

## ORIGINS OF ENGLISH SETTLEMENT

### Viewpoint 1A

#### National and Economic Reasons to Colonize the New World (1585)

Richard Hakluyt

**INTRODUCTION** During the long reign (1558–1603) of Queen Elizabeth I, England was on the sidelines of the European rush to colonize the New World following Christopher Columbus's 1492 voyage. Spain, on the other hand, created an empire of profitable colonies in South America and the Caribbean Sea. Ships from Spain's colonies laden with gold and silver made Spain the envy of other European nations. Portugal established a colony in what is now Brazil. France sent explorers up the St. Croix River in an attempt to find a trade route to Asia, established fur trading posts, and laid claims to much of North America. England sponsored several exploring expeditions, but its colonizing efforts were limited to small fishing settlements off the coast of North America and failed attempts at colonizing Newfoundland in 1583 and Roanoke Island (off what is now North Carolina) in 1587.

A growing number of Englishmen began to promote the idea that England needed to establish colonies in the New World to compete with Spain and other nations. The following is taken from a 1585 treatise by Richard Hakluyt the elder, a prominent English lawyer who became interested in overseas colonization in the 1570s (his cousin, Richard Hakluyt the younger, also was a noted colonization promoter). The following excerpt lists thirty-one reasons ("Inducements") why England should begin colonizing efforts in the New World. Although he mentions the spread of Protestant Christianity as a reason for settlement, many of Hakluyt's arguments dwell on strategic and economic benefits for England, including trade opportunities and the ability to provide employment for England's poor.

What commodities does Hakluyt believe could be cultivated in America? Why do you think Hakluyt placed religion first on his list of "Inducements?" How does Hakluyt anticipate dealing with native peoples in the New World?

1. The glory of God by planting of religion among those infidels.

2. The increase of the force of the Christians.

3. The possibility of the enlarging of the dominions of the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, and consequently of her honour, revenues, and of her power by this enterprise.

4. An ample vent [market] in time to come of the woollen cloths of England, especially those of the coarsest sorts, to the maintenance of our poor, that else starve or become burdensome to the realm; and vent also of sundry our commodities upon the tract of that firm land, and possibly in other regions from the northern side of that main.

5. A great possibility of further discoveries of other regions from the north part of the same land by sea, and of unspeakable honour and benefit that may rise upon the same by the trades to ensue in Japan, China, and Cathay, etc.

6. By return thence, this realm shall receive (by reason of the situation of the climate, and by reason of the excellent soil) woad, oil, wines, hops, salt, and most of all the commodities that we receive from the best parts of Europe, and we shall receive the same better cheap than now we receive them, as we may use the matter.

7. Receiving the same thence, the navy, the human strength of this realm, our merchants and their goods, shall not be subject to arrest of ancient enemies and doubtful friends as of late years they have been.

8. If our nation do not make any conquest there but only use traffic and change of commodities, yet, by means the country is not very mighty but divided into petty kingdoms, they shall not dare to offer us any great annoy but such as we may easily revenge with sufficient chastisement to the unarmed people there.

9. Whatsoever commodities we receive by the Steelyard Merchants, or by our own merchants from Eastland, be it flax, hemp, pitch, tar, masts, clapboard, wainscot, or such-like; the like good[s] may we receive from the north and north-east part of that country near unto Cape Breton, in return for our coarse woollen cloths, flannels, and rugs fit for those colder regions.

10. The passage to and fro is through the main ocean sea, so as we are not in danger of any enemy's coast.

#### TRADE OPPORTUNITIES

11. In the voyage we are not to cross the burnt zone [tropics], nor to pass through frozen seas encumbered with ice and fogs, but in temperate climate at all times of the year; and it requireth not, as the East Indies voyage

Richard Hakluyt, "Inducements to the Liking of the Voyage Intended Towards Virginia in 40. and 42. Degrees," from *The Original Writings and Correspondence of the Two Richard Hakluyts*, edited by E.G.R. Taylor (London: Hakluyt Society, 1935).

doth, the taking in of water in divers places, by reason that it is to be sailed in five or six weeks; and by the shortness the merchant may yearly make two returns (a factory [trade center] once being erected there), a matter in trade of great moment.

12. In this trade by the way, in our pass to and fro, we have in tempests and other haps all the ports of Ireland to our aid and no near coast of any enemy.

13. By this ordinary trade we may annoy the enemies to Ireland and succour the Queen's Majesty's friends there, and in time we may from Virginia yield them whatsoever commodity they now receive from the Spaniard; and so the Spaniards shall want the ordinary victual that heretofore they received yearly from thence, and so they shall not continue trade, nor fall so aptly in practice against this government as now by their trade thither they may.

14. We shall, as it is thought, enjoy in this voyage either some small islands to settle on or some one place or other on the firm land to fortify for the safety of our ships, our men, and our goods, the like whereof we have not in any foreign place of our traffic, in which respect we may be in degree of more safety and more quiet.

15. The great plenty of buff [buffalo or wild ox] hides and of many other sundry kinds of hides there now presently to be had, the trade of whale and seal fishing and of divers other fishings in the great rivers, great bays, and seas there, shall presently defray the charge in good part or in all of the first enterprise, and so we shall be in better case than our men were in Russia, where many years were spent and great sums of money consumed before gain was found.

16. The great broad rivers of that main that we are to enter into, so many leagues navigable or portable into the mainland, lying so long a tract with so excellent and so fertile a soil on both sides, do seem to promise all things that the life of man doth require and whatsoever men may wish that are to plant upon the same or to traffic in the same.

17. And whatsoever notable commodity the soil within or without doth yield in so long a tract, that is to be carried out from thence to England, the same rivers so great and deep do yield no small benefit for the sure, safe, easy, and cheap carriage of the same to shipboard, be it of great bulk or of great weight.

18. And in like sort whatsoever commodity of England the inland people there shall need, the same rivers do work the like effect in benefit for the incarriage of the same aptly, easily, and cheaply.

19. If we find the country populous and desirous to expel us and injuriously to offend us, that seek but just and lawful traffic, then, by reason that we are lords of navigation and they not so, we are the better able to

defend ourselves by reason of those great rivers and to annoy them in many places.

20. Where there be many petty kings or lords planted on the rivers' sides, and [who] by all likelihood maintain the frontiers of their several territories by wars, we may by the aid of this river join with this king here, or with that king there, at our pleasure, and may so with a few men be revenged of any wrong offered by any of them; or may, if we will proceed with extremity, conquer, fortify, and plant in soils most sweet, most pleasant, most strong, and most fertile, and in the end bring them all in subjection and to civility.

21. The known abundance of fresh fish in the rivers, and the known plenty of fish on the sea-coast there, may assure us of sufficient victual in spite of the people, if we will use salt and industry.

22. The known plenty and variety of flesh of divers kinds of beasts at land there may seem to say to us that we may cheaply victual our navies to England for our returns, which benefit everywhere is not found of merchants.

23. The practice of the people of the East Indies, when the Portugals came thither first, was to cut from the Portugals their lading of spice; and hereby they thought to overthrow their purposed trade. If these people shall practise the like, by not suffering [allowing] us to have any commodity of theirs without conquest which requireth some time), yet may we maintain our first voyage thither till our purpose come to effect by the sea-fishing on the coasts there and by dragging for pearls, which are said to be on those parts: and by return of those commodities the charges in part shall be defrayed; which is a matter of consideration in enterprises of charge.

#### EMPLOYING ENGLAND'S POOR

24. If this realm shall abound too too much with youth, in the mines there of gold (as that of Chisea and Saguenay), of silver, copper, iron, etc., may be an employment to the benefit of this realm; in tilling of the rich soil there for grain and in planting of vines there for wine or dressing of those vines which grow there naturally in great abundance; olives for oil; orange trees, lemons, figs and almonds for fruit; woad, saffron, and madder for dyers; hops for brewers; hemp, flax; and in many such other things, by employment of the soil, our people void of sufficient trades may be honestly employed, that else may become hurtful at home.

25. The navigating of the seas in the voyage, and of the great rivers there, will breed many mariners for service and maintain much navigation.

26. The number of raw hides there of divers kinds of beasts, if we shall possess some island there or settle on the firm, may presently employ many of our idle people in

divers several dressings of the same, and so we may return them to the people that cannot dress them so well, or into this realm, where the same are good merchandise, or to Flanders, etc., which present gain at the first raiseth great encouragement presently to the enterprise.

27. Since great waste woods be there of oak, cedar, pine, walnuts, and sundry other sorts, many of our waste people may be employed in making of ships, hoys, busses [types of ships], and boats, and in making of rosin, pitch, and tar, the trees natural for the same being certainly known to be near Cape Breton and the Bay of Menan, and in many other places thereabout.

28. If mines of white or grey marble, jet, or other rich stone be found there, our idle people may be employed in the mines of the same and in preparing the same to shape, and, so shaped, they may be carried into this realm as good ballast for our ships and after serve for noble buildings.

We shall not only receive many precious commodities. . . but also shall in time find ample vent of the labour of our poor people at home.

29. Sugar-canes may be planted as well as they are now in the South of Spain, and besides the employment of our idle people, we may receive the commodity cheaper and not enrich infidels or our doubtful friends, of whom now we receive that commodity.

30. The daily great increase of wools in Spain, and the like in the West Indies, and the great employment of the same into cloth in both places, may move us to endeavour, for vent of our cloth, new discoveries of peopled regions where hope of sale may arise; otherwise in short time many inconveniences may possibly ensue.

#### INCREDIBLE THINGS MAY FOLLOW

31. This land that we purpose to direct our course to, lying in part in the 40th degree of latitude, being in like heat as Lisbon in Portugal doth, and in the more southerly part, as the most southerly coast of Spain doth, may by our diligence yield unto us, besides wines and oils and sugars, oranges, lemons, figs, raisins, almonds, pomegranates, rice, raw silks such as come from Granada, and divers commodities for dyers, as anil and cochineal, and sundry other colours and materials. Moreover, we shall not only receive many precious commodities besides from thence, but also shall in time find ample vent of the labour of our poor people at home, by sale of hats, bonnets, knives, fish-hooks, copper

kettles, beads, looking-glasses, bugles, and a thousand kinds of other wrought wares that in short time may be brought in use among the people of that country, to the great relief of the multitude of our poor people and to the wonderful enriching of this realm. And in time, such league and intercourse may arise between our stabling seats there, and other parts of our Northern America, and of the islands of the same, that incredible things, and by few as yet dreamed of, may speedily follow: tending to the impeachment of our mighty enemies and to the common good of this noble government.

The ends of this voyage are these:

1. To plant Christian religion.
2. To traffic.
3. To conquer.

Or, to do all three.

#### Viewpoint 1B Religious Reasons to Colonize the New World (1629)

John Winthrop (1588–1649)

INTRODUCTION *The first two lasting English settlements in what is now the United States were at Jamestown, Virginia, 1607, and Plymouth, Massachusetts, 1620. Jamestown was sponsored by the Virginia Company of London, a joint-stock corporation whose investors (some of whom settled in Jamestown) hoped to make a quick profit from the colony. The leaders of the Plymouth colony—the Pilgrims—as well as the Puritans who settled close by in Massachusetts in subsequent years, had different motives.*

*The Puritans and Pilgrims were religious people who were dissatisfied with the pace of Protestant reform in the Church of England, the official established church that all English people were then obliged to support. Under Queen Elizabeth I and her successor, King James I, the Church of England was closely linked to the royal government. Many Puritans came to America to avoid being persecuted for their beliefs and to create a new society that harmonized with their conceptions of true Christianity. A passionate summary of Puritan motives comes from the following viewpoint, excerpted from a 1629 pamphlet by John Winthrop. Winthrop, one of the wealthiest and most distinguished of the Puritan settlers, served as governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony for thirteen of his nineteen years in America following his migration in 1630. In his 1629 pamphlet he argues that the true Christian church is hopelessly corrupt in England and that the faith can be preserved only by creating a new society in the New World. Puritan settlers were not to be adventurers seeking their fortune or the desperately poor seeking*

*employment, but rather people inspired by God to practice their faith free of the constraints of the Church of England.*

*How do Winthrop's views of religion and of God expressed here differ from those expressed by Richard Hakluyt in the opposing viewpoint? What comments does Winthrop make about Jamestown? Hakluyt was writing to persuade government officials, while Winthrop is hoping to attract fellow settlers; how much might their differences in their arguments be attributed to the fact that their essays are aimed at different audiences?*

Reasons to be considered for justifying the undertakers of the intended plantation in New England and for encouraging such whose hearts God shall move to join with them in it.

First, it will be a service to the church of great consequence to carry the gospel into those parts of the world, to help on the coming in of fullness of the Gentiles, and to raise a bulwark against the kingdom of anti-Christ which the Jesuits labor to rear up in those parts.

#### RESCUING THE CHURCH

2. All other churches of Europe are brought to desolation, and our sins, for which the Lord begins already to frown upon us, do threaten us fearfully, and who knows but that God hath provided this place to be a refuge for many whom he means to save out of the general calamity. And seeing the church hath no place left to fly into but the wilderness, what better work can there be than to go before and provide tabernacles and food for her, against she cometh thither?

3. This land grows weary of her inhabitants, so as man who is the most precious of all creatures is here more vile and base than the earth we tread upon, and of less price among us than a horse or a sheep; masters are forced by authority to entertain servants, parents to maintain their own children. All towns complain of the burthen of their poor, though we have taken up many unnecessary, yea unlawful, trades to maintain them. And we use the authority of the law to hinder the increase of people, as urging the execution of the state against cottages and inmates, and thus it is come to pass that children, servants, and neighbors (especially if the[y] be poor) are counted the greatest burthen, which if things were right it would be the chiefest earthly blessing.

4. The whole earth is the Lord's garden, and He hath given it to the sons of men with a general condition, Gen. 1:28, "Increase and multiply, replenish the earth and subdue it," which was again renewed to Noah. The end is double moral and natural: that man might enjoy the fruits

From *Reasons to be Considered for Justifying the Undertakers of the Intended Plantation in New England* by John Winthrop. (Proceedings, vol. 8, Massachusetts Historical Society, 1864–65).

of the earth, and God might have his due glory from the creature. Why then should we stand here striving for places of habitation (many men spending as much labor and cost to recover or keep sometimes an acre or two of land as would procure them many hundred as good or better in an other country) and in the meantime suffer a whole continent as fruitful and convenient for the use of man to lie waste without any improvement?

5. We are grown to that height of intemperance in all excess of riot, as no man's estate almost will suffice to keep sail with his equals, and he who fails herein must live in scorn and contempt. Hence it comes that all arts and trades are carried in that deceitful and unrighteous course, as it is almost impossible for a good and upright man to maintain his charge and live comfortably in any of them.

If any such who are known to be godly, and live in wealth and prosperity here, shall forsake all this to join themselves to this church, . . . it will be an example of great use . . . to give more life to the faith of God's people in their prayers for the plantation.

6. The fountains of learning and religion are so corrupted (as beside the unsupportable charge of the education) most children (even the best wits and fairest hopes) are perverted, corrupted, and utterly overthrown by the multitude of evil examples and the licentious government of those seminaries, where men strain at gnats and swallow camels, use all severity for maintenance of capes and other complements, but suffer all ruffian-like fashion and disorder in manners to pass uncontrolled.

7. What can be a better work and more honorable and worthy a Christian than to help raise and support a particular church while it is in the infancy, and to join his forces with such a company of faithful people as by a timely assistance may grow strong and prosper, and for want of it may be put to great hazard, if not wholly ruined.

8. If any such who are known to be godly, and live in wealth and prosperity here, shall forsake all this to join themselves to this church, and to run a hazard with them of a hard and mean condition, it will be an example of great use both for removing the scandal of worldly and sinister respects which is cast upon the adventurers, to give more life to the faith of God's people in their prayers for the plantation, and to encourage others to join the more willingly in it.

9. It appears to be a work of God for the good of His church, in that He hath disposed the hearts of so many of His wise and faithful servants (both ministers and others)

not only to approve of the enterprise but to interest themselves in it, some, in their persons and estates, others by their serious advice and help otherwise. And all by their prayers for the welfare of it, Amos 3. The Lord revealeth His secrets to His servants the prophets; it is likely He hath some great work in hand which He hath revealed to His prophets among us, whom He hath stirred up to encourage His servants to this plantation, for He doth not use to seduce His people by His own prophets but commits that office to the ministry of false prophets and lying spirits. . . .

#### OBJECTIONS AND REPLIES

*Objection 1:* We have no warrant to enter upon that land which hath been so long possessed by others.

*Answer 1:* That which lies common and hath never been replenished or subdued is free to any that will possess and improve it, for God hath given to the sons of men a double right to the earth: there is a natural right and a civil right. The first right was natural when men held the earth in common, every man sowing and feeding where he pleased, and then as men and the cattle increased they appropriated certain parcels of ground by enclosing, and peculiar manurance, and this in time gave them a civil right. . . . And for the natives in New England, they enclose no land, neither have any settled habitation, nor any tame cattle to improve the land by, and so have no other but a natural right to those countries. So as if we leave them sufficient for their use, we may lawfully take the rest, there being more than enough for them and us.

*Secondly,* we shall come in with a good leave of the Natives, who find benefit already by our neighborhood and learn of us to improve part to more use than before they could do the whole. And by this means we come in by valuable purchase, for they have of us that which will yield them more benefit than all the land which we have from them.

*Thirdly,* God hath consumed the Natives with a great plague in those parts so as there be few inhabitants left.

*Objection 2:* It will be a great wrong to our church to take away the good people, and we shall lay it the more open to the judgment feared.

*Answer 1:* The departing of good people from a country doth not cause a judgment but foreshew it, which may occasion such as remain to turn from their evil ways that they may prevent it, or to take some other course that they may escape it.

*Secondly,* such as go away are of no observation in respects of those who remain, and they are likely to do more good there than here. And since Christ's time, the church is to be considered as universal without distinction of countries, so as he who doeth good in any one place serves the church in all places in regard of the unity.

*Thirdly,* it is the revealed will of God that the gospel should be preached to all nations, and though we know not whether those barbarians will receive it at first or not, yet it is a good work to serve God's providence in offering it to them; and this is fittest to be done by God's own servants, for God shall have glory by it though they refuse it, and there is good hope that the posterity shall by this means be gathered into Christ's sheepfold. . . .

*Objection 4:* The ill success of other plantations may tell us what will become of this.

*Answer 1:* None of the former sustained any great damage but Virginia; which happened through their own sloth and security.

2. The argument is not good, for thus it stands: some plantations have miscarried, therefore we should not make any. It consists in particulars and so concludes nothing. We might as well reason thus: many houses have been burnt by kilns, therefore we should use none; many ships have been cast away, therefore we should content ourselves with our home commodities and not adventure men's lives at sea for those things that we might live without; some men have been undone by being advanced to great places, therefore we should refuse our preferment, etc.

3. The fruit of any public design is not to be discerned by the immediate success; it may appear in time that former plantations were all to good use.

4. There were great and fundamental errors in the former which are like to be avoided in this, for first their main end was carnal and not religious; secondly, they used unfit instruments—a multitude of rude and misgoverned persons, the very scum of the people; thirdly, they did not establish a right form of government.

#### FOR FURTHER READING

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Alan Taylor, *American Colonies: The Settling of North America*. New York: Penguin, 2001.

The complete text of Richard Hakluyt's *Inducements* can be found in Peter C. Mancall, ed., *Envisioning America: English Plans for the Colonization of North America, 1580–1640*. Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1995. The complete text of Winthrop's sermon can be found online at the web site of the Winthrop Society at <http://www.winthropsociety.org/doc-reasons.php>.