and 276 argues in favor of an

extensive shift to grain only in the 1760's.

³⁹The Lower James River District tobacco export dropped from 4,336 hogsheads in 1727 to 936 hogsheads in 1733, a decline of 78.4%. See Table 5.4.

⁴⁰Craven, Soil Exhaustion, 52-53.

⁴¹For an extensive treatment of the French market see Jacob M. Price, France in the Chesapeake, (Ann Arbor, MI, 1973).

⁴²Samuel Rosenblatt, "Introduction," John Norton and Sons, Merchants of London and Virginia, (New York, 1968), xii-xiii. See also Jacob M. Price, "The French Farmers-General in the Chesapeake: The Mackercher-Huber Mission of 1737-1738," WMQ, 3rd ser., XIV(1957), 129, 152-153.

⁴³Lower James District corn exports ranged from a low of 49% in 1733 to a high of 69% in 1749.

⁴⁴See Table 5.4 for 1768.

⁴⁵It must be noted that no Naval Lists survive for the Accomack District between 1735 and 1746. Thus the crops of 1739 and 1744 from Accomack might cause the pattern to vary slightly.

⁴⁶The Great Dismal Swamp accounts for about 50% of the total acreage of the Lower James District (1950 data), Raus M. Hanson, Virginia Placenames: Derivations; Historical Uses, (Verona, Va., 1969).

⁴⁷Dunn, Sugar and Slaves, 272-276.

⁴⁸Ibid.,

⁴⁹Walter E. Minchinton, "The Virginia Letters of Isaac Hobhouse, Merchant of Bristol," Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, LXVI(1958), 286.

⁵⁰Although the York District's share of the iron export decreased over time, from a high of 58% of the total iron exported in 1733 to a low of 27% in 1768, it consistently reported the largest single export from any of the Districts. The only exceptions to this were in 1744 and 1768. See Table 5.4.

⁵¹Minchinton, "Hobhouse Letters," 286.

⁵²See Table 4.1 (p. 111).

⁵³Both Gooch's "Answers" of 1749 and Dinwiddie's of 1755 state that the combined pork and beef exports equaled 60,000 barrels (Table 4.1, p. 111). Yet, in no year do the Naval Office Lists give a combined total of these products greater than 13,658 barrels. This later amount comes only in 1758. See Table 5.4.

⁵⁴Neither the iron as recorded in the Naval Office Lists, nor those given by Arthur C. Bining, British Regulation of the Colonial Iron Industry, (Philadelphia, 1933), taken from House of Lords Mss, 185, reach the levels suggested by the governors.

⁵⁵Governor Gooch rated staves and shingles at £3 per thousand pieces. This translates to an export of 50,000 pieces. In 1749 the valuation increased to £5 per thousand for a total of two million pieces. By contrast, the Naval Office Lists show combined exports of 2.3 million pieces in 1744, 3.3 million in 1749, 4.7 million in 1752 and just over four million in 1758.

⁵⁶Exchange Rates: Bezanson, Prices in Colonial Pennsylvania, Table 17. Wholesale Price Index: Historical Statistics of the U.S., Z:336.

⁵⁷See Table 5.1.

⁵⁸The growth rate formula is discussed in Chapter 2, note 27 (p. 56).

⁵⁹For a discussion of population growth see Chapter 2, pp. 35-36.

CHAPTER 6

Merchants and Marketing Systems in Colonial Virginia

The evidence compiled from the Naval Lists makes clear that Virginia's economy continued to rest upon the growth and export of agricultural products throughout the colonial period. This economic reality, as much as British mercantile regulation, demanded that all of the manufactured goods needed for colonial life be imported from the mother country.¹ To purchase these goods, the Virginians had to acquire sterling credits either directly through the tobacco trade or indirectly from the sale of their grain and lumber products for sterling bills of exchange in the West Indies.² In the long run, however, both methods were dependent upon British credit the bulk of which continued to be generated in the tobacco trade.³ Thus, to explain the change in the balance of Virginia's tobacco and non-tobacco exports over the course of the century it is necessary to understand the changes which were occurring in the British marketing system. New methods, designed to better meet the needs and desires of the British merchants produced a new kind of commercial class in Virginia as well.

Two methods of marketing tobacco predominated during the eighteenth century. These were consignment marketing and the direct purchase system.⁴ The former method, which was by far the older of the two, offered the greatest profits both for the planter and the British merchant who acted as

his agent. However, due to its speculative nature and acute sensitivity to subtle changes in the supply and demand curves of the international market, consignment marketing also entailed greater risks. By contrast, the direct purchase system which contracted for quantities and prices in advance offered greater stability which in turn eliminated most of these risks and reduced everyone's costs. Unfortunately for the planter, direct purchase marketing was a sure guarantee of lower prices for his crop, and for the merchant it usually meant greater competition and a smaller though more certain profit margin. Over the long run, the advantages came to outweigh the disadvantages for most Virginians as well as their British associates, so that by the beginning of the Revolution, most of Virginia's crop was being marketed in this fashion.⁵

Consignment Marketing

In the consignment system the English merchant (for this method was almost never used by Scotsmen) was not only the planter's marketing representative, he was his purchasing agent and banker as well. First the merchant chartered one or more vessels which he loaded with the manufactured goods he thought the planter might wish to buy and sent them to the Chesapeake. These goods were delivered to the planter against the credit of his tobacco which he "consigned" to the care of the English merchant who was to act as his agent for the tobacco's sale in the European market. The planter paid the freight, assumed all the risks of the ocean voyage, and agreed to pay all the duties and charges that his crop would

be subject to in England before it could be sold to a British retailer or foreign wholesaler. The English merchant for his part met the cargo at the dock, arranged for its unloading, oversaw its entry with British Customs, and procured its warehousing. The merchant advanced the money for the immediate payment of the duties, or as was more customary, arranged the security to make bond for their payment as soon as the tobacco was sold.⁶ Finally, the merchant sought out the buyer who would give the best price for the crop, arranged the sale, and cleared the debts with Customs. Only then did the merchant take his own commission, deduct the costs of the goods he had already advanced to the planter, and return any remaining balance to the planter's account.

As many historians have pointed out, the system only functioned well if there was a climate of absolute trust between the planter and his agent.⁷ This, of course, depended upon both parties prompt attention to their obligations which was at best difficult in the age of sail. From the point of view of the English merchant, most of the problems arose when the planter abused the credit granted him against the security of his upcoming crop. By custom and necessity the merchant sent goods to the planter one year on the expectation that the following year's crop would cover the debt. All too often, however, the crop did not cover the planter's costs, yet his daily needs demanded that he have more goods sent out to him before the previous orders had been paid for. Thomas Jefferson's lament concerning the inheritance of family debts for several generations was perhaps

the quintessential statement of this problem, however the actual incidence of such extreme cases was very rare.⁸

For the planter, the explanation of Virginians' chronic indebtedness was quite different. He found it in the corrupt practices of the merchants which aimed to keep him permanently in a state of debt-peonage, no matter how good the market for tobacco might become. Some planters were so cynical as to suggest that the greed of the merchants led them into attempts to manipulate the entire market in tobacco to keep the price down, and thus to perpetuate their draining of the planter's life-blood. The intermediate costs of consignment marketing were for these planters no more than "hidden profits" which contributed to the merchants' overall gain.⁹

In 1730 the planters offered The Case of the Planters of Tobacco in Virginia to substantiate their specific charges.¹⁰ These included: fraud in the assessment of so-called "fixed charges" including entry fees and warehousing costs, in the assessment of duties and the application of drawbacks --the portion of the duties refunded upon re-export--, and immorality in their assessment of commissions.¹¹ Examination of these charges with reference to the evidence offered --as well as that found in other surviving consignment invoices-- produces some surprising conclusions.

Table 6.1 classifies a series of tobacco sales into the constituent costs incurred. The first two are sales of Maryland and Virginia tobacco made in 1730. The third is a Virginia sale made in 1737, while the last is a sale made by

TITLE 6.1

Costs of Consignment Marketing (Pence Sterling/Pound of Tobacco)

	1730		1730		1737		1775 (Baylor)						
	(Clemens)		(Gray)		(Gray)		Domestic		Foreign		Draw-back ^{c)}	Adjusted Foreign	
	d/#	%	d/#	%	d/#	%	d/#	%	d/#	%		d/#	%
Duties & Fees: Duties ^{a)}	5.28	70.6	5.28	78.2	5.28	67.1	6.98	60.0	-	-	-	-	-
Fees	-	-	.07	1.0	.10	1.3	.09	.8	.09	1.9	-	.09	1.8
Freight & Handling	.89 ^{b)}	11.9	.94	13.9	.85	10.8	.46	4.0	.51	10.7	-	.51	10.1
Merchant's Commissions	.19	2.5	.17	2.5	.20	2.5	.35	3.0	.14	3.0	.22	.36	7.1
Return to Planter	1.12	15.0	.29	4.3	1.44	18.3	3.74	32.2	4.01	84.4	.10	4.11	81.1
TOTAL SALES PRICE	7.48	100.0	6.75	99.9	7.87	100.0	11.62	100.0	4.75	100.0	.32	5.07	100.0

Notes: a) All duties calculated at effective bonded rates - see Table 6.3.

b) Clemens includes all fees with handling charges.

c) Drawback of 6.98d/# on 5439# of tobacco [i.e. without deducting for clof and tret] but spread over 5200# actually sold.

Source: 1730 (Clemens): Paul Clemens, "From Tobacco to Grain: Economic Development on Maryland's Eastern Shore, 1660-1750," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1974), Table 1.12.
 1730 and 1737 (Gray): Lewis C. Gray, History of Agriculture in the Southern United States to 1860, (Washington, D.C., 1932), 424-425, 224.
 1775 (Baylor): Baylor Papers, Ac.#2257, Box 1, Folder: Sept. 1775, Alderman Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va.

Virginian John Baylor in 1776.¹² Four categories can be isolated: duties, other official fees, freight and handling, and merchant commissions. In each case these have been reduced to fractions of the retail cost in terms of pence sterling per pound of tobacco sold. First, it is obvious that British duties, over which neither planter nor merchant had any real control, accounted for more than half of the retail price.¹³ Second, while official fees increased between 1730 and 1775, on a percentage basis they remained relatively constant in terms of real money paid out on each pound of tobacco. On foreign sales, the increase was less than 1%, while on domestic sales, the fraction of the costs represented by fees actually dropped. Third, handling charges on a pound per pound basis, rather than increasing as the planters often claimed, actually decreased by almost a half penny in real money. On a percentage basis, however, this decrease was less dramatic. Fourth, although the mercantile commission increased by .5% from 1730 to 1775, it still produced an average return of less than a half penny per pound of tobacco sold.

Table 6.2 disaggregates the fees and handling charges in an effort to explain these findings. The decreased impact of these charges stems from the fact that they were assessed on a per hogshead basis. Given the trend to heavier hogsheads over the course of the century, it appears that the doubling of the fees is all but offset by the increase in weight. In the category of handling charges, only the "petty charges" increased by any appreciable amount.¹⁴ Here, as was

TABLE 6.2

Official Fees and Handling Charges (in Sterling Money)
(Paid by Planter in Consignment Marketing)

	Per Hogshead Imported		
	1730 (Gray) f-s-d	1737 (Gray) f-s-d	1775 (Baylor) f-s-d
<u>Official Fees</u>			
Entry & Waiter	0-01-00	0-01-06	0-01-06
Cocquette	0-01-00	0-01-00	0-01-00
Impost (Virginia)	0-02-00	0-01-00 ^{a)}	0-02-00
<u>Miscellaneous Fees</u>			
Maryland Inspection	-	0-02-09	-
Virginia Inspection	-	-	0-06-00
TOTAL FEES	0-04-00	0-06-03	0-10-06
<u>Freight & Handling</u>			
Freight	2-00-00	1-15-00	2-00-00
"Petty Charges"	0-02-02	0-02-01	0-02-11
Porterage & Cooperage	0-02-06	0-03-00	0-02-08
Cartage & Warehouse Rents	0-03-03	0-03-06	0-03-02
Brokerage & Abatement	0-02-00	0-02-00	0-02-00
<u>Miscellaneous Handling</u>			
Postage	-	0-01-00	0-01-00
Cutting	0-02-00	-	-
TOTAL FREIGHT & HANDLING	2-11-11	2-06-07	2-11-09

Conversion of Costs to a Per Pound of Tobacco Shipped Base:

Pounds per hogshead (net)	662	732	1338
Official Fees (d/pound)	.07	.10	.09
Freight & Handling	.94	.85	.46

Note: ^{a)} The 1737 account is from Maryland where the Provincial Impost was only 12d/hogshead shipped.

Source: 1730: Lewis C. Gray, History of Agriculture in the Southern United States to 1860, (Washington, D.C., 1932), 424-425.
1737: Ibid., 224. 1775: Baylor Papers, Ac.#2257, Box 1, Folder: Sept. 1775, Alderman Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va.

the case with the fees, the 33% increase per hogshead was easily offset by the 102% increase in the poundage it contained.

Before one completely dismisses the planters' complaints regarding fixed charges in general, however, three caveats must be considered. The first is that conversion from per hogshead assessment to per pound assessment depends entirely on the weight of the hogshead in question. John Baylor's hogshead used in this example was, perhaps, on the heavy side. The entire Virginia export crop in 1771 averaged only 1053.6 pounds/hogshead, while the York River District, which was the place Baylor commonly shipped from, averaged only 1034.5 pounds/hogshead. That same year the Maryland crop averaged 996.7 pounds/hogshead.¹⁵ Two 1774 samples averaged 1328.5 and 1092.1 pounds/hogshead respectively.¹⁶ The impact of all fixed charges must be viewed in terms of the particular amount of tobacco being sold at the time.¹⁷

A second caveat concerns the question of official perquisites and losses through pilfering. By tradition and under British Common Law certain fees-in-kind were allowed to the Customs' officials and the merchants in order to compensate for the vagaries of the scales and provide samples for prospective buyers. These became formalized as sample, draft, clof, and tret.¹⁸ Consideration of Table 6.3 which traces the history of John Baylor's five hogsheads of tobacco from their presentation at the Customs warehouse to their final sale in England and the foreign market demonstrates how these perquisites were assessed. Upon import 6924 pounds

TABLE 6.3
Rate Structure of Tobacco Duties, 1660-1775 (Pence Sterling per Pound of Tobacco)

Year	Old Subsidy (pd at impt)	Cash Discount	Other Duties	Cash Discount (pd at impt)	Bonded Discount (due w/in 15 mos)	Total Effective Cash Rate	Total Effective Bonded Rate
1660	1	25%	1		15%		1.60
1685	1	25%	4		15%		4.15
1696	1	25%	5		15%		5.00
1703	1	25%	5.33	25%	15%	4.75	5.28
1747	1	25%	6.33	25%	15%	5.50	6.13
1758 ^{a)}	1	25%	7.33	25%	15%	6.25	6.98

Imposition of Tobacco Duties, 1660-1775

1660	Old Subsidy: 5% of official value per the <u>Book of Rates</u> (f0-01-08 per pound):	1d/pound
	Additional Duty:	1d/pound
1685	Impost on Tobacco:	3d/pound
1696	New Subsidy: 5%:	1d/pound
1703	1/3 Subsidy:	1/3d/pound
1747	1747 Subsidy: 5%:	1d/pound
1758	5%:	1d/pound

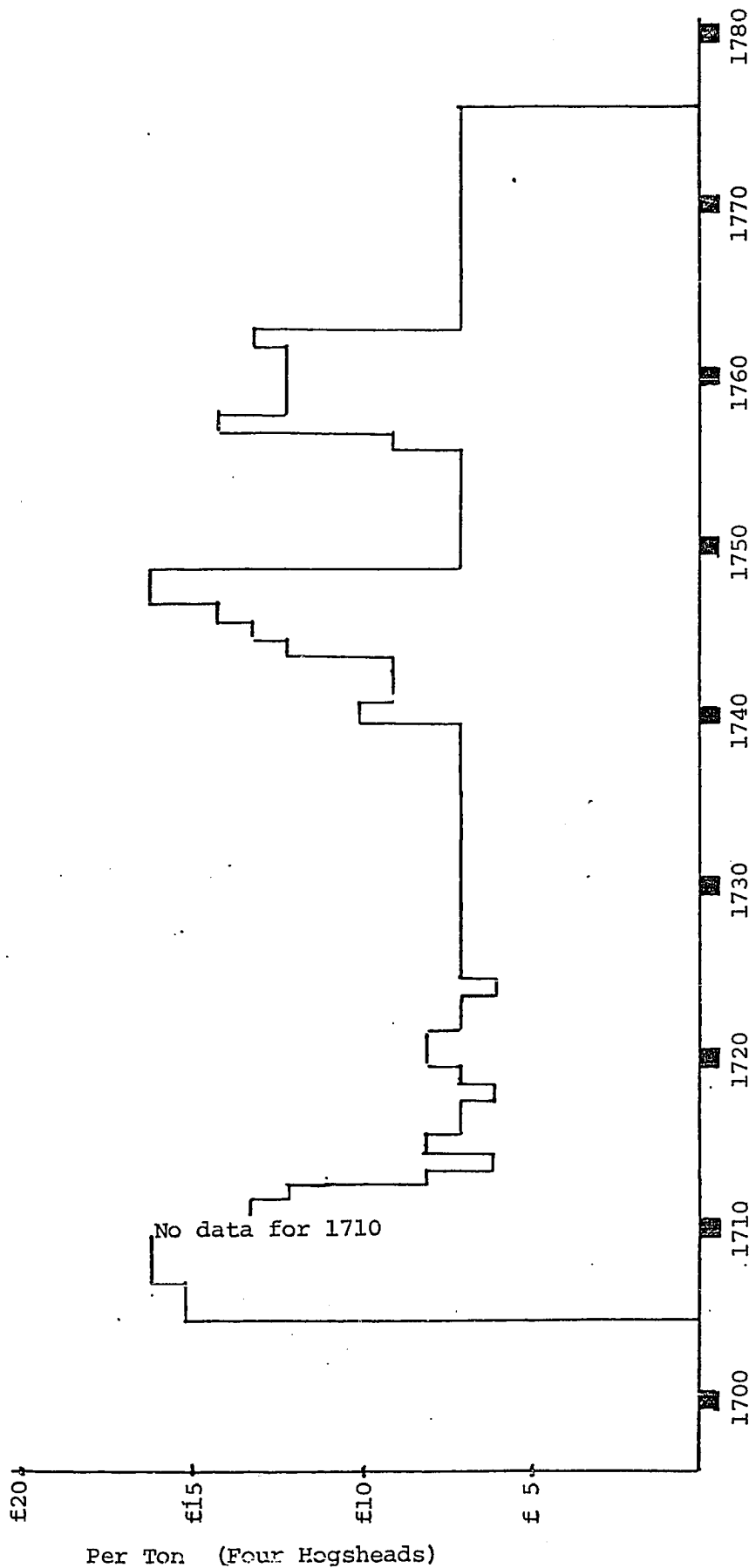
Source: Lewis C. Gray, History of Agriculture in the Southern United States to 1860, (Washington, D.C., 1932), 244-246.

Note: ^{a)} No changes made in rate, 1758-1775.

of tobacco were declared for duties in five hogsheads. Draft at the rate of two pounds per hogshead and sample at the rate of eight pounds were deducted by the Customs' men before the duties were assessed. A total of 6874 pounds were then dutied and stored. At the time of sale 6833 pounds were produced and clof was taken at the rate of two pounds for each three hundred-weight in each hogshead. For the remainder tret was removed at the rate of four pounds for each 104 pounds in the hogshead. Finally, 1338 pounds were sold domestically, while 5200 pounds entered the foreign market.

For Baylor the losses sustained through the exaction of perquisites and simple pilfering were annoying, but hardly catastrophic. The clof and tret on his tobacco amounted to an assessment of 295 pounds while 51 pounds simply "disappeared" in the warehouse --presumably to person or persons unknown, but with nefarious intent.¹⁹ This meant that he was forced to pay £10.1.3 in duties on tobacco that could never be sold to his credit. Sometimes losses of this kind could spell disaster for the planter. In the 1730 example taken from The Case of the Planters, duties had been assessed upon 739 pounds of tobacco, but when the deductions for perquisites, damaged tobacco, and outright losses were made, only 662 pounds remained for sale. The result was a loss of 11 shillings 9 pence sustained by the seller on his hogshead of tobacco.²⁰

The third caveat concerns the component of freight rates as included in the fixed handling charges. Reference to Graph 6.1 shows that while the rate of shipping tobacco



Source: Shepherd & Walton, Shipping and Maritime Trade, (Cambridge, Ma., 1972), 191-192.

GRAPH 6.1 Freight Rates for Tobacco, 1700-1775

from Virginia and Maryland remained a constant seven to eight pounds sterling per ton (counted as four hogsheads no matter how much they actually weighed) during the greater part of the eighteenth century, the rates actually fluctuated wildly during periods of warfare. For at least one-third of the years prior to the Revolution rates were above the amount used in figuring costs in the example cited above.²¹ Moreover, before 1750 neither the average Virginia nor the average Maryland hogshead contained more than 950 pounds while before 1730 the average was probably closer to 500 pounds.²² Thus, it is probable that freight costs were a greater burden upon the consigning planter than these examples would suggest.

In sum, these caveats suggest that the real costs of tobacco marketing for the planter decreased neither continuously nor uniformly as the century progressed. While the weight of the average hogshead did increase making the costs borne by each pound of tobacco go down, individual hogshead weights continued to fluctuate greatly throughout the period. Moreover, while the freight rates remained constant during times of peace, these too were subject to much disruption during the frequent periods of warfare. On balance, the planter's lot was improving, but at any given point in time, he might have had no way to knowing that this was the case.

The charge that the merchants practiced fraud in their accounting for the payment of the British import duties requires special consideration. As Table 6.4 demonstrates, the rate structure of the tobacco duties was extremely com-

TABLE 6.4

Account of John Baylor with Thomas & Robert Hunt of London, 1775

Hhd. No.	Gross Wt. (Cus. H.)	Draft (per Hhd.)	Sample (Hhd.)	Net Duty Weight	Warehouse Loss	Gross Sales Weight	Clof (2#/3Cwt)	Tret (4#/104#)	Net Sales Weight	Market Sold
7	1281	8	2	1271	9	1262	7	48	1207	foreign
8	1402	8	2	1392	10	1382	8	52	1322	foreign
27	1423	8	2	1413	10	1403	8	54	1341	foreign
51	1409	8	2	1399	5	1394	2 ^{a)}	54	1338	domestic
52	1409	8	2	1399	7	1392	8	54	1330	foreign

Weight Loss Between Import and Sale

Hhd No.	Legal Losses		Illegal Losses		Total Loss	
	pounds	%	pounds	%	pounds	%
7	65	5.1	9	.7	74	5.8
8	70	5.0	10	.7	80	5.7
27	72	5.1	10	.7	82	5.8
51	66	4.7	5	.4	71	5.1
52	72	5.1	7	.5	79	5.6
Average		5.0		.6		5.7

Note: ^{a)} This is the value given in the original - no explanation is given as to the discrepancy.

Source: Baylor Papers, Ac. #2257, Box 1, Folder: Sept. 1775, Alderman Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va.

plex; moreover the duties increased as the century progressed. Because of the options granted by the Commissioners of the Customs in the methods by which the duties could be paid, the merchants usually considered them in two parts. First was the Old Subsidy of 1 pence per pound which had to be paid immediately upon import, but was discounted by 25%. The other duties which gradually increased from 4 pence per pound in 1700 to 7.33 pence per pound after 1758 could be satisfied in either of two ways. Cash payment at the time of import brought a discount of 25%, while later payment if secured by a bond and discharged within 18 months, meant a discount of only 15%.²³ Prior to 1723 if the tobacco were re-exported all but a half pence per pound of the Old Subsidy could be drawn back: that is refunded by the government. After 1723, the entire amount of the duties were granted as a drawback.²⁴ Perhaps the merchants had no trouble keeping up with the intricacies of this system; it is clear, however, that most of the planters never mastered it. Their confusion, unfortunately, bred suspicion and eventually a misplaced charge of fraud.²⁵

In spite of the confusion of the planters regarding the operation of the Customs system in general, there were a number of mercantile practices the ethics of which were open to question. Tobacco destined for sale in the domestic market would be entered with all the duties paid in cash with a discount of 25% applied to the entire obligation. The merchant would then charge the planter the bonded rate --that is grant him only 15%-- on the duties paid.²⁶ The merchant's

justification for this was that he had tied up his own capital in the transaction while he searched for an appropriate buyer for the planter's tobacco. The records of at least one London merchant suggest, however, that little if any of the merchant's capital was actually so encumbered. Since a "town sale" of the tobacco could usually be accomplished in a very short time, the merchant would raise the cash needed to pay the duties by taking a short term note with his banker. This note would then be discharged with the proceeds from the tobacco sale well before it was due and subject to interest. The whole process netted the merchant an additional .73 pence per pound on all tobacco sold in England --a cost the planter was forced to bear under the assumption that it was part of the duties.²⁷ Samuel Rosenblatt has estimated that the firm of John Norton & Sons between 1768 and 1775 earned £11,435 from commissions on tobacco which they sold in England. By taking advantage of the differential rates in the payment of duties he believes they earned an additional £11,330. Customs manipulations (albeit at the expense of their clients) coupled with a good credit rating allowed this firm to double its income. The extent to which other merchants were able to take advantage of this device is uncertain, although numerous comments spread through a number of merchants' correspondence suggests that the practice was fairly common.²⁸

The longer lag between the entry and re-export of tobacco sold in the foreign market meant that the duties involved would be assessed at the higher rate since they would be secured by bond rather than be paid in cash. This raised

no objections from either the planter or the merchant, however, since upon re-export the full amount of the duty could be drawn back and the ultimate sale was actually duty free. Moreover, due to the intricacies of the Customs laws, it was possible to turn the drawback into an actual subsidy on the sale price of the foreign marketed product. When the tobacco was presented for sale, clof and tret were already removed from each hogshead. Nevertheless, the drawback was credited and paid on the entire amount of tobacco that had originally been declared to be in the hogshead.²⁹

In the case of Baylor's foreign sale of four hogsheads of tobacco, the clof and tret had amounted to 239 pounds with a dutied value of £6.19.2 which if spread over the actual amount exported in the sale (5200 pounds) meant an augmentation of the sale price by 32 pence per pound. The real gainer, however, was not Baylor, but his agents the Hunt brothers. For, as was the custom of the industry, they took their 3% commission on the gross amount of the drawback, which if spread over the entire 5200 pounds re-exported amounted to .22 pence per pound, or about two-thirds of the actual subsidy.³⁰ It might be argued that this practice brought them no larger a share of the per pound price of the tobacco than that which they would have made in a town sale, but their effective commission on foreign sales was thus increased from 3% to 7.1%. Moreover, they retained title to the 239 pounds of clof and tret tobacco which was legally entered in England and, in effect, duty-free. If they sold this at the going domestic price of 11.625 pence they could

clear 11.025 pence or about 95% of the sale price as profit. On 239 pounds of tobacco, the perquisites from only one hogshead, this amounted to £10.19.7. Granted, a lower town price for the tobacco would produce a much lower return, but even £1 on a hogshead could produce substantial revenue over the course of a year.

Reviewing the planter's charges as they were lodged over the years against the consignment system of marketing, several things become clear. First, neither the official charges including duties and Customs House fees, nor the handling charges assessed by the merchants were a serious burden upon the planter. While many of these fees increased on a per hogshead basis, the ongoing practice of shipping heavier hogsheads of tobacco actually lowered them on a per pound basis. Second, freight charges, for the most part, held constant per hogshead and thus per pound were also reduced. Third, and most pertinent in assessing the real nature of the planters' complaints, merchants profits were increasing. But most of these increases came not so much at the planters' expense, but because of the planters' inability to take effective advantage of the intricacies of the British Customs system. With quick access to short term credit, the merchants could take advantage of preferential rates in the payment of tobacco duties. They did not have to gouge their clients, the planters. They simply did not pass along certain savings which they effected from the government. Similarly, when dealing in the re-export market, the merchants were in a position to take advantage of the loopholes in the

drawback system. The fact that they also appropriated all of the profits from perquisite tobacco may have been immoral, but it was hardly illegal. In order to keep the perquisite tobacco they probably had to bribe, or at least offer substantial gratuities to, the Customs officials.³¹ Within the context of the eighteenth century, the notion of tipping officials for favors was certainly accepted in Virginia as much as in Britain. That the planters complained when they did not receive what they probably perceived to be their just share of the benefits which could be derived from the manipulation of perquisites and drawbacks must be viewed as the proverbial sour grapes. The system did, after all, net them a subsidy on the sale of re-export tobacco. The real complaint was that they felt it should have been a greater subsidy.

Direct Purchase Marketing

By comparison to the consignment system, direct purchase marketing was for the planter simplicity itself. To complete a direct sale of his crop all he need do was contact his local storekeeper or factor who was a purchasing agent for a Scottish (or occasionally an English) firm interested in importing tobacco to Britain.³² Once a price was agreed upon the planter either received cash for his tobacco or more commonly a credit with the factor which could be spent on the purchase of European goods which the merchant displayed in his store. The planter had no worries about finding shipping, the risks of the voyage, or the headaches with Customs. His responsibility ended when he delivered his crop into the

factor's hands. After the establishment of the Inspection System in 1730 this became even simpler. Thereafter, the planter took his tobacco to the official inspection warehouse, received his tobacco notes stating the amount of good tobacco he had on deposit, and endorsed these over to the factor. When the ships arrived from Britain it was the factor's responsibility to retrieve the tobacco from the warehouse and see to its loading.³³

The advantages for the planter using this system were many. First and foremost was the availability of the cash in hand (or at least the credit in the book) the moment the sale was made. Often this could occur while the crop was still in the ground, or just beginning to be harvested. The endless uncertainties of the two to three year lag between shipment of the crop and the receipted evidence of its sale inherent in the consignment system were avoided. Moreover, while the price received would still be subject to intense and sometimes heated negotiation with the factor, the planter always had the option of dealing with one storekeeper as against another. This was especially comforting when the planter's account with a given factor grew longer than his ability to discharge it with the proceeds from the sale of a single year's crop.³⁴

The second greatest accomplishment of the direct purchase system, at least from the point of view of customer satisfaction, was the availability of the manufactured goods for inspection before the planter committed himself to their purchase. Window shopping was infinitely more desirable than

catalog sales --especially in an age where there was no regularized catalog and certainly no glossy pictures of the merchandise which might be purchased. From the point of view of the factor, having the goods on display must have helped business through impulse buying as well. The tone of the ads found in the Virginia Gazette leaves little doubt that eighteenth century storekeepers were more than willing to play upon the vanities of their customers in order to boost their sales of the latest European fashions.³⁵

The option to sell his tobacco directly to a British agent also had certain disadvantages for the planter. In the first place he could expect to receive a lower price for his crop. This was only just, since it was not the merchant who took the risk of shipping out a cargo of European goods, securing in return a suitable quantity of tobacco and bringing it home.³⁶ Second, if the planter could threaten to deal with another factor, so the factors could and often did try to band together for the purpose of setting a fixed maximum price for which they would buy tobacco in a given season. Luckily for the planters, the individual greed of the factors usually prevented them from maintaining a united front long enough to depress staple prices seriously.³⁷ Third, the presence of the factor on a regular basis made it virtually impossible for the planter to represent his abilities either as a businessman or as a farmer as greater than they actually were. While it might have been possible to fool a merchant who was 3000 miles away about the actual state of one's finances, such misrepresentations could not be continued very

long when the factor lived just down the road.³⁸ Finally, while it was pleasant to have a selection of goods (at the factor's store) from which to choose the items one might purchase, that selection was limited. Even with enormous mark-ups there was a limit to the amount and kinds of merchandise which could practically be stocked. When the planter made his purchases through an English merchant he could ask for virtually anything his heart desired, and if he were willing to pay the price, the merchant could arrange to have the item custom made to suit the planter's dreams. This could not be done when trading with a factor who pre-ordered his goods within the conservative limits set by his parent firm. The eighteenth century equivalent of Montgomery Ward simply was not in a position to stock mink coats. Yet, in spite of these shortcomings, direct purchase was more convenient and satisfied more of the needs of the small grower of tobacco who had neither the capital nor the credit needed to justify more speculative ventures.³⁹

From the point of view of the British merchants, especially those interested in volume sales of re-export tobacco, rather than high quality sales in the more exclusive and limited British market, direct purchase also offered many advantages. By allowing the factors a chance to view the crop personally while it was still in the ground, the merchants gained a surer knowledge both of the quality and quantity they might attempt to market in a given year. Knowing these things, and with some feeling for what the going price in Virginia might be, they could plan to charter and

send over only the amount of shipping that would be needed to bring home the actual amount of tobacco they expected to purchase. At the same time, by knowing from their factors the needs and desires of the Virginians in a given year, they could send over the combination of European goods that was most likely to sell quickly for the best prices. Most importantly, by having the factors permanently resident in the colony, they could be certain that their affairs would be expedited both quickly and with concern for their best interests. Cargoes would be ready in their warehouses at the time that the shipping arrived and the costs for vessel charters and seamen's wages could be held to a minimum. Debts could be collected more quickly and bad credit risks were more likely to be avoided in the first place. Even if profits attached to any single direct purchase sale might be lower, the overall return from the work of one or more carefully situated factors was sure to be greater than that from consignment trading.⁴⁰

Independent Merchants and Mixed Marketing

An important corollary to the development of direct purchase marketing was the emergence of the independent Virginia merchant. From the earliest days of the colony, a few Virginians had combined the activities of trading with their major occupation of planting. Commonly they would purchase a few hogsheads of tobacco here and there --usually the small crop of a neighbor-- and ship them to Britain along with their own tobacco. In return these planters would order extra European goods and re-sell them (at a suitable advance)

to the people whose tobacco they had bought. This kind of trading, however, required a good deal of spare capital, which few Virginians had and the security which would allow them to invest it in such risky adventures. Not surprisingly, this kind of mercantile activity was limited to a very small number of individuals at any time, and the longevity of their trading activities was usually not great.⁴¹

Direct purchase marketing brought professional tobacco buyers into the colony on a year-round basis by 1730 at the latest.⁴² Most of these factors were young, single Scotsmen who represented the large re-export firms centered in Glasgow and its sub-ports along the Clyde. As a rule they were sent out with orders to avoid social contact with the local community as much as possible for fear the planters might take advantage of their intimacies. Most of all, the lonely young men were to steer clear of the feminine population lest they become too enamored of Virginia and forget the real reason for their presence. Perhaps in the cool, damp world of the Clyde-side counting houses, such monastic behavior was easily encouraged. In the hospitable countryside of Virginia where business was conducted not only at Church and the Courthouse, but at the race-ways, in the taverns and at planters' house parties, such dictums were easily forgotten. More than one factor suffered the displeasure and even the discharge of his employer after having married a Virginia lady.⁴³

Yet for these disabled factors, as well as for many more who simply found the incessant demands of their employers too much of a burden, economic ruin was not a certainty

once they were cut free from their former firms. With modest backing from their new Virginia relations, or even their former employer's competitors in Britain, they could enter the tobacco trade for themselves.⁴⁴ Typically these independent merchants operated in one of two ways. They would purchase tobacco directly from their former Virginia clients at the going rates and then ship it to Britain on consignment to a Scottish or an English house. This appears to have been especially popular with the outport merchants of Bristol, Liverpool and Whitehaven. The second method an independent might use was commission marketing, in which he, like the factor, acted as an agent for a British firm. Like the factor he arranged for the purchase, inspection, and delivery of the tobacco to the British firm's ships. Unlike the factor, however, he used at least some of his own capital for the initial purchase of the crop in Virginia, and for this he was allowed to take a commission of 10% rather than the 5% commonly allowed a factor. Moreover, he was not compelled to purchase all his European goods from one English or Scottish firm, an option which allowed him a much greater leeway, not only in the selection of goods he might carry, but in the mark-ups he might be permitted to make on their re-sale.⁴⁵

Another avenue to the establishment of a domestic mercantile firm independent of, or at least only partially dependent upon, British connections for working capital was through the maritime industry. From its first settlement, Virginia had maintained ties with the West Indies. The establishment of British colonies there made the acquisition of

sugar and other tropical products in return for foodstuffs an easy, as well as profitable, trade. British maritime interests, however, cared little for intercolonial trade and concentrated their efforts upon the England-Virginia tobacco trade or the England-West Indies sugar trade. Thus if Virginians were to enjoy the tropical goods for which they quickly developed a taste, they would have to provide their own shipping, or rely upon that of New England. Shipping records show that both kinds of vessels were employed for a time, but Virginia vessels came to dominate the Virginia-Caribbean trade by the 1730's.⁴⁶ As Virginia's sea captains profited from these voyages, they came to realize that even greater profits might be made by passing on the rigors of the sea voyages to their sons and brothers, and concentrating on retailing in Virginia the produce their vessels brought home. It was in this fashion that the major merchant clans of Norfolk --the Calverts, the Tuckers, and the Hutchings-- amassed their wealth.⁴⁷

Still another origin of the independent mercantile firm is to be found in the heritage of the seventeenth century planter-trader. A few of the families who had dabbled in trade in earlier years continued to do so in a more organized fashion during the eighteenth century. Most notable among these were the Harrisons and the Lightfoots, who continued to maintain stores in Williamsburg and Yorktown while their members sat in the House of Burgesses and served on the Council. The Lee family's interest in trade was so great that William Lee, a son of Council President Thomas Lee, who

had studied law in London found he had to devote much of his time to the family's business affairs.⁴⁸ Charles Carter, later of Cleve, who first married Mary Walker (daughter of Joseph Walker, a Yorktown merchant) for a time ran a store in Urbanna as well as serving as Naval Officer for the Rappahannock District. He soon abandoned the store, but like his brother Landon and his nephew Councilor Robert Carter, he continued dealings in trade throughout his life.⁴⁹

Three Virginia Mercantile Families

The extent to which an independent merchant might prosper in Virginia is best illustrated by considering three of the colony's most prosperous mercantile families of the eighteenth century: the Nelsons, the Adamses, and the Nortons. In terms of the origins suggested above, it might be argued that none of the founders of these families were truly independent merchants as each arrived with the backing of some English capital. But in each case it was capital provided by their own families, all of which had long engaged in mercantile pursuits in England. Thus, in no sense were these men merely paid factors anticipating a short stay in the colony and an early return to England. Rather, they came expecting to found new enterprises which, while they would be allied with the family fortunes at home, were expected to become the basis of new wealth in a new land.

Regardless of the source of their start-up capital, each of these families quickly established businesses which were self-sustaining. Each employed both the consignment and direct purchase methods of marketing at various times. Both

the Nelsons and the Adamses raised tobacco on their own plantations as well as purchased it from their neighbors. Sometimes this was resold in Virginia to British factors, and sometimes it was consigned directly to English firms. At one time or another, both the Nelsons and the Adamses consigned tobacco through the Nortons. Whatever their mode of marketing, the result was the same --the profits which accrued were reinvested partly in merchandise for sale in Virginia, partly in Virginia plantations, and many times in the West Indies or inter-colonial trade. All three of these families invested in manufacturing or industrial ventures in Virginia as well. Wherever they put their money, their aim was to maximize profits. For the most part, all three families met with continued success.

Thomas Nelson, the first of Virginia's own great eighteenth century commercial magnates, arrived in 1705. Within a decade he had married into one of York County's established families and begun amassing a fortune of his own. He soon acquired several plantations in York and King William Counties at the same time he expanded his activities in the tobacco trade. By 1720, at the latest, he was part owner of a vessel engaged in the West Indies trade. By the 1730's he had purchased an interest in an iron mine on the upper reaches of the Rappahannock River.⁵⁰ At the same time Nelson entered Virginia's social and political life. By 1715 he had been appointed a Justice of the Peace in York County and was serving in other county-level posts. In 1716 he became a Trustee of Yorktown which made him influential in determining

the future locations of streets, docks, and warehouses --all matters of great interest to a merchant. Although Nelson's ill-fated alliance with Governor Spotswood, both in an Indian trading company and in Spotswood's battle to retain the governorship, precluded his further advancement in colony-wide politics, he continued to be active at the county level. In 1722 and again in 1723 he held the lucrative office of Sheriff of York County. By the late 1730's his accrued seniority made him the presiding justice of the York County Court which clearly enhanced his ability to win favorable decisions in the many debt actions he brought before that body. By the time of his death in 1745, the Nelson family was firmly established among the ranks of Virginia's aristocracy.⁵¹

William Nelson, the older of Thomas's two sons had entered the family business in the early 1730's after a period of schooling in England. He quickly proved to be as clever and canny a businessman as his father. At the same time that he extended the family's activities in the tobacco and West Indies' trades, he entered new ventures as well. Along with his brother Thomas, who became his co-partner upon the death of their father, William dealt in slaves and established an extensive wholesale trade with merchants in Philadelphia and Baltimore. Not only did they deal in European goods but they purchased grain for eventual resale in the West Indies. William also continued his father's operations in the planting of tobacco as well as grains. He extended the family's holdings to include plantations in Hanover, Louisa, Henrico

and even Albermarle counties.⁵²

In spite of his many commercial activities, William Nelson also found time for an extensive political career. By 1732 he had joined his father as a Justice of York County, and in 1738 he held the post of Sheriff. In 1742 he won election as a Burgess from York County but his service in the House was brief for in 1745 he was elevated to the Council of Virginia. In 1746, again like his father, he gained a place as a Trustee of Yorktown which allowed for continued and useful influence in the development of his commercial interests in the seaport village. Finally, in 1770 he capped his political career by serving as President of the Council and, for nearly a year, as acting governor of Virginia between the death of Lord Botetourt and the arrival of the Earl of Dunmore.⁵³

Thomas Nelson II, no less than his father or brother, was also a commercial and political force to be reckoned with. His major commercial interest was in land speculation and he dealt extensively in western lands during the 1750's and 1760's. Additionally, Thomas Nelson had been trained as a lawyer and was a member of both the English and Virginia bars. This training undoubtedly was the reason for his appointment as Deputy Secretary for the colony in the spring of 1743, and his inclusion in the York County Court later that year. In 1745 he succeeded to his brother's seat in the House of Burgesses, and in 1749 joined him in the Council. The fees of the Secretary's office along with the extensive patronage (primarily from the right to appoint County Court clerks)

made Thomas Nelson II a man of continuing wealth and power until the Revolution.⁵⁴

Thomas Nelson III, William's son, continued the family's commercial and political power into a third generation. Educated in England, as his father and uncle had been, the younger Thomas returned to Virginia in 1761 to assume the same seat in the House of Burgesses that they had each held before him. In 1762 he became the fifth Nelson to sit on the York County bench and the following year he gained the post which would be most crucial for both his future and for that of the colony; he was appointed a Colonel of the York Militia. Like his father and his uncle he became a champion of the patriot cause in the late 1760's and was a signer of both the Associations of 1769 and 1770. As a militia leader, and later as a general in the State's forces, Nelson helped organize the defense of the colony during Cornwallis' invasion in 1780. In 1781, during the closing months of the military campaign, he served a short and unpleasant term as Governor of the State. Although the revolution destroyed much of the family's commercial power --in part through Thomas III's poor management of the business, and in part due to the great difficulties in collecting their accounts-- both Thomas Nelson III and his uncle Thomas II (the Secretary) could still claim to be among Virginia's wealthiest hundred individuals in 1787.⁵⁵

Ebenezer Adams, the founder of the second exemplary clan of Virginia merchants, arrived in the colony before 1714. The son of a London merchant-tailor, he arrived with substan-

tial backing and soon acquired vast landed holdings in New Kent and Henrico Counties. These he augmented when he married into the Cocke family, and as part of his wife's dowry he was given a partial interest in Bowler's warehouse, a tobacco inspection warehouse in Essex County. Whether his interests in trade were more extensive is uncertain, but it is known that he was active both as a Justice of the Peace in New Kent, and as a vestryman in Saint Peter's Parish for almost two decades.⁵⁶

Richard Adams, the first of Ebenezer's sons to become a merchant, was active in all phases of Virginia's economy. Like his father he owned extensive lands both in the form of plantations and of city lots and tenement houses in Richmond and Manchester. In partnership with his younger brother, Thomas, he traded in tobacco to England as well as grain and provisions to the West Indies. Richard also participated in a number of industrial ventures including several rope-walks in Richmond.⁵⁷ Like the Nelsons, Richard also found time for extensive political activities on all levels. He served as both a Justice and Burgess for New Kent County from 1752 until 1766 when he moved to Richmond. From then until the Revolution he held the same posts in Henrico County. In 1773 he was made a Trustee of Richmond where, similar to the Nelsons in Yorktown, he was able to wield much influence in the development of both the residential and commercial sections of the town. By 1770 he was fully committed to the patriot cause and for him it was apparently a simple step from the Association movement to the Henrico Committee of

Safety and the Virginia Convention. During the war he had extensive commercial dealings in behalf of both the state government and the continental army. After independence was achieved he served in both the House and Senate of the new state. In 1787 he, like the two Thomas Nelsons, ranked among Virginia's hundred most prosperous citizens.⁵⁸

Thomas Adams never achieved quite the wealth or status of his older brother. This was due in large part to his residence in England as the caretaker of the family's business interests from 1762 until early 1774. Although he was a Justice of the Peace for Henrico County he never served as a Burgess. Nevertheless, he too served on a Committee of Safety, and was honored with a seat in the Continental Congress. After the war he moved to Augusta County which he represented in the State Senate in the late 1780's. Trade, which had been the early basis of his wealth, ceased to occupy his time after the war when he retired to Virginia's frontier and devoted his full time to farming.⁵⁹

When John Norton arrived in Virginia in 1742 no one could have predicted that the fateful events of the revolution a generation later would treat his family far more harshly than it treated the Nelsons and the Adams. Like the first Thomas Nelson and Ebenezer Adams, John Norton had a long family history of mercantile employment in England. Unlike them, however, he had an immediate and direct connection with the Virginia trade through the firm of Flowerdue and Norton, of which he was the junior partner. The firm's interest in Virginia had begun with an association with the

Cary family before the beginning of the century, and most recently had been represented by Thomas Flowerdue, Norton's senior partner who had returned to London in 1739.⁶⁰

It was Norton himself, however, who brought a renewed vigor to the company. Within a year of his arrival he married Courtney Walker, the granddaughter of Thomas Nelson Sr.'s first wife by her first marriage. Consequently, John Norton was, in good Virginia fashion, a cousin of the influential Nelsons as well as of the Walker clan which, like the Nelsons's, were merchants of Norfolk. Like all of his new relations, Norton was quickly accepted as a Justice of the Peace in York County, and when Secretary Thomas Nelson was appointed to the Council in 1749, it was John Norton who filled his seat in the House of Burgesses.⁶¹

Perhaps, more than any of his relations, Norton's direct tie with an English firm kept him attuned to the imperial trade. Although he acquired several plantations in the colony, tobacco for London, provisions for the West Indies, and slaves for Virginia were his compelling interests. In 1756 he vacated his seat in the House of Burgesses for Robert Carter Nicholas, the man destined to become his son's father-in-law. Perhaps his appointment as a Trustee of Yorktown the same year, and his consequent involvement in the extensive renovation of its streets and waterfront helped speed his departure from the House. After 1761 he ceased participating in the York Court. Apparently his business involvements had become more important than politics. In 1764 the death of Thomas Flowerdue thrust Norton into the top spot

in his firm and brought about his permanent return to London.⁶²

John Hatley Norton, the oldest of John Norton's sons, soon became the new junior partner of John Norton & Son, and with his return to Yorktown from London in 1767 the firm was officially "of London and Virginia." Hatley waited nearly five years before marrying into the vast Nicholas clan and it was another year after that before he was admitted to the York Court. In the meantime, however, Hatley had not been ignoring politics, for he was a staunch supporter of the Association of 1770 and the group which continued to advocate non-importation as a political tactic during the early 1770's.⁶³

In spite of Hatley Norton's patriot leanings and his connection with a "radical" family by marriage, circumstances went against him as the Revolution approached. Through no fault of his own, he was consigned a small cargo of tea in the fall of 1774 while the Townshend duty upon it remained in force. When the Virginians held their mini-tea party in November, it was John Hatley Norton who was held responsible for importing the affronting substance. In spite of Robert Carter Nicholas' immediate and vocal defense, and in spite of Norton's own apologetic response to the patriots printed in the Virginia Gazette, Norton's reputation never quite recovered from the effects of the public's misunderstanding of the affair.⁶⁴

Given the tone of the rhetoric and the depth of emotion generated during the critical years of 1774 and 1775, it would have been no surprise to any in the colony if Norton

had become converted to the Royalist cause as did many other merchants who shared his close connections with England. Yet neither Hatley nor his father in London wavered in their affections for Virginia. It was the Nortons who loaned £5,600 to the colony for the purchase of powder and other stores which had to be replaced after Lord Dunmore's raid on the Williamsburg Magazine in 1775. It was the Nortons, too, who continued to arrange for the purchase of needed war supplies in Europe and the West Indies throughout the war in spite of the small chance they had of ever receiving full payment for their purchases. And it was the Nortons who almost cheerfully accepted the decision of the Virginians to withhold payments of their British debts, or to discharge through the dubious means of the State Loan Office, all the while believing that they would be repaid in due time. Unfortunately, all of this was forgotten, or ignored, when Hatley and his father were unable to procure the amount of gunpowder they had contracted to deliver to the Continental Army in 1777.⁶⁵

When John Norton died late in 1777 and Hatley's brothers decided to leave England permanently for America, the firm, for all intents and purposes, became John Norton & Sons of Virginia. Hatley, who had been in Virginia since 1767, tried to confirm this fact when he bought out the interests of his brothers and his father's estate. Nevertheless, because of the old "charges" against him, his business was made subject to the Virginia law of 1784 which impeded the collection of British debts. By the time of his death in 1797, Hatley's affairs were still hopelessly tied up in the

courts. Even though he owned over 3000 acres of choice land in the Valley of Virginia, John Hatley Norton died a virtual bankrupt. He had been an innocent victim of the Revolution.⁶⁶

Together the members of these three Virginia families represent a microcosm of the colony's developing commercial society. In each case, the members of the founding generation remained closely tied to their English sources of credit. The succeeding generations of Nelsons, Adamses, and Nortons were able to use their fathers' profits to create a greater degree of commercial independence for themselves. While the founders had been interested primarily in tobacco, the sons and grandsons diversified their activities to include the West Indian trades and investments in Virginia real estate and manufacturing. At the same time that they established their great fortunes, each family sought, and in most cases achieved, a measure of political power as well. Surely the Nelsons, the Adamses and the Nortons were more successful than many of their counterparts in trade and politics; nevertheless, they shared aspirations and career patterns which were common to many Virginia merchants of the eighteenth century.

NOTES

CHAPTER 6

¹Lawrence Harper suggested that the English penchant to regulate the import and export trades dates from the mid-fourteenth century at the latest. English Navigation Laws, (New York, 1939), 19. George L. Beer cited clauses in the Charter of 1609 which were meant to direct the export of all Virginia tobacco to England, as well as to make her the sole source of supply of the colony's manufactured goods. The Origins of the British Colonial System, 1587-1660, (New York, 1908), 188-219. The best short description of the development and apparent effectiveness of the "navigation system" and especially its provisions for "enumerated goods" is found in Oliver M. Dickenson, The Navigation Acts and the American Revolution, (Philadelphia, 1951, rpt., 1974), 33-39, 42-45, 59-62.

²James F. Shepherd and Gary M. Walton, Shipping, Maritime Trade, and the Economic Development of Colonial North America, (Cambridge, Mass., 1972), chapter 6.

³The evidence presented in Table 5.4 shows that in spite of the tremendous shift in the export economy between 1701 and 1774, tobacco continued to be the single largest export commodity,

⁴The marketing practices of Virginia merchants have been well described by Calvin B. Coulter, "The Virginia Merchant," (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1944), and by Robert P. Thompson, "The Merchant in Virginia, 1700-1775," (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1955). The most complete statement of consignment marketing is in Samuel M. Rosenblatt, "The House of John Norton and Sons: A Study of the Consignment Method of Marketing Tobacco from Virginia to England," (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Rutgers University, 1960). A more concise statement of Rosenblatt's views are in his "Introduction," to John Norton and Sons: Merchants of London and Virginia, ed. by Frances Norton Mason, 2nd ed., (New York, 1968).

⁵An exact determination of the amount of tobacco marketed by each method on the eve of the Revolution is impossible. If the assumption that most of the consignment marketing was concentrated in London is correct, then the breakdown would be in the neighborhood of 35% consignment - 65% direct purchase. If, however, one assumes that nearly all English firms --even those in the outports-- continued to market tobacco only by the consignment method, the breakdown would be about 55% consignment - 45% direct purchase. Historical Statistics of the United States from Colonial Times to 1957, (Washington, 1960), Tables Z:230-Z:234. Jacob Price implies, though he does not say so directly, that the Scottish methods

of business were becoming more common throughout Britain by the mid 1770's. "The Rise of Glasgow in Chesapeake Tobacco Trade, 1707-1775," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd ser., XI (1954), 179-199. If, as it appears, Price's hint is correct, then the breakdown was in reality probably much closer to 35% consignment - 65% direct purchase by 1774.

⁶Lewis C. Gray, History of Agriculture in the Southern United States to 1860, (Washington, 1933), 244-246.

⁷The fullest treatment of the issue of mutual trust (or lack of it) between planters and merchants is found in John Spencer Bassett, "The Relation Between the Virginia Planter and the London Merchant," Annual Report of the American Historical Association for 1901, (Washington, 1902), 553-575. See also Emory G. Evans, "Planter Indebtedness and the Coming of the Revolution in Virginia," WMQ, 3rd ser., XIX (1962), 511-533.

⁸Julian P. Boyd, et al, eds., The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, (Princeton, N.J., 1950-), X, 27.

⁹The Case of the Planters of Tobacco in Virginia, As Represented by Themselves; Signed by the President of the Council [Robert Carter] and Speaker of the House [John Holloway]. To Which is added a Vindication of the Said Representation, (London, 1733), 6-15. See also St. George L. Siousatt, "Virginia and the English Commercial System, 1730-1733," Annual Report of the American Historical Association for 1905, (Washington, 1906), I:82-83.

¹⁰Case of the Planters, 6.

¹¹Siousatt, "English Commercial System," 83.

¹²The sources for the cases are: 1730, Maryland: Paul Clemens, "From Tobacco to Grain: Economic Development on Maryland's Eastern Shore, 1660-1750," (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1974), Table 1.12; 1730, Virginia: Case of the Planters, 34-35; 1737, Virginia: Gray, History of Agriculture, 224; 1775, Virginia: Baylor Papers, Box 1: Folder: Sept. 1775, Alderman Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va.

¹³Clemens, "From Tobacco to Grain," 11-13.

¹⁴Case of the Planters, 35, 47. See also Siousatt, "English Commercial System," 82.

¹⁵"Exports to Great Britain, [to Ireland, to the Southern Parts of Europe, and the Wine Islands] from the several Ports in America under the Commissioners at Boston between the 5th day of January 1771 and the 5th day of January 1772," Miscellaneous Manuscripts, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Mass. Printed in Stella H.

Sutherland, Population Distribution in Colonial America, (New York, 1936), 296-330.

¹⁶Bland Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹⁷Over the course of the colonial period the weight of a hogshead was generally increasing, but it was not uniform at any given point in time. In 1666, for example, the accounts of Receiver General Thomas Stegge contain specifications on 534 hogsheads of tobacco sent home as payments for Quit Rents. The range of weight was 352 pounds to 670 pounds with a mean of 456 pounds. Maude H. Woodfin, ed., "Auditor Stegge's Accounts," Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, LI(1943), 360-365. A Naval List from the Accomack District for the year ending Sept. 29, 1703 gives not only the number of hogsheads exported but their weights as well. In this case 1159 hogsheads ranged between 517 pounds and 600 pounds with a mean of 550 pounds. C.O. 5/1441, 364. In 1739 Governor William Gooch informed the Board of Trade that the official minimum weight of a hogshead had been increased to 850 pounds. C.O. 5/1324, 167. From William Beverley's Account Book of 1752, which is an accounting of his estate rents, it can be inferred that a hogshead commonly weighed 1000 pounds or more. William Beverley "Account Book for 1752," Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Va. Finally in 1768 the Virginia Gazette printed a notice of thirty hogsheads of tobacco left since 1765 in Bolling's Warehouse. For these hogsheads the range was 820 pounds to 1303 pounds with a mean of 1095 pounds. Virginia Gazette (Rind) Apr. 10, 1768.

¹⁸Draft and sample were customary allowances to the use of the merchants in evaluating the quality of the goods presented for sale. The Case of the Planters, 10-11, lists these as eight pounds and two pounds respectively per hogshead to be deducted from the gross weight of the tobacco presented for payment of customs duties. Duties were not assessed upon the draft and sample, although it is clear this tobacco remained in the hands of the merchant and was usually resold by him. Clof. and tret were customary allowances for the vagaries of the scale and were applied to the retail sale (or re-export sale) of tobacco only. Clof was figured at two pounds in every 3 hundredweight (of 112 pounds) or 1/168 of the weight presented for sale. The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary, (Oxford, 1971), 439. Tret was calculated at four pounds in every 104 pounds. Ibid., 3398. When applying these "customary charges," draft and sample are deducted first, then the duties are assessed and finally the clof and tret are deducted.

¹⁹For an extended treatment of the real problems of loss due to pilfering, see Gray, History of Agriculture, and Elizabeth Hoon, The Organization of the English Customs System, 1696-1786, (New York, 1938), 255, 264.

²⁰Case of the Planters, 40, Gray, History of Agriculture, 424-425.

²¹Arthur P. Middleton, "The Chesapeake Convoy System, 1662-1763," WMQ, 3rd ser., III(1946), 182-207, and John M. Hemphill, "Freight Rates in the Maryland Tobacco Trade, 1705-1762," Maryland Historical Magazine, LIV(1959), 36-58, 153-187. The periods of warfare included the years 1701-1713, 1739-1748 and 1754-1763.

²²See note 17 for a review of the trend in the weight of tobacco hogsheads.

²³Gray, History of Agriculture, 244-245 gives an excellent summary of the development of the duties over the period after 1660. Hoon, English Customs System, 245-255, explains in great detail how the duties were assessed and how they could variously be satisfied by cash payments or bonds.

²⁴Gray, History of Agriculture, 245.

²⁵The whole tone of the Case of the Planters implies this belief. See especially pp. 47-48. See also Siousatt, "English Commercial System," 83-84.

²⁶Case of the Planters, 6. The planters, however, do not document this charge with any specific cases.

²⁷Rosenblatt, "Introduction," John Norton and Sons, xx.

²⁸Ibid., xxi-xxii. Case of the Planters, 6.

²⁹In the case of John Baylor's tobacco, outlined in Table 6.4, four hogsheads, or 5200 pounds, were actually sold for re-export. Yet, the drawback of duties was granted on 5439 pounds, the original contents of the four hogsheads before the clof and tret had been removed. Baylor Papers, Box 1: Folder: Sept. 1775. For additional comments on this practice, and the out-and-out fraud of "weighting" hogsheads for re-export with stones, sand, other "junk," see Hoon, English Customs System, 261-262.

³⁰The invoice to Baylor from the Hunt brothers, his consignment agents, credits the whole amount of the drawback to Baylor before their commission of 3% is deducted from the net proceeds of the sale.

³¹Hoon, English Customs System, 249, 253n5, 255, suggests that these gratuities in return for the right to keep the perquisite tobacco, as well as other favors the customs officials performed, were not only common they were expected. If these practices were as common as suggested, the customs agents were indeed representative of the larger pattern of political "bribery" described by Sir L.B. Namier in The

Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III, revised ed. (New York, 1957).

³²Price, "Rise of Glasgow," 187-190. James H. Soltow, "Scottish Traders in Virginia, 1750-1775," Economic History Review, 2nd ser., XII(1959), 83-98.

³³[William Gooch], A Dialogue Between Thomas Sweet-Scented and William Orinoco, Planters, Both Men of Good Understanding, and Justice Love Country, Who Can Speak for Himself, Recommended to the Reading of the Planters, by a Sincere Lover of Virginia, (Williamsburg, 1732). See also Gray, History of Agriculture, 228-229, and G. Melvin Herndon, Tobacco in Colonial Virginia: The Sovereign Remedy, (Williamsburg, Va., 1957), 26-34.

³⁴Soltow, "Scottish Traders," 92. Evans, "Planter Indebtedness," 520.

³⁵Thompson, "Merchant in Va.," 200-216. See also the adds in the Virginia Gazette, passim.

³⁶Samuel M. Rosenblatt, "The Significance of Credit in the Tobacco Consignment Trade: A Study of John Norton & Sons, 1768-1775," WMQ, 3rd ser., XIX(1962), 383-399. See also Soltow, "Scottish Merchants," 88.

³⁷"Agreement entered into by the Merchants in Fredericksburg, Falmouth, Aquia, Dumfries, &c. . . 10 January, 1771," in "Letters of William Allason, Merchant of Falmouth, Virginia," Richmond College Historical Papers, II(1917), 143. This agreement lasted for only a few months, as did others like it which were attempted from time to time. The usual cause of the collapse was the desire of some merchant to secure a cargo and develop a clientele at any price. Allason himself did this in 1757 when he first came to the Falmouth area. See also Soltow, "Scottish Merchants," 90-91.

³⁸William Allason, for example, kept "thumb sketches" of his clients. Robert W. Spoede, "William Allason: Merchant in an Emerging Nation," (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, College of William and Mary, 1973), 99. John Norton was constantly sending reminders to his son, John Hatley Norton about his recollections of the credit ratings of his customers. Rosenblatt, "Significance of Credit," 387 and Mason, ed., John Norton and Sons, passim.

³⁹James H. Soltow, The Economic Role of Williamsburg, (Williamsburg, Va., 1965), 99, Calvin B. Coulter, "The Import Trade of Colonial Virginia," WMQ, 3rd ser., II(1945), 296-314. Thompson, "Merchant in Va.," 215-245.

⁴⁰Alexander Walker & Co. to William Allason, Dec. 21, 1756, William Allason Papers, 1723-1818, Box 1: Letters and Papers, 1752-1758, Virginia State Library, Richmond, Va. For

a more generalized statement of the costs and benefits of both consignment and direct marketing, see Shepherd and Walton, Maritime Trade, chapter 6.

⁴¹See for examples: Richard B. Davis, ed., William Fitzhugh and His Chesapeake World, 1676-1701: The Fitzhugh Letters and Other Documents, (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1963), *passim*. Marion Tinling, ed., The Correspondence of the Three William Byrds of Westover, Virginia, 1684-1776, (Charlottesville, Va., 1977), 8-195. For a general statement regarding seventeenth century planter-merchants see Philip A. Bruce, An Economic History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century, (New York, 1907), II, 309-333. The career of Robert "King" Carter, one of the greatest of the planter-merchants, extended over the last years of the seventeenth and the first third of the eighteenth century. For information on his commercial dealings see Louis B. Wright, ed., Letters of Robert Carter, 1720-1727: The Commercial Interests of a Virginia Gentleman, (San Marino, Ca., 1940).

⁴²Evidence of resident merchants can be found in several merchant petitions regarding port facilities. "Petition of Sundry Citizens to remove the office of Customs ... to Urbanna," Sept. 1727, W.P. Palmer, et al, eds., Calander of Virginia State Papers and Other Manuscripts. Preserved in the Capital at Richmond, (Richmond, Va., 1875-1893), I, 212-213, lists at least nine merchants among its 20 signers. "Petition of Merchants, Owners of Vessels, and Principal Inhabitants of Norfolk," April 2, 1735, *Ibid.*, 221-222, which includes the names of 11 merchants among 29 signers, seeks to move the customs house of the Lower District of the James River from Hampton to Norfolk for the convenience of winter shipping. During the course of the year 1739, 36 different merchants placed ads in the Virginia Gazette.

⁴³See for example William Allason's contract with Alexander Walker & Co., Dec. 21, 1756, William Allason Papers, Box 1: Loose Papers, Virginia State Library, Richmond, Va. See also Soltow's remarks upon Bennett Price's contract with Cunningham & Co., "Scottish Traders," 87.

⁴⁴William Allason, for example, continued his association with Alexander Walker & Co. even after he resigned from their employment. Allason to Alexander Walker & Co., June 19, 1758, Letter Book, 1757-1770, and Allason to Robert Allason, Oct. 9, 1759, *Ibid.*, Allason Papers. For a more generalized statement of merchant capitalization see Thompson, "Merchant in Va.," 157-200.

⁴⁵Edward Dixon, of Port Royal, carried accounts with consignment firms in Bristol, Liverpool and London between 1749 and 1769. Edward Dixon Mercantile Papers, 1743-1801, Ledger 4: 1749-1775, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Thomas and William Nelson consigned cargoes through John Norton & Sons as well as dealing directly with British firms.

Mason, ed., John Norton & Sons, 34. The Nortons also dealt in tobacco on their own account at the same time that they were consignment agents. Ibid., 129-133.

⁴⁶ Thomas Nelson owned a vessel in the West Indies trade as early as 1720. Emory G. Evans, "The Rise and Decline of the Virginia Aristocracy in the Eighteenth Century: the Nelsons," in Darrett B. Rutman, ed., The Old Dominion: Essay for Thomas P. Abernathy, (Charlottesville, Va., 1964), 64. The Walke, Boush, Newton, and Hutchins clans, all merchants in Norfolk, were all owners of West Indies traders by 1733. C.O. 5/1443, 114. In 1739 the Ivy, Calvert, Pugh, and Tucker families were also trading to the Indies in their own vessels. C.O. 5/1446, 11v.

⁴⁷ Thomas J. Wertenbaker, Norfolk: Historic Southern Port, (Durham, N.C., 1931), 27-47.

⁴⁸ The Lee Papers, Vol. I, 1754-1776, Collections of the New York Historical Society for the year 1871, passim.

⁴⁹ For a brief sketch of the career of Charles Carter see Fairfax Harrison's "Annotations" to "The Will of Charles Carter of Cleve," VMHB, XXXI(1923), 39-45. For the business aspects of Robert Carter of Nomini's life see Louis Morton, Robert Carter of Nomini Hall: A Virginia Tobacco Planter of the Eighteenth Century, (Charlottesville, Va., 1941, rpt. 1964), esp. chapters 4, 7 & 8.

⁵⁰ The best brief sketch of Thomas Nelson is Evans, "The Nelsons," 62-66. Nelson first married Margaret Reade, the daughter of John Reade, and granddaughter of George Reade, both merchants in York County. Nelson's second wife was Frances Courtney Tucker, the widow of a Norfolk merchant. Emory G. Evans, "The Nelsons: A Biographical Study of a Virginia Family in the Eighteenth Century," (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Virginia, 1957), chapters 1 & 2.

⁵¹ Nelson was appointed a Justice of the Peace for York County. He became a Trustee of Yorktown in 1716, York County Deeds, Orders, and Wills, 14, 1709-1716, 507. He was appointed sheriff of York County May 9, 1722, H.R. McIlwaine, ed., The Executive Journals of the Council of Virginia, (Richmond, 1925-1945), IV, 12, and again on May 2, 1723, Ibid., 34. He was presiding Justice of the York County Court by 1741, York County Orders and Wills, 19, 1740-1746, 7.

⁵² Evans, "The Nelsons: A Biographical Study," 19-20, 35-36.

⁵³ William Nelson was appointed a Justice by 1732, York County Orders and Wills, 18, 1732-1740, 20. He was appointed sheriff, June 15, 1738, EJC, IV, 421; served as a Burgess from York County, 1742-1745, William G. and Mary Stanard, comps., Colonial Virginia Register, (Albany, N.Y.,

1902, rpt. 1965), 115-119; and was a member of the Council from 1745 until his death in 1772, Ibid., 48.

⁵⁴Thomas Nelson, II, was named Deputy Secretary to William Adair, the absentee Secretary of the Colony, in April 1743, Stanard, Register, 21. He was made a Justice in York County, August 12, 1743, York County Wills and Orders, 19, 1740-1746, 213; succeeded his brother as Burgess for York 1745-1749, Ibid., 119-125 and was elevated to the Council April 20, 1749, a seat he held until 1776, Ibid., 48.

⁵⁵Thomas Nelson, III was Burgess for York County 1761-1776, Stanard, Register, 156-200. He was appointed a Justice, December 9, 1761, "Justices of the Peace of Colonial Virginia, 1757-1775," Virginia State Library Bulletin, 14, (Richmond, 1922), 63. For his militia appointment see York County Judgements and Orders, 4, 1763-1765, 12. For his experiences as a war leader and governor see, Emory G. Evans, Thomas Nelson of Yorktown: Revolutionary Virginian (Charlottesville, Va., 1975) chapters 5-7. In 1782 Nelson was one of the hundred wealthiest Virginians, Jackson T. Main, "The One Hundred," WMQ, 3rd ser., XI(1954), 379.

⁵⁶Ebanazer Adams was appointed a Justice in New Kent, June 29, 1726, "Civil List, 1726," C.O. 5/1320, R.20. For his other activities see C.W. Coleman, comp., "Geneology of the Adams Family of New Kent and Henrico Counties," WMQ, 1st ser., V(1896), 160-161.

⁵⁷Adams was named a Trustee of Richmond in March 1773, William W. Hening, ed., The Statutes at Large, Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia, (Richmond, 1819-1823, rpt. 1969), VIII, 656. He had been a Trustee of Manchester since November 1767, Ibid., 422. For the nature of his business with his brother Thomas see "Letters to Thomas Adams, 1769-1771," VMHB, V(1897), 132-134. For his other business ventures see Harry M. Ward and Harold E. Greer, Jr., Richmond in the Revolution, 1775-1783, (Charlottesville, Va., 1977), 94-96, 127, 135-136.

⁵⁸Richard Adams became a Justice in New Kent, April 30, 1752, EJC, V, 393, where he also served as a Burgess, 1752-1765, Stanard, Register, 127-170. By December 15, 1766 he was a Justice (and presumably a resident) of Henrico County, "Justices of the Peace," 77. Here he also served as a Burgess from 1769-1776, Stanard, Register, 181-200. He was named a Trustee for Richmond in 1773.

⁵⁹For details of Thomas Adams's stay in England see his letters to and from his brother Richard Adams, "Letters to Thomas Adams," VMHB, V(1897), 132-138; VI(1898), 80-97; XXII(1914), 379-395. Adams was commissioned a Justice in New Kent County December 15, 1766, "Justices of the Peace," 78, but declined to serve after 1773, EJC, VI, 517. He was named the chairman of the New Kent Committee of Safety in

1774, Coleman, "Adams Family," 164. After the war he moved to Augusta County which he represented in the State Senate, 1784-1787, Ibid.

⁶⁰Jacob M. Price, "Who Was John Norton?: A Note on the Historical Character of Some Eighteenth Century London Virginia Firms," WMQ, 3rd ser., XIX(1962), 400-407.

⁶¹For a sketch of Courtney Walker Norton, daughter of Jacob Walker merchant of Norfolk, see Mason, John Norton and Sons, 514. For Norton's commission as a Justice of the Peace for York County, April 22, 1747, see EJC, V, 231. He served as a Burgess for York County 1749-1756, replacing Thomas Nelson who had been elevated to the Council, Stanard, Register, 125-139.

⁶²For a brief review of Norton's business interests see Rosenblatt, "Introduction," in Mason, John Norton and Sons. For a more extended treatment of the subject see Rosenblatt, "House of John Norton and Sons." Norton left the House of Burgesses in 1756, Stanard, Register, 139, and the York Court, December 9, 1761, "Justices of the Peace," 63. He sailed from Yorktown for London in the summer of 1764, Mason, John Norton and Sons, 6.

⁶³John Hatley Norton arrived in Virginia in April 1767, Ibid., 21. He signed the Association, June 22, 1770, Virginia Historical Register, III(1850), 23. He married (on January 22, 1772) Sally Nicholas, the daughter of Robert Carter Nicholas the Treasurer of Virginia and Burgess from York County who succeeded his father in 1756, Virginia Gazette (Purdie & Dixon), January 26, 1772. Norton was commissioned a Justice of the Peace for York County, December 15, 1773, EJC, VI, 553.

⁶⁴"Narrative of the facts relative to John Norton and Sons shipping two half chests in Virginia, Howard Esten, humbly address [sic] to the inhabitants of Virginia," Virginia Gazette (Purdie), May 12, 1775.

⁶⁵The Nortons loaned Virginia a total of £5,600 most of which was used for the purchase of gunpowder, Mason, John Norton and Sons, xxxi. In 1777 the Nortons were unable to complete their gunpowder contract with the Committee of Safety, Ibid., 403-404.

⁶⁶For John Hatley Norton's business reverses after the war see Ibid., 445-507.

CHAPTER 7

The Merchant in Colonial Society

The changing composition of Virginia's export economy coupled with the evolution of new marketing strategies by many British merchants during the eighteenth century offered new opportunities at the same time that they created many new challenges for the colony's resident merchants. Like the Nelsons, the Adamses and the Nortons, other Virginia merchants found new profits from dealing in products other than tobacco. But to exploit the new trades properly, the merchants discovered that new services were needed. It was not enough to be a buyer and seller of goods; successful merchants had to have access to freighters, smiths, and millers as well. Before commercial wealth could be accumulated, investment in Virginia lands and facilities was necessary. Once these investments were made, merchants found they had developed a greater awareness for Virginia society as a whole, and a greater concern for its future. Their concerns often became translated into action within the political as well as the commercial arena with the result that a group of individuals who were clearly outsiders in 1700 had become full fledged Virginians by 1775.

Merchants and Consumer Services

Perhaps the most common complaint registered by European travelers to colonial Virginia was the colony's

continuing lack of artisans and tradespeople. This, they believed, was due to the fact that Virginia had no towns, little trade and less community spirit than that which was needed to support a collection of skilled craftsmen.¹ Instead Virginians "made do" with the temporary services of indentured servants who brought skills with them from Europe and the few slaves who might be clever enough to learn trades.² Although Philip A. Bruce offered substantial evidence to suggest that this dearth of tradesmen was more a matter of opinion than fact, it is a view that historians have continued to repeat with great regularity.³ Undoubtedly the demand for artisan services outstripped their easy availability for most of the colonial period, but there is little evidence to support the notion that only the most basic trades were practiced in the colony.

A complete index of consumer services that might have been available in the colony is difficult to establish because the only widely circulated medium of advertisement -- the Virginia Gazette-- did not begin publication until 1736. Moreover, while the Gazette was carried by its readers throughout the colony, the vast majority of its advertisers were from the Williamsburg-Yorktown area and Norfolk. Only sporadic advertisements appear from Fredericksburg and virtually none from Alexandria and Richmond. Thus, at the very best, the Gazette must represent only a small sample of what appears to have been available.⁴

In spite of these limitations, a sample of advertise-

ments from those years for which all or nearly all of the weekly issues remain, shows that at any given time, at least twenty different services or crafts were available in the colony from free, independent craftsmen.⁵ These ranged from such basic needs as blacksmithing and milling through house painting, to such esoteric endeavors as dancing instruction and peruke making.⁶ Doctors, druggists, lawyers and merchants were continuously available to cater to the Virginians' physical, legal and commercial needs. Yet for all their apparent specialization, few of these artisans and professional men performed totally exclusive services. Blacksmiths routinely stocked ornamental metalwork imported from England. Peruke makers imported wigs in all the continental styles as well as offering their personal creations. Physicians and druggists sold spices along with medicinal herbs and their own devious concoctions. Lawyers served as commercial agents as often as merchants exercised powers of attorney. General retailers carried most any sort of goods imaginable at the same time that they attempted to fill special orders to their customers particular specifications.⁷

As the century progressed, however, it was the retail merchant who most often found himself managing a business conglomerate. His desire for a central location, usually near a tobacco warehouse or a courthouse, often lead him into ownership and management of ordinaries and taverns. Stables and blacksmith shops often followed the establishment of overnight accommodations. If he became interested in

the grain trades, a grist mill, a cooperage shop, and more warehouses were commonly established adjacent to his store. Purchase of sloops and brigs, not to mention numerous shallops, was not at all unusual for the merchant who maintained contacts in more than one of Virginia's great rivers.

While not all merchants became involved in all of these pursuits, a few managed to enter most of them. Andrew Sprowle, probably the colony's most diversified commercial magnate on the eve of the Revolution, owned his own "town" at Gosport across the river from Norfolk. This settlement not only included his own retail store, warehouse and wharf, but several warehouse buildings and stores which he rented to other merchants. He also maintained his own stables, blacksmith shop, sail-lofts and a grist mill. In addition to his own house he provided quarters for his staff plus a number of tenements which he rented to transient craftsmen. Across the creek in Portsmouth he owned six additional houses and lots as well as a tavern. In Norfolk and Isle of Wight Counties he maintained two plantations. Finally, he held an interest in at least three vessels engaged in Bay shipping and the West Indies trade.⁸

Other merchants maintained similar establishments on a smaller but equally diversified scale throughout the colony. John Goodrich of Portsmouth was principally involved with the sale of drygoods, yet he maintained a blacksmith shop, a cooperage, and a slaughterhouse, along with a half-dozen rental houses.⁹ At Providence Forge, half way

between Williamsburg and Richmond, Francis Jerdone owned half interest in a blacksmith shop, a gristmill, and an iron-smelting forge along with his merchant's store.¹⁰ In Port Royal, Edward Dixon kept a blacksmith shop and for many years managed one of the inspection warehouses at the same time he operated an extensive commission trade in tobacco and grain exports.¹¹ Archibald Ritchie of Hobbs Hole maintained several mills at his plantation in rural Essex County which his family continued to operate long after his death closed his mercantile house.¹² On the Eastern Shore of the colony, Nathaniel Littleton Savage took advantage of the vast salt marshes and operated a salt distillery during the Revolution.¹³ The Hunters of Fredericksburg eventually gave up their mercantile operations entirely to concentrate their efforts on their forge and bloomery which formed the basis of Virginia's first ordinance works in 1777.¹⁴

The Hunters were not the only merchants who actually delved into industrial development during the colonial period. James Parker, William Aitchison, and Archibald Campbell were the major stockholders in a ropewalk and tannery opened in Norfolk in 1764.¹⁵ Although this work was destroyed during the bombardment and burning of Norfolk in 1776, its output was replaced by a similar operation undertaken by James Buchanan, Archibald Cary and Turner Southall in Richmond in 1773.¹⁶ No large ship yards were operated in the colony before the new State engaged James Maxwell, formerly a Norfolk merchant, to create a Virginia Navy in 1777, but a number of

colonial merchants had contracted for locally built ships.¹⁷ William Ronald of Northampton built vessels for Aitchison & Parker to sell or charter. James Davies of Gloucester performed the same service for William Buckner of Yorktown. Benjamin Harrison of Charles City County, Andrew Sprowle of Gosport, and Neil Jamieson of Norfolk all maintained fleets of sloops and brigantines which had been built in Virginia.¹⁸

Large scale industrial developments continued to be slowed by the difficulty Virginia merchants had in accumulating large amounts of investment capital. Nevertheless, a number of complex operations were begun before the close of the colonial period. Iron mining, smelting, and forging were the first of these areas to generate merchant interest. As mentioned above, the Hunters of Fredericksburg were able to build upon the foundations of iron mining laid out by Governor Alexander Spotswood in the early 1720's.¹⁹ Isaac Zane, the Quaker merchant-industrialist from the Valley of Virginia, was able to achieve similar successes at his works in Frederick County.²⁰ Robert Carter, planter, merchant, and member of the Council of Virginia, joined with Charles Carroll of Maryland to head a group of Chesapeake planters and merchants in developing the Baltimore Iron Works. This partnership, the largest in the Chesapeake, continued to show a profit until after the Revolution.²¹

Perhaps the most interesting industrial development undertaken by Virginia merchants was the distillery at Norfolk. The stockholders --all merchants-- included four

American born investors and ten Scots traders as well as two Virginia-Scottish mercantile firms. The Scotsmen who might otherwise be identified as tobacco factors all were affiliated with different trading houses. In the distillery, therefore, these merchants of greatly diverse backgrounds had only one common interest --the establishment of a Virginia based investment that might outlast the political trials of the 1770's. Unfortunately the distillery became an early victim of the contest for Norfolk in 1776, and the partners were divided in their sympathies between loyalty to the Mother Country and devotion to the new nation.²²

Merchants and Town Development

European travelers were not only mistaken about the lack of commercial services available in Virginia, but about the general issue of towns as well. Virtually all of them, not to mention a goodly number of Virginians, claimed that the attempts to create towns by legislative act during the later years of the seventeenth century had failed.²³ A consideration of these so-called "town act towns," however, shows that this belief was incorrect. Table 7.1 lists the twenty towns that were created by the town act legislation as well as their fate in the eighteenth century. Five of these towns: Hampton, Norfolk, Yorktown, Urbanna, and Hobbs Hole continued to grow and prosper throughout the colonial period. Five more were moved a few miles to better locations and metamorphosed into the new towns of Suffolk, Smithfield, Cobham, West Point and Marlborough. While none

TABLE 7.1

Town Act Towns: 1680, 1691, 1705 by Naval District

Towns (Co.)	1680	1691	1705	18th Century Disposition
Upper James				
Jamestown (Jas C)	a)	C	C	"Rotten-Borough"
Varina (Henrico)	new	M	-	never built
Bermuda Hundred (Henrico)	new	M	-	warehouse
Smith's Fort (Surry)	new	M	-	Cobham (1772)
Flower de Hundred (Charles City)	new	M	-	never built
Lower James				
Jervise Plt (Eliz C)	new	C	Hampton	port of entry
Deep Creed (Warwick)	new	M	-	warehouse
Wise Plt (Norfolk)	new	Norfolk	-	port
Huff's Point (I of W)	new	C	Nansemond	Suffolk (1742)
Patesfield (I of W)	new	M	-	Smithfield (1752)
York River				
Tyndall's Point (Glouc)	new	C	-	joined to Yorktown 1705
Read's Plt (York)	new	Yorktown	-	port of entry
Brick House (N Kent)	new	West Point	C	in King William
Rappahannock River				
Wormeley's Plt (Mdsx)	new	Urbanna	C	port of entry
Hobbs Hole (Essex)	new	C	C	Tappahannock
Corotoman (Lancaster)	new	C	Queens- town	never built
South Potomac				
Chickaony (N'umberl'd)	new	C	New Castle	never built
Peace Neck (Stafford)	new	C	Marl- borough	flourished 1730-1768
Accomack - Eastern Shore				
Calvert's Neck (Acc)	new	Onancock	C	survived-small
King's Creek (N'hampton)	new	Cherrystone	C	Northampton C.H.

Note: a) Jamestown founded in 1606 and recognized, if not populated to 1776.

Source: Hening, ed., Statutes at Large, II, 471-478, III, 53-69, 404-419.

C - denotes continued

M - denotes "Market" (See "Act of 1691")

of them faired as well as the first five, they nevertheless were active trading centers until the Revolution. Three towns: Onancock, Cherrystone Creek (Northampton), and Gloucestertown continued along sluggishly neither growing appreciably nor dying out completely. Two of the original locations: Bermuda Hundred and Deep Creek in Warwick County became cross-roads settlements at tobacco warehouses. Jamestown, which slowly withered away to a handful of houses after the capital was moved to Williamsburg, gained the dubious distinction of being Virginia's only rotten borough. Only four sites: Flowerdue Hundred, Varina, Chicacony and Corotoman Creek, never developed into anything that remotely resembled a town. With the possible exceptions of Denbigh warehouse at Deep Creek and Jamestown, all of the sixteen surviving towns and warehouses could boast a population of resident merchants during most of the eighteenth century.²⁴

Governance of the towns created by the town acts was delegated to prominent local citizens designated as feoffees or trustees. In conjunction with the county courts the trustees supervised the survey and sale of town lots. As the need arose they laid out and maintained additional streets, selected sites for the public markets and wharves, and where necessary provided for the erection of public warehouses.²⁵ Given the immediate effect that these activities could have on the course of commerce, it comes as no surprise that the trustees of Norfolk, Yorktown, and Urbanna included merchants and businessmen from the beginning.

Virtually all of these individuals were also members of their respective county courts.²⁶ Hence, from the earliest attempts at systematic town development, colonial merchants played an active role.

This pattern continued as additional towns were established by individual legislative acts during the eighteenth century. New town trustees continued to supervise local affairs under the general oversight of the county courts. Prior to the Revolution only Williamsburg and Norfolk graduated to borough status which made their local governments independent of their counties.²⁷ It is possible to identify the trustees for twenty-one towns that were chartered after 1700 and which grew beyond the stage of paper promotions. Table 7.2, which is organized by Naval Districts, categorizes three kinds of trustees: those who were justices of the peace, those who were merchants and those who were both.²⁸

Several preliminary observations are in order regarding these towns. First, there were no new towns established on the Eastern Shore during the eighteenth century. Then, as now, Accomack and Northampton Counties were rural and remote from the mainstream of Virginia life. Second, while no towns are listed for the York River District, this does not mean that no urban development occurred there. The towns of Cumberland, New Castle and Hanover town all prospered for a time along the banks of the Pamunkey River. Unfortunately, the act which established Cumberland as a

TABLE 7.2

Town Trustees as Justices and Merchants by Naval District

NAVAL DISTRICT	TOWNS ^{a)}	TRUSTEES			
		Number	% J.P.'s	% Merchants	% Merchants & J.P.'s
Upper James					
Tidewater	6	52	67.3	42.3	25.0
Piedmont	<u>1</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>60.0</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Total	7	62	67.7	35.5	21.0
Lower James	3	23	47.8	26.1	13.0
York River	No Data on Trusteeships				
Rappahannock					
Tidewater	4	38	65.8	44.7	31.6
Piedmont	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>40.0</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Total	5	43	62.8	39.5	27.9
South Potomac					
Tidewater	3	30	63.3	13.3	13.3
Piedmont	<u>3</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>43.3</u>	<u>3.3</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Total	6	60	53.3	8.3	6.6
Eastern Shore	No Data on Trusteeships				
TOTAL					
All Tidewater	16	143	63.6	34.3	22.4
All Piedmont	<u>5</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>46.6</u>	<u>2.2</u>	<u>0.0</u>
All Virginia	21	188	59.6	26.6	17.0

Note: a) Towns included: U.J.: Blandford, Cobham, Manchester, Petersburg, Richmond, Warwick, Staunton. L.J.: Portsmouth, Smithfield, Suffolk. Rappa.: Falmouth, Fredericksburg, Leedstown, Port Royal, Fairfax. S.P.: Alexandria, Colchester, Dumfries, Leesburg, Strasburg, Winchester.

Source: See Text note 28.

town has been lost and its trustees are unknown. Similarly, the act for Newcastle which was developed and promoted primarily by the Merriwether family, has not survived. Hanover town, although it was recognized as a town by legislative act in 1762, remained the semi-private domain of the Page family and was never governed by trustees.²⁹

In the towns for which the trustee structure is known, a more accurate measure of town governance can be attempted. Given that all of the towns were dependent upon the county courts for the enforcement of their decisions regarding development, and that the courts were the only agency which could raise a revenue for municipal purposes, it comes as no surprise that nearly two-thirds of all town trustees were also justices of the peace. What is more interesting, however, is that colony-wide nearly one-third of all trustees were merchants. In the Tidewater region the proportion of merchants increased to two-fifths. Still more pertinent to the issue of town governance, 30% of the trustee-justices were also merchants, and in the Tidewater this group made up 35% of the trustee-justices. In the merchant-dominated towns of the Rappahannock District the concentration of merchant power reached the level of 50%. If the business-minded Carter and Lee families were counted as part of the merchant group, the total would near 75% of all the Rappahannock town trustees.³⁰

In order to appreciate fully the concentrated power that merchant-trustees exercised in the process of urban

development, one must understand what a small proportion of the total society the merchants actually represented. C.G. Gordon Moss identified 224 merchants as being active in Virginia during the decade of the 1740's.³¹ During the three years centering on 1751 at least 180 merchants were still present.³² Carville Earle and Ronald Hoffman have estimated that the average Chesapeake merchant handled 200-300 hogsheads annually.³³ This range can be confirmed from the evidence regarding tobacco shippers and shipments given in the manifest book of Lewis Burwell, the Naval Officer of the Upper James River District during the last decade of the colonial period.³⁴ Using the Earle-Hoffman estimate and an export of 52,000 hogsheads of tobacco in 1752 produces an estimated range of 173-260 merchants. Both the present findings and those of Moss fall within this range. Yet, even assuming that the actual number of merchants present in the colony neared the upper end of the range, they would still account for only .25% of the tithable population as shown in Table 7.3. By applying the same process to an export of 75,000 hogsheads in 1773 a range of 250-375 merchants is produced while 360 merchants can be identified from Virginia Gazette advertisements.³⁵ Thus, in the later year, the merchants made up .23% of the total number of tithables. Clearly the influence that this small body of men held in urban governance was far greater than their numbers alone would suggest.

TABLE 7.3

Merchants, Justices and Tithables 1750-1775

	c. 1755	c. 1773	Percent Change
Total Tithables	103,404	155,278	+ 50.2%
Total Justices	520	1,183	+127.5%
Merchants ^{a)}	180	360	+100.0%
Merchant-J.P.'s	73	127	+ 74.0%

Note: ^{a)} Merchant range, 1752: 173-260, 1773: 250-375. See text p. 219 and text note 31.

Source: Tithables: See Table 2.2 (p. 37).
Merchants and Justices: See text note 28.

Merchants and the County Courts

The justices of the county courts in colonial Virginia were the public officials who had the greatest contact with the populace at large. In terms of the scope of their duties, the justices probably made the greatest impact upon the people as well. They administered justice, legislated the local ordinances for town and county, and directed the operation of communal life in general. They levied the taxes, meted out the fines for misbehavior, and even protected the quality of the ale in the local taverns. In short, the county justices were the state in colonial Virginia.³⁶

As was the case with town trusteeships, Virginia's merchants exercised an influence in the county courts which far outweighed their number when compared to the population of the colony as a whole. Table 7.3 shows that the total number of county justices in 1752 was 520, or .5% of the total tithable population. By 1773, the county courts had experienced a growth of 127% so that their 1183 justices equalled .8% of the tithable population.³⁷ During the same period, however, the number of merchants active on the county benches only increased by 74%. Nevertheless, merchants, who never amounted to more than .2% of the total tithable population, still commanded nearly 11% of all county justiceships in 1773. Table 7.4, which shows the distribution of justices and merchant-justices in the Tidewater and Piedmont areas of each naval district, exposes

TABLE 7.4

Justices and Merchant-Justices by Naval District, 1750-1775

District & Area ^{a)}	1752		c. 1773		% Change ^{b)}	
	JP	% M-JP	JP	% M-JP	JP	% M-JP
Upper James						
Tidewater	70	21.4	104	16.3	+ 48.6	- 23.8
Piedmont	90	5.6	297	5.1	+230.0	- 8.9
Total	160	12.5	401	8.0	+150.6	- 36.0
Lower James	74	14.9	121	20.7	+ 63.5	+ 38.9
York River						
Tidewater	69	26.1	109	20.2	+ 58.0	- 22.6
Piedmont	12	0.0	26	3.8	+116.7	-
Total	81	23.5	135	17.0	+ 66.7	- 27.7
Rappahannock						
Tidewater	74	21.6	131	18.3	+ 77.0	- 15.3
Piedmont	22	0.0	62	0.0	+181.8	-
Total	96	15.6	193	12.4	+101.0	- 20.5
South Potomac						
Tidewater	58	8.0	97	12.4	+ 67.2	+ 55.0
Piedmont	-	-	23	0.0	-	-
Total	58	8.0	120	10.0	+106.9	+ 25.0
Eastern Shore	22	9.1	37	13.5	+ 68.2	+ 48.4
ALL TIDEWATER	367	17.7	599	17.7	+ 63.2	-
ALL PIEDMONT	124	4.8	437	3.7	+252.4	- 22.9
ALL MOUNTAIN- VALLEY ^{c)}	29	7.0	147	3.4	+406.9	- 51.4
ALL VIRGINIA	520	14.0	1183	10.7	+127.5	- 23.6

Notes: a) For a list of all counties included in each area: Tidewater, Piedmont, or Mountain and Valley of Virginia, see Table 2.1 (p. 27).

b) This measure represents the change in the proportion of the number of merchants on the court. Thus the Upper James Tidewater Counties had 23.8% fewer merchant-justices in 1773 than in 1752.

c) For the rationale in excluding Mountain counties from specific Naval Districts, see Chapter 2, p. 28 and Table 2.1 (p. 27) and Map 2.1 (p. 25).

Source: See text note 28.

the centers of merchant power. In the Tidewater counties the number of merchant-justices remained constant at about 18%, while in the Piedmont region, where the number of merchants had never been high to begin with, their membership in the county courts decreased from just over 5% to barely 3.5%.

The reasons for this change in the county power structure are threefold. First, while all of the counties experienced an increase in the number of justices on their courts, the growth of the Piedmont benches was greater than that which took place in the Tidewater counties. On the average, Piedmont courts increased from eleven to twenty members, while one mountain county court grew to a total of thirty-five justices. During this same period, the average increase in the size of Tidewater courts was only from eleven to eighteen members.³⁸ Second, thirteen new counties were created in the Piedmont region between 1752 and 1773 and only six of these appointed any merchant-justices. Even in these six counties, the proportion of merchants was far less than that which was common in the Tidewater.³⁹ Third, commercial power in some of the Tidewater counties was also declining as it became more heavily concentrated around the trading towns. The percentage of merchant-justices actually dropped in both the Upper James and the York River Naval Districts at the same time that it soared to a record 52% in Norfolk County and 58% in York County.

The long term effect of merchant participation in the

county courts developed along two lines. In the judicial realm, merchants could count on a sympathetic ear in most of the Tidewater courts, and in this region --especially in York and Norfolk Counties-- it was relatively easy to secure favorable judgements in cases of debts.⁴⁰ In the Piedmont counties, and especially in the remote frontier counties, where there were few merchants active in the courts, debt cases often met with long delays, and debtors often found it easy to evade judicial actions entirely.⁴¹ In the administrative realm, the role of the merchant was somewhat more subtle. In the counties where port towns and tobacco warehouses existed, the courts, usually with a strong merchant component, kept apace with the construction and maintenance of public facilities. In other areas, however, where the commerical influence was less prominent, roads often became clogged with downed trees while inns and ordinaries, in the absence of local supervision, provided inadequate facilities for the traveling public.⁴²

The Merchants and the House of Burgesses

If membership in a county court was basic to an individual's ability to exercise political power in colonial Virginia, a seat in the House of Burgesses not only multiplied one's political clout in his home county, but marked his entrance into the inner circle of Virginia's governing elite as well. With only a limited number of seats available at any given time --two for each county and one each for the Boroughs of Jamestown, Williamsburg, Norfolk and

the College of William and Mary-- these positions were secured only by the most influential.⁴³ In 1752 only eleven members of the House were merchants. Four of these came from the commercial center of Norfolk --two from Norfolk County, one from the Borough, and one from Princess Anne County.⁴⁴ One each came from Elizabeth City, Charles City and Williamsburg. The remaining four came from the York Basin with only Thomas Walker from Louisa representing a Piedmont county.⁴⁵ In all, the merchant-Burgesses made up 11% of the membership of the House in 1752.

By 1773 the number of merchant-Burgesses had nearly doubled. The Norfolk area still claimed three as did the York Basin. Now the real center of mercantile power had moved up to the rich tobacco counties along the Richmond-Petersburg axis. Eight merchant-Burgesses came from this area. Three members came from the Piedmont area of the upper James River Valley and two from the Shenandoah Valley.⁴⁶ The merchant-Burgesses of 1773 made up 15% of the House. Yet, the increase in merchant power was actually greater than these numbers would suggest. Between 1752 and 1773, fifteen new counties had been carved out of the Piedmont back-country, for an increase in the total membership of the House of Burgesses of 31%. At the same time the increase in the number of merchant members was 73%, more than twice that of the membership as a whole. Clearly, the bulk of the merchant block came from the Tidewater where one in five Burgesses was also a merchant. Nevertheless, the

Piedmont counties produced a respectable number of merchant politicians as well. One in ten Burgesses from the Piedmont had commercial connections. In the House of Burgesses, as on the county courts, the influence of merchants was growing both in total numbers and geographic extent.

By the eve of the Revolution Virginia's merchants had become enmeshed in all phases of the colony's economic and political life. They operated most of the commercial services needed in a growing society, and were the key organizers of Virginia's burgeoning industrial activities. Merchants had played active roles in the organization and development of all the major towns. Their participation in government at both the county and colony-wide level far surpassed what might have been expected of their slight numbers.

NOTES

CHAPTER 7

¹One of the earliest exponents of this view was Anthony Langston, "On Towns and Corporations, and on the Manufacture of Iron," [1657], William and Mary Quarterly, 2nd ser., I(1921), 100-102. The Rev. John Clayton expressed a similar view in a letter to the Royal Society, Aug. 17, 1688, Edmund and Dorothy S. Berkeley, ed., The Reverend John Clayton: A Parson with a Scientific Mind: His Scientific Writings and Other Related Papers, (Charlottesville, Va., 1965), 80. Francis Louis Michel, a Swiss traveler and colonial promoter, also expressed concern over the lack of towns in Virginia in "Report of the Journey of Francis Louis Michel from Berne, Switzerland to Virginia, October 1701 - December 1702 [1701]," trans. and ed. by William J. Hinke, Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, XXIV(1916), 30-31. The Reverend Francis Makemie offered the most detailed contemporary assessment of the urban problem in "A Perswaisive to Towns and Cohabitation, [London, 1705]," VMHB, IV (1896), 252-271. As late as 1759 the view that Virginia lacked towns persisted in the minds of such non-Virginians as the Reverend Andrew Burnaby, Travels Throughout the Middle Settlements in North America in the Years 1759 and 1760, (London, 1775, rpt. N.Y., 1960), 14-15

Two short modern discussions of all of these views can be found in Edward M. Riley, "The Town Acts of Colonial Virginia," Journal of Southern History, XVI(1950), 306-323, and John C. Rainbolt, "The Absence of Towns in Seventeenth Century Virginia," Ibid., XXXV(1969), 343-360. Rainbolt expanded his views in From Perscription to Persuasion: Manipulation of Seventeenth Century Virginia Economy, (Port Washington, N.Y., 1974).

²Henry Hartwell, James Blair, and Edward Chilton, The Present State of Virginia and the College, ed. by Hunter Dickenson Farish, (Charlottesville, Va., 1940, rpt. 1964, [orig. pub. London, 1727]), 9-14. Robert Beverly, The History and Present State of Virginia, ed. by Louis B. Wright, (Charlottesville, Va., 1947, rpt. 1968, [orig. pub. London, 1705]), 87-88, 104. See also Richard B. Davis, ed., William Fitzhugh's Chesapeake World, 1676-1701: The Fitzhugh Letters and Other Documents, (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1963), passim, and Marion Tinling, ed., The Correspondence of the Three William Byrds of Westover, Virginia, 1684-1776, (Charlottesville, Va., 1977), 1-189.

³Philip Alexander Bruce, An Economic History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century, (New York, 1895), II 377-385.

⁴The years and issues of the Virginia Gazette included in this survey are as follows: 1739: Virginia Gazette (Parks), Jan. 5, 1739 - Feb. 1, 1740; 1745: (Parks), Mar. 21 - Dec. 19, 1745; 1751: (Hunter), Jan. 10 - Dec. 27, 1751; 1770: (Purdie & Dixon), Jan. 18 - Oct. 4, 1770; 1775: (Dixon & Hunter), Jan. 7 - Dec. 23, 1775.

⁵During the five sample years fifty different crafts and services were advertised, yet no craft or service was advertised in all of the years. Among the craft ads watch-makers ranked first with eight advertisers in four years. Tanners placed second with seven advertisers in four years. Carpenters and tailors tied for third place; each having five advertisers in three years. In the service fields, doctors ranked first with seven advertisers in three years; druggists second, with six advertisers in two years; and attorneys third, with five advertisers in three years.

⁶These advertisers included three blacksmiths, five millers and millwrights, two interior decorators and five wig and peruke makers.

⁷William Peake sold both ready made and made to order wigs. (Hunter), July 25, 1751. Likewise, Ephriam Goosley of Yorktown dealt in both imported ornamental ironwork, and objects he forged in his own shop, Ibid., Oct. 17, 1751. By contrast, Thomas Clendening of Glasgow sold his wigs only on order from Scotland. (Parks), June 6, 1745.

⁸For an extensive listing of Sprowle's property holdings, as well as his other investments and business interests, see the claims made in behalf of his estate before the Parliamentary Commissioners investigating loyalist losses in the American Revolution, A.O.12/54:288-344. Public Record Office, London.

⁹A.O.12/56:166-183.

¹⁰"Providence Forge in New Kent County, Virginia, With Notes Regarding the Jerdone, Holt and Coleman Families," WMQ, 1st ser., V(1896), 20-22. See also "The Letter Book of Francis Jerdone," Ibid., IX(1903), 153-160, 236-242.

¹¹Edward Dixon Mercantile Papers, 1743-1801, Ledger 4: Commission Accounts, 1749-1775; Ledger 31: Blacksmith Accounts, 1771-1774; Ledger 32: Blacksmith Accounts, 1776-1779. Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹²John C. Matthews, "Two Men on a Tax: Richard Henry Lee, Archibald Ritchie, and the Stamp Act," in Darrett B. Rutman, ed., The Old Dominion: Essays for Thomas P. Abernathy, (Charlottesville, Va., 1964), 96-108.

¹³Sussie M. Ames, "A Typical Businessman in the Revolutionary Era: Nathaniel Littleton Savage and His Account Books," Journal of Economic and Business History, III(1931), 407-423.

¹⁴Walter R. Coakley, "The Two James Hunters of Fredericksburg, Patriots Among the Virginia Scottish Merchants," VMHB, LVI(1948), 3-21.

¹⁵A.O.12/54:247, 273.

¹⁶For the destruction of the Norfolk ropewalk and tannery see A.O.12/54:247. See also Thomas J. Wertenbaker, Norfolk: Historic Southern Port, (Durham, N.C., 1931), 64-67. On Buchanan, Cary, and Southall's enterprise --the Chatham Rope Yard-- see Harry M. Ward and Harold E. Greer, Richmond in the Revolution, 1775-1783, (Charlottesville, Va., 1977), 136-139.

¹⁷Wertenbaker, Norfolk, 69.

¹⁸For William Donald, see Virginia Gazette (Purdie & Dixon), June 14, 1770; for Davis see (Dixon & Hunter), May 27, 1775. The Harrison family had been involved in shipping at least since 1739. C.O. 5/1444,11; Virginia Gazette (Parks), Apr. 20, 1739, (Purdie & Dixon), May 8, 1770. For Sprowle see A.O.12/54:288-334; for Jamieson, A.O.12/55:49. Ships of Jamieson and Sprowle are also frequently mentioned in the Naval Lists, C.O.5/1445-1450, passim, and in the Virginia Gazette.

¹⁹The best contemporary description of Spotswood's activities at Germana is found in William Byrd's "A Progress to the Mines in the Year 1734," in Louis B. Wright, ed., The Prose Works of William Byrd, (Cambridge, Mass., 1966), 339-380. For Spotswood's own evaluation of his holdings, see Lester J. Capon, ed., Iron Works at Tuball: Terms and Conditions for Their Lease as Stated by Alexander Spotswood on Twentieth of July, 1739 ..., (Charlottesville, Va., 1945).

²⁰Roger M. Moss, Jr., "Issac Zane, Jr., A 'Quaker for the Times,'" VMHB, LXXVII(1969), 291-306.

²¹For a brief discussion of the successes and failures of the Baltimore Company see Keatch Johnson, "The Genesis of the Baltimore Ironworks," J So Hist, XIX(1953), 157-179, and Johnson, "The Baltimore Company Seeks English Markets: A Study of the Anglo-American Iron Trade, 1731-1775," WMQ, 3rd ser., XVI(1959), 37-60. For Carter's role in the company see Louis Morton, Robert Carter of Nomini Hall: A Virginia Tobacco Planter of the Eighteenth Century, (Charlottesville, Va., 1945, rpt. 1969), 166-172.

²²Among the sixteen partners, seven were clearly loyalist in their sentiments; two were probably loyalist; three were patriots; two were probably patriots; and the views of two are unknown. For the partners and their individual investments see A.O. 12/54:147. Many of the partners appear in the Virginia Gazette as frequent advertisers. Five of the sixteen were signers of the Association of 1770; eight were members of merchant committees in 1770; two were active in the merchants' meeting of 1774.

²³See note 1 for a review of the English travelers' views of the town problem, and note 2 for the views of some prominent Virginians. Riley, "Town Acts," reviews the legislative efforts to found towns. John W. Reps, Tidewater Towns: City Planning in Colonial Virginia and Maryland, (Charlottesville, Va., 1972), chapter 4, adds some interesting insights from the point of view of a professional city planner.

²⁴See the merchant ads in the Virginia Gazette, passim. The list of merchant committees formed in conjunction with the Association of 1770 lists members from all of these "towns" except the Denbigh Warehouse. Virginia Historical Register, III(1850), 79-83.

²⁵The duties of the trustees are spelled out in the "Town Acts," the texts of which are found as follows: 1681: William W. Hening, The Statutes at Large, Being a Collection of all the Laws of Virginia ..., (Richmond, 1819-1823, rpt. 1969), II, 471-478; 1691: Ibid., III, 53-69; 1705: Ibid., III, 404-419. See also Riley, "Town Acts," and Reps, Tidewater Towns, 65-67 for additional comments on the duties of trustees.

²⁶Complete lists of trustees for the "Town Act" towns can be found only by consulting the various county records. Bruce, Economic History, II, 552-558, however, gathers most of these early trustees into his discussions.

²⁷Williamsburg was chartered July 28, 1722. The text of the charter is available in Rutherford Goodwin, A Brief and True Report Concerning Williamsburg in Virginia, (Richmond, 1959), 351-357. See Hening, Statutes at Large, IV, 138-141, for the Assembly's "enabling" act which defined the powers of the Williamsburg Hustings Court. Norfolk was chartered Sept. 15, 1736. The text of the charter is available in Brent Tarter, ed., The Order Book and Related Papers of the Common Hall of Norfolk, Virginia, 1736-1798, (Richmond, 1979), 38-39. For the "Act to Confirm the Charter of the Borough of Norfolk," see Hening, Statutes at Large, IV, 541-542.

²⁸In the eighteenth century towns were created by specific acts of the Assembly, which in nearly all cases included

the names of the first trustees to be appointed. These acts are found in Hening, Statutes at Large, passim. Commissions for Justices of the Peace were issued by the governors and had to be confirmed by the Council and were usually found in H.R. McIlwaine, ed., The Executive Journals of the Council of Virginia, (Richmond, 1925-1945), passim. An additional source of justices is a manuscript book of court commissions presumably from the Secretary of State for Virginia's office, now preserved in the Virginia State Library, Richmond, which has been printed as "Justices of the Peace in Colonial Virginia, 1757-1775," Virginia State Library Bulletin, 14, (Richmond, 1922), 49-149. As has been noted in some detail in note 27 of chapter 3 above (pp. 96-97), not all commissions were recorded in the Council Journals, and probably not in the manuscript commission book. For example, the commissions of William and Thomas Nelson, II, both prominent merchants, Burgesses and eventually Councillors from York County, are known only from the York County records. All the numbers included in this and the discussions which follow, therefore, must be considered as minimums.

²⁹For Cumberland, see Malcolm H. Harris, "The Port Towns of the Pamunkey," WMQ, 2nd ser., XXIII(1943), 498-503; for Newcastle, Ibid., 503-510; and for Hanover, Ibid., 510-516.

³⁰For the method of determining the trustees and county justices see note 28. The merchants are identified as is explained in note 4. In addition, notes on family history and geneology which have appeared over the years in VMHB, passim and WMQ, passim, when they are substantiated by family Bibles, letters, or other contemporary documents, have been used.

³¹C.G. Gordon Moss, "The Virginia Plantation System: A Study of Economic Conditions in the Colony for the Years 1700 to 1750," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1932), 423-430.

³²This figure is based upon merchant advertisements in the Virginia Gazette (Hunter), Jan. 10 - Dec. 27, 1751, and evidence of merchant ownership of shipping from the Naval Lists, 1749-1752, C.O. 5/1444-1446, passim. Additional references have been drawn from the William Allason Papers, Box 1: Letters and Papers, 1752-1758, Virginia State Library, Richmond; the Dixon Mercantile Papers, Ledger 4: Commission Accounts, 1749-1775, Library of Congress; and the "Letter Book of Francis Jerdon," WMQ, 1st ser., XI(1903), 153-160, 236-242.

³³Carville Earle and Ronald Hoffman, "Staple Crops and Urban Development in the Eighteenth Century South," Perspectives in American History, X(1976), 23.

³⁴Robert P. Thompson, "The Tobacco Export of the Upper James River Naval District, 1773-1775," WMQ, 3rd ser., XVIII(1961), 393-407, provides an extensive analysis of Burwell's manifest book which is preserved in the Virginia State Library.

³⁵This list was compiled from merchant advertisements in the Virginia Gazette (Purdie & Dixon), Jan. 18 - Oct. 4, 1770, and (Dixon & Hunter), Jan. 7 - Dec. 23, 1775. It was supplemented with the list of members of the Association of 1770 and the merchant committees that were established to aid its enforcement, VHR, III(1850), 17-24, 79-83; merchants identified by Landon Carter in Jack P. Greene, ed., The Diary of Colonel Landon Carter of Sabine Hall, 1752-1778, (Charlottesville, Va., 1965), passim; and the frequent announcements of the "meetings of the merchants" at Williamsburg which appeared in the Virginia Gazette from 1769-1775.

³⁶For a contemporary picture of the scope of the justices' powers and duties, see George Webb, The Office and Authority of a Justice of the Peace, (Williamsburg, 1736). An excellent modern summary of the function of the justices in Virginia society is found in Charles S. Sydnor, American Revolutionaries in the Making: Political Practices in Washington's Virginia, (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1952, rpt. Chicago, 1965), chapter 6.

³⁷The list of justices for 1752 is found in EJC, V, 387-395. Unfortunately, no single list comprising all of the counties in a single year exists later than 1752. The "list" for 1773 is actually a composite of lists in "Justices of the Peace," from 1770-1775. The formula for calculating percent change is explained in chapter 2, note 31 (p. 56).

³⁸See sources in note 37.

³⁹Due to the infrequency of mercantile ads from the Piedmont counties (although some did appear), the number of merchants may be understated. Nevertheless, given the marked tendency for merchants to locate in the Tidewater, near the shipping centers, the trend if not the actual number is reflective of the situation.

⁴⁰In 1773 York County Court contained eleven merchants out of nineteen justices, while Norfolk County had twelve of twenty-three justices who were merchants.

⁴¹Robert E. and Katherine B. Brown, Virginia 1705-1786: Democracy or Aristocracy?, (East Lansing, Mi, 1964), 111-113.

⁴²Sydnor, Revolutionaries in the Making, 81-82.

⁴³All memberships in the House of Burgesses were drawn from William G. and Mary Stanard, The Colonial Virginia Register, (Albany, N.Y., 1902, rpt., 1965), 126-195.

⁴⁴Ibid., Merchants were identified as described in note 32. Norfolk County: Robert Tucker and Samuel Boush, Jr.; Norfolk Borough: John Hutchings; Princess Anne: Anthony Walke, Jr.

⁴⁵York: John Norton; Charles City: Benjamin Harrison; Williamsburg: Armistead Burwell. Elizabeth City: John Tabb; New Kent: Richard Adams; Hanover: John Syme; Louisa: Thomas Walker.

⁴⁶Norfolk County: Thomas Newton, Jr., James Holt; Norfolk Borough: Joseph Hutchings. York: Thomas Nelson III; Hanover: John Syme; King William: William Aylett. The College: John Page, Jr. Charles City: Benjamin Harrison; Surry: Nicholas Falcoun, Jr.; Prince George: Richard Bland, Peter Poythres; Henrico: Richard Adams, Samuel Duval; Chesterfield: Archibald Cary; Dinwiddie: Robert Bolling, John Banister. Amelia: John Tabb; Amherst: William Cabell, Jr., Joseph Cabell; Mecklenberg: Mathew Marrable. Frederick: Isaac Zane; Hampshire: James Mercer.

CONCLUSION

This study of the economy of eighteenth century Virginia has emphasized growth, diversification, and fundamental changes which occurred during the last seventy-five years of the colonial period. By using often over-looked documents detailing population, land-holding, and most important, the export trades, it has been possible to show that Virginians not only widened their economic horizons between 1700 and 1775, they increased their standard of living as well. In all probability, it is the newly emerging Virginia merchant class which was most responsible for facilitating these changes. They were the individuals who adopted new marketing strategies, and exploited old sources of credit in new ways in order to develop new markets for crops and productions other than Virginia's venerable staple export: tobacco.

As part of this process of commercial change, the merchants became more actively involved in the political aspects of Virginia colonial life. They became active in town development, county government, and even in the politics of the House of Burgesses. At least three members of the governor's council during the third quarter of the eighteenth century were merchants. To say that the merchants sought political power for purely selfish ends is to do them a disservice. They, like their fellow Virginians

who aspired to political and social leadership, felt a great sense of public responsibility which could and sometimes did transcend their admitted desires for personal gain.

When the Revolution forced Virginians of all molds and professions to examine and then to act upon their loyalties, the merchants like many others found themselves in a quandary. They, more than most colonials, were likely to have had long-standing relationships with British merchants and British politicians. Yet many of the new, Virginia oriented merchant class cast their lot with the new nation. By so doing, they did not guarantee the success of the independence movement, but by placing their resources and their business skills in the service of the new Commonwealth they certainly helped the common cause. The diversification of exports, the beginnings of industry and the increased number of service functions which they brought about in the colony during the half century before the Revolution made possible the transition from colony to Commonwealth.

APPENDIX 1

The Naval Officers of Colonial Virginia, 1699-1775

On June 8, 1699 in compliance with his instructions from the Board of Trade Governor Francis Nicholson enforced the order that members of the Council of Virginia could not serve simultaneously as Naval Officers and/or Collectors of the Customs. Five new Naval Officers were appointed at that time by Nicholson, and the number of Naval Districts was temporarily increased to eight. By 1710 at the latest the two extra officers and districts for the Potomac River had been discontinued, and from then until the end of the colonial period, Virginia was served by only six naval officers at any one time.

Beginning in January 1743, the York, Upper James and Lower James Naval Districts were awarded by Royal Letters Patent to English absentees who served in Virginia by deputy. The Rappahannock and Accomack Naval Districts were also granted by Royal Letters Patent beginning in 1759, but in each case the appointee served in person rather than by deputy. The Patent for the Naval Office of the South Potomac District was jointly awarded to William Crouch and Richard Lee in 1747. Lee, a Virginian, continued to hold the post until the outbreak of the American Revolution.

The tabular listing of naval officers which follows includes the dates of service of each officer, the county and date of appointment as a Justice of the Peace, the county and

dates of service as a Burgess and, where appropriate, the dates of service as a Councillor or other Crown officer. In the interests of clarity, the following abbreviations have been used:

County Abbreviations:

Chas C	Charles City
Eliz C	Elizabeth City
Glouc	Gloucester
Jas Cty	James City
Jamestn	Jamestown
K Geo	King George
K & Q	King and Queen
Lanc	Lancaster
Mdsx	Middlesex
N'hampton	Northampton
N'umberland	Northumberland
War	Warwick
Westmd	Westmoreland
Wmsbg	Williamsburg

Source Abbreviations:

CO	Colonial Office, British Public Record Office, London
CL 1680	"Civil List, 1680," <u>Virginia Magazine of History and Biography</u> , I(1893), 225-226, 246-252.
CL 1699	"Civil List, 1699," C.O. 5/1310, C.16.
CL 1702	"Civil List, 1702," C.O. 5/1312, pt. 2, 85-88.
CL 1714	"Civil List, 1714," C.O. 5/1317, #27vi.

Source Abbreviations (cont'd):

- CL 1726 "Civil List, 1726," C.O. 5/1320, R.20.
- EJC H.R. McIlwaine, ed., The Executive Journals of the Council of Virginia, (Richmond, 1925-1945).
- Hening William W. Hening, ed., The Statutes at Large, Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia, (Richmond, 1819-1823, rpt. 1969).
- Lee Chron Cazanove G. Lee, comp., Lee Chronical: Studies of the Early Generations of the Lees of Virginia (New York, 1957).
- Mss JPs "Justices of the Peace of Colonial Virginia, 1757-1775," Virginia State Library Bulletin, 14 (Richmond, 1922).
A reprint of a Mss list of Justices preserved in the Virginia State Library, Richmond, Va.
- Reg William G. and Mary Stanard, comps., Colonial Virginia Register (Albany, N.Y., 1902, rpt. 1965).
- Spots R.A. Brock, ed., The Official Letters of Alexander Spotswood, (Richmond, 1882-1885, rpt. 1973).

Naval Officers of Colonial Virginia

Upper District of the James River

Officer	Date Begin	Date End	Justice	Burgess	Other Offices - Notes
Nathaniel Harrison	6-8-1699 EJC 1:499	2-26-1714 EJC 3:365	Surry by 98 CL 1699	Surry 99-06 Reg: 92-97	Councillor 13-27 Reg: 45
Arthur Allen	4-23-1701 VMHB 24:73	6-16-1710 EJC 3:249	Surry 02 EJC 2:271		No evidence of service as N.O.
Francis Lightfoot	2-26-1714 EJC 3:365	2-5-1728 EJC 4:160	Jas Cty 12 EJC 3:316 Chas C by 26 CL 1726		
John Blair	2-5-1728 EJC 4:160	8-15-1728 EJC 4:184	Jas Cty by 52 EJC 5:391 York by 61 Mss JPs:63	Wmsbg 36-40 Reg: 109-112	Dept. Auditor 28-71 EJC 4:184 Councillor 44-71 JBT 8:161
Lewis Burwell	8-15-1728 EJC 4:184	11-19-1743 EJC 5:139		Jamestn 36-40 Jas Cty 42-43 Reg: 109-116	see Gooch to Albermarle 11-21-1743 BM Add Mss 32, 701:267
Lewis Burwell, Jr.	11-19-1743 EJC 5:139	Revolution	Jas Cty 37 EJC 4:413	Jas Cty 58-74 Reg: 147-196	served as Depty N.O. to Tredcroft & Robert
Edward Tredcroft	5-3-1744 CO 324/37:250	1758?			Absentee, never came to Va.
James Robert	10-27-1758 CO 324/38:504	Revolution			Absentee, never came to Va.

Naval Officers of Colonial Virginia

Lower District of the James River

Officer	Date Begin	Date End	Justice	Burgess	Other Offices - Notes
William Wilson	6-8-1699 EJC 1:449	10-10-1710 EJC 3:253	Eliz C by 94 EJC 1:309	Eliz C 00-02 Reg: 94	
Nicholas Curle	10-10-1710 EJC 3:253	10-15-1714 EJC 3:375	Eliz C 02 CL 1702	Eliz C 10 Reg: 98	
John Holloway	10-15-1714 EJC 3:375	6-12-1716 EJC 3:428	York 17 EJC 3:461	K&Q 11-14 York 20-22,27- 34, Wmsbg 23-26 Reg: 99-106	Speaker, H of B 20-34 Treasurer 23-34 Reg: 24, 51
Henry Irwin	6-12-1716 EJC 3:428	4-28-1726 EJC 4:98			
Wilson Cary	4-28-1726 EJC 4:98	3-25-1761 CO 5/1448: 47	War by 26 CL 1726		date of termination is uncertain date given is last Naval List
William Berkeley	3-24-1761 CO 324/40: 69	unknown			Absentee? No record of service
Wilson M. Cary	9-29-1761 CO 5/1449:2	Revolution	War 57 EJC 6:26 Eliz C 62 Mss JPs: 67	Eliz C 65-71 Reg: 172	Deputy? Date appointed unknown date given is first Naval List

Naval Officers of Colonial Virginia

York River District

Officer	Date Begin	Date End	Justice	Burgess	Other Offices - Notes
Miles Cary	6-8-1699 EJC 1:449	2-18-1709 EJC 3:207	War by 02 CL 1702	War 84-92,98-06 Reg: 86-97	
William Buckner	2-18-1709 EJC 3:207	3-1-1709 EJC 3:212	York by 99 CL 1699	York 98-99, 10-14 Reg: 100	Collector of Customs for York District. Temporary appt. as N.O.
Nathaniel Burwell	3-1-1709 EJC 3:207	10-15-1719 EJC 3:512	Glouc by 09 EJC 3:215	Glouc 10-22 Reg: 90-103	Dismissed as N.O. by Gov. Spotswood
William Robertson	10-15-1719 EJC 3:215	10-23-1739 EJC 4:442			Clerk of Jas Cty Clerk of Countil 02-39
William Gooch, Jr.	10-23-1739 EJC 4:442	uncertain			Appt in dispute with Head Lynch
Head Lynch, Esq.	1-10-1740 CO 324/37: 152	uncertain	Caroline 37 EJC 4:349		First appt by Royal Warrant disputed with William Gooch, Jr. no evidence of service as N.O.
William Gooch, Jr.	4-7-1742 CO 324/37 1-8	10-29-1742 EJC 4:101			no evidence of service as N.O.
Ralph Wormeley	10-29-1742 EJC 4:101	uncertain			no evidence of service as N.O.

Naval Officers of Colonial Virginia

York River District (continued)

Officer	Date Begin	Date End	Justice	Burgess	Other Offices - Notes
John Couraud	1-7-1743 CO 324/37: 197	4-15-1751 CO 324/38: 213			Absentee, never came to Va. Under Secretary of State
James Pride	uncertain	uncertain	York by 61 Mss JPs: 63		Served as Depty N.O. to Couraud & Palmer in Va. by 6-15-1746 (first Naval List, CO 5/1444:6) Removal forced by House of Burgesses, June 1768?
Robert Palmer	4-15-1751 CO 324/38: 213	uncertain			Absentee, never came to Va.
Cary Goosley	by 9-29-1770 CO 5/1349:	by 6-30-1772 Va. Gazette (P&D), 7-2-1772			Depty N.O. for Plamer begin date is first Naval List; end date is date of death
John H. Norton	by 10-10- 1773 CO 5/1352: 129	Revolution	York 73 Mss JPs: 113		Depty N.O. begin date is first Naval List

Naval Officers of Colonial Virginia

Rappahannock River District

Officer	Date Begin	Date End	Justice	Burgess	Other Offices - Notes
Ralph Wormeley	6-?-1676 CO 5/1355: 73	10-24-1699 EJC 2:14			Councillor 77-01, Reg: 41 Sect of State of Va., 93-01 EJC 1:276; Collector of Customs, Rappahannock Dist., 77-98
Robert Carter	10-24-1699 EJC 2:14	12-23-1700 EJC 2:123	Lanc by 99 CL 1699	Lanc 91-00 Reg: 87-93	Councillor 00-32, EJC 1:93 Speaker, H of B, 96-99 Treasurer of Va., 99-05, Reg:24,51
Corbin Griffin	12-23-1700 EJC 2:123	11-11-1701 EJC 2:210	Mdsx by 02 CL 1702		
Gawin Corbin	11-11-1701 EJC 2:210	6-13-1711 EJC 3:276	Mdsx by 98 CL 1699 K&Q 23 EJC 4:30	Mdsx 98-04,14- 22, K&Q 15 Reg: 94	was fired by Spotswood
Christopher Robinson	6-13-1711 EJC 3:276	3-1-1727 EJC 4:128	Mdsx by 02 CL 1702	Mdsx 10-14 Reg: 98-100	Sheriff of Mdsx 23, 24, 26 EJC 4:34, 66, 100
Robert Carter, Jr.	3-1-1727 EJC 4:128	11-1-1729 EJC 4:210			resigned because of health
Charles Carter	11-1-1729 EJC 4:210	11-1-1733 EJC 4:311	Mdsx 30 EJC 4:216	K Geo 36-64 Reg: 109-178	Trustee of Falmouth Hening 6:281-3
Armistead Churchill	11-1-1733 EJC 4:311	6-24-1761 CO 5/1448: 56	Mdsx 25 EJC 4:91		end date from last Naval List
Charles Neilson	3-24-1761 CO 324/40:80	Revolution	Mdsx by		merchant & loyalist appointed by Royal Warrant

Naval Officers of Colonial Virginia

South Potomac Naval District

<u>Officer</u>	<u>Date Begin</u>	<u>Date End</u>	<u>Justice</u>	<u>Burgess</u>	<u>Other Officer - Notes</u>
Richard Lee	4-20-1697 EJC 1:364	11-3-1710 EJC 3:263	Westmd by 80 CL 1680	Westmd 76 Reg: 81	Councillor 76-91, 93-99 EJC 1:172, 278 J of Vice-Admty 85, EJC 1:507
Rice Hooe	6-8-1699 EJC 1:450	uncertain	Stafford by 99 CL 1699	Stafford 03 Reg: 95	N.O. for Stafford Co. only
Hancock Lee	6-8-1699 EJC 1:450	uncertain	N'hampton 77 Lee Chron:31 N'umberland 80 CL 1680	N'umberland 98	N.O. for N'umberland Co. only
Thomas Lee	11-3-1710 EJC 3:263	4-22-1733 EJC 4:307	Westmd by 26 CL 1726	Westmd 26-33 Reg: 106-108	Councillor 33-50 EJC 3:307
Henry Lee	4-22-1733 EJC 4:307	uncertain	Westmd 19 EJC 3:500		terminated by death after 3-25-1747, his last list CO 5/1445:47
Richard Lee & William Crouch	11-20-1747 CO 324/37: 398	Revolution	Westmd 48 EJC 5:273	Westmd 58-76 Reg: 148-200	Lee & Crouch appt. jointly. Crouch an absentee? no evidence of his presence in Va.

Naval Officers of Colonial Virginia

Accomack District

Officer	Date Begin	Date End	Justice	Burgess	Other Offices - Notes
John Custis	6-8-1699 EJC 1:449	7-9-1700 EJC 2:91	N'hampton by 80 CL 1680	N'hampton 85, 93-99 Reg: 85-91	
Hancock Custis	7-10-1700 EJC 2:98	5-5-1711? Spots 1:80	Accomack by 14 CL 1714		date terminated uncertain, but by this date at latest
William Waters, Sr.	5-5-1711 Spots 1:80	10-7-1720 EJC 5:531	N'hampton by 09 EJC 3:215	N'hampton 14-20 Reg: 100-103	date appt uncertain, but by this date at latest
William Waters, Jr.	10-7-1720 EJC 3:531	3-1-1721 EJC 5:539			resigned to go to England
James Torse	3-1-1721 EJC 3:539	6-7-1726 EJC 4:103	N'hampton by 26 CL 1726		Tobacco Inspector 31 EJC 4:236
Edmunc Scarburgh	6-7-1726 EJC 4:103	4-22-1732 EJC 4:266	Accomack 20 EJC 4:x1	Accomack 23-26 Reg: 104-105	
Henry Scarburgh	4-22-1732 EJC 4:266	10-11-1744 Reg: 116	Accomack by 26 CL 1726	Accomack 26-44 Reg: 105-116	date terminated is date of death
James Delpeche	11-1-1744 EJC 5:166	11-4-1745 EJC 5:192			recommended for office by Id Albermarle, absentee Gov.
Adam Muir	11-4-1745 EJC 5:192	3-13-1760 CO 5/1448: 31			terminated in favor of Bowman Tobacco Inspector 43 & 50 EJC 5:132,327
David Bowman	11-26-1759 CO 324/39:17	Revolution	Accomack 71 EJC 6:388		appt by Royal Warrant

A NOTE ON THE SOURCES

Where in the World Did You Dig That Up?

Perhaps the greatest challenge associated with this study from the very first has been to overcome the all too prevalent view among modern economists and historians that the kind of detailed information needed to make an accurate description, not to mention analysis, of Virginia's colonial economy did not exist. It seems unreasonable to assume that, in an age devoted to mercantilism, regulation, and protectionism, evidence regarding the successes and failures of policies would not have been collected. As the foregoing chapters prove, not only does such evidence exist, it can be fruitfully used to document the diversification process within colonial Virginia.

In general terms, three broad classes of documents have been employed in the development of this evidence: official public papers, private papers and accounts, and contemporary publications including newspapers and pamphlets. The first grouping, public papers, has proved to be the largest and most useful. For ease of explanation, it should be considered in three sections: imperial documents, colonial documents, and county-parish documents. It is from the first of these sections that the bulk of the statistical material has been developed.

All of the records dealing with population, land

acquisition, tobacco revenues and, most importantly, the Naval Office Lists were created at the behest of the British government. Most of these were produced by the colonial bureaucracy --the Governor, the Receiver General of the Revenue, the Auditor, or the Naval Officers-- for the use of the Board of Trade, the Board of Customs, or after mid-century, for the Secretary of State. As a result, virtually all of these papers have come to rest in the Public Records Office in London --Britain's "National Archives"-- and they are readily available in the United States on microfilm. Most Virginia materials are grouped among the Colonial Office Papers (C.O. 5/1304-1450). Additional documents may be found in the Treasury Papers (especially T.1 - the In-Letters), the Customs Papers (C.2/, C.3/, and C.16/1), and in the papers of the various other departments which dealt with the colonies.

Unfortunately, entrance into this vast body of materials is often rather hit-or-miss, since there is no form of index available. They have been described, although very inadequately, by Charles M. Andrews, Guide to Materials for American History, to 1783, in the Public Record Office of Great Britain, (Washington, D.C., 1912-1914). For materials prior to 1738 descriptions, and often extended extracts are printed in Noel Sainsbury, et al, eds., Calendar of [British] State Papers: America and the West Indies, (London, 1860-), which includes citations to the originals. For those fortunate enough to have access to them, the Survey Reports

of the Virginia Colonial Records Project give detailed descriptions of all the Colonial Office documents as well as other P.R.O. documents, and documents in other British and continental archives which relate to Virginia. These, in turn, are keyed to a microfilm collection available at the Virginia State Library and the Virginia Historical Society in Richmond, Va., the Alderman Library of the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va., and the Research Department of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

A special word about the Naval Office Lists is in order since they form the heart of the statistical evidence. While the vast majority of these documents are found in C.O. 5/1441-1450, some strayed into the records of the Secretary of State and are now catalogued in C.O. 5/1349-1352. Still others ended up in the Treasury offices and are found in T.1/484-512. A not insignificant number of Lists appear to have been removed from the offices of the Board of Trade by George Chalmers, while he was head clerk of the Board and engaged in writing a variety of historical works about the colonies early in the nineteenth century. As a result these Lists have been scattered with the Chalmers Papers to a number of libraries outside of Britain. At least a dozen are to be found in the collection of the New York Public Library. Still other Naval Lists have turned up among the Miscellaneous Virginia Manuscripts at the Massachusettes Historical Society, Boston, the Clemens Library at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and some at the Huntington Library, San Marino,

California. For most of the Naval Lists, the greatest trial was to survive the great Customs House fire in London in 1814, yet for some, which are now located in the Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, survival has been in spite of being used as insulation in the walls of a Richmond tenement for the better part of two centuries.

As a supplement to the Naval Office Lists, the serial reports of the Inspector General of the Customs (C.2/ and C.3/) are very useful, although they are aggregations of Virginia and Maryland data. Similarly, a series of special reports prepared by the Inspector General's office for the Board of Trade (C.O. 390/) offers additional data on various aspects of Virginia's tobacco and fur trades. Other official documents of value include the vast series of commercial data prepared by the Board of Trade (B.T.6/) at various times to aid in determining the overall balance of the empire's import and export trades.

Two other groups of records preserved in the Public Record Office also figure prominently in this study. One is a series of Entry Books of the Board of Trade (C.O. 324), the other is a collection of claims made by American Loyalists at the end of the Revolution (A.O. 12). After 1740, when the power of appointment of the Naval Officers was taken away from the Lieutenant Governor by the Secretary of State, all subsequent appointments to those offices were made by royal warrant and recorded on the books of the Board of Trade. From that time on the notice of Naval Office appointments found in the

Journals of the Council of Virginia (discussed below) was merely the formal recognition that the new Officer had presented his credentials in America. For all intents and purposes (and especially for the collection of fees) the new officer's term began from the date of his warrant under the king's Sign Manuel.

The other group of documents --the Loyalists' Claims-- represent a wealth of material dealing with colonial merchants. After the outbreak of the Revolution, Parliament recognized the plight of many of Britain's loyal subjects who had lost property or other incomes in America due to the hostilities. The multitudinous claims of these individuals plus their supporting affidavits and other evidence of property ownership came to be lodged in the Audit Office. A.O. 12/54-56 contain the bulk of the Virginia claims, and from them a variety of information concerning over 87 merchants has been gleaned. Not only do these documents show the extent and variety of mercantile holdings in the 1770's, they tell much about Virginia's burgeoning industrial development as well. While it must be remembered that this evidence was prepared by only those merchants who left Virginia, the accounts they presented bear upon the activities of a number of patriot merchants as well.

Beyond the imperially related documents, are a group of colonial documents which bear directly upon trade and its regulation. Most of the materials concerning the appointment and tenure of Naval Officers, their relationship to the

Virginia establishment, and their functions in general comes from the journals of the Council of Virginia. These are available in published form as The Executive Journals of the Council of Virginia, ed. by H.R. McIlwaine, (Richmond, 1925-1945). They cover the period from 1680 to the outbreak of the Revolution, although they offer the most detail for the period before 1750 when the Council was most active. As the century drew to a close, the Council's executive functions grew more and more routine, and as a result the Journals become less informative. Also, as is discussed in detail in Chapter 3, after the mid 1740's the Lieutenant Governor in Virginia effectively lost the power to appoint Naval Officers --hence the Journals would no longer contain useful information on this subject.

Details of colonial legislative activity regarding trade and its regulation are learned chiefly from William Hening, ed., The Statutes at Large, Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia..., (Richmond, 1819-1823), rpt. 1965). The debates of the Burgesses are found in John P. Kennedy and H.R. McIlwaine, eds., The Journal of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1619-1776, (Richmond, 1905-1915).

Two other groups of Official papers have proved to be useful for this study. These include the records of various Virginia counties and parishes. Both groups were used primarily as sources of information on prices current for the major export commodities, and to a lesser extent for information bearing upon the lives and activities of colonial

merchants. County records were useful for price data for several reasons. First, the colonial courts dealt with many matters from land to the adjudication of debts, to the supervision of the estates of minors. This, coupled with the practice of valuing many goods and services in terms of tobacco for much of the eighteenth century, made the occurrence of current prices quite common. The York County Records were used extensively in this fashion after my association with the Research Department at Colonial Williamsburg. The Middlesex County Records have also been used, though less extensively, and in all cases indirectly through the material developed by Darrett and Anita Rutman from their continuing analysis of Middlesex. A few scattered price quotes from the Caroline and Spotsylvania County records have been used, but these too were borrowed from indirect sources. In the case of Caroline, T.E. Campbell, A History of Colonial Caroline County, (Richmond, 1954), includes an extensive series of appendices of county office holders and other data taken directly from the Caroline County Order Books. William A. Crozier, comp., Spotsylvania County, 1727-1800, (Richmond, 1905, rpt. 1971), contains extensive abstracts of Spotsylvania deeds and wills, as well as guardian, marriage and estate administration bonds.

The nature of the parish structure of the established Church of England in Virginia also makes their records useful in commercial research. As the official overseers of the care for poor and incapacitated members of their communities, the parish vestries were often purchasers of farm products that were also exports. Thus, parish vestry books offer additional

sources of prices current. The following vestry books, all of which were edited and transcribed by Churchill G. Chamberlayne, were consulted: The Vestry Book of St. Peter's Parish, New Kent and James City Counties, Virginia, 1684-1786, (Richmond, 1937); The Vestry Book of St. Paul's Parish, Hanover County, Virginia, 1706-1786, (Richmond, 1940); The Vestry Book of Petsworth Parish, Gloucester County, Virginia, 1677-1793, (Richmond, 1933).

Private papers, the second general category of evidence used in this study, can provide additional quantitative measures of Virginia's export trades as well as shed further light on the careers and investments of the colony's merchants. In theory, although not in fact, if one could add up all of the mercantile records, they ought to provide an independent check against which to measure the volumes of exports reported in the Naval Office Lists. Many, many mercantile records have survived. However, the number is far too small to produce such a "private measure" of the trade. Moreover, those records which do exist come from a variety of merchants operating in all parts of the colony with disparate trading interests and connections. Nevertheless, if statistical correlations cannot be made, the qualitative parallel between the patterns in the mercantile accounts and those found in the Naval Office Lists is clear and consistent.

A comprehensive analysis of all the extant mercantile records which bear upon the Virginia trades was beyond the scope of the present project. Those groups of papers which were used were picked for their apparent representativeness

and for their voluminous content. The Papers of William Allason, 1723-1818, at the Virginia State Library, Richmond, Va., were of first importance because they included both correspondence to and from Allason and his actual store records at Falmouth, Va. from 1761 through the Revolution and into the early nineteenth century. The Edward Dixon Mercantile Papers, 1743-1801, at the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., contain extensive accounts of this Port Royal, Va. merchant from the early 1740's to the Revolution. Dixon's ledger of Commission Accounts was particularly useful in establishing his activities as an independent tobacco dealer buying directly from his Virginia neighbors and consigning to England. The Francis Jerdone Papers, 1720-1776, most of which are located at the Swemm Library of the College of William and Mary, detail the activities of a major British consignment agent who lived in Louisa. The John Norton & Sons Papers, 1750-1902, at Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, Va., about one third of which have been printed in Frances N. Mason, ed., John Norton & Sons, Merchants of London and Virginia, (Richmond, 1937, rpt., 1968), were particularly useful for establishing the identities of minor merchants in the Yorktown-Williamsburg area.

Some smaller collections of mercantile papers which give additional evidence on prices, products exported and, most importantly, on other mercantile investments should also be mentioned. The James and Henry Ritchie Accounts, 1761-1813, Library of Congress, give valuable information regarding credit arrangements in the Rappahannock Valley on the eve of

the Revolution. Similarly, the William Nelson Letterbook, 1766-1775, Virginia State Library, further illuminates mercantile activity in Yorktown during the final ten years of the colonial period. The Hunter Family Papers, 1770-1867, Alderman Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va., detail the activities of a family of merchant-industrialists whose iron foundry at Fredericksburg became one of the major weapons manufactories during the Revolution.

Some merchant papers have been printed, at least in part, in various historical journals, and are of related value. These include: "Letters of Thomas and Richard Adams," Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, V(1898), 132-138, 290-297, VI(1899), 30-31, 127-134, XXI(1914), 379-395. Joseph S. Ewing, ed., "The Correspondence of Archibald McCall and George McCall, 1777-1783," VMHB, LXXVIII(1965), 312-353, 425-454. "Letters of Robert Pleasants, Merchant of Curles," William and Mary Quarterly, 2nd ser., I(1921), 107-113, II(1922), 257-275.

Along with mercantile papers, the private papers of many planters have survived and they too offer additional evidence of prices and mercantile activity. As in the case of the mercantile papers, many more of these exist than were consulted for the present study. Nevertheless, those which have been used appear to be among the most valuable. Various papers from the vociferous members of the Carter family were used. The most valuable, of course, is Louis B. Wright, ed., Letters of Robert Carter, 1720-1727, The Commerical Interests of a Virginia Gentleman, (San Marino, Ca., 1940). Of related

but lesser use were the Sabine Hall Papers, 1659-1897, Alderman Library, University of Virginia. These are available in a microfilm edition jointly published by the University of Virginia and the National Historic Publications Commission which includes additional Carter family papers from the Swemm Library, College of William and Mary, the Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Va., and those still in the possession of Carter descendants. Also of use concerning the Carter family business interest are the Robert Carter of Nomini, Plantation and Business Accounts, 1759-1805, Library of Congress. Jack P. Greene, ed., The Diary of Colonel Landon Carter of Sabine Hall, 1752-1778, (Charlottesville, Va., 1965), is of considerable value not only in identifying continuing Carter family business enterprises, but also for Carter's appraisal of various Virginia merchants.

Other planter papers which contributed bits of price data, evidence of export productions, or reflected Virginians' views of the commercial community included the Joseph Ball Letterbook, 1743-1776; the Robert Beverly Letterbook, 1761-1791, and the Miscellaneous Letters and Papers of Theoderick Bland, all found in the Library of Congress. The William Beverly Account Book, 1752, Virginia Historical Society, also proved useful for its information concerning hogshead sizes at the middle of the century.

Among the printed letters and papers of planters, three works deserve special mention. First is Richard B. Davis, ed., William Fitzhugh and His Chesapeake World, 1676-

1701: The Fitzhugh Letters and Other Documents, (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1963), which is especially good for its picture of the slow and often haphazard pace of consignment marketing as it was practiced at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The second work, Marion Tinling, ed., The Correspondence of the Three William Byrds, 1684-1776, (Charlottesville, Va., 1977), contains not only voluminous commercial correspondence of William Byrd I, but also his, as well as William Byrd II's, insights upon the tobacco trade and the colony's land development from an official point of view during the years while each served as Receiver of Virginia's royal revenues. Third, and finally, the three parts of William Byrd's diaries, Louis B. Wright and Marion Tinling, eds., The Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover, 1709-1712, (Richmond, Va., 1941), _____, William Byrd of Virginia: The London Diary, 1717-1721, (New York, 1968), and Maude H. Woodfin, ed., Another Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover, 1739-1741, (Richmond, Va., 1942), proved to be extremely helpful in identifying and characterizing a number of James River merchants. In addition, the third volume shed valuable light upon the Gooch-Lynch contest for the Naval Office of the York River.

The third general category of source material includes newspapers and other works of a public, but unofficial, nature. The most extensive item in this grouping is the Virginia Gazette as published variously by William Parks, James Hunter, Joseph Royale, John Dixon, Alexander Purdie, and William Rind. The extant copies of these papers provided the initial identi-

fication of most of the merchants considered in the study, as well as a variety of opinions that Virginians held about the mercantile community. Newspaper evidence is available with varying degrees of completeness for the years from 1736 through the Revolution. Philadelphia newspapers figured in the study in an indirect fashion since they were the major source of evidence used in Anne M. Bezanson, ed., Prices in Colonial Pennsylvania, (Philadelphia, 1935), from which the standardized prices were taken for Chapter 5.

Four other types of contemporary literature also figured in this study. First of these are the genre of "history and present state," They include Henry Hartwell, James Blair and Edward Chilton, The Present State of Virginia and the College, ed. by Hunter D. Farish, (Charlottesville, Va., 1940, rpt. 1964, [orig. pub., London, 1727]), an anti-Virginia establishment tract which was actually written in 1699; Robert Beverley, The History and Present State of Virginia, ed. by Louis B. Wright, (Charlottesville, Va., 1947, rpt. 1968, [orig. pub., London, 1705]), a pro-Virginia tract; and Hugh Jones, The Present State of Virginia, from Where is Inferred a Short View of Maryland and North Carolina, ed. by Richard L. Morton, (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1956, [orig. pub., London, 1724]). The first two bear upon early Virginia politics and are analyzed in some detail in Chapter 3. The Jones work, by far the least biased of the three, was useful for its comment upon planter attitudes toward tobacco planting and diversification on the eve of the depression which affected

Virginia in the late 1720's.

The second and third types of documents are "town tracts" and "tobacco tracts". Town literature begins in the 1650's at the very latest when Virginians began to make a positive effort to encourage urban development. They continue well into the eighteenth century when pro- and anti-town polemics still pepper the "travel accounts" of non-native travelers to the colony who commented in detail upon what they found. All of the pertinent items belonging to this group of tracts are discussed in detail in Chapter 7, and especially in note 1, p. 227. Two "tobacco tracts," --works directly commenting upon the tobacco trade-- figured in this study. The first, The Case of the Planters of Tobacco in Virginia, As Represented by Themselves; Signed by the President of the Council [Robert Carter] and Speaker of the House [John Holloway]. To Which is added a Vindication of the Said Representation, (London, 1733), is a collection of planter complaints against British merchants and the existing system of tobacco duties. As is pointed out in the analysis of this document in Chapter 6, it is polemic and biased in favor of the planters' views, and most of its charges were unsubstantiated. The second, A Dialogue Between Thomas Sweet-Scented and William Oronoco, Planters, Both Men of Good Understanding, and Justice Love Country, Who Can Speak for Himself, Recommended to the Reading of the Planters, by a Sincere Lover of Virginia, (Williamsburg, 1732), is a tract written by Governor William Gooch in support of the tobacco legislation of 1730.

It, too, represents a particular point of view, but it is useful in establishing the climate of opinion in the colony at this crucial time in its commercial history.

The fourth, and final, category of unofficial works which must be mentioned contains two contemporary books dealing with the economy and particularly the agricultural production of the colonies prior to the Revolution. First, an anonymous work, American Husbandry, published in London in 1775 and reprinted with a critical introduction by Harry J. Carman, (New York, 1939), has long been known as a standard treatise on mid-eighteenth century colonial agriculture. The section dealing with the Chesapeake is useful, but should be used only in conjunction with Alexander Cluny's The American Traveler: or Observations on the Present State, Culture and Commerce of the British Colonies in America ..., (London, 1767, facsimile rpt., Ann Arbor, Mi., 1979). In actuality, Cluny is the source of all the commercial and agriculture statistics given in American Husbandry.