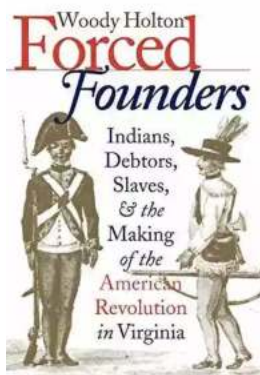


# Indians Debtors Slaves And The Making Of The American Revolution In Virginia

It is no secret that the American Revolution was a turning point in the history of the United States. It marked the birth of a new nation and the beginning of a struggle for independence from British rule. But what many people may not know is that the American Revolution was also deeply intertwined with the issue of debt, particularly in the colony of Virginia.

In the years leading up to the American Revolution, Virginia was considered the wealthiest colony in America. Its economy was predominantly agrarian, relying heavily on the labor of enslaved Africans and indentured servants. These workers were vital to the success of Virginia's tobacco industry, which was the colonists' primary source of income.

However, as the colony grew and expanded, so did its need for labor. Indentured servants were individuals who had signed a contract to work for a set number of years in exchange for passage to America. The majority of these servants were poor English and Scottish immigrants hoping to improve their economic prospects.



**Forced Founders: Indians, Debtors, Slaves, and the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia (Published by the Omohundro Institute of Early American ... and the University of North Carolina Press)** by Woody Holton (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 15304 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 254 pages



Unfortunately, many indentured servants found themselves in a cycle of poverty and debt upon their arrival in America. They were often sold to plantation owners for agricultural labor and were required to work off the cost of their passage. However, an increasing number of servants found themselves unable to pay off their debt due to the high cost of living, inadequate wages, and exploitative working conditions.

As the number of indebted servants grew, so did discontent among the working class in Virginia. Many began to question the legitimacy of their contracts and the system of indentured servitude itself. This growing unrest would eventually play a significant role in the events leading up to the American Revolution.

At the same time, Virginia's reliance on enslaved Africans further exacerbated the issue of debt. Enslaved individuals were seen as property and were bought and sold like commodities. Slaveholders would often borrow money against their enslaved workers, using them as collateral. This practice, known as slave mortgages, allowed for the perpetuation of a system that relied on the exploitation of human beings for economic gain.

Slave mortgages became increasingly widespread as the demand for labor grew. However, the reliance on debt to sustain the institution of slavery also exposed the vulnerabilities of the system. Economic downturns and fluctuations in the

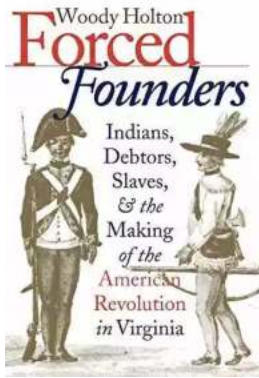
tobacco market often left slaveholders unable to repay their debts, resulting in the repossession and auctioning off of enslaved individuals.

As the tensions between the working class and affluent plantation owners grew, small-scale revolts and protests erupted throughout Virginia. In 1774, a violent conflict known as the Battle of Great Bridge occurred, further fueling the flames of discontent. These events, coupled with the ongoing issue of debt, served as catalysts for the revolutionary sentiments that would eventually lead to the American Revolution.

The American Revolution in Virginia was not solely fought for political independence from Britain. It was also a struggle against a system of exploitation and indebtedness that had plagued the colony for years. The fight for freedom from debt and the desire for economic independence played a significant role in shaping the events that led to the revolution.

, the issue of debt played a crucial role in the making of the American Revolution in Virginia. The exploitation of indentured servants and enslaved Africans for economic gain led to widespread discontent among the working class. The desire for freedom from debt and the right to economic independence fueled revolutionary sentiments and contributed to the eventual fight for independence from British rule.

So, while the American Revolution may be remembered primarily for its political significance, it is important to recognize the underlying economic factors that played a significant role in its inception. The story of Indians, debtors, slaves, and the making of the American Revolution in Virginia sheds light on the complexities and nuances of this pivotal moment in history.



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In this provocative reinterpretation of one of the best-known events in American history, Woody Holton shows that when Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, and other elite Virginians joined their peers from other colonies in declaring independence from Britain, they acted partly in response to grassroots rebellions against their own rule.

The Virginia gentry's efforts to shape London's imperial policy were thwarted by British merchants and by a coalition of Indian nations. In 1774, elite Virginians suspended trade with Britain in order to pressure Parliament and, at the same time, to save restive Virginia debtors from a terrible recession. The boycott and the growing imperial conflict led to rebellions by enslaved Virginians, Indians, and tobacco farmers. By the spring of 1776 the gentry believed the only way to regain control of the common people was to take Virginia out of the British Empire.

Forced Founders uses the new social history to shed light on a classic political question: why did the owners of vast plantations, viewed by many of their contemporaries as aristocrats, start a revolution? As Holton's fast-paced narrative unfolds, the old story of patriot versus loyalist becomes decidedly more complex.



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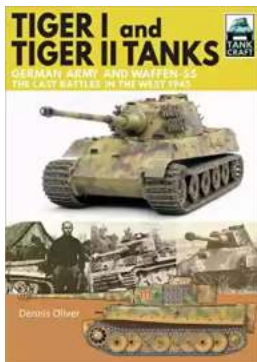
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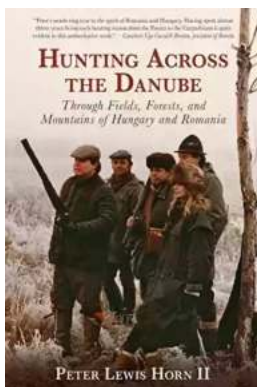
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