

**Tobacco and Jesus: The Social Impacts of Scottish and Scots-Irish Immigrants in Colonial  
Virginia**

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with Honors in History

Benjamin Andrew Soullier  
Washington and Lee University  
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Michelle Brock, Ph.D. Primary Advisor

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Matt Gildner, Ph.D. Secondary Reader

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## Introduction

Following the Glorious Revolution, Britain saw several small-scale rebellions against William of Orange and his wife Mary in support of James II, beginning with the Jacobite Rebellion in 1689. After the conflict ended in 1692, doubts remained both in England and in Lowland Scotland regarding Highland loyalty to King William II. As a result, Captain Robert Campbell, a Scottish Chieftain loyal to William, took a large army north to Glencoe where Clan MacDonald, one of the clans who supported the Stewarts, was having a wedding. The Campbells asked for hospitality and food, which they were given. After the wedding, they murdered almost forty MacDonalds.<sup>1</sup> The Glencoe Massacre was an early sign of the mistreatment Scottish highlanders would receive from the English and Lowland Scots nobles.<sup>2</sup> In the following centuries, Scottish highlanders experienced the effects of what would be known as the Highland Clearances, an attempt to remove Highlanders from their lands in order to create room for sheep to increase wool production. Due to these clearances, and economic hardships in all of Scotland, many Scots began searching for new homes.<sup>3</sup>

About 173 years after the Glencoe Massacre, Andrew Carnegie, perhaps Scotland's most famous immigrant, founded the Keystone Bridge Company and was well on his way to creating a steel empire in the United States. Carnegie, born in Fife, remains one of the most extreme examples of the "American Dream" immigrant story.<sup>4</sup> The story of famous immigrants like Carnegie is told over and over again. Additionally, the larger effects of migrant diasporas,

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<sup>1</sup> "BBC Radio 4 - In Our Time, The Glencoe Massacre," BBC, accessed December 30, 2018, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00pxrr7>.

<sup>2</sup> Alasdair Raffe, *Scotland Restored and Reshaped: Politics and Religion, c.1660–1712* (Oxford University Press, 2012), 11–12.

<sup>3</sup> J. M. Bumsted, *The People's Clearance: Highland Emigration to British North America, 1770-1815* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1982).

<sup>4</sup> "Carnegie, Andrew (1835–1919), Steelmaker and Philanthropist | Oxford Dictionary of National Biography," accessed April 4, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/32296>.

including through British Colonialism, have been researched and recorded at equal if not greater length than individual stories such as Carnegie. In these histories of migration and immigration, the stories most often told are about elites—those who encountered fame and fortune beyond British shores.

Conversely, this thesis explores the lives and legacies of the many working-class Scottish and Scots-Irish immigrants who settled parts of eastern Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley during the late seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries.<sup>5</sup> It focuses on the economic impact of the Scottish tobacco trade, and the cultural impact that Scottish and Scots-Irish Presbyterianism had on the development of colonial Virginia. Prior to the American Revolutions, immigrants, especially British immigrants, had greater opportunity to influence their new lands than they would be afterwards. The tobacco trade created a deep connection between Virginia and Scotland and offered economic incentives for Scottish immigrants to search for a new life. Religious autonomy was the other main factor which led to this diaspora during the eighteenth

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<sup>5</sup> It is incredibly important to note that Scottish financial success during the tobacco trade came at an incredibly high cost of human rights. The tobacco traders, although not directly involved in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, indirectly profited and benefited significantly as a result of slave labor. Tom Devine is one of few Scottish historians to acknowledge Scotland's involvement in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade when discussing Scottish colonialism. He uncovers Scotland's role in forming the British Empire, its use of the port of Glasgow and the manufacturing industry, and, perhaps most importantly, he acknowledges and defines Scotland's role in the Atlantic slave trade. Indeed, Scottish ships were used to transport slaves, and even after Britain abolished slavery, Scottish ships and ports were massive importers of U.S. cotton produced by slaves. This topic has not particularly been discussed or acknowledged because Scotland's involvement was generally indirect. As Devine attests, "the Scottish dimension never really featured in these vigorous discussions," and goes on to criticize, "the continued commitment of many Scottish historians to stick to their own patch, refusing to engage in major British and international debates." Devine argues that despite Scottish ports such as Glasgow not being used heavily for the slave trade, Scotland benefited from the crops of slave labor. He also points out that, "in Liverpool at least five Scots managed slaving firms. Of the 128 slaving captains sailing from the port during the later eighteenth century who mentioned their origins, twenty-five were from Scotland, as were no less than 136 ships' surgeons." This is a very controversial issue in Scotland today. The country has traditionally washed its hands free of any involvement in slavery. Although this study pointed out almost exclusively positive impacts that Scottish and Scots-Irish immigrants had on eighteenth century colonial Virginia, it cannot go unstated the price of freedom and basic human rights African slaves paid to create the colonial machine that was the British Empire. T. M. Devine, "Did Slavery Make Scotia Great?," *Britain and the World* 4, no. 1 (March 2011): 40–64, <https://doi.org/10.3366/brw.2011.0004>.

century. As a result, the Scots revolutionized the trans-Atlantic tobacco trade with an incredibly specific schedule for ship voyages and transportation of tobacco, and Scottish and Scots-Irish Presbyterianism generated several American institutions of higher learning, as well as forming churches that would serve as centers of authority and public discourse in colonial Virginia.

Through trade and through faith, Scottish and Scots-Irish immigrants reshaped the economic and social structures of colonial communities in the Shenandoah Valley and the Chesapeake Bay Area in the eighteenth century. Moreover, the two colonial pillars of tobacco and Jesus assured that Scots in Virginia would remain connected to their home country.

This thesis builds upon a rich body of scholarship, and attempts to fill in some of the existing gaps in the secondary literature. The work of Tom Devine and David Dobson will be crucial to developing this study. Both of whom have studied the Scottish migration process from a global perspective during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In his monograph *Scotland's Empire and the Shaping of the Americans, 1600-1815*, Devine details the famed deeds of major Scottish figures and industries. Specifically, Devine focuses on the impact of Scottish immigrants who became bankers, traders and political figures in South Carolina and Nova Scotia, Canada. He also describes how Scots revolutionized the tobacco trade through efficient shipping methods and effective communication from the planter to the ship captain to the merchant in Glasgow. Devine details how these figures were able to contribute to the development of economic institutions and markets. He does not, however, focus his study on the average Scottish workers such as the farmers and tradesmen. His journal article "A Global Diaspora," co-written by Jenny Wormald, details the Scottish immigration pattern as a whole over the last 700 years. Devine and Wormald focus on particular periods of mass immigration such as 1840 to 1914 and the 1920's, but again, this work does not focus on the everyday life of



Scots in one specific region.<sup>6</sup> In these articles and in his monograph, Devine was in dialogue with previous historical works that examined Scottish military endeavors, religious beliefs, economic strategies, and political ideologies. He also uses trade logs, intake counts for ports such as Glasgow, and military records of Scottish soldiers specifically in foreign armies to detail exactly how many Scots left, when they left, how much profit slave industries brought in, and the general economic success of Scottish industries and trading companies.<sup>7</sup>

Most recently, Devine has received some criticism from the public for detailing Scotland's involvement in the Atlantic slave trade and in British empire-building overall.<sup>8</sup> His most current work illustrates that Scotland may not have directly participated in the trans-Atlantic slave trade, but they did profit from it immensely. The Port of Glasgow became even more profitable than the Port of Liverpool because of the tobacco and cotton trade. These are uncomfortable topics for Scottish people today, because they have always prided themselves on not being involved in the slave trade and not having very many enslaved persons in Scotland. That being said, Devine has been praised for his work by newspapers such as the *Scotsman* and *The Guardian* for describing and presenting challenging topics in an insightful way.<sup>9</sup> This study adds to Devine's work by focusing specifically on the economic impact of ordinary Scottish immigrants on colonial Virginia, and what that impact meant at a communal and local level.

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<sup>6</sup> "A Global Diaspora," 2, [https://sakai.wlu.edu/access/content/group/2017\\_18\\_FALL-HIST\\_216\\_01/Readings!/11.10.Devine\\_A\\_Global\\_Diaspora.pdf](https://sakai.wlu.edu/access/content/group/2017_18_FALL-HIST_216_01/Readings!/11.10.Devine_A_Global_Diaspora.pdf).

This topic is also further discussed in in another article by Devine and Wormald titled *The Impact of the Victorian Empire*.

<sup>7</sup> T. M. Devine, *Scotland's Empire and the Shaping of the Americas, 1600-1815* (Washington: Smithsonian Books, 2004).

<sup>8</sup> Kevin McKenna, "We Should Not Hate It When Fellow Scots Succeed," *The Gaurdian*, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/jun/17/why-do-we-hate-it-when-our-fellow-scots-succeed-jk-rowling-billy-connolly>.

<sup>9</sup> "Sir Tom Devine: Revisiting the Nation's Historic Bestseller - The Scotsman," accessed December 30, 2018, <https://www.scotsman.com/news/sir-tom-devine-revisiting-the-nation-s-historic-bestseller-1-4772172>.

In his monograph *Scottish Emigration to Colonial America, 1607-1785*, David Dobson focuses on Scottish emigration during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Dobson examines why Scots left, where they went, who they were, and what they did. He uses primary sources written by Scottish immigrants such as journals, as well as secondary accounts of Scottish migration to specific regions like New York, Pennsylvania, Nova Scotia, and other areas in the Caribbean. Dobson argues that since Scots had better individual opportunities in Europe than in the Americas, they must have been driven to emigrate. The Scots who left in the seventeenth century were mostly prisoners or debtors who looked for new opportunities. However, Dobson points out that there was a change in the eighteenth century because of how profitable trade opportunities, such as tobacco, became in the Americas.<sup>10</sup> He also highlights the cultural impacts Scots had on their new communities, such as the influence of Presbyterianism and the implementation of judicial systems similar to the kirk sessions and presbyteries in Scotland.<sup>11</sup> Like Devine, however, Dobson focuses on the large-scale impact Scottish immigrants made on political and economic systems in North America. He does not focus on a specific region or cultural phenomenon. As a result, Dobson overlooks certain regions many Scots emigrated to and their effect on those regions, especially Philadelphia, parts of Delaware, and the subject of this thesis, colonial Virginia. This thesis will closely examine the impact of poorer Scottish immigrants in Virginia at a much closer level than in Dobson does in his work.

The primary work that deals with Scots and Scots-Irish in Virginia, and more specifically in the Shenandoah Valley, is James G. Leyburn's *The Scotch-Irish: A Social History*. Leyburn begins his sociological study with an examination of Protestant Scots migrating to Ulster

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<sup>10</sup> David Dobson, *Scottish Emigration to Colonial America, 1607-1785* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994).

<sup>11</sup> Kirk sessions were religious congregations in the Lowlands of Scotland made up of a council of elected elders. They presided over matters of moral dispute, held service and operated separately of the local magistrate which handled legal matters in the communities.

beginning in 1606. He then focuses on the people of this region moving to the United States along with other Scottish and Irish immigrants. Leyburn's work is unique in that before this work was published, there had not been a great deal of scholarly literature on the subjects of Scottish or Scots-Irish immigrants to the Shenandoah Valley region of Virginia. He gives background on both Scotland and Ireland's economic and political struggles during the two centuries leading up to the late eighteenth century, including the Highland clearances and periods of famine and poverty for the Scots and the Irish. Leyburn then discusses how this group was able to settle in both Pennsylvania and the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. He focuses his study on community politics, cultures, and religion, detailing the previously understudied the experiences and challenges the Scots-Irish faced in coming to a new land and trying to start a new life.<sup>12</sup> This thesis builds upon Leyburn's work by incorporating the immigration experience of Scots to eastern Virginia as well as to the Shenandoah Valley and examining the nature of the tobacco trade throughout the state, which the Ulsterman had little involvement in.

Another approach to examining Scottish or Scots-Irish immigration is to focus solely on Presbyterianism and its impacts on colonial North America. Howard Miller's *The Revolutionary College: American Presbyterian higher education, 1707-1837* details the development of Presbyterian ministers' involvement with the foundation of American higher educational institutions. Miller's study deals with the conflicts Protestants had internally and with other Christian denominations throughout the time period. Throughout, he focuses on the Presbyterian influence on higher education, with special attention to Pennsylvania, and considers this

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<sup>12</sup> John J. Appel, review of *Review of The Scotch-Irish: A Social History*, by James G. Leyburn, *American Quarterly* 15, no. 1 (1963): 99–99, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2710277>; A. P. McDonald, review of *Review of The Scotch-Irish: A Social History*, by James G. Leyburn, *The Southwestern Social Science Quarterly* 43, no. 4 (1963): 391–92; review of *Review of The Scotch-Irish. A Social History*, by James G. Leyburn, *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 47, no. 4 (1963): 460–61.

influence as a part of the Great Awakening, a religious movement of Protestant Enlightenment during the eighteenth century. The main point of Miller's work is that there were several shifts that occurred during the Great Awakening that influenced changes in Presbyterian higher education. Miller argues that during this time period Presbyterians sought to expand their higher educational system and draw upon student candidates throughout the colonies to fill recruitment. They then shifted in 1775 to the idea of a "Christian Republic" in order to increase the influence Presbyterians and their communities had on the national political stage in America.<sup>13</sup> Another major shift occurred after the Revolution, when some called for a national group of Presbyterians to be unified to achieve goals of cultural, political, and social influence in the recently formed United States of America. It is unclear whether Miller's theories, though useful and illuminating, apply beyond Presbyterianism and to American Protestantism as a whole. However, Miller undertook a significant step forward in understanding the history of American higher education during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the development of Presbyterianism during this time period. Miller's study is very detailed, but it does not focus on Presbyterianism at a local level. This thesis reconsiders the impact of Presbyterianism on colonial Virginia by incorporating specific stories such as that of Reverend John Craig, a Scots-Irish immigrant who founded a Presbyterian Church in the Hanover Presbytery of Virginia.<sup>14</sup>

The works discussed above form the framework upon which this study builds. Devine and Dobson's works are too broad to provide much detail on the region of the Shenandoah Valley, but they provide a useful basis for understanding general patterns of migration to North

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<sup>13</sup> Howard Miller, *The Revolutionary College: American Presbyterian Higher Education, 1707-1837*, New York University Series in Education and Socialization in American History (New York: New York University Press, 1976).

<sup>14</sup> "Dictionary of Virginia Biography - John Craig (17 August 1709-22 April 1774) Biography," accessed March 15, 2019, [http://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/dvb/bio.asp?b=Craig\\_John\\_1709-1774](http://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/dvb/bio.asp?b=Craig_John_1709-1774).

America and elsewhere. Leyburn's work focuses specifically on the Scots-Irish immigrants that travelled to the Shenandoah Valley region, but does not discuss Scottish immigration to the Chesapeake or the tobacco trade. Finally, this thesis uses Miller's examination of Presbyterian documents and doctrine to inform an examination of how Scottish Presbyterianism combined with Scottish cultural and societal structures to influence and shape the communities in the Shenandoah Valley and beyond.

The study of Scottish and Scots-Irish immigration to Virginia, both in the Chesapeake Bay region and to the Shenandoah Valley region respectively, is important because it focuses on a community that has not had its full story told. Scots and Scots-Irish immigrants economically revolutionized trade in colonial Virginia, and they brought their own version of Presbyterian values which left a lasting impact of communities in the regions through the establishment of churches and institutions of higher education. These Scots went through several trials and tribulations to just make it to the United States, including the long journey across the Atlantic Ocean and arriving with very little money.<sup>15</sup> They also faced many challenges upon arrival, such as communal integration and starting a new life from scratch. The history of lower-class Scots in this region during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is a relatively undiscussed topic, yet these Scots helped shape nascent American communities. More specifically, Presbyterian religious and political practices profoundly influenced several communities in the Shenandoah Valley, the legacies of which persist into the present. For example, Scottish Presbyterian minister William Graham founded Liberty Hall Academy in the Hanover Presbytery and that institution would become Washington and Lee University.<sup>16</sup> Also, the two

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<sup>15</sup> Dobson, *Scottish Emigration to Colonial America, 1607-1785*.

<sup>16</sup> Alexander, Archibald, "Memoir of the Rev. Wm. Graham," trans. Carter, Paul (1843).

Churches John Craig established, Augusta Stone Presbyterian Church and Tinkling Spring Presbyterian Church are still operating today in Fort Defiance, Virginia.<sup>17</sup>

To closely examine how the Scots and Scots-Irish managed to have such an impact on colonial Virginia, this study draws from primary source documents from or about immigrants during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This study is partially reliant on archives from the *Virginia Gazette*, specifically advertisements for real-estate sales, job openings and public opinion of American-Scottish relations.<sup>18</sup> This thesis also closely inspects the personal journals of John Harrower, a Scottish immigrant who came to the Chesapeake area of Virginia as an indentured servant and worked on a tobacco plantation from 1773 until 1777.<sup>19</sup> Harrower's account, in which he detailed almost everything from his daily life, is truly unique because most working class immigrants did not keep personal accounts. A great deal can therefore be inferred from this work, though one cannot assume that Harrower's experience resembled the overall experience of working class Scottish immigrants. In order to understand the varied influences of Scots on their communities with special attention to Presbyterianism, this study also analyzes church documents and session records from Presbyterian churches in Virginia and Scotland, court records, Liberty Hall Academy Trustees' minutes, a memoir of William Graham written by one of his students, and sermons by minister John Craig. This wide range of sources provides insight into the varied experiences and contributions of Scottish and Scots-Irish Presbyterians in colonial Virginia.

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<sup>17</sup> "Dictionary of Virginia Biography - John Craig (17 August 1709-22 April 1774) Biography."

<sup>18</sup> "Virginia Gazettes | The Colonial Williamsburg Official History & Citizenship Site," accessed October 1, 2018, <http://research.history.org/DigitalLibrary/va-gazettes/index.cfm>.

<sup>19</sup> John Harrower, *The Journal of John Harrower, an Indentured Servant in the Colony of Virginia, 1773-1776.*, Williamsburg Eyewitness to History Series (Williamsburg, Va: Colonial Williamsburg, 1963).

### *Scottish Immigration Breakdown*

Scottish migration to North America began in the seventeenth century, but these early immigrants did not have the same magnitude of impact on the colonial communities they entered as Scots who subsequently settled the region over the following two centuries. This is largely because there were significantly fewer Scottish immigrants during this century. According to historian David Dobson, approximately 150,000 Scots migrated to colonial America prior to the American Revolution, and the majority of this number migrated during the mid to late eighteenth century. Tom Devine and Jenny Wormald note that 80,000-90,000 of these Scots migrated between 1700 and 1815. Between 1825 and 1938, they estimate that 2.3 million Scottish people migrated to various destinations outside of Europe, not exclusively to North America. Nonetheless, despite the fact that most Scots left in the modern era, the 1600's still saw significant numbers of Scots leaving Scotland. From 1600 to 1650, studies estimate "an annual average loss of two thousand people" for the Scottish population. Most of this population was made up of young men drafted into the military or joined the military in order to fight in the Thirty Years' War, which began in the 1618. In the second half of the century and the next, this same age demographic joined the military to help expand the nascent British Empire.

### *Methodology*

Chapter one shows the development of push and pull factors for Scots migrating to what would become the United States—why they felt compelled to leave, and what drew them to the colonies. These factors differ for Highland and Lowland Scots, and while this chapter surveys both, it focuses mainly on Lowland Scots and the Scots-Irish as these were the people involved in spreading both tobacco and Presbyterianism in Virginia. This is meant to give background for the remainder of the thesis and to set the scene for the next two chapters. This chapter draws

upon Ian Graham's *Colonists from Scotland: Emigration to North America, 1707-1783*, which describes Scots who came to colonial America as entrepreneurs, farmers looking for opportunities or felons forced to leave Britain.<sup>20</sup> Devine's work is also used to frame this migration as a part of British colonial efforts to expand capitalistic efforts in farming crops such as tobacco and cotton. Most important, this section analyzes primary resources such as letters, manuscripts and voyage records to detail the story of why the average Scot left, how they got to the American colonies, and what they did when they arrived.

Chapter two focuses on the impact Scots had on the trans-Atlantic tobacco trade. Here Devine's work provides a basis for tracing the capital stock of tobacco companies, shipment costs, and how much product was shipped during the tobacco boom from 1740 until the end of the American Revolution.<sup>21</sup> This chapter also details the first-hand accounts of William and Henry Fogges and David Young, Glasgow tobacco merchants who petitioned to be authorized to begin trading again after being suspended by the Glasgow Tobacco Lords for selling damaged goods.<sup>22</sup> This chapter also tells the story of John Harrower and examines firsthand accounts from the *Virginia Gazette* to describe Scottish immigration and the tobacco trade in the Chesapeake region of Virginia.

The final chapter focuses on the impact Scottish and Scots-Irish Presbyterianism had on colonial Virginia. This chapter describes the values of American Presbyterianism based on John

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<sup>20</sup> Ian Charles Cargill Graham, *Colonists from Scotland: Emigration to North America, 1707-1783* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Published for the American Historical Association by Cornell University Press, 1956).

<sup>21</sup> T. M. Devine, *The Tobacco Lords: A Study of the Tobacco Merchants of Glasgow and Their Trading Activities, c. 1740-90* (Edinburgh: Donald, 1975).

<sup>22</sup> *Unto the Right Honourable, the Lords of Council and Session, the Petition of William and Henry Foggoes, and David Young, Merchants in Glasgow, in Company, James Weir Late Commander of the Ship, the Diamond of Glasgow, and Robert Arthur Ship-Master in Craufordsdyke, ...* ([Edinburgh ], 1739), [http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=vic\\_wlu&tabID=T001&docId=CB3326928758&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE](http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=vic_wlu&tabID=T001&docId=CB3326928758&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE).



Witherspoon and Samuel Davies preachings in America.<sup>23</sup> This chapter also examines parish records from Presbyterian Churches in the Shenandoah Valley, such as Augusta Stone Presbyterian Church and the Lexington Presbytery.<sup>24</sup> These parish records show Church attendance from both locals and immigrants as well as information regarding the communities such as political decrees and town quarrels. Finally, this chapter examines the work of William Graham and John Craig to show the impact Scottish and Scots-Irish Presbyterian ministers had on local communities in the Shenandoah Valley.

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<sup>23</sup> John Witherspoon, *The Selected Writings of John Witherspoon*, Landmarks in Rhetoric and Public Address (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1990); Samuel Davies, *The Reverend Samuel Davies Abroad: The Diary of a Journey to England and Scotland, 1753-55* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1967).

<sup>24</sup> Presbyterian Church in the U. S.A. Presbytery of Lexington, *Records of Lexington Presbytery, Synod of Virginia, Presbyterian Church in the United States. The Official Records and Relevant Historical Material of Lexington Presbytery and Her Constituent Church in Microfilm. [Schedule of Contents.* (n. p: np, 1962).

## **Chapter One: A New Life an Ocean Away**

Before the Scottish and Scots-Irish immigrants built or transformed the American communities they entered, every family faced the same difficult decision. In a time period with no rapid or mass communication, it can hardly be overstated how incredibly risky deciding to leave was for these men, women, and children. For many, Scotland was the only place they knew, and this uncertainty surrounding the destination made leaving all the more difficult. Despite the risks, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Scots and Scots-Irish began migrating to North America in large numbers.

### *Reasons for Leaving Scotland*

Before examining the infusion of Scottish and Scots-Irish culture in American communities and the effects of this immigration, this chapter discusses the two main reasons why so many people decided to leave when they did. First, many people were drawn to the opportunity and promise of the “New World.” Second, internal pressure from the British and local Scottish governments drove many Scots, especially Highlanders and poorer Lowlanders, to colonize parts of North America so the land in Scotland could be repurposed and so the British could expand their empire abroad. Additional factors can be placed into these larger categories of opportunity and imperial pressure. Finally, this chapter offers background into the Scottish Reformation and early Scottish Calvinist ideology, as well as kirk structures and their sessions, to show similarities and differences between these ideologies and structures and those of the Scottish and Scots-Irish Presbyterian communities in colonial Virginia. Ultimately, this chapter establishes the larger context for why the British government encouraged, and in some cases forced, migration to North America and the Caribbean.

When Jamestown was founded as a British settlement in 1607, colonization and global expansion were relatively new ventures for the British. Britain—and, more specifically, England—was attempting to enter an endeavor that other European nations, such as Spain, had been taking full advantage of for almost 100 years. Poorer Scots became heavily involved in migration due to agricultural hardships and promises of economic opportunity and religious freedoms in the New World. In 1610, Lowland Scots saw a new economic hardship, which James Leyburn describes in his social study, *The Scotch-Irish: A Social History*:

The *feu*, which had the effect of dispossessing many farmers of their traditional land. A *feu* is a device whereby the landlord may acquire money in reasonably large sums: his tenant agrees to pay a fixed rent each year, with no obligation of services; in return the landlord gives him a lease for as long as he pays rent.<sup>1</sup>

Over the next century this problem grew worse for lower class farmers. This made it extremely hard for farmers in the Lowlands to gain any sort of long-term stability in the land they were cultivating. The availability of a new farmland in Virginia and the Carolinas, free from the avarice of these landlords, seemed very promising to these lower class farmers and their families.<sup>2</sup>

Scottish migration for religious purposes, originated from a conflict with the Anglican Church in England. During the beginning of the seventeenth century, Lowland Scots also began to migrate to the northern part of Ireland as a result of religious disagreements and quarrels with the Anglican Church. After the death of James VI and I in 1625, Charles I tried to rule over England and Scotland in the same way as his father. This meant that he attempted to control the affairs of the noblemen, the clergy, and the members of both parliaments so that the king would

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<sup>1</sup> James Graham Leyburn, *The Scotch-Irish: A Social History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962), 99.

<sup>2</sup> Leyburn, 99–100.

always have the final say over matters of state. This was not effective for Charles I, as his actions infuriated the Scottish nobles and clergymen and caused a severe decline in political support for an Anglocentric king that believed to be too involved in their affairs.<sup>3</sup> When the Scots moved to Ulster, “an effective compromise was devised whereby Presbyterian ministers in Ulster might accept ordination from a Church of England bishop with no offense to their scruples. Until 1642 Scottish ministers readily accepted this ordination, for it did not require them to use the liturgy, while it allowed them to remain Presbyterian.”<sup>4</sup> This was a much better arrangement for Scottish ministers. These same Scots would become the ancestors of the Scots-Irish who would instill their Presbyterian values in Virginia communities over the next 120 years.

Despite colonial efforts of James VI and I and Charles I, due to the English Civil War and the Thirty Years’ War the major colonial migration of Scots did not take place in the latter half of the seventeenth century. As Devine’s aforementioned statistics suggest, migration from both England and Scotland flourished during the middle and late eighteenth century. After more than a century under a united crown, the English and Scottish Parliaments were unified in 1707, and the British colonial effort became much more integrated as the two governments merged into one.<sup>5</sup> As a result, international trade and commerce became much more efficient for Scottish merchants. They took full advantage of the British navy and trade ships and almost monopolized the tobacco industry. In fact, in 1758 Scottish merchants imported more tobacco from Virginia and Maryland than London imported from any colony, and Glasgow itself imported more than Bristol, Liverpool, and Whitehaven imported combined.<sup>6</sup> In 1761, Scotland saw, “the highest-

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<sup>3</sup> Leyburn, 103.

<sup>4</sup> Leyburn, 118.

<sup>5</sup> David Dobson, *The Original Scots Colonists of Early America, 1612-1783* (Baltimore: Genealogical PubCo, 1989).

<sup>6</sup> Devine, *Scotland’s Empire and the Shaping of the Americas, 1600-1815*, 2004, 70.

ever volume of tobacco leaf was landed in Scotland, a staggering 47 million lb, which amounted to a third of all the nation's imports and when sold on to European and Irish markets no less than two-thirds of its exports."<sup>7</sup> These statistics are remarkable, but only a small portion of the Scottish population benefited from these endeavors.

Yet tobacco was not the only good the Scots successfully imported. In 1702 in the city of Glasgow, merchants imported only fifteen different manufactured goods.<sup>8</sup> However, this was still during the early stages of Britain's colonization of America and almost forty years before the trans-Atlantic tobacco boom would take off. For context, in the 1770s those fifteen manufactured goods grew to 9,000 different types of manufactured products that were imported into the city of Glasgow alone.<sup>9</sup> This massive increase in diversity and amount of production can only be attributed to efficiency of transportation and sheer human force becoming involved in the process.

It is also important to understand this Scottish success in a broader national and imperial context. Indeed, it was through the efforts of the British Empire that Scotland intentionally found international commercial success. As Devine states, "full commercial union between the two countries was necessary to achieve the huge levels of tobacco imports landed at the Clyde ports by the 1750's. No English government would have tolerated such a potent threat to the imperial economy coming from another country."<sup>10</sup> In other words, Scotland being a part of the British Empire took away the threat of English involvement in their economic affairs. Scotland benefited greatly from the British Empire as England became a partner rather than a competitor. That being

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<sup>7</sup> Devine, 70.

<sup>8</sup> Devine, 72.

<sup>9</sup> Devine, 71.

<sup>10</sup> Devine, 74.

said, many leading Glaswegians initially opposed the Act of Union in 1707, and fortunately for Scotland's economy, their opposition was not heeded.<sup>11</sup> It is difficult to say with certainty, but research suggests that Scotland's impact on colonial America, and thus colonial Virginia, would have been significantly less had they been competing with England in the international trade market.<sup>12</sup>

With the aid of British colonial influence and power, Scotland was able to connect with colonial America through mass migration. David Dobson notes in his study of emigration to colonial America that "according the *Virginia Gazette*, of 11 June 1767, 'there are so many Scotch in Jamaica that they nearly possess two-thirds of the island.'"<sup>13</sup> Jamaica was a valuable tobacco and sugar producing colony, and Scottish merchants benefitted heavily from its production. It was during the late eighteenth century that Scottish migration was arguably at its peak global influence because of the impact of the tobacco trade and the sheer number of Scots migrating to colonial America. Also, America was not yet a country so the Scots who came over, to some degree, had a certain amount of flexibility to influence social practices on a developing community.

The majority of Scots who came to colonial America, specifically Virginia and North Carolina, were skilled laborers and craftsman. Another *Virginia Gazette* article in 1767 described the arrival of working-class Scots on American shores:

Just arrived in the ship *Lynn* [Robert Mudie] from Leith, a parcel of choice indented men and women servants, any of them are valuable tradesmen viz tailor, locksmith, joiners, weavers and a goldsmith, also laborers and waiting men. Most of the women servants have been used in repairing and the management of flax

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<sup>11</sup> Devine, 74.

<sup>12</sup> T. M. Devine, *Scotland's Empire and the Shaping of the Americas, 1600-1815* (Washington: Smithsonian Books, 2004), 71–76.

<sup>13</sup> Dobson, *Scottish Emigration to Colonial America, 1607-1785*, 132.

also sewery and housework. The sale begins at Leeds Town on the Rappahannock on Tuesday 11, August next.<sup>14</sup>

These Scots did not have a tremendous amount of influence or wealth like the tobacco lords of Glasgow, but there were significantly more of them migrating to America. As such, they had a much deeper impact on a smaller scale and at the local level than wealthy merchants. These people were taking part in forming a new society and the values they held were immensely apparent in the communities that emerged.

One example of an average Scottish family and their struggle in migrating to America is the story of Allan and Flora MacDonald. The two immigrated from Kingsburgh, Skye, to North Carolina, and then eventually in their later years they moved to Nova Scotia after some hard economic times.<sup>15</sup> The way that the two described their experience and the overall situation in Skye is incredibly revealing. For example, in her letter, Flora MacDonald thanked her friend for looking after her son in North Carolina and remarked, “I am able to make for your many and repeated freindships shown to me and this family; of which there will soon be no rememberanc in this poor miserable Island, the best of its inhabitance are making ready to follow their freinds to America.”<sup>16</sup> She and Allan sent their son to North Carolina prior to their move in 1773. They became one of the few remaining families in Skye, and Flora hardly recognized it. Allan MacDonald also noted that:

The only newes in this Island is Emegration; I believe the whole will go for America – In 1771 there Shiped and arived Safe in north Carolina 500 souls. In 1772 there Shiped and arived Safe in Said place 450 souls. This year they have

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<sup>14</sup> Dobson, 153.

<sup>15</sup> “Flora and Allan MacDonald’s Story – Scots Abroad: Stories of Scottish Emigration,” accessed January 24, 2019, <https://digital.nls.uk/emigration/preparing/macdonalds/index.html>.

<sup>16</sup> “Letter of Flora Macdonald, 1772 – Scots Abroad: Stories of Scottish Emigration,” accessed January 24, 2019, <https://digital.nls.uk/emigration/preparing/macdonalds/letter-1772.html>.

already signed & preparing to go, above 800 souls and all those from Sky & North Uist – It is melancholy to see the state of this miserable place.<sup>17</sup>

Allan MacDonald continued his sentiment in noting that there was nothing left for families in Skye. They had to attempt to start a new life somewhere else. He stated, “Most miserable is the State of this once good and great family – when this next Emigration is gone, only old Aird, and other three old men, will be all, that will be in State and Trolernish of the name of McDonald.”<sup>18</sup> The Highlands were unique in that they had no urban center resembling Edinburgh or Glasgow. They were made up of small communities that felt the impact of an exodus in a much harsher way than those in the Lowlands because the population size of their communities was significantly smaller.

The MacDonald family from Skye wrote these letters during the Highland Clearances, which left the Northern parts of Scotland economically depressed and demographically barren. There were little to no opportunities for trade or potential to accumulate wealth. After the Jacobite Rebellion in 1745, many Scottish highlanders were forced from their homes to make room for sheep farming. This was not, as is commonly believed, a unilateral effort by the English government. As J.M. Bumsted describes in *The People’s Clearances*, “although the English government did not allow their Scottish cousins completely open access to the American colonies, many Scots were allowed to emigrate as indentured servants under English Privy Council warrants. Other Scots were transported to the English colonies by warrant of the Scottish Privy Council.”<sup>19</sup> Both the English and Scottish local governments saw the economic opportunity in clearing the land. The people of the Highlands were either strongly encouraged or

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<sup>17</sup> “Letter of Allan Macdonald of Kingsburg, 1773 – Scots Abroad: Stories of Scottish Emigration,” accessed January 24, 2019, <https://digital.nls.uk/emigration/preparing/macdonalds/letter-1773.html>.

<sup>18</sup> “Letter of Allan Macdonald of Kingsburg, 1773 – Scots Abroad: Stories of Scottish Emigration.”

<sup>19</sup> Bumsted, *The People’s Clearance*, 2.



forcibly removed from their homes and had no choice but to move to America by their governments. This was a more depressing example of migration for those involved than that of the Scots-Irish in Ulster and the Lowland Scots, who were leaving because of tenant farming and religious struggle. The Lowlanders and Scots-Irish were in a difficult situation, but the Highlanders almost had no choice.

The Highland Scots, while their story is sympathetic, are also not the focus of this thesis. They did not migrate to colonial Virginia and more importantly, many were not Presbyterian. They are, however, vital to the overall narrative of Scottish impact on colonial America. Many Highlanders, before migrating to America, moved to the Lowlands and adapted to Lowland culture. Some even converted to Presbyterianism. Some did migrate to the Chesapeake area of Virginia and thus had interactions with Lowland and Scots-Irish immigrants.<sup>20</sup> Many were also heavily involved in the tobacco trade as either indentured servants on plantations in Virginia, or as members of the crew on ships importing tobacco into Glasgow.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, a study of Scottish and Scots-Irish impact on colonial Virginia would be incomplete if the Highland immigration experience were excluded.

Along with tobacco, the other major significant influencer that caused Scots and Scots-Irish peoples to immigrate to America was the opportunity of religious autonomy. In order to understand this desire, it is important to examine the origins of Presbyterian ideologies. In the sixteenth century, the Scottish Reformation came at a time of political turmoil in both England and Scotland. Unlike their Southern neighbor, the reformation in Scotland largely took place at the local level. In other words, the driving force behind the beginning of the reformation were

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<sup>20</sup> Alan L. Karras, *Sojourners in the Sun: Scottish Migrants in Jamaica and the Chesapeake, 1740-1800* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1992), 3–7.

<sup>21</sup> Karras, *Sojourners in the Sun*.

“small groups of militant converts drove the Scottish Reformation in concentrated bursts of evangelization.”<sup>22</sup> The movement grew, and several Scottish ministers, such as George Wishart and John Knox, began preaching against the Catholic hierarchy in Britain and the authority of Catholic bishops in the 1540’s. Wishart was eventually executed, but Calvinism gained many supporters in Scotland afterwards. His execution only motivated Scottish Calvinists to continue their movement no matter the costs.<sup>23</sup> Moving forward with the cause, Knox argued that “the church of the Rome was the antichrist.”<sup>24</sup> This was a radical stance at the time, and eventually Knox would be exiled. Yet his teachings remained. As a result of the actions of Knox and other reformers at the local level, the Scottish Reformation was ultimately successful in converting the Lowlands to Calvinism.

### *The Scottish Reformation and Early Presbyterianism*

Scottish Presbyterianism and Kirk structures originate in the aftermath of the Scottish Reformation. The Presbyterian faith is based on the Calvinist ideas and scriptures of John Knox. In an excerpt of *The Scots Confession* written by Knox and other Scottish Reformers, the group make an important definitions of their faith. The first of those was, “that same eternal God and Father, who by grace alone chose us in his Son Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world was laid, appointed him to be our head, our brother, our pastor, and the great bishop of our souls.”<sup>25</sup> In other words, they believe they are the elect or chosen people of God and are destined to go to Heaven. As a result of this, they believed heavily in divinely inspired good works and acts of kindness. Another excerpt states from *The Scots Confessions* details the importance of

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<sup>22</sup> Philip Benedict, *Christ’s Churches Purely Reformed: A Social History of Calvinism* (New Haven [Conn: Yale University Press, 2002), 153.

<sup>23</sup> Benedict, 155.

<sup>24</sup> Benedict, 155.

<sup>25</sup> John Knox, *The Scots Confession* (Charles River Editors, 2018).

doing good works but recognizing they occur through God's will. Crediting God for success was a key pillar of Calvinism. Knox wrote, "the cause of good works, we confess, is not our free will, but the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, who dwells in our hearts by true faith, brings forth such works as God has prepared for us to walk in."<sup>26</sup> It was vital in Calvinist teachings for the congregation to live out divinely inspired works. Where Calvinism differed from Anglicanism was in the idea of double predestination and Church hierarchies.<sup>27</sup> This naturally led to conflict between the churches.

After the Reformation, Scottish Presbyterianism not only dominated the kirk in Scotland, but it was also the backbone of judicial and political institutions in lowland communities. As stated previously, during the seventeenth century Charles I sought to maintain supreme political power over both England and Scotland. That also meant he wanted to retain power over both nations' churches. Charles I himself was Anglican and as his personal beliefs began to show in his policies, Scottish and Ulster Kirks became less and less favorable of Charles I.<sup>28</sup> In the Lowlands, the Kirk Sessions acted as local judicial institutions separate from local magistrates. They presided over matters of spiritual conflict and legal conflict within their respective communities. While they were not the local magistrate, they did maintain an amount of authority and commanded respect from local citizens. This presented a problem for Charles I as he wanted control over these sessions that preferred to remain as autonomous as possible.

Once the Reformation was over, the new Protestant Churches began setting up a new structure that avoided the perceived hierarchical trappings of Catholicism. In the early stages of development, Scottish churches decided that, "at the parish level, the First Book of Discipline

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<sup>26</sup> Knox.

<sup>27</sup> Benedict, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed*.

<sup>28</sup> Dobson, *The Original Scots Colonists of Early America, 1612-1783*.

called for the congregational election of ministers who were to be vetted by the ministers and elders of the nearby principal town to certify their capacity for the office... Elders were likewise to be elected.”<sup>29</sup> This idea of election and a set group of ministers and elders would be passed on to Presbyterian structures and congregations in Ulster and Virginia. These structures were designed so that the Church could be involved in the affairs of the community. For example, the church collected and distributed alms and scheduled weekly public meetings and congregations. These sessions presided over church matters, as well as some disputes between townspeople, but there was also a separate magistrate for judiciary matters.<sup>30</sup> These kirk sessions served as a part of the local government in many Lowland communities, and their structures would be partially emulated by Scottish and Scots-Irish immigrants in their communities in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia.

These kirks also decided on religious affairs and gave the final say on the proper way to worship. One example of such a case occurred in Perth in 1577 when “several inhabitants were bold enough to celebrate the pageant of Corpus Christi, bearing the consecrate Host through the town and acting out plays that went along the procession... the kirk session moved quickly to discipline these ‘Corpus Christi players.’”<sup>31</sup> This Catholic celebration did not go well at all for those involved in newly Calvinist Scotland. According to historian Leigh Schmidt, “the situation in Perth is a good index for the situation throughout most of Scotland in 1600. After a little more than a generation reform the Protestants had largely succeeded in leveling the religious rhythm of late medieval Catholicism.”<sup>32</sup> The roots of Calvinism in Scotland were centered upon being anti-

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<sup>29</sup> Benedict, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed*, 165.

<sup>30</sup> Benedict, 165–65.

<sup>31</sup> Leigh Eric Schmidt, *Holy Fairs: Scotland and the Making of American Revivalism* (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001), 17.

<sup>32</sup> Schmidt, 17.

Catholic. This would prove to be a difference between Scottish and Scots-Irish Calvinist ideology during the sixteenth century and American Presbyterian ideology during the eighteenth century. Additionally, the Scottish emphasis on church structure and discipline was slightly more extreme than what would occur in Virginia communities. These differences notwithstanding, it is important to note the local authority that these types of congregations commanded because that same authority would become apparent in Presbyterian communities of Virginia.

Colonial Virginia offered religious freedom and autonomy for Scots and Scots-Irish Presbyterians which became a major incentive for them to migrate. The main pull factor regarding religion was that in the colonies, Presbyterians were much less concerned with preventing the spread of Catholic doctrine and practices, and much more concerned with expressing their spiritual beliefs through their own rituals. For example, from 1764 to 1767, John Beath, a Church Clerk in Booth Bay, Maine took note of the congregation's sacramental season. The sacramental season was a time in Presbyterian Churches where the congregation practiced rituals, such as communion and fasting, to examine if they were truly living a Godly life.<sup>33</sup> Preparations for these rituals during the sacramental season involved a great deal of, "involved extensive efforts at purification."<sup>34</sup> In order to achieve the desired level of purification, Churches and congregations often fasted for 24 hours before the Sunday of Sacramental season in order to fully purify themselves.<sup>35</sup> This was not uncommon amongst Virginia Presbyterian congregations as well.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Schmidt, 71.

<sup>34</sup> Schmidt, 76.

<sup>35</sup> Schmidt, 77.

<sup>36</sup> Leyburn, *The Scotch-Irish*.

Along with fasting, Beath also discussed the penitential preparation. There was a great deal of soul searching that occurred during the sacramental season. Members of the congregation were expected to truly look within themselves and examine their own deficiencies as Presbyterians. One way congregations did this was by stating that they were all united in, “spreading our iniquities before [Almighty God]... accusing, judging and condemning ourselves for them, and especially laying open that miserable state whereby our hearts were rendered unfit, and ourselves unworthy to make so near an approach him as we had the prospect of attempting on the ensuing Sabbath’.”<sup>37</sup> This was incredibly important to the Presbyterian idea of evangelism. They had to prove to themselves that they were worthy of God’s love and affection. This belief is directly descendent from the Calvinist ideas displayed in medieval Scotland after the Reformation took place.

This communal structure would soon flourish in American settlements, especially surrounding education.<sup>38</sup> Scottish Presbyterians and Scots-Irish Presbyterians were extremely invested in the idea of higher education, and more specifically a Protestant higher education. In fact, this idea dates back to the Scottish Reformation. As historian James Leyburn notes in his work, *Scotch-Irish: A Social History*, “one of the notable features of the Reformation was the ardor of the new Kirk for education. The Presbyterian church desired that elementary schools be set up in every parish with grammar schools in the larger towns, and it made a concerted effort to discover boys of ability in these schools, so that they might go on to the universities.”<sup>39</sup> Scottish Presbyterians and their kirks understood that the way to gain influence was to educate the younger generation in both intellectual knowledge and spiritual knowledge. This would have a

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<sup>37</sup> Schmidt, *Holy Fairs*, 77.

<sup>38</sup> Miller, *The Revolutionary College*.

<sup>39</sup> Leyburn, *The Scotch-Irish*, 43.

tremendous impact on the Shenandoah Valley communities the Scots and Scots-Irish communities founded and or influenced. The religious institutions the Scots-Irish would remain prevalent in those communities long after the colonial period of American history.

Another important development in Presbyterianism during the eighteenth century is the support of the Williamite Settlement. Scottish Presbyterians became much more involved in politics both abroad and back in Scotland. They were avid supporters of the Williamite Revolution, a rebellion in Ireland against King William of England in 1688, and the Whig party.<sup>40</sup> As Andrew Holmes puts it, “despite their loyalty, and the fact that the established church in Scotland was declared Presbyterian in 1690, Irish Presbyterians found themselves in an Anglican confessional state, legally excluded from full participation in political life and perceived as second-class citizens.”<sup>41</sup> This is a very important distinction for Irish and, more importantly for the purposes of this thesis, Scots-Irish Presbyterians. These people had significantly less political power as a religious group in Scotland and Ireland than the Lowland Kirks did. This was a significant reason why they searched for a new start in Virginia.

### *Conclusion*

Scottish immigrants were not leaving Scotland to be a part of a new society or culture; rather they were leaving to establish their own cultural, political, and religious practices in a new land. This is constant throughout British colonialism prior to and shortly after the American Revolution and the foundation of the new nation. Scottish Lowlanders, Highlanders and the Scots-Irish all migrated to North America for different reasons but had a common goal. They wanted to build a new Scottish lifestyle in colonial America. This is the reason Scottish and

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<sup>40</sup> Andrew R. Holmes, “Presbyterian Religion, Historiography, and Ulster Scots Identity, c. 1800 to 1914,” *The Historical Journal* 52, no. 3 (2009): 616.

<sup>41</sup> Holmes, 616.

Scots-Irish Presbyterianism has such a grand impact on colonial and American communities is because the immigrants were so steadfast in their cultural ways.



## Chapter Two: The Tobacco Bridge between Virginia and Glasgow

The Scots and the Scots-Irish immigrated to America during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries due to a mix of economic and religious pressures. Highland Scots, Lowland Scots, and the Scots-Irish all had different cultural, religious and political practices back in Scotland or Ulster, but they generally faced similar push and pull factors for leaving their homes. Their immigration experience and the communities they entered or developed became much more differentiated once they arrived in America. The Highland Scots traveled mostly to North Carolina and Georgia as prisoners of the English Civil War; the Lowland Scots settled in Virginia because of the lucrative nature of the tobacco trade; and the Scots-Irish established or entered communities along the frontier to gain as much autonomy from the English Crown as possible.<sup>1</sup> They also migrated to Virginia because of their deeply rooted involvement in tobacco cultivation in America and distribution across Europe.<sup>2</sup> This chapter focuses on the Lowland Scots and the Scots-Irish, as they migrated to Virginia and their involvement in the trans-Atlantic tobacco trade. The changes the Lowland Scots brought to Virginia were mostly economic, as they were attempting to revise in the tobacco trade and make as much of a profit as possible. They attempted to maintain their Presbyterian religion along the way, but this was not their central priority in immigrating to the colonies. The Scots-Irish on the other hand, because their communities were on the frontier, lacked the connection to the rest of the colonies— and most certainly to Britain and Europe— that the Lowland Scots on the coast had. This chapter examines how both groups effected the communities they entered economically, and culturally,

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<sup>1</sup> Dobson, *Scottish Emigration to Colonial America, 1607-1785*.

<sup>2</sup> Devine, *The Tobacco Lords*, 1975, 5.

as well their role in the colonial American political changes and radical ideas of revolution going on around them.

### *Where Scots and Scots-Irish Immigrants Settled*

Prior to the migration to Puritan New England, the seventeenth century saw significantly fewer Scots migrating to America as opposed to the eighteenth century simply because there were less promising economic incentives to search for a new home. In the seventeenth century, Scots traveled to America because they felt they had no choice. For example, in 1651 1,610 Scottish prisoners of the English Civil War were granted free passage to America if they agreed to enter servitude for land owners in Virginia. 150 of those offered passage agreed to go to Virginia, and 272 ended up in Massachusetts instead.<sup>3</sup> According to Ian Graham, “in a 1665 correspondent in Virginia reported that many of the Scots there were better off than, their forefathers, having progressed from the degradation of servitude to be themselves masters of many servants.”<sup>4</sup> Scots who lived and experienced American colonial communities during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were the Scots who most influenced the political, social, and cultural structures and systems of the communities they entered.

The Scots had many reasons to leave during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but that did not mean colonial America was a Garden of Eden across an ocean. Immigrating to North America presented an entirely new set of problems, some of which the Scots and Scots-Irish expected and others that came as a complete shock. In the seventeenth century, Scots and Scots-Irish immigrants faced the struggle of a land not yet fully settled by Europeans. There were few

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<sup>3</sup> Ian Charles Cargill Graham, *Colonists from Scotland: Emigration to North America, 1707-1783* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Published for the American Historical Association by Cornell University Press, 1956), 10.

<sup>4</sup> Graham, 10.

settlements and farming and trade were very difficult, especially for newly-founded communities. In the eighteenth century, Scots and Scots-Irish settlers found it challenging to decide precisely where to immigrate to. The already-established colonies each offered a different set of problems. For example, Maryland was a colony established for and by Roman Catholics, so this went against the ideas of Presbyterian religious freedom the immigrants were seeking. Virginia and the Carolinas were plantation colonies heavily controlled by England and the Church of England, and New York's government officials were not considered welcoming to new migrants.<sup>5</sup> The various settlements in New England were more attractive to Protestant settlers for a new home. As a result, before eventually making their way down to the Shenandoah Valley region of Virginia, the Ulsterman Scots-Irish made their early homes in Boston. The Scots-Irish initially settled New England in part because Puritan practices shared much with their Calvinist beliefs, and they arrived there beginning in 1718.<sup>6</sup> More would soon follow, as it was estimated that between 1718 and the Revolutionary War over 250,000 immigrants from Ulster made the journey to America.<sup>7</sup> This is an astounding number and partially explains why the Scots-Irish had such a large impact on the communities they entered.

Lowland Scots began settling in Virginia about a century before the Scots-Irish began settling New England. In Virginia and Maryland, Scottish merchants and plantations owners flourished off of the tobacco trade.<sup>8</sup> This gave future Scots a communal foundation they could enter. This was true for Lowland Scots, both wealthy and working class, and they were slightly more comfortable with the idea of traveling to Virginia knowing that there were other Scots that

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<sup>5</sup> James Graham Leyburn, *The Scotch-Irish: A Social History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962), 186.

<sup>6</sup> Carlton Jackson, *A Social History of the Scotch-Irish* (Lanham, MD: Madison Books, 1993), 57.

<sup>7</sup> Leyburn, *The Scotch-Irish*, 158.

<sup>8</sup> Andrew Hook, *Scotland and America: A Study of Cultural Relations, 1750-1835* (Glasgow: Blackie, 1975), 9.

had already established a life there. In other words, Scottish trade ships and tobacco merchants created an enduring connection between Scotland and Virginia. Knowing that there was a previously established connection between their homeland and the “new world,” Scottish Lowland farmers were much more willing to travel to Virginia.<sup>9</sup> In certain situations, colonies offered tax exemptions in order to convince Scottish and Scots-Irish immigrants to settle there. In 1771, for example, North Carolina’s colonial government passed a law freeing European immigrants from all taxes for four years after the date of their arrival in the colony. This offer was mostly taken up by Highland Scots.<sup>10</sup> While Virginia and Maryland never offered anything as extreme, Lowland Scots started and continued to settle in mercantile communities in Virginia, Maryland, and some northern parts of North Carolina, mostly because of the lucrative tobacco industry.<sup>11</sup>

Highland and Lowland Scots looked for settlements in these regions because they felt there were few opportunities for them back in Scotland. In all of Scotland, land owners were overcharging their tenants, and since the population was declining at such a rapid number, there were fewer opportunities for local trade outside of major city centers such as Edinburgh or Glasgow.<sup>12</sup> This sentiment began to spread Highlanders and Lowlanders alike. For example, one Virginia Gazette article from December 1773 stated,

In Captain M’Larry’s ship came Passenger Mr. Godfrey M’Neil a gentleman of Ferrone Arghydesure, with the View to fix upon a settlement for a Number of Families from Part of the Highlands of Scotland, who intend for America as soon as he returns. The Spirit of Migration is become so universal there that it is thought that the Country must soon be almost depopulated, unless the Lowlanders take some speedy and effectual Means to quiet their poor Tenants, who are now determined to bear their oppressions any longer.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Hook, 10.

<sup>10</sup> Graham, *Colonists from Scotland*, 96.

<sup>11</sup> Graham, 117.

<sup>12</sup> Graham, 117.

<sup>13</sup> Purdie and Dixon, “Virginia Gazette: Dec. 23 1773,” December 23, 1773.

The concern that Mr. M'Neil expressed on his journey to Williamsburg was not a new feeling, but it provides an important explanation for what Scottish immigrants thought of the new land. More specifically, M'Neil talked about the widespread belief in opportunity of wealth and a fresh start that many Scots, Lowland or Highland, began to embrace during the middle of the eighteenth century. In short, the main reason for them leaving was economic instability in Scotland and economic opportunity in America, accompanied by a massive increase in the global demand for tobacco.

### *Economic Transformations*

The economic connection between Scotland and the American colonies was largely forged by Scottish tobacco merchants who were incredibly innovative in their shipping methods, resulting in Scottish control of the industry. The tobacco boom for Scottish merchants did not begin until not until the middle of the eighteenth century when Glasgow overtook Liverpool and Bristol as the largest importer of tobacco in Britain.<sup>14</sup> In fact, Scottish merchants in America and Scotland were so effective that English merchants began modeling their shipping methods and practices after the Scots. Many English captains and merchants shared the belief that, “the Scots managed to reduce the costs of their operations, which of course gave them a distinct competitive advantage.”<sup>15</sup> In August of 1768, an English merchant operating in Virginia named William Nelson wrote to an English merchant named John Norton, who operated out of London, about the Scots’ ability to trade cheaply. In the letter Nelson wrote, “[The Scots] sail their Ships so much cheaper than you can from London and they have some other Advantage in the Trade, to

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<sup>14</sup> Ann Smart Martin, *Buying into the World of Goods: Early Consumers in Backcountry Virginia*, Studies in Early American Economy and Society from the Library Company of Philadelphia (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 8–12.

<sup>15</sup> Graham, *Colonists from Scotland*, 117.

which you and I are strangers, that it is my Opinions, that in a few Years the London Market will be cheaply supply'd thro channel."<sup>16</sup> The English envy did not lead to equal ability. A primary reason the Scots were able to be so efficient was because Scottish merchants and ship captains established such great relationships with open communication. For example, William Beverly of Blandfield, wrote "I find the Scotch, who are the principal Importers of Goods from London, insist that the Captains shall sign their Bills of Lading, deliverable at a particular Landing on the River, whereon they reside... by this means they receive their Goods in due Time and proper order."<sup>17</sup> Scottish merchants understood the nature of the tobacco trade better than their English counterparts and thus profited immensely from it. As a result, Scottish people of lower class felt more and more inclined to settle in Virginia and North Carolina to take advantage of the economic and labor opportunity. The majority of merchants and company owners remained in Glasgow, but there was a significant amount of jobs open on tobacco plantations in Virginia that working class Scots were willing to take because of the economic possibility.

The Scottish tobacco trade was controlled by a select group of merchants, and those few companies made the majority of the profits. As displayed in Table I, most Glasgow merchants were born into the profession, or had fathers of wealth.<sup>18</sup> For example, by the end of the tobacco boom in 1779 it is estimated that the Cunninghame group, a profitable Glasgow importer, had a capital stock value of £100,000 and the James and Robert Donald group's value was estimated at £65,000.<sup>19</sup> For most small firms if they were successful, were estimated between £2,000 and

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<sup>16</sup> As quoted in Graham, 117.

<sup>17</sup> As quoted in Graham, 118.

<sup>18</sup> T. M. Devine, *The Tobacco Lords: A Study of the Tobacco Merchants of Glasgow and Their Trading Activities, c. 1740-90* (Edinburgh: Donald, 1975), 6.

<sup>19</sup> Devine, 75.

£4,000.<sup>20</sup> As table II suggests, during the tobacco boom from the 1740's until the end of the eighteenth century, most groups were not nearly as successful.

*Table I: Occupation of Fathers of Eighteenth Century Glasgow Tobacco Merchants*

Merchants in Glasgow	71
Merchants in other Scottish Burghs	6
Craftsman in Glasgow	4
Landowners with no direct interest in Commerce	8
Ministers of Presbyterian or Episcopalian Churches	12
Lawyers, Notaries and Members of the Judiciary	6
Schoolmasters	1
Physicians	2
Occupations of Fathers unknown but not Merchants in Glasgow	53

<sup>21</sup>

*Table II: Capital Stock of Sample Glasgow Tobacco Partnerships, c. 1740-83*

Firm	Capital Stock	Date
George McCall and Co.	£5,000	Uncertain
Findlay, Hopkirks and Co.	£8,000	1783
Buchanan, Bowman, Speirs	£16,400	1744
Buchanan, Hastie and Co.	£10,500	1772
William Cunninghame and Co.	£20,000	1770
Cunninghame, Findlay and Co.	£15,000	1770
G and A. Buchanan and Co.	£8,000	1768

<sup>22</sup>

However, they still had significant power and wealth. In order to operate such a complicated shipping process, these firms needed to be economically successful. For example, each ship from Virginia cost approximately £500 per voyage just to cross the ocean. The average

<sup>20</sup> Devine, 75.

<sup>21</sup> Devine, *The Tobacco Lords*, 1975, 6.

<sup>22</sup> Devine, 75.

ship had the loading capacity of approximately 330 hogsheads of tobacco. Once the ship arrived in Glasgow, the company would be charged approximately £170 in port fees.<sup>23</sup> These costs add up quickly, and can be very difficult to fund. However, the Scots managed to be extremely efficient in this trade and even more so once companies accumulated capital. The end result was mass European supply of tobacco. In total, exports of tobacco in hogsheads shipped to France were 3,287, to Holland 2,398, to Ireland 1,234, to Norway 155 and to Germany there were 1,019 hogsheads shipped in 1775 alone.<sup>24</sup> In terms of profit, “the Scottish share of the British tobacco trade doubled from 10 percent to 20 percent between 1738 and 1744 and reached 30 percent in 1758.”<sup>25</sup> This was the same year that Glasgow’s tobacco outlet surpassed London and all other British ports that were involved in the tobacco trade. Glasgow was by far the largest importer and exporter of tobacco in Britain. As a result, the tobacco trade became one of the fundamental connections between Scotland and Virginia.

Another major reason the Scots were so successful in the tobacco trade was because they created an incredibly precise and efficient shipping system that was well documented and effectively overseen. This process ensured that mistakes were rare occurrences, and if a ship captain or merchant had a setback, they were required to prove to the local magistrate that they were not at fault, or they would ensure it never happened again. One particular example of this process was the case of William and Henry Foggoes, and David Young. These three men were tobacco merchants in Glasgow during the middle of the eighteenth century who ran a small-scale operation. In 1739, one of their ships was delayed and some of the product was damaged. As a result, their entire operation was suspended by the local magistrate until further notice. The

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<sup>23</sup> Devine, 3.

One hogshead of tobacco is equivalent to 145 U.S. gallons which weighed approximately 1,000 pounds.

<sup>24</sup> Devine, 65.

<sup>25</sup> Karras, *Sojourners in the Sun*, 85.



Fogges brothers and Young, along with the ship's captain James Weir and shipmaster Robert Arthur, petitioned to the Tobacco Lords of Glasgow and their council to be able to remove their suspension so they could trade again.<sup>26</sup> The group had successfully run several voyages from Virginia to Glasgow. The Voyage in 1739 was regarding a ship called *The Diamond*. To summarize the situation of the dispute the petition read, "the Petitioners are the principal Owners of the Ship *Diamond* of Glasgow; and having a Branch of Trade in Tobacco... have been, for these four years past, in the constant Custom of sending said Ship from the River *Clyde* to *Virginia*, or *Maryland* to take Tobacco for our prover Accounts."<sup>27</sup> The petitioners were not the owners of the company, but these men worked for the "*Oband Company*," which did not aid in their petition.<sup>28</sup> The company did not concern itself with one ship's lack of production, so the merchants and the crew of *The Diamond* were left to their own devices to try and reopen their business. In the meantime, they were at a loss for income, which is why it was so vital for them to get their ship back on the water.

The issue itself was the result of two complaints made by the men who purchased the tobacco from Young and the Fogges brothers. The first complaint was a delay in the arrival of the ship into Glasgow. According to the petition, Captain Weir deviated from his projected course in January of 1739. The ship did not arrive in the Clyde until March of that year.<sup>29</sup> This

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<sup>26</sup> *Unto the Right Honourable, the Lords of Council and Session, the Petition of William and Henry Foggoes, and David Young, Merchants in Glasgow, in Company, James Weir Late Commander of the Ship, the Diamond of Glasgow, and Robert Arthur Ship-Master in Craufordsdyke, ...*, 3.

<sup>27</sup> *Unto the Right Honourable, the Lords of Council and Session, the Petition of William and Henry Foggoes, and David Young, Merchants in Glasgow, in Company, James Weir Late Commander of the Ship, the Diamond of Glasgow, and Robert Arthur Ship-Master in Craufordsdyke, ...*, 4.

<sup>28</sup> *Unto the Right Honourable, the Lords of Council and Session, the Petition of William and Henry Foggoes, and David Young, Merchants in Glasgow, in Company, James Weir Late Commander of the Ship, the Diamond of Glasgow, and Robert Arthur Ship-Master in Craufordsdyke, ...*, 4.

<sup>29</sup> *Unto the Right Honourable, the Lords of Council and Session, the Petition of William and Henry Foggoes, and David Young, Merchants in Glasgow, in Company, James Weir Late Commander of the Ship, the Diamond of Glasgow, and Robert Arthur Ship-Master in Craufordsdyke, ...*, 5-7.

two month delay was a large problem for those who purchased the tobacco because it slowed down their own shipment process as most purchasers were selling large quantities of tobacco to other European nations.<sup>30</sup> The petitioners argued that Weir's actions were a necessary deviation from the standard course due to outside circumstances such as weather and transportation in Virginia, and Weir made the best he could of a difficult situation.<sup>31</sup> Regardless of Weir's pleas, this was a difficult problem to explain. A two month delay, even during a time of slow transportation across the Atlantic Ocean, was still a significant delay for those who purchased the tobacco from Young and the Fogges brothers.

The group of merchants who purchased the petitioners' tobacco, were most likely selling the tobacco to other European nations or distributing it throughout Britain. A ship's load of tobacco was a heavy hit to production, but the petitioners argued, "an Inspection and Report was made by the said referees, which was thereafter put into the Hands of the Chargers who, after the Survey and Report, received their Tobaccos without any Protestation."<sup>32</sup> In other words, despite the delay the "chargers" were still satisfied with receiving their product. They would however, make this complaint after inspecting the product they received to strengthen their case against the petitioners.

The second piece of the case the "chargers" brought against the petitioners was that the tobacco they received was somehow damaged or poorer quality tobacco than they were expecting. The tobacco, once unloaded in Glasgow, was inspected by a third party group of

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<sup>30</sup> Devine, *The Tobacco Lords*, 1975, 65.

<sup>31</sup> *Unto the Right Honourable, the Lords of Council and Session, the Petition of William and Henry Foggoes, and David Young, Merchants in Glasgow, in Company, James Weir Late Commander of the Ship, the Diamond of Glasgow, and Robert Arthur Ship-Master in Craufordsdyke, ...*, 5.

<sup>32</sup> *Unto the Right Honourable, the Lords of Council and Session, the Petition of William and Henry Foggoes, and David Young, Merchants in Glasgow, in Company, James Weir Late Commander of the Ship, the Diamond of Glasgow, and Robert Arthur Ship-Master in Craufordsdyke, ...*, 6.

surveyors who, after close examination, determined that the tobacco was damaged.<sup>33</sup> This was the case the “Chargers” brought against Young and the Fogges. In their petition, however, the group argues there were mistakes made during the inspection. The petition reads,

Accordingly these Referees appointed by the Judge, without ever seeing the Tobaccos, or requiring any Proof concerning Damage actually sustain'd, have made certain conjectural Hypothesis, upon which they found their Opinion of what Damage the Pursuers might have sustain'd, which they make to the amount the Sum of 89 L. 18lb. 6 d. Sterl. And accordingly to this Opinion the Judge has decreed.<sup>34</sup>

The damage fee listed above is about half of what the estimated port fee was for the entire shipment.<sup>35</sup> If the petitioners were required to pay that fee, they would make significantly less profit on this journey and would be financially setback as a result. On top of that cost, since their production was halted due to the suspension, they had no way of making another journey to try and generate a new stream of revenue to pay off the added cost. After examining the case of the petitions, the Judge who oversaw this hearing then recommended the petitioners' requests be heard and thus their suspension was most likely overturned although it was not explicitly stated in the petition or the attached documents.<sup>36</sup>

This example outlines clearly just how serious the tobacco trade was run in Scotland. If the petitioners had indeed been negligent in their arrival time, course taken, or their handling of the product, they would have most certainly been suspended for a long period of time. If the grievances were severe enough, they could have been shut down permanently.<sup>37</sup> Again, this case

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<sup>33</sup> *Unto the Right Honourable, the Lords of Council and Session, the Petition of William and Henry Foggoes, and David Young, Merchants in Glasgow, in Company, James Weir Late Commander of the Ship, the Diamond of Glasgow, and Robert Arthur Ship-Master in Craufordsdyke, ..., 7.*

<sup>34</sup> *Unto the Right Honourable, the Lords of Council and Session, the Petition of William and Henry Foggoes, and David Young, Merchants in Glasgow, in Company, James Weir Late Commander of the Ship, the Diamond of Glasgow, and Robert Arthur Ship-Master in Craufordsdyke, ..., 7.*

<sup>35</sup> Devine, *The Tobacco Lords*, 1975, 65.

<sup>36</sup> *Unto the Right Honourable, the Lords of Council and Session, the Petition of William and Henry Foggoes, and David Young, Merchants in Glasgow, in Company, James Weir Late Commander of the Ship, the Diamond of Glasgow, and Robert Arthur Ship-Master in Craufordsdyke, ..., 16.*

<sup>37</sup> Devine, *The Tobacco Lords*, 1975, 65.

epitomizes why Scotland was able to be so successful in the trans-Atlantic tobacco trade, and how complicated of a process importing tobacco could be.

*Scottish Labor Involved in the Tobacco Trade*

The international tobacco traded provided an opportunity for poorer Scots to provide for their families. In order to further illustrate the importance of the tobacco industry for Scottish immigrants, it is important to examine the population breakdown of the professions of working class Scottish immigrants and colonists of Scottish descent in the Chesapeake Bay area to show the relationship to the tobacco trade. During the eighteenth century, professions of Scots in the Chesapeake Bay area break down in the following percentages: apprentices made up around 9 percent, attorneys and lawyers made up approximately 6 percent, and physicians made up around 12 percent of the region's population.<sup>38</sup> As expected, the higher classes made up a significantly smaller portion of the population. For example, bureaucrats, land owners not involved in planting tobacco, teachers and ministers each made up either 2 or 3 percent of the population.<sup>39</sup> The remaining 64 percent of the population worked in some aspect or area of the tobacco trade as factors, surveyors, overseers or on transport ship.<sup>40</sup> The Scottish tobacco industry was a well-oiled and heavily-manned machine. The majority of the colonial population depended on it, and the Scots found a way to make in incredibly effective and lucrative.

Tobacco was so central to the colonial world that it was even used as payment during auctions of indentured servants. One such auction is noted in the December 23, 1773 edition of the Virginia Gazette. In this article, Captain Curtis of *The Succsel's Increase*, brought over eighty servants to be sold in Leeds Town with the description in the article reading, "choice

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<sup>38</sup> Karras, *Sojourners in the Sun*, 12.

<sup>39</sup> Karras, 12.

<sup>40</sup> Karras, 12.

healthy servants, among whom are tradesmen via. Shoemakers, Weavers, Carpenters, Black and White Smiths, a Bricklayer, a Brasts Founder, a Tanner, an Upholsterer, Surgeons and Apothecaries, Hair Dressers, School-Masters and Bookkeepers, with many farmers and laborers etc...”<sup>41</sup> Though this description of these indentured servants does not explicitly say their origin, these are the same occupations held by Lowland Scots before migrating to Virginia.<sup>42</sup> In fact, in certain situations, after their servitude ended, Scottish immigrants would advertise their availability in the newspaper or their employers would do it for them so they could find new work. For example, in one article from 1755, John Sanders published an advertisement stating, “this is to certify to all whom it may concern that Mr. Zabariah Martyngale is no longer in my employ.”<sup>43</sup> This was not only so Martyngale could look for new work, but also to legally establish Martyngale would have no involvement in Sanders’ business affairs. Other examples of similar practices are also detailed in the Virginia Gazette over the years, but the advertisements did not always benefit the working class Scots. For example, in April of 1772 businessman Thomas Hill attempted to warn others from hiring his former apprentice and advertised, “whereas my Apprentice, Christopher Lewis, has absented himself from my Service, I therefore warn all Persons from employing or entertaining him under any Pretence whatever.”<sup>44</sup> While most working class Scots did not keep their own records, some of them did. From these records, inferences can be made about the stories of other poor, Lowland Scottish immigrants and their descendants.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Purdie and Dixon, “Virginia Gazette: Dec. 23 1773.”

<sup>42</sup> Hunter, “Virginia Gazette Oct. 3, 1755,” October 3, 1755, [http://research.history.org/CWDLImages/VA\\_GAZET/Images/VG/1755/0074hi.jpg](http://research.history.org/CWDLImages/VA_GAZET/Images/VG/1755/0074hi.jpg).

<sup>43</sup> Hunter.

<sup>44</sup> Purdie and Dixon, “Virginia Gazette: April 16 1772,” April 16, 1772, [http://research.history.org/CWDLImages/VA\\_GAZET/Images/PD/1772/0065hi.jpg](http://research.history.org/CWDLImages/VA_GAZET/Images/PD/1772/0065hi.jpg).

<sup>45</sup> Harrower, *The Journal of John Harrower, an Indentured Servant in the Colony of Virginia, 1773-1776.*, xiii–xxi.

*The Journey of John Harrower*

While the most lucrative, tobacco was not the only agricultural product Scottish immigrants were involved with. In fact, many working-class Scottish immigrants, especially those who migrated to Virginia as indentured servants, ended up working on wheat or corn farms. Such was the story of John Harrower's life in America during the 1770's. Harrower was a Scottish merchant from the village of Lerwick, in the Shetland Islands, who at the age of forty decided to leave his wife and family in Scotland in pursuit of wealth in the Virginia tobacco trade. While born a Highlander, Harrower moved south during his lifetime and had looked, unsuccessfully, for employment in both the Lowlands of Scotland and England for months prior to making his decision to leave for America. He travelled to Virginia as an indentured servant and became a tutor for the Daingerfield family. He kept a diary of his daily life on the plantation and the national affairs of the time period. Harrower eventually became a merchant in Fredericksburg, Virginia. Scottish merchants, such as William Allason, John Glassell, Roger Dixon, James Hunter and James Ritchie with similar stories also set up fruitful mercantile shops in the Piedmont region and the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. However, unlike the other examples, Harrower kept a detailed account of his time on the Daingerfield plantation.<sup>46</sup> This source is incredibly important as first-hand accounts from working class immigrants or indentured servants are very rare and difficult to find.

Harrower began his journal by detailing his time in England searching for work in 1773. Despite his efforts, he found no work in England. Most of his early entries deal with daily affairs in England such as purchasing clothes or food or conversations he had with potential employers.

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<sup>46</sup> John Harrower, *The Journal of John Harrower, an Indentured Servant in the Colony of Virginia, 1773-1776.*, Williamsburg Eyewitness to History Series (Williamsburg, Va: Colonial Williamsburg, 1963), xiii-xxi.

He also took a great deal of interest in the daily weather and which direction the wind was blowing, suggesting he had been contemplating a journey.<sup>47</sup> In one entry, dated December 23, 1773, he noted his initial thoughts of leaving Scotland, stating that “this day I once thought of engaging with the Mr. of the Elizabeth Bringantine bound for North Carolina but the thoughts of being so far from my family prevented me.”<sup>48</sup> This is an example of a sentiment shared by many Scots when contemplating leaving their homes. However, Harrower soon overcame this hesitation due to his inability to find work in Britain. Harrower made his way to London where he saw “an advertisement for Bookkeepers and Clerks to go to a gentleman [at] Philadelphia.”<sup>49</sup> After this point, Harrower began to consider the possibility of a better life in North America and on January 26, 1774 Harrower reported that “being reduced to the last shilling I hade was obliged to engage to go to Virginia for four years as a schoolmaster.”<sup>50</sup> Like so many Scots before and after him, he was economically forced to leave his home country and accept indentured servitude to provide for his family.

After the long journey across the Atlantic Ocean, one darkened by sea sickness malnutrition, and misery, Harrower landed in Virginia in April of 1774 and was indentured to British military officer Colonel William Daingerfield.<sup>51</sup> It was on Daingerfield’s plantation that Harrower gave firsthand accounts of the colonial farming industry. Harrower’s daily duties included educating the Daingerfield children in reading and writing, making purchases on behalf of the family, and assisting Colonel Daingerfield in administrative duties over the plantation. Harrower also attended the local Presbyterian Church regularly and noted specific sermons that

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<sup>47</sup> Harrower, 3–8.

<sup>48</sup> Harrower, 7.

<sup>49</sup> Harrower, 15.

<sup>50</sup> Harrower, 17.

<sup>51</sup> Harrower, 39–40.

spoke to him.<sup>52</sup> Being in close contact with Colonel Daingerfield, Harrower also knew Dangerfield's estimates of the plantation's production levels. According to Harrower, the Daingerfield plantation was about 400 acres of land that produced approximately 3,600 bushels of wheat every year.<sup>53</sup> Daingerfield would then sell each bushel for 5 pounds and pay his workers 23 shillings in the occasions he had hire workers outside of his slaves and indentured servants.<sup>54</sup> Throughout his time working on the plantation, Harrower was able to send some money home to his wife and tried to fund her voyage to America. Unfortunately for Harrower, however, his wife and child never attempted that voyage because of the uncertainty involved. He planned for his wife to travel to Glasgow, "and from that to Greenock where you will ship for this Country."<sup>55</sup> That letter was written on December 6, 1774, and Harrower died in 1777.

John Harrower's story represents a larger story. Like Harrower, most Scottish immigrants were poor, unskilled laborers looking for a new opportunity in a new land. Unfortunately, not many were able to tell their own story in the way that Harrower did. The perspective Harrower offered as an indentured servant is particularly unique in that, not only do few such accounts exist, but he also took tremendous pride in his writings. He gave very detailed accounts and wrote almost daily. It is from this work that much can be inferred regarding the life of working class Scottish immigrants, but there remains a great deal of speculation about the lives of working class Scottish immigrants because most of them did not write their own story.

Not only did John Harrower document his experiences on a tobacco plantation, he also recorded some of the political sentiment of the time period. Harrower noted in June of 1774,

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<sup>52</sup> Harrower, 47–51.

<sup>53</sup> Harrower, 46.

<sup>54</sup> Harrower, 50.

<sup>55</sup> Harrower, 72.



“this day there was prayers in all the Churches in Virginia on Accot. Of the disagreement at present betwixt great Britain and her Colonies in North America, on Accot. Of their not agreeing to pay a duty on Tea laid on them by the british parliament and the Bostonians destroying a Quantity of Tea belonging to the British East India Comp. in 1773.”<sup>56</sup> Harrower was not a well-known revolutionary thinker, nor was he a political expert. However, he was extremely observant of his surroundings and especially observant to matters larger than the Daingerfield plantation. In 1774, when that entry was written, the Boston Massacre and Tea Party were fresh in the minds of American Colonists and the region was less than a year away from war. Being in the employment of a former British military Colonel, Harrower had a unique viewpoint of the American Revolution. Despite his previous employment, Daingerfield was loyal to the colonial cause, and Martha Washington even dined at the Daingerfield plantation in 1775.<sup>57</sup> In November of 1775, Harrower noted, “upon Thursday the 2<sup>nd</sup> Inst. There was a Camp Marked out close to the back of the school for a Battalion of 500 private men besides officers and they immediately began to erect tents for the same.”<sup>58</sup> Again, Harrower’s experience was not entirely unique, and many Scottish immigrants observed or took part in American troop movements during the Revolution.<sup>59</sup>

### *Conclusion*

The trans-Atlantic tobacco trade provided a bridge between Scotland and Colonial Virginia that financially bound the communities of both regions. For working class Scots, the idea of a new life in Virginia while maintaining a connection to home provided a comforting feeling when they immigrated. Leaving Scotland for Virginia was no doubt surrounded with

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<sup>56</sup> Harrower, 44.

<sup>57</sup> Harrower, 122.

<sup>58</sup> Harrower, 123.

<sup>59</sup> Graham, *Colonists from Scotland*, 160.

uncertainty, but knowing that there was a direct link through trade made the journey slightly easier. Harrower's constant letters to his family back in Scotland, and his efforts to work in Virginia as an indentured servant to provide money for his family suggest this sentiment was true for most working class Scottish immigrants. Furthermore, the way in which Glasgow merchants revolutionized the tobacco trade was simply remarkable. It also definitively changed the formation of the economic landscape of the Chesapeake region of Virginia to be mainly centered upon tobacco cultivation. Scottish and Scots-Irish Presbyterianism had a similar effect on culture in colonial Virginia, and it provided a religious connection between Virginia and Scotland. Through maintaining cultural and religious values, with the help of a healthy economic relationship, the Scots and Scots-Irish were able to maintain a connection to their homeland, and enact cultural change in colonial Virginia.

### **Chapter Three: Scottish Impact on the Early Development of American Presbyterianism**

As Scots escaped the economic hardships of their homeland and were drawn to the promise of work in the tobacco trade, they brought with them their Presbyterian values to communities in colonial Virginia. Individual Scots-Irish communities were much less connected economically and culturally to other communities in the Shenandoah Valley than the communities established by Lowland Scots in the Chesapeake region of Virginia because of the frontier nature of the valley. The Scots-Irish were focused on the frontier to the west of them. Therefore, they were more isolated from other communities much less Britain. This was partially the reason why they established small community meeting areas such as churches and courtrooms, and why they relied so heavily on religion to guide them. The Lowland Scottish immigrants were still very much connected to Britain through the tobacco trade. These Scots-Irish were forced to keep their connection with their homeland through religion and spirituality because of how far west their communities were located.

The tobacco industry was not the only way Scottish immigrants and settlers made their impact on colonial America during the eighteenth century. The trade brought a great deal of immigrants from Scotland and Ulster to the colonies in search of profit. However, whether they were indentured servants, craftsmen, merchants, or wealthy nobles, Presbyterianism and its values connected a great deal of them. Presbyterian ministers in the eighteenth century, most notably Reverend John Witherspoon, a former President of what would become Princeton University and a man involved in the First Continental Congress, articulated the goal of establishing, spreading, and maintaining influence over not only colonial social and religious practices, but also political establishments. Witherspoon believed that education was the key to Presbyterianism gaining influence and authority in the colonies. On a local scale, ministers such

as John Craig and William Graham were able to establish Presbyterian Churches, and in the case of Graham a college, in their respective communities. These churches were designed, like Scottish kirk sessions and presbyteries, to preside over most areas of everyday life. They decided legal disputes, dispersed resources, and elected local officials, but unlike Scottish Kirks, they were not directly involved in policing the community for moral offenses. In colonial Virginia, the Presbyterian values that Scottish and Scots-Irish immigrants brought with them became imbedded in colonial society at a local level through ecclesiastical and higher education establishments. On a grander scale, popular ministers such as John Witherspoon and Samuel Davies spread the influence of Presbyterianism through their sermons, and from the political influence they gained as they became more nationally popular.

#### *Early Presbyterianism in Colonial America*

In 1704 Scots-Irish minister Francis Makemie travelled back to England in hopes of recruiting young new ministers to return to the colonies. Makemie had spent the previous twenty years travelling throughout the American colonies and the Caribbean spreading the Presbyterian faith and the Word of God. Considered by many to be the “father of American Presbyterianism,” he urged ministers in London to travel to America. In his efforts he issued, “A Plain and Friendly PERSWASIVE TO THE INHABITANTS OF VIRGINIA AND MARYLAND, for Promoting Towns and Cohabitation.”<sup>1</sup> Makemie and other Scottish and Scots-Irish Presbyterian ministers who came after him hoped to develop the American Presbyterian Church as a cornerstone of American life. In order to achieve this goal, Presbyterian ministers realized that higher education and heavy recruitment were the two major keys to gaining influence. As a result, colonial

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<sup>1</sup> Howard Miller, *The Revolutionary College: American Presbyterian Higher Education, 1707-1837*, New York University Series in Education and Socialization in American History (New York: New York University Press, 1976), 3.

Presbyterian congregations welcomed all British Presbyterians who made the voyage to America and encouraged more to follow.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, Presbyterian ministers and elders in their communities encouraged young men to seek higher education opportunities and founded many higher level academic institutions in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia as they attempted to increase their influence in their communities.

### *Presbyterian Higher Education*

The Scots-Irish had a particular influence in the establishment of early American higher learning institutions with the hopes of gaining more respect and authority as community cultural and political leaders. For example, modern higher-level academic institutions such as Dickinson College, Hampden-Sydney College, Washington and Jefferson College, Washington and Lee University and Princeton College were all founded by Scots-Irish Presbyterians with this purpose in mind.<sup>3</sup> These institutions are all examples of the lasting impact Scots and Scots-Irish Presbyterians had on America's higher education system. Presbyterian minister focused on establishing as many quality institutions of higher education as possible because they recognized this was a way to gain religious, and in some ways, political influence in the broad communal and governmental structures in the colonies.

Makemie was among the first Scottish Presbyterian ministers to become an American Presbyterian minister and leave the Scottish Presbytery.<sup>4</sup> He wrote to other American ministers which stated, "Our design is to meet yearly, and oftener if necessary to consult the most proper

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<sup>2</sup> Miller, 4–5.

<sup>3</sup> Miller, xiv.

Miller, xiv. The Presbytery, in both Scotland and colonial Virginia, was the regional governing body that monitored and presided over churches in its region, but it was not a judicial body in Virginia as it as in Scotland. FRANCIS MAKEMIE, "Original Letter of Rev. Francis Makemie.," *Christian Observer (1840-1910); Louisville*, April 12, 1851.

measures for advancing religion, and propagating Christianity in our various stations, and to maintain such a correspondence... by prescribing texts to be preached.”<sup>5</sup> These institutions, and their predecessors, were founded on the Presbyterian ideas of practicing virtuous behavior. As historian Howard Millar points out, “the concept of ‘virtue’ dominated the idea and practice of the Presbyterian educators. References to the concept marked the Presbyterians’ descriptions of their school, its curriculum, and, in particular, its faculty.”<sup>6</sup> One particular example of this notion was shown in 1757 when William Livingston, the leader of New York’s Presbyterians, gave a eulogy for Reverend Aaron Burr, the former President of New Jersey College. Livingston stated that Burr never neglected “any opportunity of imbuing the minds of his pupils with the seeds of virtue, at the same time that he enriched them, with the treasures of learning.”<sup>7</sup> This mindset was constant throughout all Presbyterian institutions during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The emphasis on virtue and the system they created were their means to gain influence and authority in American communities and political structures. To a large degree it worked. New Jersey College eventually became Princeton University and the legacy of that particular Presbyterian institution developed into one of the nation’s finest collegiate institutions.

While Makemie may have been an early influential Presbyterian minister in America, but his influence could never match that of Reverend John Witherspoon. Before becoming one of America’s lesser known founding fathers, John Witherspoon was a prominent preacher throughout the nation and influenced many communities with his sermons. Witherspoon was born in Gilford, Scotland, in 1723 and later attended the University of Edinburgh. He became

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<sup>5</sup> FRANCIS MAKEMIE, “Original Letter of Rev. Francis Makemie,,” *Christian Observer (1840-1910); Louisville*, April 12, 1851.

<sup>6</sup> Miller, *The Revolutionary College*, 81.

<sup>7</sup> As quoted in Miller, 81.

President of Princeton University in 1768 and remained President until his death in 1794.<sup>8</sup>

Witherspoon passed on his beliefs in his sermons wherever he preached. One common theme was assurance to his audience that no matter what they were doing, God was always with them and should always be on their minds. Witherspoon stated in one of his letters,

There is not a greater evidence either of the reality or the power of religion than a firm belief of God's universal presence and a constant attention to the influence and operation of his providence. It is by this means that the Christian may be said in the emphatically scripture language, 'to walk with God, and to endure as seeing him who is invisible.'<sup>9</sup>

The centrality of this sentiment was shown in how Presbyterians, particularly those of Scottish or Scots-Irish descent, acted in their everyday lives, but also in the institutions they established. Furthermore, Witherspoon encouraged Presbyterians, like all other denominations of Christianity, to apply principles of magnanimity to everyday life and keep God at the focal point to find the best ways to serve Him. Witherspoon's principles were "to attempt great and difficult things, to aspire after great and valuable possessions, to encounter dangers with resolution, to struggle against difficulties with steadiness and perseverance and to bear sufferings with fortitude and patience."<sup>10</sup> All of these principles of magnanimity were to be achieved with prudence, wisdom, and justice with God's will in mind.<sup>11</sup> In order to spread these ideas, Witherspoon and other prominent Presbyterian ministers sought to establish as many institutions of higher learning as possible to gain as large of a sphere of influence.

Preaching, and the popularity of the minister, had the potential to draw followers to become Presbyterian which is why there was so much emphasis placed on becoming an inspiring preacher by Presbyterian ministers. Another example of the importance of preaching in the

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<sup>8</sup> Jeffrey H. Morrison, *John Witherspoon and the Founding of the American Republic* (Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005), 1–6.

<sup>9</sup> Witherspoon, *The Selected Writings of John Witherspoon*, 126.

<sup>10</sup> Witherspoon, 118–19.

<sup>11</sup> Witherspoon, 120.

eighteenth century spread of Presbyterianism can be found in the works and sermons of the Welsh Reverend Samuel Davies. Davies, albeit not of Scottish descent, eventually became President of Princeton College. Before taking his position at Princeton, Davies spent the early part of his career spreading evangelistic teachings throughout Virginia.<sup>12</sup> Davies was described by many as the, “leader of Presbyterianism in Virginia.”<sup>13</sup> In alignment with Francis Makemie’s goals of one connected national presbytery, Samuel Davies was in constant communications with Presbyterian ministers in New England. More specifically, Davies was concerned with the “dissonant Protestants” in Virginia who did not align themselves with Presbyterian ideologies. In a letter to Rev. Joseph Bellamy of Bethlem in New England, Davies began his letter by stating that its purpose was “not to inform the World of my petty personal Concerns, to boast of Proselytes, or to asperse the Church of England here established and therefore, to avoid Suspicion, I must suppress sundry Particulars that might be proper to mention in the Freedom of amicable conversations.”<sup>14</sup> Davies felt as though it were important to keep conversation open amongst different presbyteries. He believed this could not only present solutions to problems he was facing in his own presbytery such as reaching those who did not conform, but also present a way to coordinate an effort to spread Presbyterianism. He continued his letter by describing his issue of facing “dissenters” of Presbyterianism in various parts of Virginia. Davies firmly believed that:

The fine declamations on moral Duties or speculative Truths, will be but wretched Entertainment to hungry Souls. Such a maim’d system is not that compleat Religion of Jesus,

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<sup>12</sup> Davies, *The Reverend Samuel Davies Abroad*, ix–xii.

<sup>13</sup> Davies, x.

<sup>14</sup> Davies, Samuel, *The State of Religion among the Protestant Dissenters in Virginia; in a Letter to the Rev. Mr. Joseph Bellamy, of Bethlem, in New-England: From the Reverend Mr. Samuel Davies, V.D.M. in Hanover County, Virginia. [Two Lines from Proverbs]*. (Boston: N.E., 1751), 4, <- use proper footnote format. And you don’t need to put the URL in the notes.  
[http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=vic\\_wlu&tabID=T001&docId=CW3321738238&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE](http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=vic_wlu&tabID=T001&docId=CW3321738238&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE).



that glories in the amiable Symmetry, mutual Dependency, and Subserviency of all its Doctrines, as its peculiar Characteristic. Had the whole Counsel of God been declared, had all the Doctrines of the Gospel been solemnly and faithfully preached in the established Church; I am perswaded there would have been but few Dissenters in there, Parts of Virginia.<sup>15</sup>

What Davies meant by this was that he felt the Gospel had not adequately been spread or heard by these dissenters. In other words, the “hungry souls” were not fed with the word of God.

Although Davies was not of Scottish or Scots-Irish descent, this argument was exactly the argument many Scottish and Scots-Irish ministers made. The conviction that the doctrines and practices of Presbyterianism should be involved in every aspect of life is what led to such tremendous influence over political and religious structures in various communities in Virginia. Davies went on in his letter to describe how these practices were carried out. In reference to a friend and colleague, Samuel Morris, Davies wrote, “my good Friend before-mentioned, who was the principal private Instrument of promoting the late Work, and therefore well acquainted with it, to write me a Narrative of its Rise and Progress from this Period ‘till my Settlement here.”<sup>16</sup> In this, Davies was arguing that ministers could influence the foundation of a settlement simply by promoting “the Work.” Again this mirrored the actions taken by Presbyterian ministers of Scottish descent. The ultimate goal was to infuse Presbyterian doctrine into a community and create a wholly devoted congregation out of the communities Presbyterians entered.

There were, however, several logistical problems that Davies and other ministers faced in trying to execute this plan. In many cases, for instance, particularly on the Virginia frontier, communities were spread out and it took a long time for a family to travel to the congregation’s

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<sup>15</sup> Davies, Samuel, 6.

<sup>16</sup> Davies, Samuel, 9.

church on any given Sunday. In the letter to Reverend Bellamy, Davies closed his argument by expressing this exact issue. Davies wrote, “it is a very common Thing in this Colony, and allowed expressly by Law, that where the Parish is of great Extent, and cannot be divided into sundry, each of them capable to maintain a Minister, to erect 2, 3, or 4 Churches.”<sup>17</sup> The problem Davies described was that ministers were often expected and required by law to accommodate their congregation by maintaining and preaching at several different churches. For obvious reasons, this made it difficult for ministers to be able to effectively reach their congregations. In search of a solution, Davies and other ministers from his Presbytery and those surrounding it travelled to Britain for guidance from Presbyterian ministers in England and the Church of Scotland.

Davies, like many other ministers his time, sought to maintain the connection between the Church of Scotland and the American Presbytery as more Scots and Scots-Irish immigrants settled colonial Virginia. He travelled to England and Scotland in 1753 to personally attend to this issue. Davies wanted to present issues he and other American Presbyterian leaders were facing in the colonies to Presbyterian leaders in Britain.<sup>18</sup> Davies knew little about the affairs of the Church of Scotland, but when he travelled to Edinburgh in January 1754 he was able to gain a great deal of knowledge. He noted in a diary he kept during his travels across Britain that, “the Baptists [Calvinists] in general were unhappily ignorant of the Importance of Learning.”<sup>19</sup> Davies was lamenting the lack of cohesiveness amongst Scottish Churches and the fact that they did not value “learning in the same way that American Presbyterians did. Scotland already had established institutions of higher learning that had Presbyterian ideals instilled in their founding.

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<sup>17</sup> Davies, Samuel, 44.

<sup>18</sup> Davies, *The Reverend Samuel Davies Abroad*, 65.

<sup>19</sup> Davies, 66.

The University of Edinburgh was one such example. Nonetheless, Davies then presented the case of the dissenters in Virginia to the Baptists, but gained no solid ground. According to his diary, “They cordially gave us their best advice. They had no time to consider the Case of the oppressed Dissenters in Virginia; but promised it should be done at their next Meeting.”<sup>20</sup> The ministers of the Church of Scotland told Davies advice he already knew, such as to continue to spread the word. However, he placed a great deal of value in their counsel.

Davies, although not Scottish, was very forward thinking for a Presbyterian minister of the eighteenth century in trying to coordinate several congregations of a mixture of different people. He went on to become President of Princeton prior to John Witherspoon, but only for a short while. Davies was also very socially progressive for his time. For example, unlike many Presbyterian ministers at the time, Davies did in fact educate enslaved Africans so that they might be able to read and understand the Presbyterian faith.<sup>21</sup> This only provides further evidence that Davies was truly concerned with spreading the word. However, he was not the only minister who faced great struggle in trying to achieve that goal.

#### *The Establishment of Liberty Hall Academy*

Not every college or academy established by Presbyterian ministers was as problem-free as the establishment of Princeton. In fact, many faced a lack of funding or enrollment during their early years and particularly at their founding. The case of Reverend William Graham and Liberty Hall Academy in Lexington, Virginia was one example of an institution that had its fair share of problems at the start. Graham was born to Scots-Irish immigrants and raised in the Shenandoah Valley. He eventually attended and graduated from Princeton in 1773 and became a Presbyterian

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<sup>20</sup> Davies, 66.

<sup>21</sup> Davies, x.

minister. In 1776, he became Principal of Liberty Hall Academy in Lexington Virginia until 1796. Having been at Princeton while John Witherspoon was President, Graham learned many important values fundamental to Witherspoon's and teachings.<sup>22</sup> He was taught values of virtue and reasoning. While there are few documents regarding his education, when a former student of Graham's, Archibald Alexander, wrote his memoir, he detailed how Graham had an affinity for two subjects while at Princeton: "Natural Philosophy and the other the Philosophy of the Mind." "These," according to Alexander, Graham "cultivated through every period of his life and inspired many of his pupils with the same ardor in pursuing them which he felt in his own breast."<sup>23</sup> The "natural philosophy" Graham was concerned with was how to properly interact with others in a godly way. His study of the mind was to better understand how to spiritually be more connected to God. As Witherspoon took the lessons he learned from his time at the University of Edinburgh to create Princeton's curriculum, Graham took the lessons a he learned at Princeton. and began to apply them to the curriculum of Liberty Hall Academy.

Augusta Academy, located in what would become the city of Lexington, was in a tumultuous situation before the Augusta Presbytery assigned new trustees to the school. The school predated Liberty Hall Academy, but when Graham took over the project of constructing Liberty Hall Academy, he developed it as if he were beginning from scratch. After a long period of consideration, Graham was one of twenty-four trustees appointed by the Presbytery to reorganize the school's finances and repurpose the institution. The Presbytery decided to

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<sup>22</sup> Alexander, Archibald, "Memoir of the Rev. Wm. Graham," trans. Carter, Paul (1843), 2-8. <- put in Chicago Style footnote

Note: Archibald Alexander was a student of William Graham during the late eighteenth century. He was himself of Scots-Irish descent and he attended Liberty Hall Academy as a young man to further his Presbyterian education. In 1843, Alexander decided to begin writing a memoir of his former educator. Alexander, with the help of Graham's family and other students, Alexander was able to piece together the life story of William Graham. <- this stuff should be in the body of your text

<sup>23</sup> Alexander, Archibald, "Memoir of the Rev. Wm. Graham," 8.

construct new buildings for the school to use and also buy new materials for the school.<sup>24</sup> The goal was to attract new students and potential faculty to come to what would become Liberty Hall academy. In order to fund this new endeavor, Graham set out to other colonies in order to find sponsors for construction and school materials. Alexander described how “Wm. Graham undertook a journey into New England, to solicit aid in the erection of buildings, procuring a library etc.... there is reason to believe that his collections were not considerable.”<sup>25</sup> With limited funding, the project was much more difficult for Graham to accomplish. Another issue facing the school was Graham and the trustees were attempting to establish the College during the Revolutionary War. Many young men were drafted or called to war, “and all the pupils above sixteen were liable to military duty. They were subject to be called out very frequently for training and not only so but to be drafted, as it was called, into the regular service or obliged to take their turn of militia duty for six months.”<sup>26</sup> The remainder of the year 1775 and the following year would present even more economic hardship for the Presbytery and the construction of Liberty Hall Academy.

Establishing an institution in colonial Virginia’s frontier and gathering a student body population was not an easy task, and that was certainly for William Graham and the case of Liberty Hall Academy’s creation. During the American Revolution, the value of currency dropped significantly, and this was especially problematic for landowners and construction projects. In 1775 and 1776, Augusta Presbytery was both. As Alexander described it, “first the money issued by the State depreciated so rapidly that it soon became worthless and then the paper money issued by Congress, called continental money, began also to depreciate and no laws

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<sup>24</sup> Alexander, Archibald, 16.

<sup>25</sup> Alexander, Archibald, 17.

<sup>26</sup> Alexander, Archibald, 20.

which could be framed had the least effect in retarding the depreciation.”<sup>27</sup> This quote was in reference to the Continental Congress attempting to sever economic ties with Britain and establish its own currency. This could not have come at a worse time for colonial business owners or project managers. This effort by the Continental Congress was devastating, and many believed, like Alexander, that “it is wonderful, that after the sad experiment of paper money in the time of revolution, the people should have learned so little wisdom, respecting fiscal concerns, but should run madly into a system of banking without solid capital, which has produced a currency little better than the old issues of paper money.”<sup>28</sup> The issue of funding, combined with the national currency crisis and the lack of young prospective male students, made the Liberty Hall Academy’s trustee’s job to create a new school incredibly difficult, and “its prospects having been very bright became very gloomy and discouraging.”<sup>29</sup> Still, despite these complications, the combined efforts of Graham, the other trustees, and the Presbytery resulted in the establishment of Liberty Hall Academy.

It took a great deal of effort and coordination to complete the construction and opening of Liberty Hall Academy, and William Graham was at the head of it all. This process officially began in 1775. According to the trustees’ minutes of Liberty Hall Academy on October 27, 1775, “the Augusta School was taken under construction. The Presbytery agree that we will give continuance to have the care and texture of said school.”<sup>30</sup> This was when the Presbytery agreed to fund the initial construction of the school’s buildings, before most of the financial hardships occurred in the following year. Construction had commenced and was proceeding relatively

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<sup>27</sup> Alexander, Archibald, 21.

<sup>28</sup> Alexander, Archibald, 22.

<sup>29</sup> Alexander, Archibald, 22.

<sup>30</sup> “Washington College Early Trustee’s Minutes: 1811-1844” (1844), 3, Record Group 2 - Trustees Papers, W&L University Archives.

fluidly in March of 1776. According to the minutes, “the Presbytery proceeded to examine the school under the care of Mr. Graham and having the receiving of their insights.”<sup>31</sup> This was after Graham had been officially charged with the construction of the school, which entailed not only finding funding for materials, but also for establishing a curriculum and bringing on faculty.

By May 4, 1776 Graham had made some progress in the construction process and had managed to procure some learning materials for students. Graham was specifically charged by the Augusta Presbytery with finding a plot of land, organizing the construction effort, and providing a plan for what came next after the construction process was complete. According to the trustee’s minutes on May 4, “Mr. Graham informed Presbytery that the gathering at last shall have collected a deed into his hands above... He will be ready to account for more accurately with the trustees of the Augusta Academy... Mr. Graham also informed Presbytery that agreeable to the committee of Presbytery he has purchased books etc.”<sup>32</sup> With the deed secured and the project underway, even with the depreciation of currency, the school was on its way to being completed. Graham’s efforts had gone a long way in this process. The construction process was completed in 1776 and the Presbytery relinquished jurisdiction over the academy with the understanding the Graham would uphold Presbyterian teaching values as its new principal.<sup>33</sup> Graham, in short, embodied Presbyterian determination to establish an academic institution as the cornerstone of a community despite difficult challenges.

After Liberty Hall Academy opened, Graham established a Presbyterian academic curriculum based on the one he had at Princeton. He also successfully recruited faculty and students to attend the academy. According to one of his students, “Mr. Graham’s celebrity as a

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<sup>31</sup> “Washington College Early Trustee’s Minutes: 1811-1844,” 2.

<sup>32</sup> “Washington College Early Trustee’s Minutes: 1811-1844,” 3.

<sup>33</sup> “Washington College Early Trustee’s Minutes: 1811-1844,” 4.

teacher drew a number of students to this sequestered spot although there was not a school-house of any kind: An upper room in Mr. Graham's house was the place of recitation."<sup>34</sup> Alexander described Graham as being extremely welcoming to his students and congregation. Since he lived in close proximity to the school, he often times taught or lectured from his own home. He also used any finances he had available to further benefit the school.<sup>35</sup> This was mostly because Liberty Hall Academy eventually became independent from the Augusta Presbytery. This decision was made by Graham to gain autonomy, but it also resulted in significantly less funding.<sup>36</sup> This presented issues initially, but Graham was able to insure the Academy's survival throughout his tenure until his death in 1796.

William Graham's specific teaching style was based on the gospel itself. He strove to pass on Presbyterian beliefs and values to the students who attended Liberty Hall Academy. According to a former student, "M. Graham preached the gosple to them with a clearness & plainness, which all could understand, and with an earnestness and affection which caused them to feel deeply the truths which he uttered. No doubt pious were fed & comforted, and laudatory impressions made on the minds of others."<sup>37</sup> This sentiment is very similar to the lessons John Witherspoon attempted to leave with his followers. A common thread between the two was the passion with which both spoke about the Gospel and scripture which inspired their listeners. In one particular example, after a Sunday mass, Graham gave a sermon to a congregation that filled his house and some were forced to stand outside. The sermon was described as,

Exceedingly impressive, and delivered with a deep & solemn feeling wh. could hardly have been increased., without degenerating into excess or rant. The writer does remember ever before or since, to have seen a whole congregation more fully under an impression

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<sup>34</sup> Alexander, Archibald, "Memoir of the Rev. Wm. Graham," 22.

<sup>35</sup> Alexander, Archibald, 22.

<sup>36</sup> Alexander, Archibald, 22.

<sup>37</sup> Alexander, Archibald, 91.



as tender as it was solemn; but there reigned a breathless silence through the house only interrupted occasionally by the sound (of not in the text but should be) a suppressed sigh. Perhaps W. Graham never exceeded the sermon preached on this occasion.<sup>38</sup>

This passion inspired students and townspeople who came to see Graham speak. This type of celebrity and fame Graham garnered only aided the advancement of Presbyterian influence over communities in colonial Virginia.

Another similarity between Witherspoon and Graham was accountability and responsibility being essential to acting in a Godly manner. Graham's students were by no means perfect and, in some cases, far from it. One particular example was that of Andrew Lyle. Lyle was from Timber Ridge, Virginia, and was the son of a minister who had been described as extremely devote and pious.<sup>39</sup> Lyle enrolled in Liberty Hall Academy, "And it so happened that he came there, while some of the very worst young men were in the institution. Before this he hardly knew what vice was, & had hardly ever heard an oath or seen a wicked act."<sup>40</sup> Despite Graham's efforts, some students still had their vices and Lyle eventually found his. He was sixteen or seventeen when he first arrived at Liberty Hall and at first, he upheld his family traditions, but that did not last. However, one of Graham's faculty was able to speak sense into Lyle. According to a student, "This refutation delivered in the pointed, withering language of John B. Smith at once shook his [Lyle's] confidence in his beloved system of infidelity."<sup>41</sup> Smith, a faculty member of Liberty Hall Academy, was one example of how Liberty Hall Academy, and other Presbyterian higher education institutions with similar curriculums, operated.

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<sup>38</sup> Alexander, Archibald, 90.

<sup>39</sup> Alexander, Archibald, 94.

<sup>40</sup> Alexander, Archibald, 95.

<sup>41</sup> Alexander, Archibald, 97.

Many Presbyterian Colleges, established in the eighteenth century, eventually turned into prominent institutions of higher education and remain so today. However, if not for the trustees' efforts, like William Graham, what would become Washington and Lee University and other similar institutions might never have been. The effort on the part of Scottish and Scots-Irish Presbyterians to establish these institutions is remarkable and somewhat unique. However, it is important to note that only a small portion of the American colonial population (and following the Revolution, the American population) went to college, and an even smaller number went to Presbyterian institutions. Yet Scottish and Scots-Irish immigrants and their decedents maintained influence over communities in Virginia through the spread of Presbyterianism and the establishment of Presbyterian communal structures and institutions based off of Scottish and Ulster Kirk sessions and Presbyteries.

#### *Presbyterian Religious and Social Structures at a Local Level*

While John Witherspoon, Samuel Davies, and William Graham were incredibly influential in their roles as both Presbyterian ministers and college administrators, their efforts were not the only important way Presbyterianism spread through the colonies and especially Virginia. Most ministers, whether they were of Scottish/Scots-Irish descent or not, saw caring and guiding their congregations not as their primary important responsibility, but as their only one. These communities remain in existence, and the Presbyterian churches that are still standing are proof of the lasting impact the Scots-Irish had in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. Many communities in the valley were isolated and self-reliant. This was especially the case the further west colonists settled.<sup>42</sup> These settlements were mostly concerned with survival, as many were often attacked by Native Americans or short on food. Also, these communities were often very

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<sup>42</sup> Leyburn, *The Scotch-Irish*.

spread out and people had to travel great distances to congregate. This made the job of a minister in these communities all the more difficult.

One example of a minister who was able to overcome this challenge was that of Reverend John Craig and his foundation of Augusta Stone and Tinkling Spring Churches. Born in 1709, in County Antrim, Ireland, John Craig was the founder of Augusta Stone Presbyterian Church. Craig, whose parents were most likely Scottish and came to Ireland during the late seventeenth century, attended the University of Edinburgh and entered the Presbyterian ministry. He migrated to America in 1734 and eventually settled in what is now Fort Defiance, Virginia.<sup>43</sup> Craig established two Presbyterian congregations in that area which were known as the Tinkling Spring Church and Augusta Stone Church. During the 1740's, Craig baptized 883 new members into his congregations. The growth of Craig's congregation was remarkable. In the first three months of the Church's establishment, Craig oversaw 49 Baptisms. In the following year, the church saw another 125 baptisms. In nine years, the community saw 883 baptisms of which 463 were male and 430 were female.<sup>44</sup> This was largely due to his popularity as a preacher, and his influence as the community's leader. In his later years, Craig taught at Princeton College and also did a significant amount of fundraising for the College until his death in 1774.<sup>45</sup>

John Craig became a leader in the Augusta Stone community because the community was so isolated and his church provided a unifying center in town for all to congregate for any purpose. Not many original documents written by or about John Craig exist today, as many of Augusta Stone's records were destroyed in a fire in the 1850's. However, one of his sermons in

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<sup>43</sup> "Dictionary of Virginia Biography - John Craig (17 August 1709-22 April 1774) Biography," 2019, [http://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/dvb/bio.asp?b=Craig\\_John\\_1709-1774](http://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/dvb/bio.asp?b=Craig_John_1709-1774).

<sup>44</sup> Augusta Stone Church, "Record of Baptisms".

<sup>45</sup> "Dictionary of Virginia Biography - John Craig (17 August 1709-22 April 1774) Biography," 2019, [http://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/dvb/bio.asp?b=Craig\\_John\\_1709-1774](http://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/dvb/bio.asp?b=Craig_John_1709-1774).

1764 survived somehow, and it embodies to passion and fervor he was able to instill in his congregation. In this sermon, Craig described how the congregation can best live a Godly life, “for a person or people to have the true God their covenanted God, is their truest interest, and highest privilege and honor, yea the most complete happiness, satisfaction and delight, they can possibly attain to.”<sup>46</sup> This sentiment aligns very closely with the ideologies of William Graham and Samuel Davies. Again, the goal of these ministers was to establish the Church and its values as the foundation and center point of the communities of which they were a part. In this surviving sermon, Craig gave his congregation specific advice for acting in a Godly way, explaining that:

The method of handling this subject is as follows: enquire by what means a person or people may attain a covenant right in God, so as to call him their own God. Show that it is their truest interest and highest privilege and honor to have God for their own God. How it completes their happiness, satisfaction and delight. Improve the whole, briefly.<sup>47</sup>

Craig was imploring his congregation to act in the way of Christ so that the entire community might benefit. The idea of a covenant with God was nothing new in the Presbyterian faith and can be found in the origins of the Calvinist faith as well.

The Scots-Irish immigrants established communities in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia that were fundamentally politically and culturally different from the settlements on the coast and in the Chesapeake Bay area. The bay area was much more centered on tobacco production and much more connected to other communities. In the Shenandoah Valley, many communities were isolated. For example, August Stone Presbyterian Church, established in

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<sup>46</sup> Craig, John, “A Relic of a Great and Good Man of the Eighteenth Century, Being a Farewell Sermon, by the Rev. John Craig, of Augusta County, Virginia--Delivered, Nov., 1764, in Tinkling Spring Church, Augusta; on the Dissolution of the Pastoral Relation of Mr. C. to That Church.: Introductory Note. Sermon, &c. Application.,” *The Baltimore Literary and Religious Magazine (1835-1841)*; *Baltimore*, December 1840, 4.

<sup>47</sup> Craig, John, 4.

1740, was the center point of the Scots-Irish community that surrounded the Church.<sup>48</sup> The Scots-Irish established their churches as meeting grounds not only for church sessions but also for town discussions of political events. When Craig established Augusta Stone, he initially held meeting in the Stone Courthouse.<sup>49</sup> This congregation was also a part of the larger Tinkling Springs congregation and what would later become the Washington Presbytery.<sup>50</sup> This trajectory was not unique, as throughout the entire valley during the eighteenth century, Presbyterian churches were established based on the religious practices that the previous generation of Ulstermen hoped to establish.<sup>51</sup> However, not all communal matters could be solved solely by the Church and its ministers.

What would become Lexington, Virginia began as one of those frontier Western Virginia towns. Over two decades before Graham built Liberty Hall Academy and established a reason for young men to travel there, Lexington was focused on survival. According to the Lexington Court Records, December 9, 1745, was the first time a county court had ever been assembled. That same court also established one sheriff, one clerk, two deputy sheriffs, and five attorneys.<sup>52</sup> These positions were all sworn in under oath by Presbyterian ministers. These courts handled matters small and large, but mostly those of a civil or criminal manner. They are somewhat similar to Kirk sessions in principal, but Kirk sessions handled mostly cases of morality and not criminal cases.<sup>53</sup> For example, in February of 1746, Lexington was attacked by Native

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<sup>48</sup> Howard Mcknight Wilson, *The Tinkling Spring, Headwater of Freedom: A Study of the Church and Her People, 1732-1952* (Tinkling Spring and Hermitage Presbyterian Churches, 1954), 82, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/wu.89064445497>.

<sup>49</sup> Wilson, 24.

<sup>50</sup> Wilson, 25.

<sup>51</sup> Leyburn, *The Scotch-Irish*, 120–23.

<sup>52</sup> *Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish Settlement in Virginia, Extracted from the Original Court Records of Augusta County, 1745-1800*, (Rosslyn, Va., [c1912-13]), 13, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/hvd.hn4xqt>.

<sup>53</sup> Schmidt, *Holy Fairs*, 17.

Americans, and 12 citizens made claims of some sort of loss with some losses being much more significant than others.<sup>54</sup> This court was charged with finding a way to ensure these people were compensated, which is a matter a Scottish Kirk session would not typically handle.

More so than protecting its people from outside threats, the court was charged with making sure its citizens were protected from internal threats including altercations, burglary, domestic violence, and other serious criminal acts between two citizens. One specific example occurred on August 21, 1747 when, “John Graham ordered under arrest for abusing and threatening the life of Rev. John Hindman.”<sup>55</sup> Graham was held accountable for his actions and for obvious reasons the life of Hindman was protected. However, domestic threats did not just come from citizens. Vermin infestations became a massive problem for disease in the communities. In fact the problems the town of Lexington had with squirrels and crows became so terrible citizens were required to aid in reducing the population of both animal groups. People were even punished for not doing their civic duty and aiding in the killing of these birds and rodents. One example of a punishment for this crime was documented on February 27, 1749. According to the Lexington Court records, “six pounds of tobacco collected from every person that has not delivered in his crows heads or squirrels scalps, according to law.”<sup>56</sup> This was a large amount of tobacco that must be paid by those who did not partake in animal control. However, it can be inferred that these constant threats, both internally and externally only strengthened the bond Lexington citizens felt between one another.

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<sup>54</sup> *Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish Settlement in Virginia, Extracted from the Original Court Records of Augusta County, 1745-1800*, 15.

<sup>55</sup> *Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish Settlement in Virginia, Extracted from the Original Court Records of Augusta County, 1745-1800*, 31.

<sup>56</sup> *Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish Settlement in Virginia, Extracted from the Original Court Records of Augusta County, 1745-1800*, 40.

Local courts in Shenandoah Valley communities, although not explicitly run by the Presbytery, was still heavily influenced by Christian morality and incredibly protective of Presbyterian ministers. Around the same time that William Graham was constructing his new school, the Lexington court saw some changes. In fact, in March of 1774, a new commission of Justices was instated on the court, this time with more members on the court and in the positions of sheriffs and attorneys.<sup>57</sup> Also in 1774, John Craig had passed, and since this court represented Augusta County they were charged with disbursing his estate. This was not a popular decision amongst Craig's relatives, particularly his widow. For example, in May, 1774, "Rev. John Craig's estate committed to George Moffett and James Allen Jr., the widow refusing."<sup>58</sup> The court sold the land to help finance some of his debt, but Mrs. Craig had no intention of selling prior. The establishment of precedent and of a community is a difficult task and even more difficult in a frontier county such as Augusta. Craig had a large estate and wanted to ensure that it was continued to serve a religious purpose.

By the end of the eighteenth century, communities in the Shenandoah Valley began to shift. In 1786, Hanover Presbytery was divided into two different Presbyteries, one of which was established in Lexington Virginia. This Presbytery effectively took some of the authority away from Lexington's local court. In many cases, locals would go in front of the Presbytery to settle disputes because they gave it more authority than a court of law. For example, in the minutes of the Presbytery from September 26 1786, a case was brought before the Presbytery by James Cunningham against a Mr. Bell. The dispute was over a position given at Brown Church to Mr. Bell over Cunningham. The Presbytery decided to "appoint Mr. Graham (William) to write a

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<sup>57</sup> *Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish Settlement in Virginia, Extracted from the Original Court Records of Augusta County, 1745-1800*, 178.

<sup>58</sup> *Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish Settlement in Virginia, Extracted from the Original Court Records of Augusta County, 1745-1800*, 179.

letter to the session explaining our former Recommendation to them and preserve a copy for inspection at the next Presb.”<sup>59</sup> These types of arrangements and settlements occurred regularly, but are an example of the authority the Presbytery had. Another typical decision for the Presbytery was deciding a fair and balanced division of resources throughout the county. For example, on the same day as the Bell decision, several churches requested supplies to be able to host a feast for the Lord’s Day that month. According to the minutes, the Presbytery received, “A verbal petition from the Tinkling Spring for supplies for the Lord’s Supper.”<sup>60</sup> Several other Churches made similar claims. This shows the level of authority Presbyterianism had in Virginia. This role of the Presbytery of Lexington by the end of the eighteenth century was similar to the elders and council being elected in Lowland Kirks to preside over communal matters centuries before.<sup>61</sup>

Funding for the construction and establishment of these churches was difficult to procure on the Virginia frontier. It took donations from wealthy parishioners to fund Lexington Presbytery and others like it in the colonies. One such example of a generous member of a congregation occurred decades later in the case of Alexander MacKenzie. In the eastern part of Virginia in Alexandria, Alexander MacKenzie was a wealthy merchant who helped fund a Presbyterian Church in 1811. MacKenzie was likely either a Scottish immigrant himself or of Scottish descent, as he wrote and received several correspondence from relatives and friends in Scotland.<sup>62</sup> In one particular letter from one David Black, Black implored MacKenzie to, “pledge to remember me to your brother his arrival as the as also of my agreement that you know, give

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<sup>59</sup> Presbyterian Church in the U. S.A. Presbytery of Lexington, *The Minutes of Lexington Presbytery* (Richmond, Va: Whittet & Shepperson, Publishers etc, 1786), 3.

<sup>60</sup> Presbyterian Church in the U. S.A. Presbytery of Lexington, 4.

<sup>61</sup> Benedict, *Christ’s Churches Purely Reformed*, 165.

<sup>62</sup> “SydneyEnterprise OPAC,” accessed March 15, 2019, [http://librarycatalog.virginiahistory.org/final/Portal/default.aspx?lang=en-US&p\\_AABC=tab3](http://librarycatalog.virginiahistory.org/final/Portal/default.aspx?lang=en-US&p_AABC=tab3).



my sweet respects to my Peggy and pray her send the same to Mrs. Jamison.”<sup>63</sup> This letter is one example of the deep family ties and connections Scottish immigrants attempted to maintain with their homeland after settling in Virginia. Years later, a Presbyterian Church in Alexandria was looking to expand, and MacKenzie was more than happy to help. The deed for the Church was written in his name, although there is little other documentation regarding his connection to the church. More specifically, MacKenzie, with the approval of the Church’s Trustees, funded the building of a new cemetery to be placed alongside the Church. The deed stated, “the sum of nineteen dollars to them in hand paid by the said Alexander MacKenzie of which they hereby acknowledge the receipt, have granted, bargained and sold and do by those present grant bargain and sell onto the said Alexander MacKenzie.”<sup>64</sup> MacKenzie’s efforts suggest that the sense of community the Church brought reached even those who were not directly involved with the faith. Presbyterian Churches extended to the greater community and relied on that community for funding. This situation was very similar to William Graham or John Craig seeking funding for their own Presbyterian institutions. It was through collections and offerings of wealthy merchants in the communities that the Presbyterian efforts were funded.

### *Conclusion*

Scottish and Scots-Irish Presbyterian ministers contributed, in no small part, to the fundamental period of America’s cultural development. Before becoming a country, the colonies, particularly Virginia, were much more culturally malleable. The early British colonists had no long standing traditions so Scottish immigrants were forced to bring their own. The goal of these Presbyterian ministers was to incorporate Presbyterian values into every aspect of life. In the

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<sup>63</sup> “SydneyEnterprise OPAC.”

<sup>64</sup> “SydneyEnterprise OPAC.”

case of John Craig, it was building a place for two communities to gather not only to worship, but also hold town meetings, decide on judicial matters, and celebrate certain ceremonies. Through his sermons, Craig's influence spread throughout Augusta County and Tinkling Springs. In the case of William Graham, he chose to impact his particular congregation by establishing an academy of higher learning. Through his efforts and coordination, especially during a time of financial struggle during the American Revolution, Graham was able to establish the Liberty Hall Academy and oversee its early history throughout his 20-year tenure. On a national scale, John Witherspoon was able to create a network of influence that culminated in the establishment and growth of what would become Princeton University. Witherspoon would also become a key figure in America's Continental Congress and the Revolutionary War. The congregation structures in the Shenandoah Valley were based off of Scottish Kirks in the Lowlands and Scots-Irish Kirks in Ulster, and their members carried Presbyterian ideologies and philosophies with them when they came to America. These individual immigrants and their dependents, well known or not, had critical and lasting cultural impacts on their communities. With the help of wealthy merchants, like Alexander MacKenzie, their influence grew. Scotland's impact on the creation of America can thus be tied back to the Presbyterian roots of Virginia and beyond. Through the spread of Presbyterianism, and their economic success with the trans-Atlantic tobacco trade, Scottish and Scots-Irish immigrants firmly left their mark on the creation of the United States while also maintaining connections with their homelands.

## Epilogue

The impact of Scottish and Scots-Irish immigrants on colonial Virginia has often been understated. As a topic, it has not been widely covered by historians, and the academic work on the economic impact of the Scottish tobacco trade and the social impact of Presbyterianism has been particularly lacking. Part of this is due to the lack of primary source material from poor Scots such as Scottish indentured servants and farmers. In their search for a new home, these immigrants developed communities in colonial Virginia based on the values they held dear, such as their religion, economic ambition, and sense of community. The Scottish and Scots-Irish impact played out primarily at the local level, as illustrated by the stories of William Graham and John Craig. However, in some instances, such as the careers of John Witherspoon and the Glasgow tobacco lords, Scots made their impact known on a national scale. The American Revolution occurred at the tail end of the Scottish Diaspora, and as a result, the Scots and Scots-Irish were given an opportunity to not only develop local communities, but also define a new nation.

By the end of the eighteenth century, immigration to the United States became a completely different social and political movement. The new nation had been born, and as it developed further, the impact new immigrants had on the communities they entered arguably decreased. In the decades following the formation of a nation, it becomes largely rooted in the principles upon which it was founded, on for better or for worse. As a result, the impact of outsiders, especially those with diverse or markedly different cultures, is likely to be strongly opposed.

In the years leading up to and during the American Revolution, the Scots and Scots-Irish were able to take part in the formation of American politics. Just prior to the American

Revolution, the Church of Scotland was concerned for their American Presbyterian brothers. Historian Andrew Hook cites a letter from 1775 which noted, “There are at present in the different provinces upwards of one thousand six hundred Presbyterian parsons and teachers who, by the doctrine they preach, inspire the Americans to take the field; assuring them, if they fail, they fail in the service of God.”<sup>1</sup> These were Scottish-American farmers calling for Revolution. This was an example of American colonists of Scottish and Scots-Irish descent showing incredible political involvement in colonial affairs with a direct connection communal structures back in Scotland.

On a grand political stage, immigrants of Scottish descent, as well as those of Scots-Irish descent, were often divided in their loyalties during the American Revolution. The Highlanders who migrated to North Carolina remained mostly loyal to the British crown because it was mostly populated by Highland immigrants who had history of loyalty to the monarchy.<sup>2</sup> In fact, General Charles Cornwallis chose Major Patrick Ferguson, a young Scottish Highlander, to engage colonial forces in the mountains of North Carolina. Ferguson led a group of Scottish Highlanders against the cause for American independence.<sup>3</sup> Lowland Scots who migrated to Virginia were split in their loyalties. In the Virginia Gazette, Lowland Scots were often blamed for perceived British oppression in Williamsburg. For example, Lord John Murray, 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Dunmore born in Perthshire Scotland, was the last royal governor of Virginia. A Gazette article dated December 30, 1775 criticized the governor for his seizure of ships entering Norfolk. The article also stated, “we have pretty good reason to believe that lord Dunmore has propagated a report amongst the few Tories now left in his interest that 50 grenadiers, of the 14<sup>th</sup> regiment, had

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<sup>1</sup> Hook, *Scotland and America*, 67.

<sup>2</sup> Graham, *Colonists from Scotland*, 160.

<sup>3</sup> James H. Webb, *Born Fighting: How the Scots-Irish Shaped America*, 1st ed (New York: Broadway Books, 2004), 166–70.

fallen into an abuscade on 1,200 rebels that they fought bravely, killed 150 rebels and retreated.”<sup>4</sup> The Gazette claimed this to be false and continued to bash Dunmore. For this, a great deal of working class Scots, who had nothing to do with Dunmore’s actions, were labeled as loyalists and blamed for British acts of aggression. Finally, the Scots-Irish in Pennsylvania immediately sided with Colonial forces, whereas those in Virginia were slightly more hesitant.<sup>5</sup>

The Scots-Irish left Scotland and then Ulster to escape English rule over their religious and economic practices, and most of them were happy to aid the colonies in ridding of English domination. For example, as Leyburn has argued, “the Scotch-Irish have been called the first political radicals in America... Rank individualism, the competitive spirit determined, to win at whatever price, ruthlessness in action toward a goal-these traits, too have been called Scotch-Irish.”<sup>6</sup> This is a somewhat romanticized view of Scots-Irish culture, but it is mostly accurate. The Scots-Irish were able to thrive in this situation because there was no established unity in America. They had much greater autonomy than the Irish immigrants who migrated to America during the 1840’s because there was no American national precedent for political culture or belief.

On the opposite end of the political spectrum during the American Revolution, Scottish Highlanders were particularly loyal to the crown, unlike the Ulstermen no longer felt loyalty to Britain. Scots-Irish were one or two generations removed from being entirely Scottish, and the Irish did not reap the benefits of the British Empire in the way the Scots did. Scotland capitalized on the tobacco trade, but Ireland, and those Scots who lived there, were viewed almost as a

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<sup>4</sup> Pinkney, “Virginia Gazette: December 30, 1775,” December 30, 1775, [http://research.history.org/CWDLImages/VA\\_GAZET/Images/PI/1775/0233hi.jpg](http://research.history.org/CWDLImages/VA_GAZET/Images/PI/1775/0233hi.jpg).

<sup>5</sup> Webb, *Born Fighting*, 162–63.

<sup>6</sup> Leyburn, *The Scotch-Irish*, 296.

colony itself. In fact, there was even direct conflict between Highlanders and Ulstermen at The Battle of King's Mountain, South Carolina in October of 1780, which, "was essentially a battle between a revived Highland army in North Carolina and a force of Scotch-Irish patriots... It illustrated succinctly the divergent roles of Highland Scots and of Ulster Scots in the American Revolution."<sup>7</sup> Also, Presbyterians came to colonial America looking for an escape from Anglican authority. This made them very keen to establish it for themselves permanently. For similar reasons, Virginia tobacco planters of Scottish descent were also keen to gain independence. This was a tremendous potential economic and financial opportunity for self-determination.

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<sup>7</sup> Graham, *Colonists from Scotland*, 160.

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