

The Proceedings and Accidents of The English Colony in Virginia

CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH

Extracted from the Authors following, by
William Simons, Doctour of Divinitie.¹

Chapter I

It might well be thought, a Countrie so faire (as Virginia is) and a people so tractable, would long ere this have bene quietly possessed, to the satisfaction of the adventurers, and the eternizing of the memory of those that effected it. But because all the world doe see a default², this following Treatise shall give satisfaction to all indifferent Readers, how the businesse hath bin carried: where no doubt they will easily understand and answer to their question, how it came to passe there was no better speed and successe in those proceedings.

Captaine Bartholomew Gosnoll, one of the first movers of this plantation, having many yeares solicited many of his friends, but found small assistants; at last prevailed with some Gentlemen, as Captaine John Smith, Master Edward-Maria Wingfield, Master Robert Hunt, and divers others, who depended a yeare upon his projects, but nothing could be effected, till by their great charge and industrie, it came to be apprehended by certaine of the Nobilitie, Gentry, and Marchants, so that

1606.
*Sir Thomas Smith
Treasurer.*

*The first mover of
the action.*

¹Captain John Smith, "The Proceedings and Accidents of the English Colony in Virginia," *The Generall History of Virginia, The Sommer Isles, and New England* (1623), Book III, Chapters 1-3, *The Complete Works of Captain John Smith*, ed. Philip L. Barbour (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986).

²The narrative is the composite work of several authors: Thomas Studley, Dr. Walter Russell, Nathaniel Powell, William Pherryplace, Richard Wiffin, Richard Potts, and Anas Todhill. Reverend William Simons served as an editor.

³failure

his Majesty by his letters patents, gave commission for establishing Councils, to direct here,³ and to governe, and to execute there. To effect this, was spent another yeare, and by that, three ships were provided, one of 100 Tuns, another of 40. and a Pinnace of 20. The transportation of the company was committed to Captaine Christopher Newport, a Marriner well practised for the Westernne parts of America. But their orders for government were put in a box, not to be opened, nor the governours knowne untill they arrived in Virginia.

On the 19 of December, 1606. we set sayle from Blackwall, but⁴ by unprosperous winds, were kept six weekes in the sight of England; all which time, Master Hunt our Preacher, was so weake and sicke, that few expected his recovery. Yet although he were but twentie myles from his habitation (the time we were in the Downes) and notwithstanding the stormy weather, nor the scandalous imputations (of some few, little better than Atheists, of the greatest ranke amongst us) suggested against him, all this could never force from him so much as a seeming desire to leave the busines, but preferred the service of God, in so good a voyage, before any affection to contest with his godlesse foes, whose detestous designes (could they have prevailed) had even then overthrowne the businesse, so many discontents did then arise, had he not with the water of patience, and his godly exhortations (but chiefly by his true devoted examples) quenched those flames of envie, and dissention.

We watered at the Canaries,⁴ we traded with the Salvages at Dominica; three weekes we spent in refreshing our selves amongst these west-India Isles; in Gwardalupa we found a bath so hot, as in it we boyled Porck as well as over the fire. And at a little Isle called Monica, we tooke from the bushes with our hands, neare two hogsheds full of Birds in three or foure houres. In Mevis, Mona, and the Virgin Isles, we spent some time, where, with a lothsome beast like a Crocodil, called a Gwayn, Tortoises, Pelicans, Parrots, and fishes, we daily feasted. Gone from thence in search of Virginia,

³that is to supply direction in London, and to govern in Virginia.

⁴Canary Islands. The Gulf stream current impels sail vessels to approach the southern mainland from the south, by way of the West Indies.

the company was not a little discomforted, seeing the Marriners had 3 dayes passed their reckoning and found no land, so that Captaine Ratliffe (Captaine of the Pinnace) rather desired to beare up the helme to returne for England, then make further search. But God the guider of all good actions, forcing them by an extreame storme to hull all night, did drive them by his providence to their desired Port, beyond all their expectations, for never any of them had seene that coast. The first land they made they called Cape Henry,⁵ where thirtie of them recreating themselves on shore, were assaulted by five Salvages, who hurt two of the English very dangerously. That night was the box opened, and the orders read, in which Bartholomew Gosnoll, John Smith, Edward Wingfield, Christopher Newport, John Ratliffe, John Martin, and George Kendall, were named to be the Councell, and to choose a President amongst them for a yeare, who with the Councell should governe. Matters of moment were to be examined by a jury, but determined by the major part of the Councell, in which the President had two voyces. Untill the 13 of May they sought a place to plant in, then the Councell was sworne, Master Wingfield was chosen President, and an Oration made, why Captaine Smith was not admitted of the Councell as the rest.⁶

Now falleth every man to worke, the Councell contrive the Fort, the rest cut downe trees to make place to pitch their Tents; some provide clappbord to relade the ships, some make gardens, some nets, etc. The Salvages often visited us kindly. The Presidents overweening jealousy would admit no exercise at armes, or fortification, but the boughs of trees cast together in the forme of a halfe moone by the extraordinary paines and diligence of Captaine Kendall. Newport, Smith, and twentie others, were sent to discover the head of the river: by divers small habitations they passed, in six dayes they arrived at a Towne called Powhatan, consisting of

⁵the southern tip of the eastern shore of Maryland and Virginia.

⁶Smith on the voyage had made his criticisms of aristocratic highhandedness in the management of the colony evident, alienating numbers of the other leading figures in the expedition. The councillors were distressed to learn that the Company's instructions named Smith as a member of the governing circle.

Their first landing.

Matters of government.

The discovery of the Falles and Powhatan.

Orders for government.

Monica an unfrequented Isle full of Birds.

some twelve houses, pleasantly seated on a hill; before it three fertile Isles, about it many of their cornfields, the place is very pleasant, and strong by nature, of this place the Prince is called Powhatan, and his people Powhatans, to this place the river is navigable; but higher within a myle, by reason of the Rockes and Isles, there is not passage for a small Boat, this they call the Falles, the people in all parts kindly intreated them, till being returned within twentie myles of James towne, they gave just cause of jealousy, but had God not blessed the discoverers otherwise then those at the Fort, there had then bene an end of that plantation; for at the Fort, where they arrived the next day, they found 17 men hurt, and a boy slaine by the Salvages, and had it not chanced a crosse barre shot from the Ships strooke downe a bough from a tree amongst them, that caused them to retire, our men had all bene slaine, being securely all at worke, and their armes in dry fats.⁷

Hereupon the President was contented the Fort should be pallisadoed, the Ordnance mounted, his men armed and exercised, for many were the assaults, and ambuscadoes⁸ of the Salvages, and our men by their disorderly stragling were often hurt, when the Salvages by the nimblenesse of their heeles well escaped. What toyle we had, with so small a power to guard our workemen adayes, watch all night, resist our enemies, and effect our businesse, to relade the ships, cut downe trees, and prepare the ground to plant our Corne, etc., I referre to the Readers consideration. Six weekes being spent in this manner, Capitaine Newport (who was hired onely for our transportation) was to returne with the ships. Now Capitaine Smith, who all this time from their departure from the Canaries was restrained as a prisoner upon the scandalous suggestions of some of the chiefe (envying his repute) who fained he intended to usurpe the government, murder the Councill, and make himselfe King, that his confederats were dispersed in all the three ships, and that divers of his confederats that revealed it, would affirme it, for this he was committed as a prisoner: thirteene weekes he remained thus suspected, and by

⁷storage barrels⁸ambushes

that time the ships should returne they pretended out of their commiserations, to referre him to the Councill in England to receive a check, rather then by particulating his designes make him so odious to the world, as to touch his life, or utterly overthrow his reputation. But he so much scorned their charitie, and publicly defied the uttermost of their crueltie, he wisely prevented their policies, though he could not suppress their envies, yet so well he demeaned himselfe in this businesse, as all the company did see his innocency, and his adversaries malice, and those suborned to accuse him, accused his accusers of subornation; many untruthes were alledged against him; but being so apparently disproved, begat a generall hatred in the hearts of the company against such unjust Commanders, that the President was adjudged to give him 200. so that all he had was seized upon, in part of satisfaction, which Smith presently returned to the Store for the generall use of the Colony. Many were the mischiefes that daily sprung from their ignorant (yet ambitious) spirits; but the good Doctrine and exhortation of our Preacher Master Hunt reconciled them, and caused Capitaine Smith to be admitted of the Councill; the next day all received the Communion, the day following the Salvages voluntarily desired peace, and Capitaine Newport returned for England with newes; leaving in Virginia 100. the 15 of June 1607.

By this observe;

Good men did ne'r their Countries ruine bring.

But when evill men shall injuries beginne;

Not caring to corrupt and violate

The judgements-seats for their owne Lucr's sake:

Then looke that Country cannot long have peace,

Though for the present it have rest and ease.⁹

Chapter II

What happened till the first supply.

Being thus left to our fortunes, it fortunated that within ten dayes scarce ten amongst us could either goe, or well stand, such extreame weaknes and sicknes oppressed us.

The occasion of sickness.

⁹Theognis of Megara, *Atheomastix.*

And thereat none need marvaile, if they consider the cause and reason, which was this; whilst the ships stayed, our allowance was somewhat bettered, by a daily proportion of Bisket, which the sailers would pilfer to sell, give, or exchange with us, for money, Saxefras, fures, or love. But when they departed, there remained neither taverne, beere-house, nor place of reliefe, but the common Kettell. Had we bene as free from all sinnes as gluttony, and drunkenness, we might have bene canonized for Saints; But our President would never have been admitted, for ingrossing to his private, Oatmeale, Sacke, Oyle, Aquavitz, Beefe, Egges, or what not, but the Kettell; that indeed he allowed equally to be distributed, and that was halfe a pint of wheat, and as much barley boyled with water for a man a day, and this having fayed some 26. weekes in the ships hold, contained as many wormes as graines; so that we might truly call it rather so much bran then corne, our drinke was water, our lodgings Castles in the ayre: with this lodging and dyet, our extreme toyle in bearing and planting Pallisadoes, so strained and bruised us, and our continuall labour in the extremitie of the heat had so weakened us, as were cause sufficient to have made us as miserable in our native Countrey, or any other place in the world. From May, to September, those that escaped, lived upon Sturgeon, and Sea-crabs, fiftie in this time we buried, the rest seeing the Presidents projects to escape these miseries in our Pin-nace by flight (who all this time had neither felt want nor sickness) so moved our dead spirits, as we deposed him; and established Ratcliffe in his place, (Gosnoll being dead) Kendall deposed, Smith newly recovered, Martin and Ratcliffe was by his care preserved and relieved, and the most of the souldiers recovered, with the skilfull diligence of Master Thomas Wotton our Chirurgian¹⁰ general. But now was all our provision spent, the Sturgeon gone, all helps abandoned, each houre expecting the fury of the Salvages; when God the patron of all good endeavours, in that desperate extremitie so changed the hearts of the Salvages, that they brought such plenty of their fruits, and provision, as no man wanted.

¹⁰surgeon

The Sailers abuses.

And now where some affirmed it was ill done of the Councell to send forth men so badly provided, this in contradictable reason will shew them plainly they are too ill advised to nourish such ill conceits; first, the fault of our going was our owne, what could be thought fitting or necessary we had, but what we should find, or want, or where we should be, we were all ignorant, and supposing to make our passage in two moneths, with victuall to live, and the advantage of the spring to worke; we were at Sea five moneths, where we both spent our victuall and lost the opportunitie of the time, and season to plant, by the unskillfull presumption of our ignorant transporters, that understood not at all, what they undertooke.

Such actions have ever since the worlds beginning bene subject to such accidents, and every thing of worth is found full of difficulties, but nothing so difficult as to establish a Common-wealth so farre remote from men and meanes, and where mens mindes are so untoward as neither doe well themselves, nor suffer others. But to proceed.

The new President and Martin, being little beloved, of weak judgement in dangers, and lesse industrie in peace, committed the managing of all things abroad to Captaine Smith: who by his owne example, good words, and faire promises, set some to mow, others to binde thatch, some to build houses, others to thatch them, himselfe alwayes bearing the greatest taske for his owne share, so that in short time, he provided most of them lodgings, neglecting any for himselfe. This done, seeing the Salvages superfluitie beginne to decrease (with some of his workemen) shipped himselfe in the Shallop to search the Country for trade. The want of the language, knowledge to mannage his boat without sailes, the want of a sufficient power, (knowing the multitude of the Salvages) apparell for his men, and other necessaries, were infinite impediments, yet no discouragement. Being but six or seaven in company he went downe the river to Kecoughtan, where at first they scorned him, as a famished man, and would in derision offer him a handfull of Corne, a peece of bread, for their swords and muskets, and such like portions also for their apparell. But seeing by trade and

A bad President.

The beginning of Trade abroad.

Plentie unexpected.

The building of James Towne.

courtesie there was nothing to be had, he made bold to try such conclusions as necessitie inforced, though contrary to his Commission: Let fly his muskets, ran his boat on shore, wherat they all fled into the woods. So marching towards their houses, they might see great heapes of corne: much adoe he had to restraine his hungry souldiers from present taking of it, expecting as it hapned that the Salvages would assault them, as not long after they did with a most hydeous noyse. Sixtie or seaventie of them, some blacke, some red, some white, some party-coloured, came in a square order, singing and dauncing out of the woods, with their *Okee* (which was an Idoll made of skinned, stuffed with mosse, all painted and hung with chaines and copper) borne before them: and in this manner being well armed, with Clubs, Targets, Bowes and Arrowes, they charged the English, that so kindly received them with their muskets loaden with Pistoll shot, that downe fell their God, and divers lay sprauling on the ground; the rest fled againe to the woods, and ere long sent one of their *Quiyoughkasocks* to offer peace, and redeeme their *Okee*. Smith told them, if onely six of them would come unarmed and loade his boat, he would not only be their friend, but restore them their *Okee*, and give them Beads, Copper, and Hatchets besides: which on both sides was to their contents performed: and then they brought him Venison, Turkeys, wild foule, bread, and what they had, singing and dauncing in signe of friendship till they departed. In his returne he discovered the Towne and Country of Warraskoyack.

*Thus God unboundlesse by his power,
Made them thus kind, would us devour.*

Smith perceiving (notwithstanding their late miserie) not any regarded but from hand to mouth (the company being well recovered) caused the Pinnace to be provided with things fitting to get provision for the yeare following: but in the interim he made 3. or 4. journies and discovered the people of Chickahamania: yet what he carefully provided the rest carelesly spent. Wingfield and Kendall living in disgrace, seeing all things at randome in the absence of Smith, the compa-

*Amoris, a Salvage
his best friend slaine
for loving us.*

*The Discovery of
Chickahamina.*

nies dislike of their Presidents weaknes, and their small love to Martins never mending sicknes, strengthened themselves with the sailers, and other confederates to regaine their former credit and authority, or at least such meanes aboard the Pinnace, (being fitted to saile as Smith had appointed for trade) to alter her course and to goe for England. Smith unexpectedly returning had the plot discovered to him, much trouble he had to prevent it, till with store of sakre and musket shot he forced them to stay or sinke in the river, which action cost the life of captaine Kendall.¹¹ These brawles are so disgustfull, as some will say they were better forgotten, yet all men of good judgement will conclude, it were better their basenes should be manifest to the world, then the busines beare the scorne and shame of their excused disorders. The President and captaine Archer not long after intended also to have abandoned the country, which project also was curbed, and suppressed by Smith. The Spaniard never more greedily desired gold then he victuall, nor his souldiers more to abandon the Country, then he to keepe it. But finding plentie of Corne in the river of Chickahamania where hundreds of Salvages in divers places stood with baskets expecting his comming. And now the winter approaching, the rivers became so covered with swans, geese, duckes, and cranes, that we daily feasted with good bread, Virginia pease, pumpions, and putchamins,¹² fish, fowle, and diverse sorts of wild beasts as fat as we could eate them: so that none of our Tuffaffay humorists¹³ desired to goe for England. But our Comædies never endured long without a Tragedie; some idle exceptions being muttered against Captaine Smith, for not discovering the head of Chickahamania river, and taxed by the Council, to be too slow in so worthy an attempt. The next voyage hee proceeded so farre that with much labour by cutting of trees in sunder he made his passage, but when his Barge could passe no farther, he left her in a broad bay out of danger of shot, commanding none should goe a shore till his returne; himselfe with

*Another project to
abandon the
country.*

¹¹Smith used force and may have killed Kendall to prevent the abandonment of the colony.

¹²persimmons

¹³taffeta dressed imposters.

two English and two Salvages went up higher in a Canowe but hee was not long absent, but his men went a shore, whose want of government, gave both occasion and opportunity to the Salvages to surprize one George Cassen, whom they slew, and much failed not to have cut of the boat and all the rest. Smith little dreaming of that accident, being got to the marshes at the rivers head, twentie myles in the desert, had his * two men slaine (as is supposed) sleeping by the Canowe, whilst himselfe by fowling sought them victuall who finding he was beset with 200. Salvages, two of them hee slew still defending himselfe with the ayd of a Salvage his guid, whom he bound to his arme with his garters, and used him as a buckler,¹⁴ yet he was shot in his thigh a little, and had many arrowes that stucke in his cloathes but no great hurt, till at last they tooke him prisoner. When this newes came to James towne, much was their sorrow for his losse, fewe expecting what ensued. Sixe or seven weekes those Barbarians kept him prisoner, many strange triumphes and conjurations they made of him, yet hee so demeaned himselfe amongst them, as he not onely diverted them from surprising the Fort, but procured his own libertie, and got himselfe and his company such estimation amongst them, that those Salvages admired him more then their owne *Quiyonckosucks*.¹⁵ The manner how they used and delivered him, is as followeth.

The Salvages having drawne from George Cassen whether Captaine Smith was gone, prosecuting that opportunity they followed him with 300. bowmen, conducted by the King of Pamaunkee,¹⁶ who in divisions searching the turnings of the river, found Robinson and Emry by the fire side, those they shot full of arrowes and slew. Then finding the Captaine, as is said, that used the Salvage that was his guide as his shield (three of them being slaine and divers other so gauld)¹⁷ all the rest would not come neere him. Thinking thus to have

¹⁴ shield

¹⁵ spirit men

¹⁶ the powerful chieftain Opechancanough, who would later lead the 1622 Native rising against the English.

¹⁷ galled with shot.

**Jebu Robinson and Thomas Emry slaine.*

Captaine Smith taken prisoner.

returned to his boat, regarding them, as he marched, more then his way, slipped up to the middle in an oasis¹⁸ creeke and his Salvage with him, yet durst they not come to him till being neere dead with cold, he threw away his armes. Then according to their composition¹⁹ they drew him forth and led him to the fire, where his men were slaine. Diligently they chafed his benumbed limbs. He demanding for their Captaine, they shewed him Opechancanough, King of Pamaunkee, to whom he gave a round Ivory double compass Dyall. Much they marvelled at the playing of the Fly and Needle, which they could see so plainly, and yet not touch it, because of the glasse that covered them. But when he demonstrated by that Globe-like Jewell, the roundnesse of the earth, and skies, the sphaere of the Sunne, Moone, and Starres, and how the Sunne did chase the night round about the world continually; the greatnesse of the Land and Sea, the diversitie of Nations, varietie of complexions, and how we were to them Antipodes, and many other such like matters, they all stood as amazed with admiration. Norwithstanding, within an houre after they eyed him to a tree, and as many as could stand about him prepared to shoot him, but the King holding up the Compass in his hand, they all laid downe their Bowes and Arrowes, and in a triumphant manner led him to Orapaks, where he was after their manner kindly feasted, and well used.

Their order in conducting him was thus; Drawing themselves all in fyle, the King in the middest had all their Peeeces and Swords borne before him. Captaine Smith was led after him by three great Salvages, holding him fast by each arme: and on each side six went in fyle with their Arrowes nocked. But arriving at the Towne (which was but onely thirtie or fortie hunting houses made of Mats, which they remove as they please, as we our tents) all the women and children staring to behold him, the souldiers first all in fyle performed the forme of a Bissonne so well as could be; and on each flanke, officers as Serjeants to see them keepe their order. A good time they continued this exercise, and then cast

¹⁸ oozy

¹⁹ intention

themselves in a ring, dauncing in such severall Postures, and singing and yelling out such hellish notes and screeches; being strangely painted, every one his quiver of Arrowes, and at his backe a club; on his arme a Fox or an Otters skinne, or some such matter for his vantage; their heads and shoulders painted red, with Oyle and *Pocones*²⁰ mingled together, which Scarlet-like colour made an exceeding handsome shew; his Bow in his hand, and the skinne of a Bird with her wings abroad dried, tyed on his head, a peece of copper, a white shell, a long feather, with a small rattle growing at the tayles of their snakes tyed to it, or some such like toy. All this while Smith and the King stood in the midst guarded, as before is said, and after three dances they all departed. Smith they conducted to a long house, where thirtie or fortie tall fellowes did guard him, and ere long more bread and venison was brought him then would have served twentie men, I thinke his stomacke at that time was not very good; what he left they put in baskets and tyed over his head. About mid-night they set the meate againe before him, all this time not one of them would eate a bit with him, till the next morning they brought him as much more, and then did they eate all the old, and reserved the new as they had done the other, which made him thinke they would fat him to eat him.²¹ Yet in this desperate estate to defend him from the cold, one Maocassater brought him his gowne, in requittal of some beads and toys Smith had given him at his first arrivall in Virginia.

Two dayes after a man would have slaine him (but that the guard prevented it) for the death of his sonne, to whom they conducted him to recover the poore man then breathing his last. Smith told them that at James towne he had a water would doe it, if they would let him fetch it, but they would not permit that; but made all the preparations they could to assault James towne, craving his advice, and for recompence he should have life, libertie, land, and women. In part of a Table booke he writ his minde to them at the Fort, what was

²⁰dye

²¹Cannibalism had been rumored to be a Native practice since the beginning of American colonization in the 1490s.

intended, how they should follow that direction to affright the messengers, and without fayle send him such things as he writ for. And an Inventory with them. The difficultie and danger, he told the Salvages, of the Mines, great gunnes, and other Engins exceedingly affrighted them, yet according to his request they went to James towne, in as bitter weather as could be of frost and snow, and within three dayes returned with an answer.

But when they came to James towne, seeing men sally out as he had told them they would, they fled; yet in the night they came againe to the same place where he had told them they should receive an answer, and such things as he had promised them, which they found accordingly, and with which they returned with no small expedition, to the wonder of them all that heard it, that he could either divine, or the paper could speake: then they led him to the Youghtanunds, the Mattapanients, the Payankatanks, the Nantaughtacunds, and Onawmanients upon the rivers of Rapanhook, and Patawomek, over all those rivers, and backe againe by divers other severall Nations; to the Kings habitation at Pamaunkee, where they entertained him with most strange and fearefull Conjurations;

As if neare led to hell,

*Amongst the Devils to dwell.*²²

Not long after, early in a morning a great fire was made in a long house, and a mat spread on the one side, as on the other; on the one they caused him to sit, and all the guard went out of the house, and presently came skipping in a great grim fellow, all painted over with coale, mingled with oyle; and many Snakes and Wesels skins stuffed with mosse, and all their tayles ryed together, so as they met on the crowne of his head in a tassell; and round about the tassell was as a Coronet of feathers; the skins hanging round about his head, backe, and shoulders, and in a manner covered his face; with a hellish voyce and a rattle in his hand. With most strange gestures and passions he began his invocation, and

*How he saved
James towne from
being surpris'd.*

*How they did
Conjure him at
Pamaunkee.*

²²Fotherby, *Albeomastix*; a translation of Seneca.

enviored the fire with a circle of meale; which done, three more such like devils came rushing in with the like antique tricks, painted halfe blacke, halfe red: but all their eyes were painted white, and some red stroakes like Mutchato's;²³ along their cheekes: round about him those fiends daunced a pretty while, and then came in three more as ugly as the rest; with red eyes, and white stroakes over their blacke faces, at last they all sat downe right against him; three of them on the one hand of the chiefe Priest, and three on the other. Then all with their rattles began a song, which ended, the chiefe Priest layd downe five wheat cornes: then straying his armes and hands with such violence that he sweat, and his veynes swelled, he began a short Oration: at the conclusion they all gave a short groane; and then layd down three graines more. After that, began their song againe, and then another Oration, ever laying downe so many cornes as before, till they had twice incirculed the fire; that done, they tooke a bunch a little stickes prepared for that purpose, continuing still their devotion, and at the end of every song and Oration, they layd downe a sticke betwixt the divisions of Corne. Till night, neither he nor they did either eate or drinke, and then they feasted merrily, with the best provisions they could make. Three dayes they used this Ceremony; the meaning whereof they told him, was to know if he intended them well or no. The circle of meale signified their Country, the circles of corne the bounds of the Sea, and the stickes his Country. They imagined the world to be flat and round, like a trencher;²⁴ and they in the midst. After this they brought him a bagge of gunpowder, which they carefully preserved till the next spring, to plant as they did their corne; because they would be acquainted with the nature of that seede. Opitchapam²⁵ the Kings brother invited him to his house, where, with as many platters of bread, foule, and wild beasts, as did environ him, he bid him wellcome; but not any of them would eate a bit with him, but put up all the remainder in Baskets. At his returne to

²³moustaches²⁴circular platter²⁵Powhatan's eldest brother and heir.

Opechancanoughs, all the Kings women, and their children, flocked about him for their parts, as a due by Custome, to be merry with such fragments.

*But his waking mind in hydeous dreames did oft see
wondrous shaples,*

*Of bodies strange, and huge in growth, and of
stupendious makes.²⁶*

At last they brought him to Weronocomoco, where was Powhatan their Emperor. Here more then two hundred of those grim Courtiers stood wondering at him, as he had beene a monster; till Powhatan²⁷ and his trayne had put themselves in their greatest braveries. Before a fire upon a seat like a bedsted, he sat covered with a great robe, made of Rarowcut²⁸ skinnes, and all the tayles hanging by. On either hand did sit a young wench of 16 or 18 years, and along on each side the house, two rowes of men, and behind them as many women, with all their heads and shoulders painted red; many of their heads bedecked with the white downe of Birds; but every one with something: and a great chayne of white beads about their necks. At his entrance before the King, all the people gave a great shout. The Queene of Appamatuck was appointed to bring him water to wash his hands, and another brought him a bunch of feathers, in stead of a Towell to dry them: having feasted him after their best barbarous manner they could, a long consultation was held, but the conclusion was, two great stones were brought before Powhatan: then as many as could layd hands on him, dragged him to them, and thereon laid his head, and being ready with their clubs, to beate out his braines, Pocahontas the Kings dearest daughter, when no intreaty could prevaile, got his head in her armes, and laid her owne upon his to save him from death: wherewith the Emperour was contented he should live to make him hatchets, and her bells, beads, and copper; for they thought him as well of all occupations as themselves.

*How Powhatan
entertained him.*

²⁶Atbeomastix, 127.²⁷Costumes²⁸Raccoon

For the King himselfe will make his owne robes, shoes, bowes, arrowes, pots; plant, hunt, or doe any thing so well as the rest.

*They say he bore a pleasant shew,
But sore his heart was sad.
For who can pleasant be, and rest,
That lives in feare and dread:
And having life suspected, doth
It still suspected lead.*²⁹

Two days after, Powhatan having disguised himselfe in the most fearefullest manner he could, caused Captaine Smith to be brought forth to a great house in the woods, and there upon a mat by the fire to be left alone. Not long after from behinde a mat that divided the house, was made the most dolefullest noyse he ever heard; then Powhatan more like a devill then a man with some two hundred more as blacke as himselfe, came unto him and told him now they were friends, and presently he should goe to James towne, to send him two great gunnes, and a gryndstone, for which he would give him the Country of Capahowosick, and for ever esteeme him as his sonne Nantaquoud.³⁰ So to James towne with 12 guides Powhatan sent him. That night they quartered in the woods, he still expecting (as he had done all this long time of his imprisonment) every houre to be put to one death or other: for all their feasting. But almightie God (by his divine providence) had mollified the hearts of those sterne Barbarians with compassion. The next morning betimes they came to the Fort, where Smith having used the Salvages with what kindeesse he could, he shewed Rawhunt, Powhatans trusty servant two demi-Culverings and a millstone to carry Powhatan: they found them somewhat too heavie; but when they did see him discharge them, being loaded with stones, among the boughs of a great tree loaded with Isickles, the yoe and branches came so tumbling downe, that the poore Salvages ran

²⁹ *Atheomastix*, 112.

³⁰ That he is praised as a son rather than as a brother highlights the disparity in age between the senior Powhatan and Smith, a man in his mid-twenties.

away halfe dead with feare. But at last we regained some conference with them, and gave them such toyes, and sent to Powhatan, his women, and children such presents, as gave them in generall full content. Now in James Towne they were all in combustion, the strongest preparing once more to run away with the Pinnacle; which with the hazzard of his life, with Sakre falcon and musket shot, Smith forced now the third time to stay or sinke. Some no better then they should be, had plotted with the President, the next day to have put him to death by the Levitical law, for the lives of Robinson and Emry, pretending the fault was his that had led them to their ends: but he quickly tooke such order with such Lawyers, that he layd them by the heeles till he sent some of them prisoners for England. Now ever once in foure or five dayes, Pocahontas with her attendants, brought him so much provision, that saved many of their lives, that els for all this had starved with hunger.

*Thus from numbe death our good God sent reliefe,
The sweete asswager of all other grieffe.*³¹

His relation of the plenty he had seene, especially at Werawocomoco, and of the state and bountie of Powhatan, (which till that time was unknowne) so revived their dead spirits (especially the love of Pocahontas) as all mens feare was abandoned. Thus you may see what difficulties still crossed any good endeavour: and the good successe of the businesse being thus oft brought to the very period of destruction; yet you see by what strange means God hath still delivered it. As for the insufficiency of them admitted in Commission, that error could not be prevented by the Electors; there being no other choise, and all strangers to each others education, qualities, or disposition. And if any deeme it a shame to our Nation to have any mention made of those inormities, let them peruse the Histories of the Spaniards Discoveries and Plantations, where they may see how many mutinies, disorders, and dissentions have accompanied them, and crossed their attempts: which being knowne to be particular mens offences; doth take away

³¹ *Atheomastix*, 125.

the generall scorn and contempt, which malice, presumption, covetousnesse, or ignorance might produce; to the scandall and reproach of those, whose actions and valiant resolutions deserve a more worthy respect.

Now whether it had benee better for Captaine Smith, to have concluded with any of those severall projects, to have abandoned the Countrey, with some ten or twelve of them, who were called the better sort, and have left Master Hunt our Preacher, Master Anthony Gosnoll, a most honest, worthy, and industrious Gentleman, Master Thomas Wotton, and some 27 others of his Countymen to the fury of the Salvages, famine, and all manner of mischietes, and inconveniencies, (for they were but fortie in all to keepe possession of this large Countrey;) or starve himselfe with them for company, for want of lodging: or but adventuring abroad to make them provision, or by his opposition to preserve the action, and save all their lives; I leave to the censure of all honest men to consider. But

We men imagine in our Jollitie,

That 'tis all one, or good or bad to be.

But then anone wee alter this againe,

If happily wee feele the sence of paine;

*For then we're turn'd into a mourning vaine.*³²

*Written by Thomas Studley,
the first Cape Merchant in Virginia,
Robert Fenton, Edward Harrington, and J. S.*

Chapter III

The Arrivall of the first supply, with their Proceedings, and the Ships returne.

All this time our care was not so much to abandon the Countrey; but the Treasurer and Councell in England, were as diligent and carefull to supply us. Two good ships they sent us, with neare a hundred men, well furnished with all things could be imagined necessary, both for them and us; The one commanded by Captaine Newport: the other by Captaine Francis Nelson,

³² *Astheomastix*, 132.

an honest man, and an expert Marriner. But such was the lewardnesse of his Ship (that though he was within the sight of Cape Henry) by stormy contrary winds was he forced so farre to Sea, that the West Indies was the next land, for the repaire of his Masts, and reliefe of wood and water. But Newport got in and arrived at James Towne, not long after the redemption of Captaine Smith. To whom the Salvages, as is sayd, every other day repaired, with such provisions that sufficiently did serve them from hand to mouth: part alwayes they brought him as Presents from their Kings, or Pocahontas; the rest he as their Market Clarke set the price himselfe, how they should sell: so he had inchanced these poore soules being their prisoner; and now Newport, whom he called his Father arriving, neare as directly as he foretold, they esteemed him as an Oracle, and had them at that submission he might command them what he listed. That God that created all things they knew he adored for his God: they would also in their discourses tearme the God of Captaine Smith.

Thus the Almightye was the bringer on,

*The guide, path, terme, all which was God alone.*³³

*Their opinion of our
God.*

But the President and Councell so much envied his estimation among the Salvages, (though we all in generall equally participated with him of the good thereof,) that they wrought it into the Salvages understandings (by their great bounty in giving foure times more for their commodities then Smith appointed) that their greatnesse and authoritie as much exceeded his, as their bounty and liberalitie. Now the arrival of this first supply so overjoyed us, that wee could not devise too much to please the Marriners. We gave them libertie to trucke or trade at their pleasures. But in a short time it followed, that could not be had for a pound of Copper, which before was sould us for an ounce: thus ambition and sufferance cut the throat of our trade, but confirmed their opinion of the greatnesse of Captaine Newport, (whetewith Smith had possessed Powhatan)

³³ *Astheomastix*, 174.

especially by the great presents Newport often sent him, before he could prepare the Pinnace to goe and visit him: so that this great Savage desired also to see him. A great coyle there was to set him forward. When he went he was accompanied with Captaine Smith, and Master Scrivener, a very wise understanding Gentleman, newly arrived and admitted of the Councell, with thirtie or fortie chosen men for their guard. Arriving at Werowocomoco, Newport's conceit of this great Savage bred many doubts and suspitions of trecheries, which Smith to make appeare was needlesse, with twentie men well appointed, undertooke to encounter the worst that could happen: Knowing

*All is but one, and selfe-same band, that thus
Both one while scourgeth, and that helpeth us.*

Nathaniel Powell	} Gentlemen	John Taverner
Robert Behethland		William Dyer
Michell Phitiplace	} Gentlemen	Thomas Coe
William Phitiplace		Thomas Hope
Anthony Gosnoll		Anas Todkill
Richard Wyffin		

These, with nine others (whose names I have forgotten) comming a-shore, landed amongst a many of creekes, over which they were to passe such poore bridges, onely made of a few cratches,³⁴ thrust in the ose, and three or foure poles laid on them, and at the end of them the like, tyed together onely with barks of trees, that it made them much suspect those bridges were but traps. Which caused Smith to make diverse Salvages goe over first, keeping some of the chiefe as hostage till halfe his men was passed, to make a guard for himselfe and the rest. But finding all things well, by two or three hundred Salvages they were kindly conducted to their towne. Where Powhatan strained himselfe to the utmost of his greatnesse to entertaine them, with great shouts of joy, Orations of protestations; and with the most plenty of victuals he could provide to feast them. Sitting upon his bed of mats, his pillow of

³⁴wooden racks

leather imbrodered (after their rude manner with pearle and white Beads) his attyre a faire robe of skinnes as large as an Irish mantell: at his head and feete a handsome young woman: on each side his house sat twentie of his Concubines, their heads and shoulders painted red, with a great chaine of white beads about each of their neckes. Before those sat his chiefest men in like order in his arbour-like house, and more then fortie platters of fine bread stood as a guard in two fyles on each side of the doore. Foure or five hundred people made a guard behinde them for our passage; and Proclamation was made, none upon paine of death to presume to doe us any wrong or discourtesie. With many pretty Discourses to renew their old acquaintance, this great King and our Captaine spent the time, till the ebbe left our Barge aground. Then renewing their feasts with feates, dauncing and singing, and such like mirth, we quartered that night with Powhatan. The next day Newport came a shore and received as much content as those people could give him: a boy named Thomas Salvage³⁵ was then given unto Powhatan, whom Newport called his sonne; for whom Powhatan gave him Namontack³⁶ his trustie servant, and one of a shrewd, subtill capacitie. Three or foure dayes more we spent in feasting, dauncing, and trading, wherein Powhatan carried himselfe so proudly, yet discreetly (in his salvage manner) as made us all admire his natural gifts, considering his education. As scorning to trade as his subjects did; he bespake Newport in this manner.

Captaine Newport it is not agreeable to my greatnesse, in this pedling manner to trade for trifles, and I esteeme you also a great Werowance. Therefore lay me downe all your commodities together; what I like I will take, and in recompence give you what I thinke fitting their value.

Captaine Smith being our interpreter, regarding Newport as his father, knowing best the disposition of Powhatan, told us his intent was but onely to cheate

³⁵This young boy would be the only member of the original company to leave a posterity that survives today in America.

³⁶a son

Powhatans speech.

Powhatan his entertainment.

Gentlemen

us; yet Captaine Newport thinking to out brave this Salvage in ostentation of greatnesse, and so to bewitch him with his bountie, as to have what he listed, it so hapned, that Powhatan having his desire, valued his corne at such a rate, that I thinke it better cheape in Spaine: for we had not foure bushells for that we expected to have twentie hogshells. This bred some unkindnesse betweene our two Captaines; Newport seeking to please the unsatiabile desire of the Salvage, Smith to cause the Salvage to please him; but smothering his distast to avoyd the Salvages suspition, glanced in the eyes of Powhatan many trifles, who fixed his humor upon a few blew beades. A long time he importunately desired them, but Smith seemed so much the more to affect them, as being composed of a most rare substance of the colour of the skyes, and not to be worne but by the greatest kings in the world. This made him halfe madde to be the owner of such strange Jewells: so that ere we departed, for a pound or two of blew beades, he brought over my king for 2. or 300. Bushells of corne; yet parted good friends. The like entertainment we found of Opechankanough king of Pamaunkee, whom also he in like manner fitted (at the like rates) with blew beades, which grew by this meanes, of that estimation, that none durst weare any of them but their great kings, their wives and children. And so we returned all well to James towne, where this new supply being lodged with the rest, accidentally fired their quarters and so the towne, which being but thatched with reeds, the fire was so fierce as it burnt their Pallisado's, (though eight or ten yards distant) with their Armes, beddings, apparell, and much private provision. Good Master Hunt our Preacher lost all his Library and all he had but the cloathes on his backe: yet none never heard him repine at his losse.³⁷ This hapned in the winter in that extreame frost, 1607. Now though we had victuall sufficient I meane onely of Oatmeale, meale and corne, yet the Ship staying 14. weekes when shee might as wel have bene gone in 14. dayes, spent a great part of that, and neare all the rest that was

Differences of opinions.

James towne burnt.

*A ship Idely
loytering 14.
weekes.*

sent to be landed. When they departed what there discretion could spare us, to make a little poore meale or two, we called feastes, to relish our mouths: of each somewhat they left us, yet I must confesse, those that had either money, spare clothes credit to give billes of paiment, gold rings, furs, or any such commodities, were ever welcome to this removing taverne, such was our patience to obay such vile Commanders, and buy our owne provisions at 15. times the value, suffering them feast (we bearing the charge) yet must not repine, but fast, least we should incur the censure of factious and seditious persons: and then leakage, ship-rats, and other casualties occasioned them losse, but the vessels and remnants (for totals) we were glad to receive with all our hearts to make up the account, highly commending their providence for preserving that, least they should discourage any more to come to us. Now for all this plenty our ordynary was but meale and water, so that this great charge little releevd our wants, whereby with the extremitie of the bitter cold frost and those defects, more than halfe of us dyed; I cannot deny but both Smith and Skrivener did their best to amend what was amisse, but with the President went the major part, that there hornes were to short. But the worst was our guilded refiners with their golden promises made all men their slaves in hope of recompences; there was no talke, no hope, no worke, but dig gold, wash gold, refine gold, loade gold, such a bruit of gold, that one mad fellow desired to be buried in the sands least they should by there art make gold of his bones: little neede there was and lesse reason, the ship should stay, there wages run on, our victualls consume 14. weekes, that the Mariners might say, they did helpe to build such a golden Church that we can say the raine washed neere to nothing in 14. dayes. Were it that captaine Smith would not applaude all those golden inventions, because they admitted him not to the sight of their trials nor golden consultations, I know not; but I have heard him oft question with Captaine Martin and tell him, except he could shew him a more substantiall triumph, he was not inamourd with their durry skill, breathing out these and many other passions, never any thing did more torment him, then to see all necessary busines

*The effect of meere
Verbalists.*

A needlesse charge.

³⁷The metal book fastenings were recovered in Dr. William Kelso's excavation of the Fort at Jamestown in the late 1990s.

neglected, to fraught such a drunken ship with so much gilded durt. Till then we never accounted, Captaine Newport a refiner, who being ready to set saile for England, and we not having any use of Parliaments, Plaies, Petitions, Admiralls, Recorders, Interpreters, Chronologers, Courts of Plea, nor Justices of peace, sent Master Wingfield and Captaine Archer home with him, that had ingrossed all those titles, to seeke some better place of employment.

*Oh cursed gold those, hunger-starved movers,
To what misfortunes lead'st thou all those lovers!
For all the China wealth, nor Indies can
Suffice the minde of an av'ritious man.³⁸*

[1623]



WILLIAM

William Bradford, Governor of Plymouth Pilgrims, their historian and leader. He described the adventures of his career and the name by which his courageous com-

*From my years young in days of youth
God did make known to me his truth
And call'd me from my native place
For to enjoy the means of grace,
In wilderness he did me guide,
And in strange lands for me provide
In fears and wants, through weathers
A pilgrim, passed I to and fro.
Of all that I have known I did trust*