

**COLONIAL TRADE OF
MARYLAND, 1689-1715;
A DISSERTATION, 1914**

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Colonial Trade of Maryland, 1689-1715; A Dissertation, 1914 by Margaret Shove Morriss

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BY

MARGARET SHOVE MORRISS

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of Bryn Mawr College in Partial
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree
of Doctor of Philosophy

BALTIMORE
1914

COLONIAL TRADE OF MARYLAND
1689-1715

PREFACE

The purpose of this paper is to show the place which the province of Maryland held in the British colonial system. Maryland was one of the two continental colonies which were regarded as satisfactory to the home country from the mercantilist point of view. As the connection with Great Britain was especially close during the twenty-five years when the colony was in the hands of the king, it has seemed best to analyze its trade relationships during those years. The attempt has been made to indicate its exact value to Great Britain: (1) as a source for the supply of raw material, that is, tobacco, which had to be shipped directly to England; (2) as a market for British manufactures and foreign goods through Great Britain as an entrepôt; (3) as the terminus of a line of trade which employed a large number of English ships and sailors. The description of British colonial policy as a whole is the task of Mr. G. L. Beer in the admirable series of volumes now appearing. The results reached in this presentation of trade conditions in Maryland between 1689 and 1715 tend to confirm the conclusions of Mr. Beer for the earlier development of the colonial system.

The materials used, aside from the printed records in the Archives of Maryland, have been found for the most part in the Public Record Office in London among the Colonial Office Papers. Of the greatest value was a volume of Maryland Naval Office papers for the period, containing lists of ships and their loadings. The Custom House Accounts in the Record Office furnished statements of the imports and exports to and from Virginia and Maryland between 1689 and 1715. Much general information has been secured from published and unpublished letters of the colonial gov-

ernors to the Board of Trade and the secretary of state. These were often largely concerned with trade conditions.

This study was undertaken at the suggestion of Professor Charles M. Andrews of Yale University when he was at Bryn Mawr College, and the author is indebted to him for very generous assistance at every stage of her inquiry. Professor William Roy Smith of Bryn Mawr College has made many valuable criticisms in arrangement and form. The year 1913-1914 has been spent by the writer at the Johns Hopkins University, and it is a pleasure to acknowledge the courtesy of Professor John H. Latané of that institution. The kindness of the editors of the Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science in allowing the dissertation to be published in that series is greatly appreciated. Thanks are due also to Dr. Frances Davenport of the Department of Historical Research of the Carnegie Institution for the use of unpublished references, to Mr. Hubert Hall for his assistance when the author was in London, and to Dr. Ellen D. Ellis of Mount Holyoke College for many helpful suggestions.

M. S. M.

COLONIAL TRADE OF MARYLAND, 1689-1715

CHAPTER I

STAPLE PRODUCTS AND CHIEF EXPORTS

Maryland became a royal province in 1692. At that time the belt of settlement was still comparatively narrow, although the colony had been occupied for more than fifty years. The chief means of communication between the different parts of the colony and between the colony as a whole and the outer world was by water. The result was that plantations were scattered from the head of the bay along both shores to the Potomac and Somerset Rivers and up the banks of all the navigable streams. The settlements were not evenly distributed within this narrow district, for the inhabitants were still clustered in greater numbers where the colony had first been seated,—along the Potomac and the Patuxent and around St. Mary's and Annapolis.¹ Across the bay, too, plantations were concentrated along the Choptank, Elk, and Chester Rivers and farther south in Dorchester and Somerset Counties. The controversy over the collection of taxes in the boundary dispute with Pennsylvania shows that there were a few settlements in Cecil County north of Chesapeake Bay.²

At the end of the seventeenth century there was little thought of the possibility of occupying the region back of this tide-water district. In 1695 Governor Nicholson complained to the Duke of Shrewsbury that on account of the scarcity of land young men were leaving Virginia and Maryland, "where land is grown scarce to be taken up, by reason

¹ N. D. Mereness, *Maryland as a Proprietary Province*, p. 105.

² *Archives of Maryland*, vol. xxiii, pp. 85, 87.

of the great Tracts that single persons have, and will not part with but at unreasonable rates. So that as our people increase, they are in a manner necessitated to look out for new Countrys."³ It was not until the Germans from the Palatinate came into Pennsylvania and the western part of Maryland that settlements in the latter colony spread appreciably beyond the tide-water.

The region to which the seventeenth century settlements were confined was a flat, thickly wooded country. Hugh Jones wrote home in 1698 that in the settlements there was "no Hill . . . fifty yards perpendicular but about 100 miles backe or west of us . . . the ground rises. . . . All the low land is verry woody like one continued forrest no part clear but what is cleared by the English And tho we are pretty closely seated yett we cannot See our next neighbours house for trees." He further explains that there had already been much clearing of land.⁴

The nature of the country that had been settled and the large number of waterways indicate what would supposedly be the chief resources of the colony. The thick woods which still surrounded so many of the plantations furnished an abundance of game,—deer, bear, and many varieties of wild fowl, especially turkeys. They also supplied enough mast to feed the stock, which for the most part ranged the woods. Thus the planters were assured of an abundant support from the natural products of the land with little effort on their own part, but although they lived largely by hunting and fishing, we shall see that from earliest times neither furs nor fish played a conspicuous part in the commercial activities of the colonists.

Of the fisheries this is especially true. There is abundant testimony that the bay and the rivers teemed with fish, as indeed they do today, and the different kinds were much

³ Colonial Office Papers, 5: 719, 18; see also a letter of Governor Nicholson to the Board of Trade, in C. O. 5: 714, 25; and Archives, vol. xxiii, p. 87.

⁴ Reverend Hugh Jones to Dr. Benjamin Woodroof, in Royal Society, Letter Books, I, i, 183.