"In the Hollow Lotus-Land": Discord, Order, and the Emergence of Stability in Early Bermuda, 1609-1623

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"IN THE HOLLOW LOTOS-LAND":
DISCORD, ORDER, AND THE EMERGENCE OF STABILITY
IN EARLY BERMUDA, 1609-1623

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of History
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

by
Matthew R. Laird
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This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Matthew R. Laird

Approved, July 1991

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"IN THE HOLLOW LOTOS-LAND";
DISCORD, ORDER, AND THE EMERGENCE OF STABILITY
IN EARLY BERMUDA, 1609-1623

--ABSTRACT--

From the first accidental arrival of the English in 1609 through the early 1620s, the settlement of Bermuda was characterized by the same painful process of social, political, and economic development witnessed in Virginia's early years. Yet, over the course of a decade Bermuda was transformed from a shaky experimental settlement rife with instability and anarchic social conditions into an increasingly complex community with a solidifying economic base, its own system of representative government, and a more disciplined and deferential settler population.

Through the enforcement of a rigorous disciplinary code modelled on Virginia's Lawes Divine, Morall and Martiall the initial crises of famine and social disorder were confronted and overcome. Quasi-military rule was then quickly superceded as demographic development, a nascent tobacco industry, and the establishment of permanent local authority structures hastened the emergence of stability in the colony. As a result, by 1623 Bermuda had been successfully integrated into the broader system of English colonial enterprise in the seventeenth-century Atlantic world.

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THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY IN VIRGINIA
"IN THE HOLLOW LOTOS-LAND":
DISCORD, ORDER, AND THE EMERGENCE OF STABILITY
IN EARLY BERMUDA, 1609-1623
What should we do but sing his praise
That led us through the watery maze,
Unto an isle so long unknown,
And yet far kinder than our own?

-- Andrew Marvell, "Bermudas"

It was Saturday morning, 30 July 1609—150 exhausted and shaken men, women, and children gazed forlornly out to the hulk of their ship, the Sea Venture, lying stranded on a reef not far from shore. The winds were dying down and the sea had calmed in the wake of the tremendous storm which had battered and pounded their vessel mercilessly for three days and nights.

With the wind shrieking, sails ripping, and wood groaning under a heavy, blackened sky, few aboard the Sea Venture had dreamed they would ever see the sun rise again. They had been seven weeks out of Plymouth aboard the flagship of the "Third Supply," a fleet of seven ships and two pinnaces sent for the relief of the struggling infant plantation in Virginia. When the devastating tropical storm struck, the Sea Venture soon became separated from the rest of the ships, its passengers and crew suddenly in a desperate fight for their lives.¹ Sir George Somers, hard-

¹ Two first hand accounts of the "tempest" (soon to be immortalized by Shakespeare) which wrecked the Sea Venture were later published in London: William Strachey's "A True Repertory of the Wreck and Redemption of Sir Thomas Gates,
bitten admiral of the fleet, fought with the rudder hour after gruelling hour to keep the vessel from capsizing, while every able-bodied man worked furiously at the pumps to stem the rush of water into the hold. By the third day of the storm all seemed lost. The ship was strained to its breaking point, the crew to the very limit of their endurance. Settlers and sailors alike offered up their final, silent prayers, resigning themselves to their imminent fate. But then, miraculously, out of nowhere it appeared: land. In a final, frenzied effort, the crew brought the ship closer to shore, hoping that it would not be shattered on the reef. With a terrible creaking and splitting of timber, the Sea Venture finally came to rest upright, jammed between two rocks. Directed by Somers and the ship's captain, Christopher Newport, the passengers clambered into the small boats and rowed wearily to shore. They had found Bermuda.²

² Recent underwater archaeological investigation has substantiated the original accounts which described the Sea Venture coming to rest on a reef off "Landing Beach". What appeared to be the structure of a seventeenth-century ship was located in 1958 by local divers in the precise area alluded to in the documentary sources, but a more detailed recovery operation would not begin until 1978. Details of the wreck's construction and the related artifactual evidence suggested an early seventeenth-century vessel;

With the immediate threat of death now gone, the unsettling reality of their situation began to sink in. Somers and Newport were well aware that they had run aground on Bermuda. Since the fifteenth century European mariners had spun tales of the "Isle of Devils", a treacherous group of limestone coral islands, rocks, and reefs which stood isolated in the mid-Atlantic, separated by some six hundred miles of ocean from the Grand Banks, Virginia, and Hispaniola. For more than a century before the Sea Venture ran aground off its shores, Bermuda had played a crucial part in guiding thousands of Spanish, Portuguese, and French ships home from the Caribbean. Ships laden with the riches of the Indies followed the Gulf Stream through the Florida Straight until they approached 32° 20' latitude, where Bermuda lay. Here ships sought to avoid strong patterns of erosion on the outer hull planking also indicated a lengthy period during which the ship was semi-submerged, a fact which further substantiated contemporary descriptions of the wreck, and the subsequent salvage operations conducted by Somers and Gates. The results of the archaeological investigation of the Sea Venture wreck are summarized in Allan J. Wingood, "Sea Venture. An Interim Report on an Early 17th Century shipwreck lost in 1609," The International Journal of Nautical Archaeology and Underwater Exploration, 11.4 (1982), 333-347; Jonathan Adams, "Sea Venture: A Second Interim report--Part 1," IJNAUE, 14.4 (1985), 275-299; and Allan J. Wingood, "Sea Venture Second Interim Report-- Part 2," IJNAUE, 15.2 (1986), 149-159; Philip P. Armitage, "Victuals and Vermin: Life on Board the Sea Venture in 1609," Bulletin of the Institute of Maritime History and Archaeology, No.10 (December 1987), 8-10.

adverse northerly winds by using a belt of westerlies which blew just north of Bermuda, but because pilots were unable to determine their longitude with much accuracy, they generally waited until they sighted the island before striking out to the east. For many hapless sailors, however, this maneuver proved too difficult when combined with unpredictable winds and the particularly hazardous reefs off Bermuda's northwest coast. By the early seventeenth century countless ships had been lost in the area, firmly establishing Bermuda's daunting reputation as a shipping graveyard.4

The Spanish were particularly interested in the "Isle of Devils" because of its navigational and strategic value as a pivotal point along their shipping routes home from the Caribbean and Latin America. Plans were intermittently hatched in the Spanish court throughout the sixteenth century which would have seen Bermuda settled in a bid to secure it as a defensive and re-supply position for ships en route to Europe or the Azores. But such a project never came to pass. When Somers and Gates landed quite unexpectedly on Bermuda in 1609 they found it entirely

uninhabited but for a large number of wild hogs—the only survivors, it was thought, of earlier ships which had met their end on Bermuda's deadly reefs. While the Spanish had failed to plant a settlement on this naturally fortified island before their English rivals stumbled upon it, they would not forget Bermuda's importance in the context of their vital transatlantic trade. The persistent English fear of a Spanish assault on the nascent colony was thus well-founded—a fear which had a significant impact on the character and development of Bermudian settlement in its first, tentative years.5

In the quiet hours following the tempest-tossed ordeal of the Sea Venture, Somers must certainly have contemplated the sobering fact that his small band of settlers now had to survive entirely by means of their resourcefulness and perseverance. No one in the rest of the "Third Supply" continuing on to Virginia knew where the Sea Venture had landed, let alone if it had survived the storm. Even if they had known, it would have taken weeks for help to arrive. Nonetheless, dismay turned to a muted sense of relief as the marooned colonists realized they had stumbled upon a fertile island paradise. Rough lean-to shelters could be made quickly and with relatively little effort from the island's abundant palmettos and stands of cedar. Even

the wildlife of the island—fish, birds, turtles, and hogs, unused to human company—seemed to present themselves eagerly to the hungry settlers.6

Somers and Sir Thomas Gates, the newly-appointed deputy-governor of Virginia who also happened to be aboard the Sea Venture, quickly came to see that controlling and motivating the colonists under their authority was, if anything, going to be made more difficult by the attractively easy living conditions of their temporary home.7 "And sure it was happy for us," noted the deferential William Strachey, on his way to Virginia to assume the secretaryship of the colony, "that we both had our governor with us and one so solicitous and careful whose both example...and authority could lay shame and command


7 Sir Thomas Gates and Sir George Somers were no strangers to command in 1609. Gates was a seasoned professional soldier who had served under Drake in the West Indies and fought with Essex at Cadiz and in the Azores. He had studied law at the Inns of Court, was knighted in 1596, and served on a brief embassy to Vienna. Somers had considerable experience as a privateer in the West Indies, Guiana, and had sailed against the Spanish several times closer to home. He was knighted in 1602 and elected to James I's first Parliament as member for Plymouth; in 1605 he was chosen as mayor of his native Lyme Regis. Henry Wilkinson, The Adventurers of Bermuda: A History of the Island From Its Discovery Until the Dissolution of the Somers Island Company in 1684, (London: 1933), 41-42; David F. Raine, Sir George Somers: A Man and His Times, (Bermuda: 1984).
upon our people." This "shame and command" would be essential for keeping order once homesick and weary colonists had glimpsed the potential for a life of ease amidst plenty, for, as Strachey observed, the "major part of the common sort" soon came to the conclusion that they would much rather make Bermuda their permanent home.

While Gates and Somers took the lead in organizing the construction of rescue boats to carry them the rest of the way to Virginia, some disgruntled seamen and settlers murmured in protest. Why leave this charmed paradise when who knew what lay ahead for them on the mainland? Discontent, it appears, arose first among the sailors, always quick to bemoan their lot. Predicting that only "wretchedness and labor" awaited them in Virginia, the seamen had little trouble convincing many of the settlers that their prospects were infinitely more promising right where they were. Who could argue with this logic? Bermuda seemed a tempting new home where "ease and pleasure might be enjoyed," free from the hunger, want, and toil which lay menacingly ahead.

Here, vividly expressed in the fears and discontent of the first accidental English inhabitants of Bermuda, was foreshadowed the fundamental tension which would come to

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8 Strachey, "True Repertory," 40.
characterize the social and political climate of the colony through the first shaky, experimental years of its life. How were the desires of the settlers arriving in this new mid-Atlantic "utopia" to be reconciled with the goals and ideals of investors and administrators thousands of miles away? How was social order to be maintained and selfish degeneracy curbed? How could colonists be kept working to the benefit of the new community and profit-minded shareholders at home? What would be the most effective form of political and religious authority in the new settlement? These were the issues which all too frequently sparked bitter disputes and social unrest, from the wreck of the Sea Venture through the first raucous and restive years of settlement.

Not until Bermuda had staggered through years of disorder and deprivation would the colony emerge as the settled and productive sort of community which the Somers Island Company investors, ever wary of the bottom-line, so desired. Discipline meant stability, stability meant success, and success-- in the minds of seventeenth-century colonial sponsors-- meant profits, plain and simple. Chaotic unrest and disorder in any venture of this sort was abhorred, not simply because it overturned notions of legitimate authority inherent in a society founded on rigid social distinctions and deferential class relations, but ultimately because it precluded the financial rewards which
were, after all, the raison d'être of privately-sponsored colonization. Deference to authority kept settlers working at the task of building a colony which would eventually turn a profit for its investors; disorder and instability would almost certainly guarantee failure.

It would take a decade of wrestling with the manifold problems of discipline and order before Bermuda's early governors and investors could rest assured that the foundations of social, political, and economic stability in the colony had been adequately laid. Through periods of rampant insubordination and starvation, the imposition of an authoritarian, quasi-military regime, and finally the development of effective civil government, increasingly "normalized" social relations and demographic trends, and a solid church polity, Bermuda's early history is one of a community consistently striving to come to terms with often widely divergent expectations and realities. The years 1609 through 1623 proved Bermuda's most colorful and vibrant, and certainly its most formative. Here England's colonizing experience in the New World, with all its attendant tragedies and triumphs, was played out on a tiny speck of land in the midst of the vast Atlantic.
CHAPTER I

MUTINY AND STARVATION:
1609-1615

We have had enough of action, and of motion
we,
Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to leaboard, when the
surge was seething free,
Where the wallowing monster spouted his
foam fountains in the sea.
Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal
mind,
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclined
On the hills like Gods together, careless of
mankind.

-- Alfred, Lord Tennyson,
"The Lotos-Eaters"

With its consistently mild climate and semi-tropical
abundance of flora and fauna, Bermuda seems at first glance
unique among the earliest of English settlements in the
Atlantic world. Images of the natural richness and beauty
of the island immediately captured the imaginations of
Englishmen-- from Shakespeare to servants-- who listened in
wonderment to the awesome accounts of those intrepid souls
who had been flung by chance upon its shores. Certainly
Bermuda seemed "the richest, healthfullest, and pleasing
land...and merely natural, as ever man set foot upon."11

But when it came to planting a settlement in this

11 Jourdain, A Discovery of the Bermudas, 109.
seeming paradise Bermuda suffered through the same crises of hunger, discontent, and chaos which were contemporaneously wreaking havoc in Irish and American plantations. The years between the wreck of the *Sea Venture* in 1609 and the beginnings of permanent settlement under Richard Moore were marred by ineffective and unpopular leadership, internal strife, and social dysfunction. As the fledgling settlement struggled to find its feet and become productive and self-supporting, local authorities and distant administrators alike struggled with the problem of maintaining a semblance of social order in an often unruly and potentially explosive frontier society. Without order and cohesiveness the colony was clearly doomed to failure, both as a profitable commercial venture, and a community in which men lived and worked in harmony with one other, authorities, and God. The orderly and prosperous plantation which colonial promoters envisioned in Bermuda could not and did not appear overnight; rather, the early history of English settlement in Bermuda is best described as the playing out of a constant tension between order and disunity, profit and want, collectivity and individual interest. It would take nearly a decade of growth and development before Bermudian settlement would even begin to live up to the expectations of English investors.

Conflict and discord dominated from the very beginning of the English occupation of Bermuda, as witnessed after the
wreck of the Sea Venture and the subsequent efforts of its passengers to proceed to Virginia. The difficulties Gates and Somers faced in their roles as impromptu colonial governors in 1609-10 were primarily a function of the character and motivations of the settlers in their charge. When a faction of discontented members of the "common sort" organized to oppose the building of boats to leave the island for Virginia, Gates and Somers were not likely taken completely by surprise. In the context of the early seventeenth century, argues Nicholas Canny, the poorer elements of society who comprised the bulk of the settlers bound for Ireland or the New World were expected by their socially superior leaders to be thoroughly undisciplined and uncivilized. The more pessimistic even held that "the poorer elements in England were not only poorly motivated but were actually ideologically opposed to colonization." 12

Given the prevailing conception of the character of settlers bound for the New World, the action the leaders took initially to regulate life in Bermuda was not unusual. Gates and Somers wasted no time in dividing the settlers into groups and setting them to work. They knew that building boats offered them the best chance of leaving the island, but they also clearly understood that keeping the

company together and occupied would be crucial to maintaining discipline for the duration of their forced stay. In addition, Richard Bucke, the party's Anglican minister, preached two sermons each Sunday and held daily services each morning and evening during the rest of the week. The ringing of a bell was the signal for the entire company to congregate; once the group was assembled roll was called, and anyone who happened to be absent was duly punished.¹³

Keeping the settlers busy and maintaining a strict daily regimen punctuated by public meetings, prayer, and roll call allowed Somers and Gates to maintain order and exercise direct control over the potentially idle and disorderly colonists. Colonial organizers of the early seventeenth century, Canny proposes, "were confident that their efforts would succeed provided that all settlers were bound closely together under the watchful eye of the officers of the colony. They would be subject to martial law...and would also be exposed to a rigorous orientation programme. Those entrusted with the execution of such a programme were the ministers of religion, who were brought to the colonies perhaps largely for that purpose."¹⁴ Yet, despite the tight form of discipline which Gates and Somers imposed in the form of work parties, religious

¹³ Strachey, "True Repertory," 53.

¹⁴ Canny, "Permissive Frontier," 35.
"orientation", and constant supervision, a mutinous faction had emerged by the beginning of September 1609. Several men under the leadership of Nicholas Bennett, "a mutinous and dissembling imposter," and John Want, who was "both seditious and a sectary in points of religion," began stirring up trouble.\(^{15}\) Predictably, these men had decided they would rather stay on Bermuda, and so had made a secret compact to stop working on the boats, convincing some of their compatriots to do the same. When this plot was revealed to Gates and Somers they promptly exiled the men involved to a remote corner of the island, thus hoping to stem any further dissent which might disturb the company's plans.\(^{16}\)

Work continued, but by January 1610 Gates and Somers found themselves with another potential mutiny on their hands. Stephen Hopkins, a man with some education serving as clerk to the Reverend Bucke, began quoting scripture to support his contention that the authority of the governor and admiral had ceased with the wreck of their ship and that settlers and sailors alike were now "freed from the government of any man."\(^{17}\) Gates and Somers could not tolerate such a flagrant assault on their legitimacy as leaders. This was precisely the sort of disruptive and

\(^{15}\) Strachey, "True Repertory," 42.

\(^{16}\) Strachey, "True Repertory," 42.

\(^{17}\) Strachey, "True Repertory," 44.
socially dangerous behavior to be expected when the lower orders were allowed to operate unchecked by secular or religious authority. As governor, Gates felt obliged to charge Hopkins with fomenting rebellion. After some deliberation it was decided that the mutinous man should be put to death.\(^{18}\) Gates ultimately pardoned Hopkins' life, but the message was clear: anyone whose actions upset the social order or challenged established authority risked severe retribution.

Such retribution was finally meted out in March 1610 in response to the third threatened uprising on the island. Several months earlier, Somers had apparently clashed with Gates and decided to remove to another part of the island with his seamen to build a separate rescue vessel.\(^{19}\) Somers's gang felt that Gates was all too quick to flaunt his authority over them (he was, after all, the governor of the colonists, not the sailors), and they particularly resented the manner in which Gates had summarily banished their comrades Bennett and Ward. In this spirit, the entire group under Somers, though probably without his knowledge or encouragement, plotted to kill Gates and his supporters. Gates, however, learned of the sailors' mutinous intentions

\(^{18}\) Strachey, "True Repertory," 45.

\(^{19}\) Butler proposed that Gates (the soldier) and Somers (the seaman) fell victim to a sort of "inter-service" jealousy, a "qualetye," he claimed, which was "over common to the English." Butler, Historye, 14.
before they could act. By seizing one of the key conspirators and making him an example to the others the governor managed, though just barely, to quell an uprising which might have inverted all legitimate authority on the island. Henry Paine, a gentleman from the settlers' camp, had been one of the most outspoken and inflamed of the mutineers, and Gates, "who now had the eyes of the whole colony fixed upon him," found it necessary to condemn him "to be instantly hanged." At his own request Paine was shot to death at sundown.

With Paine's life ended any further threats of mutiny among the shipwrecked company. By the beginning of May 1610 the Deliverance and the Patience, the two pinnaces constructed from materials salvaged from the Sea Venture and from local cedar, were finally completed. The entire group of settlers, apart from two volunteers who remained on the island, set sail for Jamestown. No one had planned on the Sea Venture landing on Bermuda in 1609, and so there had been no officially sanctioned "modus operandi" for Gates and Somers to follow when they found themselves in command of 150 dispirited and potentially mutinous settlers on an uninhabited island. Acting consistently on the assumption that only a strict, authoritarian approach and a highly ordered regimen could hold the inherently lazy and unruly nature of the colonists in check, Gates and Somers managed

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to prevent the anarchic disintegration of their small, haphazard island society. The potential problems of discipline and motivation involved in establishing a future colony here had now been glimpsed. It remained to be seen if these challenges might be overcome when English colonists arrived two years later, not through an unforeseen twist of fate, but rather sent by a hopeful Virginia Company to establish a permanent, viable plantation on Bermuda.

In July 1612 the Plough dropped anchor off St. George's Island and a party of fifty settlers set foot for the first time on their new island home. They were led by Richard Moore, a carpenter who had been commissioned by the Virginia Company as the first deputy-governor of the island for the first three years of settlement. Perhaps the London

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In 1612 the settlement of Bermuda was financed directly by the Virginia Company; it was not until 29 June 1615 that control over the Bermudian plantation was granted by royal charter to the "Governour and Company of the City of London for the Plantation of the Somer Islands", otherwise known as the "Bermuda Company". The interests, as well as the membership, of the Virginia and Bermuda Companies, however, overlapped considerably until the dissolution of the Virginia Company in 1624. The Bermuda Company was a joint-stock corporation which claimed an initial membership of 117 "adventurers"; each investor ventured at least one share valued at £12 10s. (as in the Virginia Company), and was thus entitled to a ratable proportion of the Company's profits. The principal officer of the Bermuda Company was the "Governor", who was assisted by a variety of shareholding councillors and minor officials. Routine matters of Company policy and administration were voted on democratically in monthly stockholders' meetings, while weightier issues were considered in quarterly sessions known as "courts". The charter of the Bermuda Company gave it the full power of
adventurers hoped that an artisan, a man clearly of lower social rank than the gentlemen Gates and Somers, might be better suited to commanding the respect of the colonists and motivating them to launch into the task of making Bermudian settlement into a profitable venture. Moore seemed like an obvious candidate for leader, "for although he was but a Carpenter, he was an excellent Artist, a good Gunner, very witty and industrious." Here was the sort of hard-working, reliable man who could whip lazy colonists into shape and get the settlement quickly on its feet.

Before Moore left England he was presented by the Virginia Company investors with a commission which roughly laid out the plan of action he should follow when he reached criminal, civil, maritime, and military jurisdiction over the colony. Despite the fact that Moore and his successors were usually referred to as "governors", they were technically only deputy-governors, a rank which clearly implied their subordination to the colonial "government" which rested in London, not in Bermuda. Wesley Frank Craven, An Introduction to the History of Bermuda, (reprinted from the William and Mary College Quarterly, 2nd Series, XVII,Nos.2,3,4; XVIII,No.1), 1937-1938, 28-35.

22 Smith, Generall Historie, 354.

23 The details of Richard Moore's career prior to his tenure as Bermuda's first governor are obscure. Allen Mardis, Jr., in "Richard Moore, Carpenter," Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, 92 (1984), 416-422, claims to have identified him among the records of London's Company of Carpenters. Besides having established something of a reputation as an author by publishing a treatise on measuring lumber, it appears that Moore may have had some connection with a few prominent members of the Virginia Company who also had financial interests in the Bermuda plantation. Perhaps Moore's commission was more the result of his knowing the right people than his practical artisan's abilities.
the island. The adventurers's orders stressed two principal themes: keep an eye out for profitable resources and, even more important, maintain social order. "Carrye yorselves respectivlye each to other," cautioned the London financiers, "accordinge to yor places both in obedience to your superiors and mutuall affecccon againe from them to the rest, soo that Love and Kindness may be continued on all sides." If anything had been learned from the months Somers and Gates spent shipwrecked on Bermuda it was that maintaining a clear sense of authority, order, and routine was essential to keeping settlers working and in their place. Busy, respectful colonists, the shareholders realized, did not mutiny.

Next, Moore's commission emphasized the central role that religion should play in colonial affairs. Just as Gates and Somers had attempted to regulate the settlers's daily lives through regular, formalized church meetings, so too did the London administrators realize the value of religion in promoting social order in the nascent colony. "And for that Religious Goverment doth best bynd men to pforme there duties," they reasoned, "It is principally to be cared for that prayers be said every morninge and eveninge, in the whole course of your said voyage, and Continued likewise during the tyme of your residence

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abroade, as the best testimonie of your good Carriage in your dutie to God, and means to preserve peace and Concord amongst yorselves."\textsuperscript{25} The regular preaching of the Christian message would hopefully ensure that the values of industry and obedience would be driven home to those sent to labor for the plantation. On a pragmatic level as well, regular meetings would bring all the settlers together daily-- a convenient way for leaders to keep an eye on people and gauge the level of morale in the community. As such, organized religious activity during the initial settlement of Bermuda might very well be seen as an integral part of the "rigorous orientation programme" Canny recognized in the contemporary English plantations in Ireland and the Chesapeake.\textsuperscript{26}

The primary concern of the Bermuda investors, however, was the military defence of the new colony. Moore's commission charged him with fortifying the island against what was assumed to be the inevitability of a Spanish assault. While Bermuda clearly needed adequate protection against the potentially meddling Spanish, a construction project of this scope would also have the innate advantage of setting many of the settlers to work right away and keeping them occupied while Moore adjusted to his new role as governor.

\textsuperscript{25} Lefroy, \textit{Memorials}, 59.

\textsuperscript{26} Canny, "Permissive Frontier," 36.
One month after Moore and his fifty settlers arrived in Bermuda the governor drew up a series of articles by which all the members of the community agreed to abide. Besides swearing allegiance to King James and promising to defend the colony against foreign invasion, the settlers pledged to conduct themselves in an upright manner and to avoid contentious and socially disruptive behavior. It is clear from these articles that the preservation of religious values and the maintenance of social order and harmonious relations were understood to be closely related. "Seeing the true worship of God and a holy Life cannot bee severed," reads the third article, "wee doe therefore promise in the presence aforesaid, That to the uttermost of our power we will live together in doing that which is just, both towards God and Man."27 The colonists also agreed to refrain from swearing, or taking God's name in vain, stealing from, quarreling with, or slandering one another, and declared their solemn intention to avoid any thought or action which did not stand to benefit "the good estate of a Christian Church and well-governed Commonwealth."28 Having affirmed their desire to live in accordance with basic Christian values the colonists agreed finally to respect and obey the authority of the investors at home and their chosen

27 Lefroy, Memorials, 64.

28 Lefroy, Memorials, 64.
representatives in Bermuda, both secular and clerical.29

The groundwork now appeared to be laid for a successful start to the plantation of Bermuda: the investors had made their demands and expectations clear and the colonists had agreed to live and work in due respect of their superiors. But, while everything may have looked auspicious on paper, the realities of life in the coming months would prove to be far from ideal. Trouble, in fact, began almost immediately after Moore led his party ashore. Christopher Carter, Edward Chard, and Edward Waters had been living on Bermuda since the latter part of 1610 while the Virginia Company set about laying plans for permanent settlement. During their stay the men had stumbled upon a huge quantity of ambergris which had washed ashore, weighing about 180 pounds.30 A waxy, grayish substance formed in the intestines of sperm whales, ambergris was used as a fixative in making perfume. Because it was so rare, especially in such large quantities, this whale by-product commanded exorbitant prices in Europe. In fact, the giant lump the men had discovered was worth in the range of £6500-- enough to send each of them home to England with a substantial fortune.31

The colonists of the Sea Venture wreck had also found pieces of ambergris on the beaches, though never any the

29 Lefroy, Memorials, 64.
30 Butler, Historye, 21.
31 Lefroy, Memorials, 79.
size Chard, Waters, and Carter now had in their hands. The Bermuda investors in England knew that more ambergris would probably be found when Moore returned there in 1612, and the governor's commission specifically ordered him to send any further quantities of the precious substance back to England on the Plough's return trip. "But yf you shall finde any man to goe about to conceale yt and appropriate yt to his owne partciler use," warned the investors, "then you are to seaze upon yt, as you forfeite to the undertakers, and inflict such other punishment upon the offenders as the qualitie of there offences shall deserve." 32

Following his orders to the letter, Moore approached the three men to enquire if they had indeed discovered any ambergris. They told him they had not, in the meantime having made an arrangement with Captain Davis, master of the Plough, and one of Moore's advisors, Edwin Kendall, to smuggle the valuable cargo back to England in exchange for a cut of the profits. When Moore discovered this covert deal he immediately placed Kendall under arrest and issued a strong warning to Captain Davis. Soon after, Davis incited his sailors to mutiny against Moore. In the frantic "generall expectance of an un-civill civill warre," however, Moore acted quickly and resolutely, organizing his settlers to repel the threatened assault. 33

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32 Lefroy, Memorials, 60.
33 Butler, Historye, 22-23.
new governor, Davis backed down at the last moment and repented his role in fomenting rebellion. In a gesture of good faith Moore released Kendall on condition that the ambergris be turned over to the proper authorities. And so, with the ink on his commission barely dry, Moore had only narrowly averted an uprising which would have seriously jeopardized the future of the Bermuda plantation.

Even though the much-coveted ambergris may have provoked a crisis of social unrest, even to the point at which the legitimate authority of the plantation was seriously jeopardized, it was not this rare commodity which most interested the investors of the Virginia Company. As early as 1584, the colonial propagandist Richard Hakluyt the younger had been stressing the need for England to have its own reliable source of Mediterranean and sub-tropical products. Such a source, he argued, would free England from dependence on trade with foreign powers and substantially lower the costs of production and transportation.  

A remarkably consistent ignorance of the North American climate was displayed in the mounting English interest in Virginia in 1606-07 as a potential source of such produce. Such imaginative, if uninformed, hopes of Virginia becoming England's tropical "fruit-basket" soon fizzled, however, as the disappointing reality of conditions in the Chesapeake

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34 Quinn, "Exploration and Early Settlement," 17.
became apparent.\textsuperscript{35}

But then came the English "discovery" of Bermuda. A full four degrees of latitude further south than Virginia, the Atlantic island offered a new source of the tropical products that colonial promoters in England so desired. Tobacco had been discovered growing wild in Bermuda, along with a variety of other semi-tropical flora. The island seemed rich with agricultural potential, so why not plant sugarcane, olives, pineapples, and grapevines, asked English investors with a new-found enthusiasm. Early reports had indicated that mulberry trees also grew plentifully. Why not develop a Bermudian silk industry? As they organized themselves as a subsidiary interest of the Virginia Company in June 1611, optimistic London investors envisioned Bermuda as a veritable cornucopia offering up its bounty to any who would claim it, a "place so opulent fertile and pleasant that all men were willing to go thither."\textsuperscript{36} The answer to reliance on Iberian and Mediterranean produce seemed finally at hand.\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{35} Quinn, "Exploration and Early Settlement," 17-18.

\textsuperscript{36} David B. Quinn, "Advice for Investors in Virginia, Bermuda, and Newfoundland, 1611," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd ser., 23 (1966), 144.

Unfortunately, other more pressing demands rapidly emerged under Moore's governorship. Trying to get the process of settlement back on track in the wake of the "ambergris mutiny," Moore divided the settlers into parties and set them to work on several forts at various strategic locations.\(^{38}\) He would not allow the colonists to disperse throughout Bermuda, but for the remainder of his tenure as governor forced the majority of them to stay close together on St. George's Island, and on the small islands at the mouth of Castle Harbour where the defensive works were primarily situated. Moore was repeatedly criticized by the London investors for not experimenting more assiduously with agricultural products and for postponing the settlement of colonists on the shares of land which were to form the basis of tenant farming on the island. Yet, despite continuing calls, both internal and external, to get on with the business of settling and opening the land to agriculture, the "artisan-governor" remained steadfast in his resolve to make certain the colony was adequately defensible against the Spanish.

Intent on exercising personal control over the settlers, particularly as greater numbers began flooding

\(^{38}\) John Smith reported that Moore undertook to build "eight or nine Forts, called the Kings Castle, Charles Fort, Pembrookes Fort, Smiths Fort, Pagits Fort, Gates Fort, Warwicks Castle, Saint Katherines Fort, etc. mounting in them all the Ordnance he had." Smith, Generall Historie, 354.
into the plantation over the next two years, Moore was often a hard task-master. The settlers were starting to lose patience with their governor as work on the forts grew tedious and tiresome and food supplies began to dwindle. Bermuda's climate and soil were ideal for planting, the colonists complained, so why was so little food being grown to meet the demands of a steadily increasing population? The answer was simple: because the governor had practically everyone penned up on St. George's Island, slaving away on fortifications to defend the colony against a military threat which came to seem less and less pressing as the months passed without the appearance of a single menacing Spaniard.

With stomachs growling and backs aching, some of the settlers inevitably began to grumble about Moore's ability as a leader. Reverend George Keith, the colony's sole minister, was enlisted as the mouthpiece for the disaffected faction and soon began railing against Moore from the pulpit. Keith protested at length before the entire congregation that Moore "did grinde the faces of the poore, oppressing his Christian brethren with Pharaohs taxes." Moore would have none of this griping, however, particularly not from the minister whose job it was to keep order. Fearing that Keith's outspoken criticism might well "breed ill bloud" among the company, Moore assembled the colonists

and asked them forthrightly if they felt that Keith's accusations were justified. Overawed, perhaps, by Moore's direct approach, the settlers proclaimed their support of the governor with a "universall cry". Keith had no choice but to fall to his knees and beg forgiveness, which the governor promptly granted though accompanied by a theatrical pronouncement on the value of Christian modesty and charity. In his brief tenure as Bermuda's first governor Moore may have mastered the art of showmanship and rhetoric, but he had yet to provide sufficient food for the settlers under his charge. The steady influx of immigrants after 1612 strained the colony's meager food resources to their limit. By mid-1614 Bermuda's inhabitants were beginning to starve, with many so "feeble and weake" from hunger that they could not even summon the energy to venture out of their houses in search of provisions. The situation had indeed become so extreme that Moore was impelled to take action. Clearly, under such conditions the colonists were unable to continue working, and Moore might easily have been faced with another mutiny had enough of the settlers actually been able to move. Without any further

40 Smith, Generall Historie, 355.

41 Settlers began arriving at a tremendous rate in the late spring of 1614. The Blessing arrived with 100 passengers, followed soon after by the Starre with 180 more. Only two weeks later the Margaret brought a further 160 prospective colonists. Smith, Generall Historie, 356.

42 Smith, Generall Historie, 357.
delay, Moore dispersed a considerable portion of the company, which now numbered some 500 inhabitants, advising them to move south onto Cooper's Island where sea birds and fish could be easily caught. Moore's strategy worked, for the half-starved colonists were able to forage for themselves and replenish their stores of food. For the time being yet another social disaster had been averted. Moore, however, had been forced to relinquish direct control over the colonists, morale was at an all-time low, and the crucial work of settling and developing the island's natural resources was seriously delayed.

One of the many colonists who abandoned St. George's for Cooper's Island was the Reverend Lewis Hughes. A minister with patently puritan leanings, Hughes had arrived in Bermuda just in time to witness the depressing spectacle of famine and the decay of Moore's already shaky command. Hughes, however, blamed the bleakness of the situation not so much on Moore's poor planning and misplaced priorities as on the laziness and vice of the settlers themselves. Hughes would later rebuke the colonists, charging that as their numbers increased, "sin and disorder did also encrease, which brought the correcting hand of God upon you many wayes, so as divers did perish very miserably. But, consider I pray you," he continued, "that most of them that so dyed were ungodly, slothful, and heartlesse men, which

43 Smith, Generall Historie, 356-358.
sheweth plainly that God hath not reserved these Islands from the beginning of the world, to bestow them now upon such, as shall dishonour and provoke him every day, as many of them did."

The "ungodly" sloth of the settlers which Hughes so despised was apparently not a uniquely Bermudian vice. The lethargy and dispiritedness of the colonists under Moore's governorship paralleled the twin crises of mortality and demoralization which plagued Virginia between 1607 and 1624. Karen Ordahl Kupperman has described the plight of Virginia's first settlers in terms of a combination of psychological and physical factors. "The fact that the colonists were virtually all suffering from malnutrition," she contends, "offers a way of explaining the colonists' conviction that people were dying of apathy or, as they put it, of idleness and laziness." The sort of nutritional deficiency diseases from which the settlers suffered were often accompanied early on by symptoms which appeared to be psychological: anorexia, weakness, aching in muscles and joints, and a general feeling of listlessness. Colonists who suffered from these symptoms were often unable or unwilling to continue working, but were judged simply to be


lazy or poorly motivated by frustrated observers.\textsuperscript{46}

In addition to purely physical reactions to nutritional deficiency, Kupperman posits that intense psychological factors only compounded the problem. "Life in the early colonies," she proposes, "represented extreme stress situations. Psychologically, the stress consisted of a sense of isolation and lack of control over one's movement and destiny, both of which combined to produce profound despair in some people."\textsuperscript{47} The result of all this, as Virginia leaders soon realized, was a situation in which social control was consistently being eroded by the ravages of severe mental and physical strain. Half-starved and psychologically wounded, settlers succumbed to what would later become known as "give-up-itis," and ceased to function productively within the framework of plantation life.\textsuperscript{48} This is precisely what appears to have been happening in Bermuda through 1613-14. When Hughes castigated Bermudians for their laziness and vice he was responding in the same way that bewildered Virginians did to the peculiar crisis of health and morale which appeared to be undermining all normal patterns of social stability and order.

Although his forceful invective was clearly informed by puritanical sensibilities, Hughes was justified in deploring

\textsuperscript{46} Kupperman, "Apathy and Death," 24-25.

\textsuperscript{47} Kupperman, "Apathy and Death," 39.

\textsuperscript{48} Kupperman, "Apathy and Death," 28.
the serious and chronic local problem of excessive drinking. "My heart giveth me to admonish," the minister sighed, "some to bee no longer Bawds to Drunkennesse, by sending over so much Aquae-vitae, and also to admonish you to suppresse Drunkennesse and all other sinnes, as much as you can, which doe abound too much among you, to the great dishonor of Almighty God, and daily provoking of him to wrath."49 The social disruption caused by rampant drunkenness, not to mention the high incidence of alcohol-related accidents, led Hughes to believe that unless something was done to reverse the spiralling process of moral decay the colony was doomed to collapse in a fit of sinful degeneracy.50 Most of the colonists, however, seem to have taken Hughes's earnest moralizing quite lightly. Isolated from friends and family, worked incessantly by Moore, and frustrated that they had still not been allowed to settle down permanently on the land, it is not altogether surprising that many of Bermuda's first inhabitants found consolation in the bottle and not

49 Hughes, "Plaine and True Relation," 85-86.

50 Lewis Hughes to Sir Nathaniel Rich, 12 January 1619, in Vernon A. Ives (ed.), The Rich Papers: Letters From Bermuda, 1615-1646--Eyewitness Accounts Sent by the Early Colonists to Sir Nathaniel Rich (Toronto: 1984), 161-162. Apparently Hughes was not exaggerating the extent of the alcohol problem in Bermuda for it was an issue which would well outlast the first years of settlement. Writing reflectively in 1621, Hughes bemoaned the heavy toll which "aqua-vitae" had already taken on Bermudian society: he remarked upon several instances of colonists drinking themselves to death and serious shipping accidents which resulted from drunken negligence. Hughes, "Plaine and True Relation," 85-87.
the Bible.

When Moore's term as governor expired in 1615 he left Bermuda and its inhabitants in limbo. The island's first official governor had ensured that the island was tolerably fortified against Spanish attack, but at the crippling cost of widespread famine, disaffection, and unruliness among those sent to labor at the task of making something concrete of Bermuda's obvious potential as a plantation. "It is strange," remarks David B. Quinn, "that it may appear that the failure of the Sagadahoc colony in 1607-1608 could have been partly caused by the overstress on fortification-building against the French, who never appeared, while in Bermuda the Spanish threat, which never came either, and the over-elaborate precautions made to avert it, put serious difficulties in the way of settlement and undermined many of the assumptions on which the decision to colonize the islands was taken."

Clearly Moore's preoccupation with the threat of Spanish attack underlay many of the problems which confronted the Bermuda plantation in its first three years. While he had the opportunity to put the colony on a more solid economic foundation by encouraging local agricultural production, and to stabilize social relations among a characteristically unruly immigrant population by settling laborers on the land and providing for a strong framework of  

local government, Moore's overriding concerns evidently lay elsewhere.\(^{52}\) But perhaps Moore is not to be blamed for the essential failure of social control during this period as much as the system of colonization itself, a system of which the first governor was simply emblematic. "Colonization in the western Atlantic," Quinn contends, "was not understood, or was better understood in Irish conditions, than America, so that domestic capital and colonists lives were wasted."\(^{53}\) After all, it was the Virginia Company investors themselves who had put such a heavy emphasis on

\(^{52}\) Moore's fears of a seaborne enemy assault were finally justified, however, in March 1614 in a farcical encounter with two Spanish ships. When the "enemy" ships arrived off Gurnett's Head at the southeastern entrance to Castle Harbour, only twenty men were stationed at the fort there, most of whom were so weak from hunger that they could barely man their four cannon (not that this mattered anyway because the fort only had three quarters of a barrel of powder and one shot). Moore himself took charge of repelling the attackers, but in the confusion someone accidentally spilled what remained of the powder right underneath the muzzle of the gun--miraculously it did not explode. Moore's aim apparently was true, for one well-placed shot encouraged the Spanish to cut their mainsails and beat a hasty retreat. Nathaniel Butler later remarked that Spanish sources he had seen claimed that the two ships had merely been merchantmen running low on drinking water which had fallen upon Bermuda by chance. Not realizing initially that the island was inhabited, the ships continued to approach the harbor even after spotting the English fortifications, hoping to be received as friends "until finding the ordinance to speake more loud and hottly than they expected." Butler admitted that the bumbling and pathetically unprepared English had indeed been fortunate in their encounter with the Spanish, "since certain it is," he remarked, "that (by being so ill provided) if they had proved enemies, they might have done much; and findinge so much, what ther upon they would have proved, who knowes." Butler, \textit{Historye}, 30-33.

\(^{53}\) Quinn, "Exploration and Early Settlement," 20.
the need for colonial defense and grounded their scheme of Bermudian colonization on what often amounted to wildly unrealistic expectations of climate and economic possibilities in the New World.

Though the investors stood to lose considerable sums of capital should the venture fail socially or commercially, the settlers— the "common sort" who had invested their lives and livelihoods in the Bermuda plantation— consistently paid the price for critical errors in judgement and leadership. The perennial problem of social control which hindered Bermuda's initial development was in many ways the result of an often inconsistent and contradictory colonial policy formulated by distant investors and was only perpetuated by the perennial crises of hunger and undersupply. Poor judgement and misinformation concerning the climate and resource potential of Bermuda had created a tension between London adventurers intent on developing Bermuda as a lucrative commercial venture and those like Moore who were actually involved in the day-to-day struggle of settlement, who realized that the exigencies of establishing a stable and permanent settlement, safe from internal dissension and external threat, might require foregoing immediate profits.54 Until such issues of purpose and motivation were more fully worked out, both in the colony and in London, the potential for social unrest

54 Reid, "European Expectations," 319-335.
and dissatisfaction in Bermuda remained substantial.

Like Somers and Gates before him, Moore was faced with the often frustrating and daunting task of managing a group of Englishmen who seemed ill-fitted to the task of fashioning a prosperous and ordered colony in the middle of the Atlantic. When he left the colony in 1615, Moore could not fairly say that he had adequately met the challenge. The majority of English settlers headed for Ireland or the New World in the seventeenth century, Canny claims, were "either ignorant or misinformed concerning conditions in the New World; and it is likely that they were both poorly equipped and poorly motivated for what lay ahead of them." Moreover, "it soon became evident that they had no intention of making extraordinary sacrifices for the advancement of civility, and they reacted quickly against the harsh laws, the privations, and the organized labour they were called upon to endure."55

As Edmund Morgan has proposed in light of Virginian labor problems, most seventeenth-century Englishmen were unused to overly strenuous work routines, and thus seemed inordinately lazy and shiftless when faced with the unusually intense physical and mental demands of building a productive settlement from the ground up.56 In Bermuda,

55 Canny, "Permissive Frontier," 27.

Gates and Somers certainly found this to be the case while marooned in 1609-10, as did Moore as he grappled with the problems of establishing a permanent society between 1612 and 1615.

Planting a frontier settlement was no easy task for any group thrown into unfamiliar conditions thousands of miles from home, no matter how well-motivated and industrious they were. Until more adequate means of keeping order, preventing dissension and mutiny, and harnessing self-interest to the greater needs of the community could be devised, Bermuda's growth would remain stunted. It now lay to Moore's successors to further stimulate and direct the development of a workable social, political, and economic order in Bermuda, a fledgling colony still only a half-step from ruin.
Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from weariness?
All things have rest: why should we toil alone,
We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown;
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm;
Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,
"There is no joy but calm!"—
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of
things?

-- Tennyson, "The Lotos-Eaters"

Bermuda's development in its first decade can be
divided roughly into three basic stages, all of which had
clear parallels in the contemporary English settlement of
Virginia. The first of these stages was essentially
experimental: the instructions which the Virginia Company
investors gave Governor Moore in 1612 were vague and assumed
that he would begin immediately on a course of developing
the natural resources of Bermuda in an effort to justify
continued English investment in the venture. Moore's
progress, however, was stalled by his overwhelming
concentration on securing the defense of the island from
Spanish attack, leaving him little time or energy to channel into experimental horticulture or to work out a productive, self-supporting local system of tenant farming. Although Moore's governorship was not a complete failure, Company investors and settlers alike had legitimate grievances. London shareholders were still pumping capital into the plantation with no visible results, while the colonists were overworked, underfed, and uncertain of their prospects on the island. Clearly a change of direction and emphasis was needed.

With the transfer of colonial control into the hands of the newly-formed Somers Island Company in 1615, however, the realization of the island's economic potential and the coalescing of its social and political structures finally began. Captain Daniel Tucker, the first governor to serve under the government of the Bermuda Company, employed a system of martial authority comparable to that enforced in Virginia to spur economic growth and maintain discipline. Under Tucker's unforgiving regime Bermuda developed a system of tobacco monoculture which would dominate the economic life of the colony throughout the seventeenth century. Tucker also oversaw the creation of a settlement and tenant farming system which would form the basis for all future economic and social development.

When Moore sailed for England in 1615 conditions in Bermuda were far from ideal. Unfortunately, the situation
would worsen dramatically before it improved. Because Moore had left his post early and with little warning, returning home to defend himself against widespread accusations of mismanagement and disregard for the investors' wishes, the Virginia Company was not able to ensure an orderly transfer of local authority. Moore felt that he had adequately taken care of the situation by appointing six temporary deputy-governors, each of whom was to hold office for one month before passing authority on to the next. In so doing, however, Moore had created a power vacuum within the colony, encouraging an unstable "interregnum" period which would prove extremely damaging to Bermuda's already sputtering development.

As the sails of Moore's ship disappeared over the horizon the notorious "mis-rule of the six" began. Captain Miles Kendall, Captain John Mansfield, Thomas Knight, Charles Caldycot, Edward Waters, and Christopher Carter could not have been more poorly chosen from the perspective of the Company's anxious shareholders. Writing later from his vantage point as governor, Captain Nathaniel Butler heartily condemned Moore's selection of men. Admitting that few in the colony in 1615 had the necessary leadership ability, Butler was nonetheless disgusted that not even one of the men Moore selected "wer fitt for the place or capable of the employment" and that the misguided governor had only compounded his error by appointing "so many insufficient and
dangerous ones together and at once into the circle of command." Clearly, Butler wrote in hindsight, Moore's final act in office was simply the culmination of a series of critical errors in judgment, "for who knowes not," he asked incredulously, "but that five theeves are better to be endured than ten, three tyrants than six, one maddman than two."57

Immediately after drawing lots to determine the order of their terms in office three of the interim governors embarked on a privateering expedition to the Caribbean. The remaining men, Caldycot, Mansfield, and Kendall, celebrated their new-found authority by launching into an extended bout of drunken antics and wasteful mismanagement of the colony's supplies that would last until they were finally replaced a year later. Unlike Moore, the three new governors had no concern for the island's defense. They let work on the forts grind to a halt, allowing them to remain unmanned and falling into disrepair. In contrast to the stringent living conditions and endless forced labor that Moore had demanded of the colonists, Kendall, Mansfield and Caldycot seemed intent on making life in Bermuda a "perpetuall Christmas." They began their term of office "with a generall giveing of leave to playe, so that nowe the bravest and tallest fellowe was he that could drincke deepest, bowle best with saker

57 Butler, Historye, 45.
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shott in the governour's garden, and winne most loblolly."58 The interim governors made no attempt to further the work of settling the island and clearing the land for agricultural production. "Save that the constant sunne made it clearly day," wrote a disgusted Butler, "a man might have taken them for a perpetuall night; not a hoe, axe, sawe, pickaxe, or shovell was so much as heard in their streates; not an oare seene, or heard, or dash in their harbours, unless some times, and at some certaine and sett seasons, when their stoute stomachs compelled them unto it."59

Far from discouraging the rampant problem of drunkenness among the colonists that seemed— to the sober-minded like the Reverend Lewis Hughes— to be tearing apart the already weakened social fabric of the plantation, the three jolly governors labored to raise intoxication to the level of virtue. Roaming constantly throughout the island in search of ever more "aqua-vita" the governors set a miserable example for the rest of the settlers and only exacerbated a vice which was having a devastating effect on

58 Butler, History, 48. "Loblolly" was a thick corn gruel favored by the settlers. Bermuda's idle were apparently not the only colonists who preferred sport to the backbreaking labor of planting a settlement. When Sir Thomas Dale arrived at Jamestown in May 1611 he found its inhabitants at "their daily and usuall workes...bowling in the streetes." Ralph Hamor, A True Discourse of the Present State of Virginia, (London, 1615; Richmond, 1957), 26.

59 Butler, History, 58.
the frail system of social control and order which Moore had struggled to maintain. "I am not able to expresse," wrote an impassioned Hughes to a prominent investor in England, "the abominable drunkennes, loathsome spuing, swearing, swaggering and quarrelling, while the ship is in harbour with any wine or strong waters in her." The merchant ships sent by the Bermuda Company always carried a great deal of liquor for it was an item which was sure to sell quickly and provide instant profits for the Company. In a community of predominantly male laborers, however, the combination of homesickness, disillusionment, and intoxicants proved an explosive mixture. As in Virginia during the same period ships arriving from England became "moving taverns," catering to settlers who longed for the comforts of home and who could express their discontent and loneliness only by pickling themselves in the nearest cask of spirits.

When liquor was abundant, discipline among the settlers was almost impossible to maintain. This did little to discourage Kendall, Mansfield, or Caldygot, however, who collectively showed little interest in keeping order or promoting colonial development. Through the latter half of

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1615 and the beginning of 1616, the course of Bermudian settlement sank to its nadir. The feeble attempt at development initiated under Moore was abandoned, if not reversed, and the inhabitants were still forced to rely on supplies sent by the Company because insufficient food was being grown on the island. Once again the settlement's meager food supplies dwindled to dangerously low levels through waste and mismanagement. Famine and sickness stalked the island while the governors and their cronies revelled in drunken debauchery. But the "perpetuall Christmas" of this embarrassing era of "mis-rule" had run its course. Word of the chaotic conditions in Bermuda inevitably reached the Company adventurers who wasted no time in choosing a new governor-- one who could hopefully re-establish the Company's authority and bring order to a colony that was clearly out of control and costing the investors hundreds of pounds in wasted capital. The man they chose was Captain Daniel Tucker.

Tucker was a highly respected military man, a five-year veteran of the Virginia settlement who had witnessed the fiasco of starvation, disease, and the near-complete breakdown of order and discipline on the banks of the James. Tucker had earned a reputation among the Virginians for his resourcefulness and leadership, and rightfully so, for he was a resolute man of action who had played a significant part in saving the Virginia plantation from ruin in the
desperate early years of crisis and uncertainty.62

As the Bermuda Company ships returned to England without the anticipated bounty of tropical produce, pearls, and ambergris, but buzzing with disheartening reports of chaos, laziness, and wanton excess, the adventurers had ample reason for concern about the future of their commercial investment. As the months passed with little indication that conditions in the colony were stabilizing or that a reasonable profit might be generated in the near future through the exploitation of local resources, the London adventurers came to see that they were throwing good money after bad. The majority of the principal investors had not forgotten the plight of the Virginia Company only five years before when the shocking news of cannibalism, death, and insubordination in Jamestown had prompted panic among English investors and made them understandably reluctant to pay the remainder of their investment.

62 George Percy offered a complimentary appraisal of Tucker's actions while in Virginia, recalling that in the midst of famine and hardship at Jamestown he "appointed Capte: TUCKER to Calculate and Caste upp our store. The wch att a poore alowanse of halfe a Cann of meale for A man A day Amowneted unto thre monthes provissyon yette Capte: TUCKER by his industry and care caused the same to howlde outt fowere monthes." Percy also reported that "yett wanteinge more Boates for fisheing and other nedfull ocasisions Capte: DANIELL TUCKER by his greate industry and paines buyled A Large Boate wth his owne hands the wch was some helpe and A little Reliefe unto us And did kepe us from killinge one of An other." George Percy, "A Trewe Relacyon of the Proceedings and Occurentes of Momente which have hapened in Virginia from...1609 untill...1612," in Tyler's Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine, 3 (1922), 265, 267.
subscriptions.\(^6\)

The problem in Virginia, reasoned the adventurers, had been the result of a critical failure of leadership and discipline. Without order and stability in such a remote and isolated plantation, and given the questionable character and motivation of most settlers bound for the new colony, it was inevitable that conditions would degenerate into lawlessness, idleness, and discord, in turn undermining the projected financial success of the enterprise.\(^4\) The answer in 1611-12 for the Virginia adventurers had appeared in the form of a highly rigid and authoritarian body of martial and religious enactments known as the Lawes Divine, Morall and Martiall. Under this harsh and punitive code resident leaders Sir Thomas Dale, Sir Thomas Gates (of Sea Venture fame), and Samuel Argall had managed to bring the situation in the Chesapeake under control, saving the plantation from almost certain disaster. Profiting by this

\(^6\) David H. Flaherty, "Introduction," For the Colony in Virginea Britannia Lawes Divine, Morall and Martiall, etc. (London, 1612; Charlottesville, 1969), xi-xii.

recent example, the Bermuda adventurers, many of whom had themselves been involved in the affairs of the Virginia Company, saw Bermuda heading in the same degenerative direction by 1616. The most obvious course of action was thus already charted. The plantation in Bermuda had to be brought under control as rapidly and efficiently as possible, even if that meant imposing the same severe restrictions the Lawes had laid out for the Virginia settlers.\(^\text{65}\)

Not surprisingly then, when Daniel Tucker arrived in Bermuda in the summer of 1616 he carried with him a new and more rigorous governor's commission in one hand and a well-worn copy of Virginia's Lawes Divine, Morall and Martiall in the other.\(^\text{66}\) The "Instructions" which the Bermuda Company labored over before presenting to Tucker in May 1616 were not explicitly as rigorous as the Lawes nor did they seek to organize the Bermudians so stringently by social rank and privilege as in Virginia. But they did confront several issues which were of particular concern to the justifiably


\(^\text{66}\) "This course thus fastened upon and squared after the Virginian rule, and in particular imitatinge divers orders digested by Sir Thomas Dale, while he was marshall ther, a copy whereof he had brought with him and often consulted with, he began from them to looke into his English instructions given him by the Company." Butler, *Historye*, 77.
nervous London investors.\textsuperscript{67} First and foremost the investors were especially keen to have Tucker settle Bermuda's inhabitants onto shares and begin the task of clearing the land and planting crops, whether they be staples such as wheat or potatoes or more exotic products such as tobacco, grapevines, spices, sugarcane, mulberry trees, pineapples, oranges, or lemons. Before Moore's term as governor had expired, the young mathematician and physicist Richard Norwood had produced an initial survey of Bermuda, dividing the island into eight basic units, known as "tribes". In London these tribes were named for the principal investors of the Bermuda Company: the Marquis of Hamilton, Sir Thomas Smith, the Earl of Devonshire, the Earl of Pembroke, Lord Paget, the Earl of Warwick, the Earl of

\textsuperscript{67} Two points in particular of Tucker's commission seem to have been drawn directly from the Lawes Divine, Morall and Martillall: the "Instructions" of 1616 called for the compulsory attendance of all colonists at religious services each morning and evening, and more importantly, granted the governor substantial power over the settlers "to punishe and correct there misdemeanors according to the forme and manner of the lawes of England as neare as may be, and in cases of rebellion to use martiall lawe." Lefroy, Memorials, 107. "The inclusion of such a phrase," Flaherty comments, "shrewdly anticipated the changed conditions in the New World which would foster some laws at decided variance with the common law traditions of the mother country." Flaherty, "Introduction," Lawes, x. Tucker was clearly given a considerable degree of latitude in applying English justice in the Bermudian context, suggesting that the Company implicitly condoned the imposition of a system of martial law as existed in Virginia under the Lawes.
Southampton, and Sir Edwin Sandys. Since Governor Moore had made no effort to further Norwood's work Tucker was charged with ensuring that the tribes were each subdivided into 50 twenty-five acre shares running generally across the island from coast to coast. Substantial investors such as Sandys, Smith, and Paget were to receive ten shares each within their respective tribes; the rest of the shares were then to be distributed among the rest of the Company's investors in proportion to the value of the stock they held.

Until Moore's departure in 1615, all prospective tenants in Bermuda, whether they had arrived independently or under terms of indenture, had been retained by the governor in a large pool of public labor. But once the boundaries of the shares and their ownership had been established the shareholding landowners were expected to recruit tenants to improve their land from this settler population. Not all of the colonists were expected to settle down immediately. The Company reserved the eastern part of the colony, particularly St.George's and St.David's Islands, as public land to be held collectively rather than by individual stockholders. This land would be worked by colonists as yet unsettled on the private shares with the profits from the improvement of this public land then, in

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theory at least, reinvested in the colony to pay for public food supplies and necessary equipment.

Once the island had been divided into shares and settled by tenant farmers, Company leaders realized that a more sophisticated form of local administration and law enforcement would be necessary to protect the landholders's interests and to ensure that idleness and insubordination would not interfere with the smooth operation of plantation life. Tucker's commission outlined the general shape the local administrative system. As governor Tucker retained ultimate authority over the colony, but he was advised to select a council to assist him. Tucker included Bermuda's two Anglican ministers, Lewis Hughes and George Keith, in this executive body; the ministers were then to help him select eight bailiffs who would reside in each of the tribes and act as the shareholders's representatives on the governor's council.69 The bailiffs received one-thirtieth of the profits from the tribe's land in return for keeping the peace in their bailiwick, reporting any cases of laziness or dishonesty among the servants, and supervising the annual division of crops between shareholders and

69 In reality the role of the bailiff was quickly superseded by the appointment of "councillor-magistrates" who acted as "J.P.s" in each of the tribes and had considerable influence with the governor. The bailiffs retained their authority at the tribe level, however, overseeing tenant laborers and safeguarding the interests of the landowners. Craven, An Introduction, 85.
tenants.\textsuperscript{70} Tucker was charged to appoint a "Clark of the stores" to oversee the public provisions and strive to avert the wastefulness and mismanagement which had led to sickness and famine under Moore and the "Six Governors." Finally, an additional six men were elected to the governor's council so that "by there advice or the most voyces of them assembled" Tucker would be able to proceed in the daily business of governing and administering justice.\textsuperscript{71}

With these detailed plans in hand, Tucker landed in Bermuda ready to transform a feeble and unproductive settlement into a viable, profitable colonial venture. Meanwhile, the interim governors, as yet unwilling to relinquish their anarchic authority, plotted to resist the new governor and intimidate him into returning to England. They would soon realize, however, that no one easily intimidated Daniel Tucker. Faced with such arrogant insubordination by a band of drunken dandies, the irascible Tucker exploded in a fit of rage. The transfer of authority was settled.

Tucker then threw himself wholeheartedly into the task of whipping a listless and disorderly plantation into shape. Within a matter of weeks Tucker had the settlers working harder than they ever had before. Inured to countless hardships in Virginia and partial to the sort of harsh

\textsuperscript{70} Craven, \textit{An Introduction}, 77.

\textsuperscript{71} Lefroy, \textit{Memorials}, 110.
regimen and summary justice embodied in the *Lawes Divine, Morall and Martiall*, the new governor lost no time in organizing labor parties to clear the shares, plant crops, repair the decaying fortifications, and begin the construction of public buildings in St. George's, the colony's first town. Tucker's expectations were high and his discipline commensurately harsh. Settlers rose at dawn and worked steadily until nine in the morning; after a brief mid-day respite it was back to work until sundown. Insubordination was not tolerated nor was idleness, and Tucker was not squeamish about taking slackers aside and beating them senseless. In the course of one day he was said to have cudgelled no fewer than forty workmen "even for very smale and slight neglects." The settlers soon learned to watch for the tell-tale signs of Tucker's mood, observing the cock of his hat and the color of his suit before they dared to approach him.\(^7^2\)

Through the rigorous enforcement of a harsh system of labor and punishment Tucker was successful in implementing the reforms which the Bermuda enterprise so desperately needed to get back on course. But his methods also had their price. As in the contemporary English settlements in Virginia and Ireland, the severity of discipline and the long, tedious hours of forced labor led many desperate and discontented Englishmen to desert. In Virginia men vanished

\(^{72}\) Butler, *Historye*, 79.
into the woods to join the neighboring Indians and in Ireland English soldiers and settlers assimilated surprisingly easily with the local population.\textsuperscript{73} Bermuda's small size and its isolation made desertion a much more difficult and dangerous proposition, yet incredibly some discontented settlers managed to escape Tucker's reach. In one spectacular episode a group of five men built a small boat, purportedly for the governor so that he might indulge his passion for fishing. In the middle of the night, however, the foolhardy, if determined, colonists set out to cross the Atlantic. Confronted with French pirates who stole their food and forced to use parts of their small craft for firewood, the battered crew eventually ran aground on the west coast of Ireland where they were received as heroes by the local lord.\textsuperscript{74} While such bizarre incidents were relatively uncommon, they do provide some insight into the harshness of Tucker's regime and the desperation to which many settlers were driven in such unrelenting frontier conditions.

Despite his success in motivating the colonists to work for the public good and his ability to quell disorder and establish a workable system of tenant farming on the newly surveyed and distributed shares, Tucker did provoke criticism from Bermudians and London adventurers alike. To

\textsuperscript{73} Canny, "Permissive Frontier," 29-35.

\textsuperscript{74} Butler, Historye, 79-83.
begin, Tucker claimed for himself a large tract of undivided land in Sandys Tribe known as the "Overplus." Using his authority to call up tenant farmers for indefinite periods of time for work of the public estate, Tucker habitually took men away from their normal work and set them to the task of building him a substantial wood-framed house and clearing a mile-long swath through the heavily forested land to give his new home an impressive "prospect".

Understandably, both tenant laborers and shareholders alike were frustrated by Tucker's impositions, for the time it took to work on the governor's estate was valuable time taken away from their own crops. But even as unwilling laborers raised Tucker's "very substantiall and brave caeder house" they themselves were beginning for the first time to build more permanent homes for themselves. From the first days of settlement under Moore the colonists had lived in rough shelters, the "English wigwams" characteristic of such plantations in their earliest stages. These most basic of dwellings were put up cheaply, quickly, and with an absolute minimum of effort using the abundant local palmetto trees. Their intrinsic fragility and impermanence reflected both the uncertainty of the first settlers about their role in the new colony as well as their unwillingness to invest much labor in construction until they were settled more

securely on their tenant shares and not on public land. Once they had moved onto their allotted property, however, and begun the laborious process of clearing the land and planting their crops, settlers began to consider building more permanent homes—homes less apt to be blown down or catch fire than their original shelters.76

The new houses erected by the settlers were considerably sturdier and more weatherproof, but still, as in the Chesapeake, "not expected to last longer than it took its owner to accumulate enough capital to build yet another more substantial dwelling."77 Nevertheless, their construction represented a considerable change in the mindset of Bermudians. No longer restricted to public land and hampered by consistent shortages, disease, and hunger, settlers after 1616 began to see the island more as a permanent home than simply as a temporary and chaotic outpost. In this context architecture reflected the increasing commitment the settlers of Bermuda felt to their colonial endeavor. Specifically, this next stage of settler house was derivative of an "earthfast" or "post-set"

76 Robert Rich, a "factor" sent to oversee his older brothers' shares in Bermuda, complained that "our howses beeing soe weake and covered with palmitoes leaves, theye are sudenlie blowen downe, and app to firres [fires] which wee have tryall of amongst us to many mans loss." Robert Rich to Nathaniel Rich, 19 May 1617: Ives (ed.), Rich Papers, 23.

77 Carson et al., "Impermanent Architecture," 140.
building tradition. Cedar posts were set in the ground and fastened below the eaves by a plate rail. The space between the posts or "puncheons" was filled by a wattle-and-daub mixture made of woven withes or vines and smeared with mud or clay mixed with animal hair for extra support. Roofs were thatched with bundles of palmetto leaves overlapped like shingles, and most houses had a solid batten door and perhaps a window or two for ventilation. This style of house was typically cramped and, since the climate was generally mild, most cooking was done outside in open, thatched-roof shelters.

The biggest incentive for Bermuda's settlers to build more permanent, "earthfast" houses was the increasing interest in tobacco production. Company adventurers in London still harbored visions of Bermuda as England's tropical "fruitbasket," and experiments with a variety of exotic fruits and plants continued under Tucker's governorship. But to most Englishmen interested in seeing a relatively quick profit from the Bermuda plantation, tobacco seemed the most promising source of ready cash while experimentation with other products such as figs, pomegranates, indigo, cassava, and hemp continued. As

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79 Ives (ed.), Rich Papers, 74.
80 The irony of this obsession with growing tobacco despite the obvious potential for many other, less noxious products did not go unnoticed:
the first shipwrecked inhabitants of the Sea Venture had reported, tobacco grew wild on the island. Bermuda's mild climate favored the growth of the increasingly popular weed, and most settlers who took up on their shares after 1616 avidly began cultivating tobacco as their primary crop. In fact, so much tobacco was being grown in Bermuda by 1618 that it had become de facto the medium of exchange, with the price fixed at 2s.6d. per pound. On 15 January 1618 the ship Diana arrived in Bermuda with a magazine of supplies to be traded for the first substantial tobacco crop, and returned home laden with some 30,000 pounds of the smokeable leaf.81

Like Moore before him, Tucker set sail for England before his term as governor had officially expired to defend his acquisition of the "Overplus" before the Company adventurers. Nonetheless, Bermuda's second governor could look back upon his three-year tenure with a certain amount of satisfaction. Having found Bermuda's inhabitants "both abhorring all exacted labour, as also in a manner disdaining and grudging much to be commanded by him," Tucker had been remarkably successful in setting the plantation on the path

"Tobacco is their worst of things which they To English Land-lords as their Tribute pay: Such is the mould, that the blest Tenant feeds On preitious fruits, and pays his rent in weeds."  
-- Edmund Waller, "The Battel of the Summer Islands"

81 Craven, An Introduction, 86.
to profit and stability. Clearly his Virginia experience had served him well, for his consistent if harsh application of the system of quasi-military law and social order derived from the Lawes Divine, Morall and Martiall had a profound effect upon Bermuda's notoriously lazy and unmanageable colonists. From a London perspective, at least, the situation appeared more hopeful than it had at any other time since Moore arrived to settle the island in 1612. Finally, it seemed, a modicum of "civilization" had been imparted to this chronically dysfunctional and disaster-prone colony. The settlers were now behaving themselves to a degree; under Tucker they had no choice. They were even becoming more zealous about their new-found tobacco crop—an encouraging sign, even if the adventurers still hoped to one day greet ships returning from the Sommer Islands overflowing with exotic fruits, spices, and pearls. Tucker had managed to tame Bermuda's unruly spirit, at least for the time being. But would the stronger social order and nascent economic productivity the second governor had worked so hard to develop, wondered the Company adventurers, outlast his harsh system of "martial law," his hard and fast execution of justice, and his legendary temper? Only time would tell.
CHAPTER III

THE FOUNDATIONS OF STABILITY:
1619-1623

On choicest Melons and sweet Grapes they dine,
And with Potato's fat their wanton swine:
Nature these Cates with such a lavish hand
Pours out among them, that our courser Land
Tastes of that bounty, and does cloath return,
Which not for warmth, but ornament is worn:
For the kinde Spring which but salutes us here
Inhabits there, and courts them all the year:
Ripe fruits and blossoms, on the same trees live,
At once they promise what at once they give:
So sweet the air, so moderate the clime,
None sickly lives, or dies before his time.
Heaven sure has kept this spot of earth uncurst
To shew how all things were created first.

-- Edmund Waller, "The Battel
of the Summer Islands"

Tucker's official replacement landed on Bermuda on 20 August 1619. A seasoned veteran of the Royal Navy, Captain Nathaniel Butler would prove the most effective and popular of the colony's early governors. As had Tucker before him, Butler met with some mild resistance from Miles Kendall who had been acting in his familiar role of interim governor. Butler, however, carried the full weight of the Bermuda Company's authority and wasted little time debating the legitimacy of his commission. Rather, he set out resolutely to implement the detailed instructions laid out by his superiors. Having installed himself as governor with an
unprecedented show of pomp and ceremony, Butler proceeded to deal with the more mundane aspects of plantation life. In a symbolic assertion of his political and legal authority he ordered the completion of a large cedar prison to house the colony's burgeoning number of criminals and malcontents. Similarly, he oversaw the erection of a forbidding pair of gallows, a whipping post, and a pillory in St.George's town square. Butler also saw that St. Peter's Church received much-needed repairs, and approved the construction of Bermuda's first stone building, a two-story Italianate State House which would be home to Bermuda's House of Assembly and Supreme Court for the next 200 years.82

Butler's role as governor in 1619-20, however, involved more than effecting merely cosmetic improvements on the island. Realizing that Bermuda's needs were changing as the plantation became socially and economically more complex, the Bermuda Company charged Butler with the task of organizing the first local representative assembly in the colony. "Because every man will more willingly obey lawes to which he hath yielded his consent," the adventurers reasoned, "as likewise because you shall the better discover such things as have need of redresse by the advise of such lawes and constitutions as shallbe thought fitt to be made for the good of the plantation, and for maintenance of religion, order, peace, and unitie among them," a local

assembly would be better able to ensure order and stability than a distant and perennially ill-informed Bermuda Company administration.\textsuperscript{83}

By 1 August 1620, the second English representative assembly in the New World was prepared to conduct business.\textsuperscript{84} Two burgesses from each tribe had been elected "by plurallitie of voice" and were joined by the eight bailiffs, the governor, and the remainder of his appointive council. A secretary to prepare and read all bills and a clerk to record the various acts rounded out the membership of the first assembly. Meeting in the newly-framed church in St.George's (the State House was still under construction) the assembled burgesses, councillors, and the governor quickly hammered out a total of fifteen acts to be sent to London for ratification by the Bermuda Company. Among this initial legislation were provisions which regulated the apprenticeships and indentures of newly arriving colonists, restricted the entry of unproductive immigrants, and provided for the upkeep of public works such as the forts, bridges, storehouses, and roads. The bailiff of each tribe was given the authority to inspect all tobacco being produced for export and to destroy all crops that were deemed "rotten and unmerchantable." Fixed days were set for

\textsuperscript{83} Butler, Historye, 190.

\textsuperscript{84} Only the Virginia General Assembly preceded it, meeting for the first time in 1618.
the holding of general assizes for the dispensation of justice, and a tax of one thousand pounds of tobacco was levied against shareholders and tenants to pay for the defense of the island and all necessary public works.

Finally, the assembly addressed the problem of the unpredictable and often irresponsible interim governorships which had already twice threatened the stability of the colony. In all cases the Bermuda Company retained the right to appoint the legitimate governor of the colony, who was then serve out his term in its entirety before he was duly replaced.85 Once the first session of Bermuda's representative assembly was completed, these acts were sent to London for approval. In the meantime, the proposed enactments were read publicly throughout the colony, for they were to stand as law until word of their approval or rejection was returned by the Company.

Soon after Butler dispatched the Acts of Assembly, a large group of settlers arrived in Bermuda after an agonizingly long crossing made even more horrific by a severe outbreak of disease. What was most notable about these haggard new arrivals, however, was the wide range of social ranks they represented. For the first time since the wreck of the Sea Venture Bermuda welcomed "divers gentlemen of fashion and their wives" as well as a number of "Newgatiers"—criminals released from Newgate Prison and

85 Lefroy, Memorials, 165-179.
sent over to work as indentured servants on the public estate. It is evident from the first census made in 1622 that Bermuda's demographic character had changed dramatically from the time of Moore's governorship. When Moore arrived in 1612 he was accompanied by some 50 prospective settlers; by the end of his tenure in office in 1615 the influx of immigrants had swelled the island's population to between 500 and 600 settlers, most of whom, it appears, were men.

Under Tucker's harsh regime, immigration to Bermuda came to a virtual standstill. Many disenchanted colonists returned to England, whether they were granted leave or not, and so the population remained at roughly 500 people until Governor Butler took over the reins of government. By 1619, however, the population of Bermuda once again began to climb as a more stable political and social climate, combined with the promise of quick profits through tobacco cultivation, encouraged immigration to the island. Most significantly,

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86 Butler, Historye, 204-05.

87 Surprisingly, Jack Greene pleads ignorance about Bermuda's early demography. "Whether Bermuda suffered from the same distortion of sex ratios and family development as had the tobacco colonies on the mainland," he remarks, "is unknown." "There has not yet been any systematic search into the colony's early social and demographic history. In all likelihood, however, favorable health conditions prevented such distortions from persisting beyond a generation and a half, at most." Jack P. Greene, Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture, (Chapel Hill: 1988), 42-43.

88 Craven, An Introduction, 104n.
among these new arrivals were an increasing number of women. Prospective planters were now more likely to bring their wives to the colony, and the Bermuda Company soon began to organize "shipments" of marriageable "young maydes" to balance the sex ratio in this heavily male-dominated society.  

By 1622 the sex ratio in Bermuda had become considerably more balanced, a demographic fact which was to characterize the colony throughout the rest of the seventeenth century, and well into the eighteenth when women actually came to outnumber men. The census prepared for Butler's successor, Governor John Bernard, shows a rough parity in the numbers of men and women settled on shares in the various tribes: 413 men versus 393 women and children. The exact number of women in relation to

89 For 100 pounds of tobacco, a sort of "shipping and handling" fee, a single Bermudian planter might purchase one of these "maydes" as his wife. As in Virginia, women were a valuable commodity on the island. Some English investors may have been somewhat overzealous in recruiting young women to send overseas, however. In 1618 a minor government official in Somersetshire set out to "impress" country girls for transportation to Bermuda, but created such a panic that "forty terror-stricken maidens fled far into the woods." Wilkinson, Adventurers of Bermuda, 105.


91 Ives, Rich Papers, 241-245. It should be noted that these figures represent only those settlers who were living on privately-owned shares. In 1622 Bermuda's population was
children is not provided by the 1622 census; Governor Butler, however, recorded that 100 children from the London slums were sent to Bermuda as bound apprentices in 1619, and that still more "waifs" continued to arrive in the colony over the next few years. Assuming that there were still in the order of 300 adult women in Bermuda by the time of the 1622 enumeration, the ratio of men to women would have been just under 3 to 2.\textsuperscript{92}

Although still trailing behind the male population, the number of women in Bermuda as early as 1622 was unusually high when compared with the more markedly skewed sex ratios of other English colonies in the seventeenth century. The Virginia Muster of 1624/25 reveals that out of a total

\begin{itemize}
\item in the neighborhood of 1,600 people, some 800 of whom were still living on the public estate until they could find land or employment in the tribes. The sex breakdown of this non-settled group is not accurately obtainable, but on the basis of contemporary descriptions of the character of immigration post-1619 it would appear that the male-female ratio of colonists in the public charge was not radically different from that of the settled group.
\item The presence of "Negroes" in Bermuda is also noted in the 1622 census. Blacks first made their appearance on the island in 1616, bought from Spanish traders to dive for pearls and teach the colonists to cultivate West Indian products. As tobacco quickly emerged as the staple cash crop, black "servants" became more valuable as a source of cheap labor; in 1622, however, their numbers were still relatively small. Cyril Outerbridge Packwood, \textit{Chained on the Rock: Slavery in Bermuda}, (New York: 1975), chapter 1, "The Introduction of Slavery;" and James E. Smith, \textit{Slavery in Bermuda}, (New York: 1976), Part 1, "The Infant Colony."
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population of 1,218, fully 934 (or nearly 77%) were men. In 1661, men outnumbered women in the budding Jamaican colony by a ratio of 5 to 1; and, a full 45 years after Barbados was first settled there were still 153 adult white males for every 100 females. Only New England, a colony often touted as having achieved a relatively "normal" (i.e. European) demographic pattern early on, had a sex ratio comparable to Bermuda's, with male immigrants outnumbering females in a ratio of 3 to 2 through the period 1620 to 1638.

The question inevitably arises: what sort of impact did Bermuda's unusually rapid attainment of a relatively balanced gender distribution have on the character of the colony as it developed in the early 1620s? While it is easy

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93 Irene D. Hecht, "The Virginia Muster of 1624/25 as a Source for Demographic History," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd series, 30 (1973), 65-92. It is interesting to note that in the early 1620s Bermuda's population still ran slightly ahead of Virginia's; Bermudians, however, never had to face the ravages of malaria or the threat of Indian massacre.

94 Wells, Population, 201, 244.

95 Daniel Scott Smith, "The Demographic History of Colonial New England," in Maris A. Vinovskis (ed.), Studies in American Historical Demography, (New York: 1979), 38n; Herbert Moller, "Sex Composition and Correlated Culture Patterns of Colonial America," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd series, 2 (1945), 115-17. This ratio is based on information from passenger lists of ships carrying immigrants to New England through the 1620s and 1630s, but includes data on only 3,172 people, roughly 17% of New England's total population during this era. The assumption is made that this sample of immigrant arrivals is broadly representative of the sex distribution in the colony as a whole.
to cite quantitative evidence for the presence of women in Bermuda in these early years, proving that an increasingly "normal" demographic pattern in Bermuda had ramifications on the social stability and cohesiveness of the community is necessarily more challenging. First, is difficult to fully isolate a heavily male sex ratio as the primary cause of social disruption in a frontier environment; clearly other factors such as the character of leadership and the stringency of living conditions were also important. Nevertheless, "behavioural scientists and social historians," asserts R. Thompson, "usually accept such general statements as 'unbalanced numbers inexorably produce unbalanced behavior'."96 Frontier societies, whether in Bermuda or Virginia in the first decades of the seventeenth century or the American West of the nineteenth, were typically populated almost exclusively by young, restless men with little or no sense of civic or familial responsibility. Out to make their fortune as quickly as possible before they would consider setting down roots (preferably somewhere else), men in frontier environments were notoriously unwilling to submit to traditional modes of authority or social control. The "saloon-brothel-duel-bónanza syndrome" characteristic of such contexts, therefore, has frequently been attributed in large part to a

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"grave shortage of civilizing and debrutalizing females." In his classic analysis of the implications of colonial sex composition, Herbert Moller concluded that "frontier-type" groups—where women were either absent or distinctly in the minority—were most often marked by a "general restlessness, great mobility, a weakening of authority, and a high frequency of acts of violence." Conversely, in communities with a relatively equal sex ratio the "virtues of the home and of a settled existence were stressed." 

Behavioral theory aside, the correlation between the rapid demographic change in Bermuda's early years and the development of social cohesiveness and order in the plantation appears very strong. Under Governors Moore and Tucker the challenges of regulating a generally shiftless, riotous, and predominantly male population brought the experiment of Bermudian plantation precipitously close to failure. In 1616 it had been necessary for Tucker to implement a harsh disciplinary code (which differed from Virginia's notorious Lawes Divine, Morall and Martiall largely in name alone) to ensure the continuation of the colony and to save the new Bermuda Company from financial disaster. After 1619, however, the situation began to change. Governor Butler's "gentler" rule, the increasing

98 Moller, "Sex Composition," 137.
focus on profitable tobacco production, and the establishment of a permanent, local system of political and judicial control were integral forces in Bermuda's early growth. The unusually large proportion of women in Bermuda and, most importantly, the concomitant potential for single men to marry and establish their own households also certainly helped to rescue Bermuda's tarnished reputation as a godless sink of idleness, drunkenness, and insubordination.

From the early days when a bell had called the shipwrecked Sea Venture settlers to prayer at dawn and dusk, religious authority was influential in the development of a deferential and cohesive Bermudian community. Puritan leadership and liturgy imparted a distinctive character to social and political relations within the colony and was vigorously applied in the context of a "religious orientation program" to impose order and discipline on settlers notoriously prone to waywardness. But more than merely a disciplinary tool at the disposal of colonial leaders, religion was a highly integrated part of seventeenth-century English society and culture, underpinning the essential structures of social and political life regardless of sect or place on the scale of Seventeenth-Century English Society.

conformity to the established Church.\textsuperscript{101}

Though Bermuda's colonizers may not have set about planting their settlement with such self-consciously prophetic rhetoric as New Englanders would in the 1620s and 1630s, religious motivations and a genuine sense of spiritual mission were not lacking in the colony's early years. Even in Virginia, often considered the antithesis of Winthrop's godly northern experiment, the rhetoric of colonization was infused with a profound sense of religious purpose and mission.\textsuperscript{102} As in the Chesapeake, Bermuda's founders were engaged more in a search for profit than salvation of the soul, but a persistent strain of hope that the new island colony would become a workable model of Christian faith and community pervaded the first years of settlement. From the humble efforts of the Reverend Richard Bucke to keep Christian order among a bedraggled and seldom contented band of castaways, through the foundation of a stable church polity in the early 1620s, religion was intimately involved with the emergence of a coherent and stable Bermudian society.

Many prominent members of the Virginia Company who


\textsuperscript{102} John Parker, "Religion and the Virginia Colony, 1609-10," K.R. Andrews \textit{et al.}, \textit{The Westward Enterprise: English Activities in Ireland, the Atlantic, and America 1480-1650}, (Liverpool: 1978), 245-270.
later came to exert a great deal of influence over Bermuda's administration tended towards Puritanism. While not extreme or separatist in their beliefs, Sir Robert Rich, Sir Nathaniel Rich, Sir Thomas Smith, and Sir Edwin Sandys, some of the most powerful spokesmen of the Bermuda Company, were sympathetic to Puritan ideals. As well, most of the early Company shareholders were Puritan Londoners or from the eastern (and largely Puritan) counties. The first of Bermuda's ministers, Richard Bucke, leaned towards Puritanism, as did his successors who trickled into the colony once the Bermuda Company launched the program of settlement after 1612. George Keith, the hot-tempered preacher who had unsuccessfully challenged Governor Moore's treatment of the settlers, was an avowed Puritan and served in the colony from 1612 until he departed for Virginia in 1617.

The first governor was also prone to Puritan sentiments, which was evident in his concern that the settlers agree to enter a "covenant," thereby agreeing to "binde our selves ever-more to worship that...only true and ever-living God," to keep the Sabbath holy, to avoid swearing, slandering, stealing, and all other things that "stand not with the good estate of a Christian Church and

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103 Levy, "Early Puritanism," 93, 166.

104 Levy, "Early Puritanism," 166.
well-governed Commonwealth." But the impending crises of famine and division which marred Moore's tenure in office prevented the establishment of any lasting or effective religious order in Bermuda. That there were only two ministers, Keith and Hughes, in the colony by 1615 as the population swelled into the hundreds made the task of maintaining religious discipline nearly impossible. "Good sir," pleaded Hughes to a sympathetic Sir Nathaniel Rich in London, "for God sake do what you can to send hither godly preachers, before sinne hath got the upper hand. It is lamentable to see how sinne aboundeth every day more and more as the people do increase."

Though he was clearly no Puritan, Daniel Tucker came to Bermuda fully aware that religious discipline was essential to whipping idle and insubordinate colonists into shape.  

105 Lefroy, Memorials, 63-64.


107 Tucker was constantly suspicious of Reverend Hughes and his strident Puritanism. When Hughes authored a revised Calvinist liturgy for use in the colony, Tucker voiced his disapproval to Sir Nathaniel Rich directly. "You shall receive a book from him," cautioned the governor, "which I doe not very well approve. He is an honest & religious man, but weare it not-in respect of our want of preachers, I should in some sort hinder his proceedings, for I fynde he Desireth to establish a forme of prayer accordinge to his owne tradition, quite leaving the Common prayer appointed to be read in our Churches of England. This I am forced to permitt for quiettness sake and in respect of my want, for if I should Contradict him in it I feare he is of so peevish a Disposition that we should be quite without the service of God." Tucker was unsympathetic to Hughes's liturgical liberties, but he was also clearly concerned with the
As under Virginia's laws divine, moral and martial, Tucker's rule was characterized by stern religious measures such as requiring attendance at church services and enforcing moral discipline in much the same way Gates and Somers had done while marooned there several years earlier. To Tucker, who was more concerned with securing title to the Overplus and building his substantial new house than he was with the finer points of doctrinal argument, religious discipline meant curbing the destabilizing influences inherent in "disrespect for authority, drunkenness, and sexual misdemeanours." Following the example of Dale, Gates, and Argall in Virginia, Tucker was successful in enforcing religious discipline over the colonists, even if he was exceptional in his suspicion of Puritanism.

Despite persistent opposition from Tucker, Hughes was successful in creating a Presbyterian form of church government and implementing the dissenting liturgy he had written for use in the colony. Hughes's aim was to organize an ecclesiastical system in Bermuda before it became heavily populated. "When the islands are populous," he argued to Sir Nathaniel Rich, "a church government differing from that in England can not be brought in but with much ado Concerning preaching against Bishops and the estate of the Church of charismatic minister's threat to his authority as governor. Governor Daniel Tucker to Sir Nathaniel Rich, 10 March 1617/18; Ives (ed.), Rich Papers, 100.

108 Canny, "Permissive Frontier," 42.
England."  Once a Presbyterian church structure was installed, Hughes felt, settlers would be more likely to accept it once they arrived in the colony. He was right. Governor Tucker aside, Bermudians were on the whole receptive to Hughes's reforms. The church polity he established formed the basis of religious life in Bermuda throughout the first decades of settlement, especially after Governor Butler officially sanctioned a nonconformist church in the colony in 1620 by introducing the Genevan liturgy then being used in the islands of Guernsey and Jersey.  

The role that Hughes played as Bermuda's foremost religious leader between 1613 and 1625 was crucial in the settlement's development. With a troubling shortage of ministers in Bermuda through these early years, Hughes's persistent attempts at mending the moral and spiritual life of the colony helped fuel the trend towards increasingly cohesive and stable social, political, and economic life.  

By 1619, however, Hughes no longer toiled alone in the vineyard, as he was joined by the nonconformist

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111 Considering the Puritan leanings of many significant members of the Bermuda Company in its early stages, it is surprising that so few ministers were dispatched to the new colony. By 1625 Virginia had already seen at least 22 ministers come and go, yet until 1622 only four preachers had been sent to Bermuda, one of whom was forced to vacate his post soon after his arrival due to illness. Levy, "Early Puritanism," 100.
Reverend Samuel Lang. Three years later four more ministers arrived in Bermuda, the first of a steady stream of Puritan preachers through the 1620s and 1630s.\textsuperscript{112}

The Presbyterian church structure that Hughes had struggled to establish was quickly recognized by the Bermuda Company and the local Assembly. As early as 1619, Bermuda had been divided into four parishes. Each was to be served by its own minister, though qualified candidates would not arrive to fill these posts for another three years.\textsuperscript{113} Fifty acres of glebe land were set aside in each parish and occupied by four men from the general pool of laborers to work for the support of the minister.\textsuperscript{114} With the arrival of Puritan ministers in the parishes in 1622, the Bermuda Assembly also turned its attention to legislating a system of religious discipline. The resulting act called for the election of churchwardens and sidemen in each parish "by the joynte consent of the minister and the prishioners." The Assembly specified that these positions be filled by "men fearinge God" as well as "upright honest and sober in their

\textsuperscript{112} Levy, "Early Puritanism," 173-176.

\textsuperscript{113} The first parish included the Town of St.George and all the general public lands except those on the mainland. The second included the mainland public estate in addition to Hamilton and Smith Tribes. Pembroke, Devonshire and Paget Tribes formed the third, and the fourth parish encompassed Warwick, Southampton, and Sandys. Craven, A Brief Introduction, 125-26.

\textsuperscript{114} Craven, A Brief Introduction, 125.
carriage of good report amongst their neighbours and well esteemed for their wisdom and discretion." 115 Once elected, church officers served a two-year term, during which they were charged with the upkeep of the parish church and the provision of all necessary furnishings, including a "comely Pulpitt with a cushion, a Readinge Pewe, wth convenient pewes and seats for the people to sitt on, a comunion Table wth a carpett of Linen cloth, a font, a fayre Bible of the new Translation, a Booke of comon prayer of the last edition Two flaggon potts for the communion wyne Two handsome pewter plates or dishes for the communion Breade a Bell to call the people together Two Register books a fayre chest to keep the church ornaments in, and a Beare for carrying the dead to buriall." 116

More important in terms of discipline and social control, the churchwardens and sidemen were responsible for ensuring that all parishioners attended services on Sundays and holidays, and "suffer none to walke or stand idley or talke or sleepe or use any unreverend gesture in or about the church duringe that tyme." 117 While the Sunday service was proceeding, the churchwardens and sidemen would leave the church and search the "worst and most suspected places" for truant parishioners. Religious officers also made

115 Lefroy, Memorials, 317.
116 Lefroy, Memorials, 318.
117 Lefroy, Memorials, 319.
certain that social distinctions were enforced in the church, seating the parishioners "accordinge to the degree of the p.son" and ensuring that "all infamous psons sit in the lowest places according to the lawes." During the rest of the week the churchwardens and sidemen were kept equally busy scrutinizing the behavior of local inhabitants and reporting on matters of public morality directly to the minister. Officials were particularly watchful for signs of heresy or schismatic religious practices and noted all cases in which individuals failed to receive communion at least once a year or neglected to have their children baptized.

As part of their instructions churchwardens and sidemen were warned to be on the lookout for any "sorcerers Inchanters Charmers Witches Figure casters or fortune tellers Conjurers or whosoever hath or seemeth to have any familiar consultation with the Devill," all swearers and blasphemers, and anyone who broke the Sabbath by "usinge any bodilie recreation by gaminge sportinge or by doing any servile work as travellinge fyshinge cuttinge of woode digginge potatoes carryinge of burdens beatinge of corne &c or by meetinge purposelye to drinke and make merrye." Finally, church officers sought to curb the disruptive activities of "raylers quarrellers and makebates or talebearers," those who "committ adulterye fornication

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118 Lefroy, Memorials, 319.
119 Lefroy, Memorials, 320.
incest or any other uncleanes," and all "usuall gamesters for monye tobacco &c and also all extorconers assurers or oppressors of theire brethren." Also in danger of correction were any suspected of "keepinge of tipplinge houses or that p.mitt any drunkenes at any tyme in their houses," and "all cruell p.sons that shall exceede measure in correctinge of there servants, but chiefly such as will abuse theire wives by strikinge them."¹²⁰

In 1623 Puritanism was already deeply rooted in Bermudian society. With a Presbyterian structure of independently supported parishes and a strong system of religious discipline, the Bermudian church had a vigorous influence on the character and development of Bermudian society by the early 1620s. Gates and Somers had used religious order to supplement civil authority during their forced stay on the island in 1609-1610, and all subsequent governors realized that social and political order in the new colony could only rest on a solid foundation of Christian morality and discipline. Though early ministers such as George Keith and Lewis Hughes often found their congregations unruly, their leaders uncooperative, and their resources meager, they were able through their persistent efforts to implement a nonconformist liturgy and government which would in future form the basis of the Bermudian church. By the early 1620s, local clerics and religious

¹²⁰ Lefroy, Memorials, 320.
officers worked hand in hand with the civil administration to ensure that the settler population remained peaceful, deferential, and productive—properly respectful of their neighbors, their leaders, and the "goodness of God."
Within the first ten or fifteen years of settlement, Jon Kukla contends, Virginia passed through three distinct stages of social and political development. The colony began its life with a period of initial disorder and instability which threatened its viability as a productive commercial venture. This chaotic atmosphere, punctuated by disease, starvation, and demographic disaster, was gradually overcome by the imposition of a rigid and inflexible "control regime" through the instrument of the Lawes Divine, Morall and Martiall, an all-encompassing series of regulations which effectively crushed insubordination and ensured that a deferential social order would prevail. Out of the harsh and arbitrary order imposed by the Lawes, however, ultimately sprang the roots of a "consociational polity," a system in which "civil offices--councilors, burgesses, and commissioners of what became the counties--rather than militia rank increasingly became the legal basis for the colonial elite's domination of the economy and society." Mirroring the Virginia experience extremely closely,

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Bermuda passed through three similar developmental stages between 1612 and 1623. Through the governorship of Richard Moore and the "mis-rule of the six" precipitated by his abandonment of the fledgling colony in 1615, the Bermuda plantation was racked by the same debilitating conditions of chaos and disorder. Settlers starved while fertile fields lay untilled, while liquor and riot combined explosively to exact a heavy toll in lives and lost profits. Although Moore had at least attempted to erect a rudimentary structure of social control while struggling to provide for the defense of the colony, it would take a more forceful and uncompromising leader such as Daniel Tucker to set Bermuda on the road to stability and profitability. Like the adventurers who sent him, Tucker was convinced that only a rigid, deferential framework of "martial" law could rescue the ailing settlement from dissolution and disaster. In the mold of Dale, Gates, and Argall of Virginia, Tucker never hesitated to brandish his authority over the disrespectful and unmotivated colonists in his charge-- and if that meant beating forty idle servants before noon, so be it.

Tucker's system worked but did little to endear him to his colonists. The desperate, almost suicidal attempts at desertion and dwindling immigration to the colony through the course of his governorship underscored the severity of life under his "control regime". Nonetheless, Tucker's rigid, Virginia-inspired social and political order was
ultimately only a stopgap measure intended to bring Bermuda to the point at which stability and cohesiveness could be maintained without a consistent disregard for the "natural" rights of Englishmen. When Nathaniel Butler called the first legislative assembly in Bermuda, he ushered in a new, "consociational" polity-- a system incorporating the rights of elective self-government and local political and judicial responsibility which more closely mirrored contemporary "metropolitan" English society. Butler now oversaw a colony which was developing in the direction of economic, political, and social maturity and stability.

Once the island had been surveyed and divided into shares, the nascent development of tobacco monoculture brought the colony slowly into the realm of economic self-sufficiency and profitability. The pattern was set for limited local self-government and judicial authority by the first Bermuda assembly of 1620. Religious government had come into its own as a major force in Bermudian life by 1623 and the demographic character of the island was changing rapidly with the arrival of substantial numbers of women and children, transforming Bermuda from a rough-and-tumble "peripheral" society into an increasingly complex and stable community with stronger ties to the "core".

But was Bermuda truly a "stable" society by 1623? "It is clearly not sufficient," Jack Greene contends, "simply to adapt a series of specifications derived from the experience
of an older, far more complex and structurally
differentiated political society. Social and political
conditions in the colonies," he continues, "differed
radically from those in England, and the character and
conditions of political stability differed accordingly."\(^{123}\) Greene offers instead a multi-faceted model of "stability,"
noting the importance of a low level of collective violence
and civil disorder, an absence or muting of deep internal
divisions, a routine acceptance of the established structure
of government, low turnover rates among leaders, an orderly
transfer of authority, and a manageable level of factional
or party strife. Even so, continues Greene, a stable
political order need not necessarily imply a state of social
or political inertia, "complete public tranquility", or a
high degree of cohesiveness within a single, monopolistic
power elite.\(^{124}\)

Clearly, by 1623 Bermudian society had not fully
reached the level of complexity which Greene's definition of
stability charts for Virginia in the latter half of the
seventeenth century. Nonetheless, his model still provides
a useful framework for assessing the extent of Bermuda's

\(^{123}\) Jack P. Greene, "The Growth of Political Stability:
An Interpretation of Political Development in the Anglo-
American Colonies, 1660-1760," in John Parker and Carol
Urness (eds.), The American Revolution: A Heritage of
Change, (Minneapolis: 1975), 32n.

\(^{124}\) Greene, "The Growth of Political Stability," 32n-33n.
attainment of social and political permanence and order after its first decade of settlement. By the early 1620s Bermuda was no longer plagued by the virulent social unrest and explosive potential for popular rebellion which had characterized life on the island between Moore's arrival and the establishment of a rigid control regime under Governor Tucker. A burgeoning tobacco economy helped to ease the tension between Company adventurers eager to see a profit from their colonial enterprise and local tenants who now had the opportunity to advance their own interests by working towards economic self-reliance. In the revised "Laws of the Bermuda Company" passed in London in 1622, Bermuda's representative assembly was established as a permanent fixture of colonial life. Elections to the assembly were now to be held annually, with every male over eighteen who owned at least one 25-acre share of land eligible to vote for six delegates from their respective tribe, while governors and other colonial officials were to serve no longer than one three-year term.  

But perhaps the most striking example of this shift towards social and political stability is witnessed in the letter of "Grievances of the People in Bermuda," compiled and sent home to the Bermuda Company in October 1622.  

125 Lefroy, Memorials, 200-227.  
In this missive the Bermudians complained about the shameful scarcity of ministers in the colony, the lack of ammunition in the forts, the wrongful conviction and execution of inhabitants for petty crimes, serious problems of public supply, disputes over landownership, and the plight of abused orphans. What is most revealing about this petition is not so much the details of the settlers's grievances; rather, the fact that they had sought redress through "legitimate" channels-- by pleading their case to the Bermuda Company some three thousand miles away-- is an striking indication of the extent to which Bermuda had advanced toward coherence and stability by the 1620s. Highly contentious issues and bitter local divisions would continue to plague Bermuda throughout the seventeenth century, particularly during the era of the English Civil War and Cromwell's Protectorate. But now, rather than reacting to problems through insubordination and riotous misconduct, Bermudians increasingly saw themselves as a unique part of a larger colonial framework-- a system in which order and deference were recognized as critical virtues without which their society would collapse into dysfunction.

The experiment of Bermudian colonization which had come so precipitously close to failure only a decade before was well along the road to progress and stability by 1623. A steady course for future development had been charted, the
challenges of beginning afresh in a new world confronted and overcome. The "hollow Lotos-land" of insubordination, crisis, and indecision was fast becoming a distant memory. Bermuda now could emerge into an era of increasing peace, prosperity, and participation in the broader English Atlantic world of the seventeenth century.
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