**Exploring Further Possible Connections Between the English Civil War and the Early Holymans of Virginia**

**by Robert Holloman**

*During the past several articles, Robert Holloman, a descendant of Christopher Holyman, Sr., has been exploring connections between participants in the English Civil War and the arrival of the Holymans to Colonial Virginia.  In this posting, he proposes additional  evidence that suggests the Holymans were sympathetic to Charles I's forces in the fight with Parliament.  One remembers Charles I was executed in 1649, and many of his supporters fled the country.  Were some who fled the Holymans?* - Glenn N. Holliman

My premise that the English Civil War sparked the emigration of Christopher Hollyman (and/or Judith) to Virginia is obviously not original as many families trace some of their American roots to this period.  Documenting the Hollyman (Holyman, Holliman, Holloman, etc) migration is challenging.  I have scattered notes and quotes about the topic that I continue to try and arrange in manageable order.

One is struck by comments such as in Richard L. Morton's *Colonial Virginia, Vol. I, the Tidewater Period* *1607 - 1710* (UNC Press, 1960) where on p. 166 is stated: "After Prince Charles's defeat in 1651 at Worcester, 1,610 Royalist prisoners were granted their request to be sent to Virginia."  Although Charles's army was predominately Scottish and not English at Worcester, prior to the battle his army had grown by the influx of English royalist supporters as it had moved south into England from Scotland.

[](https://lh5.googleusercontent.com/-jyWOIYf5Rbg/TWkn8idhygI/AAAAAAAACBc/ye5dtQWmHak/s1600/1651x-Battle_of_Worcester.jpg)

*This 19th Century engraving depicts the success of Oliver Cromwell and his forces over the future Charles II at Worcester, England in 1651.  After the battle, Prince Charles escaped and hide for a while in an oak tree, since known as the 'Royal Oak'.  Cromwell died in 1658 and in 1660, the Stuart family, Charles II, was restored to the throne of England.*

Parliament decreed in September 1651 that all prisoners below the rank of Captain were to be sent to the plantations.  Prisoners from Chester, Worcester, Liverpool and Shrewsbury were sent to Bristol for transportation to Virginia and Bermuda.

A large number of these left with the annual Virginia fleet in the fall of 1651.  This fleet met up with Sir George Ayscue's fleet in Barbados wheer he was engaged in fighting to subdue Royalist forces that were then controlling the colony.

In December Sir George hired 150 prisoners from the fleet to join with his marines for a successful assault on Speight's Town.  In January 1652, Barbados submitted to Ayscue as the Virginia fleet continued to Jamestown.  The Virginia arrival of the Worcester prisoners is captured in the arrival records which record 270 prisoners from the ship including some of my non-Holliman ancestors, John and Sarah Bridger, who entered the colony as indentured servants. The Bridgers are ancestral grandparents.   I cannot find any Hollimans on the list but I can not be totally certain because many names are not legible.

I have found other interesting connections between the English Civil War and Christopher Hollyman.  Note if you will the connection of the first records of Christopher Holyman, Sr in Virginia is his granting of power of attorney to Thomas Pittman in 1660.  According to Pittman family websites, **Thomas Pittman was a royalist officer who arrived in Virginia in 1649** from Monmouthshire, England.  Furthering this connection between the Pittman and Holyman families, his grandson, Thomas Pittman III would later marry Christopher's son William Holliman's widow, Mary Chambers Holliman in 1704.

As my descendants continuously lived in Virginia and North Carolina though my father and mother's generation, through the years I have learned of other members of my families who were Royalist immigrants.  For example, Joseph Bridger, who was born in Dursley, Gloucestershire, was a Roylist officer.  His descendant Sarah Bridger, my 2nd  great- great grandmother married  my 2nd great-great father Jesse Holloman in 1867. Joseph  Bridger is thought to have arrived in the mid-1650s and is known to have brought several supporters with him to Virginia.  Another descendant of mine, Thomas Carter, Sr, a Royalist arrived in 1650.  Charlotte Carter is my 4th great-grandmother.

Although I am skeptical that each story of a royalist emigrant to Virginia between 1645 and 1660 has a basis in fact, I argue that given the dates of Christopher Holyman's arrival in Virginia, that the English Civil War had to have played a prominent roll in the decision to emigrate.  Hopefully, with more research a data trail can shed further light on this proposition. - **Robert Holloman**