From Settlement to Legislative assembly

- Customs of the bay—Burnaby’s code (1765): Residents presented their laws to Admiral Burnaby (to become a protectorate): Primary goal of protecting work and property—Behavior, damage to property, killing, taxes, etc.

- Public meetings: Informal meetings—only whites could participate; Participation depended on wealth and length of residency in British Honduras.

- Colony: Belize was not a formal colony (with its own style of government) until 1862—Colony: A territory under the control of a foreign sovereign state.

- Legislative Assembly: Public meeting was held where a legislative assembly was decided 1853 (1854); “The legislative shall consist of the Superintendent and a legislative assembly”

- Why? A depression of the forest industry caused a focus on British property based on land; The British Honduras Company became the dominant land owner; Forestocracy dominated the legislative assembly; 1856 Clayton-Bulwer treaty: British cannot colonize new areas.

The Legislative assembly

- Consisted of 21 members, 18 elected, 3 appointed by the superintendent

- First election 1853; First sitting of the assembly 1854; 4 year session.

- Who could run: Male, 21 years, Natural born or naturalized British, Personal property of 400 pounds

- Who could vote? Property of 7 pounds Or annual salary of 100 pounds

Legislative assembly: SUPERINTENDENTS HAD CONTROL: AMMENDED AND CREATED LAWS; PEOPLE IN THE GOVERNMENT ONLY CARED FOR BELIZE TOWN!

- Crown colony: Crown Colony: A country or area under the full/partial political control of another country, typically a distant one, and occupied by settlers from that country—ruled by the mother country; 1871: GOVERNOR FOR DIRECT RULE FROM ENGLAND—Moved power from the old settlers to the companies and the Colonial office in LONDON.

The Forestocracy and their roles

- Forest demand dominated the enclave economy— Dominated the distribution of land—controlled labor—No concern for replacing the trees being chopped.

- Forestocracy: The “principal inhabitants” that controlled the harvesting of the forests within the settlement of British Honduras—Controlled public meetings and later the legislative assembly—Controlled imports/exports and retailing.

- Quickly monopolized land: Land distribution quickly had restrictions—“Location Laws—More slaves meant more land (rich had more land and contracts.

1894 riots

- Causes: As a result of currency devaluation in the colony—Devaluation: A currency devalues when its value declines in relation to one or more other currencies.

- Who rioted: Working class black Belizeans; Workers came back from Mahogany camps; Jamaican and Barbadian imported police rioted against their low wages.

- Why did they riot? The devaluation hindered family incomes; Women could not buy groceries; Racist treatment from whites.
Women in the riot: “At the trial of the rioters, policemen testified that women pulled down fences, smashed plate glass, attacked the police station and that they urged men on with cries of ‘lick them boys.’” Unfair treatment united men and women to fight for an African-Belizean identity.

Peace: West Indian Regiments came into the settlement—Restored peace and order.

Marcus Garvey
- Born in St. Ann’s Bay, Jamaica in 1887-----1914 started the UNIA in Jamaica-----Moved to the US to gain more support for his ideas.
- UNIA: The United Negro Improvement Association: dedicated to fight for racial equality and rights of the blacks; Motto: “One aim, one God, one Destiny; Newspaper: The Negro-world.
- Racial Consciousness: Self-made person: financial independence and pride; Racial purity; he believed that blacks need to form a new nation where they can develop; Upliftment of the black race.
- Samuel Haynes: Was influenced by the UNIA ideas; Started the 1919 ex-servicemen riot; 1920 a Branch of the UNIA was established in British Honduras.
- Effects in BH: The Black Cross Nurses was established under UNIA (1920); Nurse Seay and Cleopatra White Government did not train them; own tutors and qualified nurses; Impacted Antonio Soberanis, Evan X Hyde.

Introduction to the 1919 riots

Why go to the war? Showing loyalty to the crown; Becoming Economically better; Showing Manhood and courage

-Going to war: 129 men left Belize on November 4th 1915 on the Verdela; 408 men left Belize on 15th July 1916 on the Magdalena. The two contingents were incorporated into the 1st and 2nd battalions of the British West Indies Regiments in the Middle East Theatre.

-While at war: Their experience was one of humiliation, discrimination and bitterness; Experienced blatant white racism; Joined labour battalions and their destination was the Rivers Tigris and Euphrates and not the Somme or Marne. Racially inspired.

-Racism: It was “very doubtful if the west Indian Negro would prove reliable in action; It was “against a British tradition to employ aboriginal troops against an European enemy; Disowned by white officers; Carried water, cooked, washed, cleaned latrines; Could not sing “Rule Britania”

-Corporal Haynes reports: Corporal Haynes: he recorded that at camp after camp they had been allotted insanitary, unlighted, unheated, quarters with primitive galleys; that the sick had received indifferent medical treatment and several contingent members had gone to untimely and unnecessary deaths through disease; that at several camps they had been forced to carry out fatigue duties for the European troops; that they had often been transported for long distances in cattle trucks and that everywhere they had been excluded from white mess huts, playing fields, and bathing quarters and subject to abuse from white troops. In one instance, because they were ‘niggers’ and ‘sambos’, a white chaplin refused to administer communion to them in a church tent while at Gabbary Camp.

Coming home
- Belize contingent arrived on the 8th of July 1919 on the troopship Veronie; Marched to the governor’s house where they were hailed as heroes by Eyre Hutson (governor).

-welcoming committee: The Returned Servicemen’s Welcoming Committee and the Belize Contingents’ Patriotic Fund; Help to find employment; Payments; Soldiers went for dinner and received $10

-The next day: A sports day---Watch a free film

-heroes disrespected: “A land fir heroes to live in; Their applications civil service posts, mercantile clerkship, land grants and cash advances were often rejected; Payments for soldiers took long to be accepted; Cost of living had considerably risen and merchants were taking advantage of the prosperity of veterans.

-the Riot: At 8:30 pm July 22nd 1919, two units of the veteran contingent marched through the centre of Belize Town smashing everything on their way. Haynes and Mcdonald led the rebellion and 3,000 thousand residents joined. At 8:50 pm the electric plant failed= looting of businesses. Whites and the creole elite on the streets were faced with verbal abuse, bombardment of missiles and beatings= running into the Drill Hall on Queen Street.

-The riot ends: 23rd of July 1919 the riot ended stopped by Haynes and Mcdonald (head of police); HMS Constance with soldiers came to establish British control; The rioters were persecuted and jailed