

Indians

[History](#)



Although often viewed as inferior, savage and helpless, many historians are starting to discover the intelligence and wisdom the Indians had and shared with the colonists that came to America so long ago. As the settlers slowly began to create a new world on the already inhabited North America, they were plagued with starvation due to a severe drought in the area.

Due to the dry lands and the settlers expectations to “rely on Indians for food and tribute,” (Norton 17) they were disappointed to find that the Indians were not so keen to handing out food and help to the strangers that have just come onto their land and begun to settle in such a time of severe weather and starvation. As time goes on, both the Indians and the Englishmen realize they both have what the other needs; tools from the white men and crops, land and knowledge from the Indians.

As a result, the chief of Tsenacomoco, Powhatan, and colonist, Captain John Smith on an ideally peaceful, mutualistic relationship to ensure the survival of both civilizations. This agreement will leave the groups in cahoots for 100 of years leading to some disastrous scenarios and betrayals. The Indians definitely aid the settlers in many ways. First, by not aiding them right off the bat in the starvation period, gives the settlers a bit of a backbone and a realistic outlook on this venture.

A view such that this place is not like Spain, they have to start from nothing and actually work to survive or they will die, surely. With this outlook on the entire journey, the Indians supply a sense of relief when they reach out to the settlers to form some sort of agreement to aid each population. The Indians gave the Englishmen food to keep them from being wiped out from famine and “hoped to acquire guns, hatchets, and swords,” (Norton 17)

however this relationship did not workout properly and the Indians did not receive their weapons.

Towards the 1620s, the Indians had noticed a trend in the English settlement of using land, many times Indian territories, to grow fields of tobacco which the left the soil harvestless for several years at a time and the settlers frequent quest to convert the Indians to Christianity. Being already on high tensions with the Englishmen for the capture of Pocahontas, the natives had had enough of the Englishmen and their selfish ways.

The Indians probably held quite a bit of mistrust for the Englishmen and therefore were angered that they would try to convert them into the same monsters they had become, which they figured was a behavior given by their beliefs. With the realization that they could not stop the Englishmen entirely, Opechancanough decided to make a statement that they will fight back and are not willing to let the settlers barge in and take everything they've owned and worked for, for so long.

As the settlers view the lifestyle and customs of the natives they are baffled and confused by their ways and the Englishmen immediately find fault in this before they really get to know the Indians' ways. The English settlers retaliate against the Indians because they don't want to convert to Christianity, so the Englishmen think they are savage and unruly. The settlers want the Indians to ' saved by Christ' from their appalling ways and when the Indians don't want to, the settlers feel they have no choice but to try and rid the land of them, thus resulting in further animosity between the two cultures.

Overall, no one is to know exactly who were the “ good” and “ bad” guys because that is to be decided by the historian or reader. In many ways the Indians contributed to the forming of Jamestown whether it be through neglect or through food and knowledge of the land. Even though the attacks from both groups don't stop for a very long time it is clear to see that Jamestown and our country today would not be the same without the acts of each civilization.