Timeline-African Americans at Jamestown

First recorded arrival of "20 and Odd" Africans in August at Point Comfort on a ship named *White Lion;* an English privateer with a Dutch letter of marque.

John Punch, a black runaway indentured servant, punished with servitude for life. Two white runaways only got four years of additional service.

Slavery was recognized in the law of the colony. If a child was born to a slave woman, the child would be considered a slave. (1662)

Free Blacks could no longer own white indentured servants, only black servants.

In 1692, new law states, "every negro or other slave" who commits a capital offense will be tried by a separate court that deprived them of the right of a trial by jury, counsel, right to call witnesses in their defense and no appeal of their verdict.

-----1619----------1630----------1640----------1650----------1660---------1670----------1680----------1690----------1700

Gov. George Yeardley and cape merchant, Abraham Peirsey, purchased the "20 and Odd" Africans in exchange for provisions the *White Lion n*eeded. A 1624/25 census of the colony lists 23 Africans and their descendents living in Virginia with nine as residents of Jamestown.

Legislation stated that masters were to provide firearms to all family members, but not black servants or slaves. Free blacks still retained their firearms. (1640)

1650 Black population about 300

General Assembly outlaws freedom to black slaves through baptism. (1667) In 1669, a new law stated if any slave should die during punishment for any wrongdoing, the master is not guilty of a felony as no one would purposely "destroy his own estate (property)."

An act was passed preventing slaves from meeting in large numbers. Slaves must get written permission to leave a plantation; slaves could not carry anything that could serve as a weapon; if a slave struck any "Christian" the slave would get "30 lashes on his bare back well laid on"; and if any runaway slave resisted capture they could be killed legally by their pursuers. (Black population about 2,700)

Africans and their descendents made up 10-15% of Virginia's estimated population of 62,000 people. The first "slave codes" become law in 1705. Slaves are considered "real estate" and are owned by their masters for life.