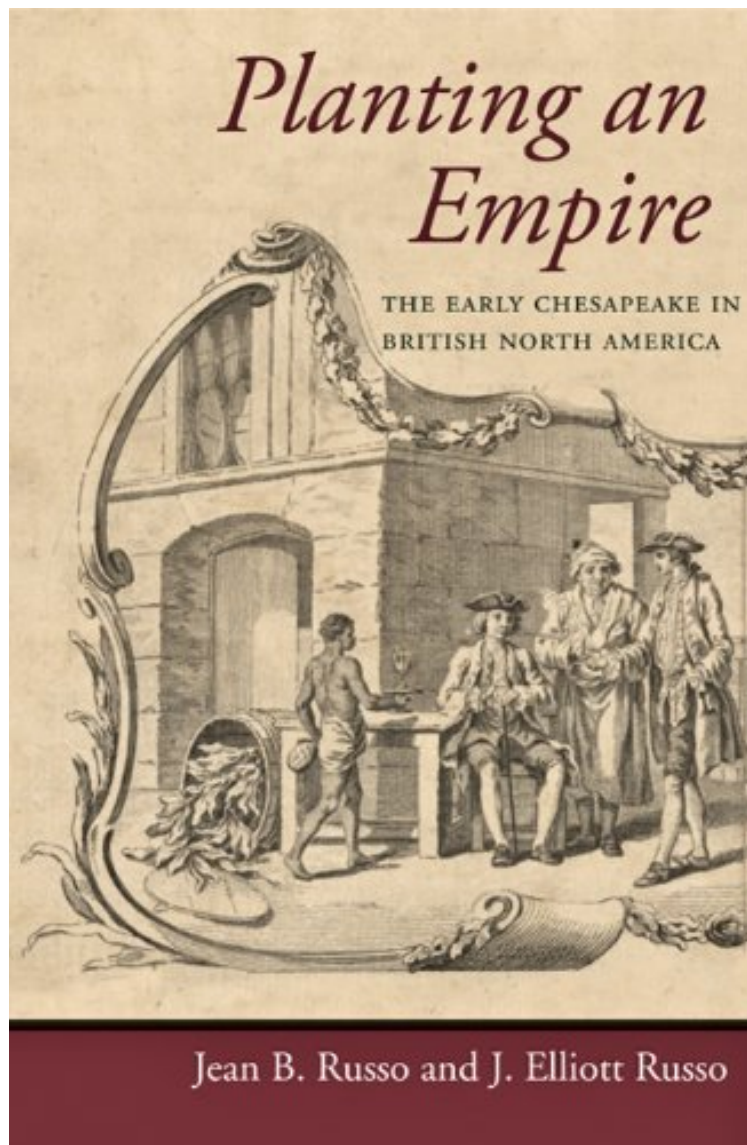


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## Planting an Empire: The Early Chesapeake in British North America (Regional Perspectives on Early America)

*Jean B. Russo, J. Elliott Russo*  
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**Jean B. Russo, J. Elliott Russo : Planting an Empire: The Early Chesapeake in British North America (Regional Perspectives on Early America)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Planting an Empire: The Early Chesapeake in British North America (Regional Perspectives on Early America):

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Readable Interesting Chesapeake OverviewBy Karen L. Jean Russo has written an extremely readable, but exhaustively researched overview of the early years of the Chesapeake. While designed for the academic community, a history buff interested in this period will find it an extremely useful addition to their library. Definitely recommend.

Planting an Empire explores the social and economic history of the Chesapeake region, revealing a story of two similar but distinct colonies in early America. Linked by the Chesapeake Bay, Virginia and Maryland formed a prosperous and politically important region in British North America before the American Revolution. Yet these "sister" colonies, alike in climate and soil, emphasis on tobacco farming, and use of enslaved labor, eventually followed divergent social and economic paths. Jean B. Russo and J. Elliott Russo review the shared history of these two colonies, examining not only their unsteady origins, the powerful role of tobacco, and the slow development of a settler society but also the economic disparities and political jealousies that divided them. Recounting the rich history of the Chesapeake Bay region over a 150-year period, the authors discuss in clear and accessible prose the key developments common to both colonies as well as important regional events, including Maryland's "plundering time," Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia, and the opening battles of the French and Indian War. They explain how the internal differences and regional discord of the seventeenth century gave way in the eighteenth century to a more coherent regional culture fostered by a shared commitment to slavery and increasing socio-economic maturity. Addressing an undergraduate audience, the Russos study not just wealthy plantation owners and government officials but all the people involved in planting an empire in the Chesapeake region—poor and middling planters, women, Native Americans, enslaved and free blacks, and non-English immigrants. No other book offers such a comprehensive brief history of the Maryland and Virginia colonies and their place within the emerging British Empire.

"A valuable and wide-ranging summary of social, economic, and political developments in the Chesapeake from the beginning of European settlement to the Revolution." (Lorena S. Walsh, author of *Motives of Honor, Pleasure, and Profit: Plantation Management in the Colonial Chesapeake, 1607–1763*) "A lucidly written, up-to-date synthesis of the histories of Colonial Virginia and Maryland that will be a valuable asset to students new to the subject, or to scholars in need of a brief refresher." (Choice) "An elegant and admirably concise overview of the history of the Chesapeake Bay region from the onset of English settlement to the end of the colonial period." (Virginia DeJohn Anderson *Journal of American History*) "A clear and accessible introduction to the history of the colonial Chesapeake." (Travis Glasson *Journal of Southern History*) "In this volume, Jean B. Russo and J. Elliott Russo synthesize the massive and sometimes arcane scholarship on colonial Chesapeake society into the most coherent, accessible, student-friendly account yet produced on this important and much-studied area. Thanks to Russo and Russo's graceful, economical prose, most readers will have no inkling as to how hard-won many of the insights contained in the original works that they draw upon really were... [ *Planting an Empire* ] is a remarkably economical, yet nuanced account of what rightly remains a staple of American history: the colonial Chesapeake's tobacco-dominated society of planters, servants, and slaves." (James D. Rice *Agricultural History*) "Planting an Empire offers a fresh new synthesis of colonial Chesapeake history... This important addition to the substantial body of scholarship known as the 'Chesapeake School,' weaves multiple narratives into a well-researched history of the colonized Chesapeake... Adding to the value of this book is its accessibility for a wide readership. The authors make a sustained effort to qualify terms and phrases by including brief explanations throughout the text, making it an excellent text for undergraduates and emerging history scholars." (Teresa Foster Melbourne *Historical Journal*) About the Author Jean B. Russo is associate general editor of *Archives of Maryland Online* and coeditor of *The Diary of William Faris: The Daily Life of an Annapolis Silversmith and Colonial Chesapeake Society*. J. Elliott Russo is a contributing editor to the *Maryland State Archives* and author of numerous articles, book chapters, and papers on colonial Maryland and Virginia.