AMERICAN HISTORY RETOLD

BOOK I – JOHN SMITH: AMERICA'S FIRST EUROPEAN HERO

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INTRODUCTION: Failures in the New World

For more than a century, the English, both Crown and subjects, watched jealously as Spanish treasure ships delivered great wealth in silver and gold from the Americas to the king in Madrid. The Spanish were following up on the discoveries of the Genoan sea captain, Christopher Columbus, who had reached the New World in 1492. The Spanish monarchs poured money into the resulting colonization that allowed for conquest of the native populations in Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America, and even parts of South America. For those same Spanish monarchs, such as Philip II, the payoff was enormous, as wealth arrived, literally, by the ton. But throughout most of the sixteenth century, the English rulers did almost nothing in support of similar colonization in America. By the 1570s and 1580s, with Queen Elizabeth I rising to the throne, the do-nothing legacy of her predecessors was about to make a change.

Gentlemen of Adventure

The English were beginning to move. Soon, English fishermen were casting their nets along Canada's Grand Banks, while English privateers were casting theirs in search of Spanish treasure ships to attack. Some of these privateers had the ear of Good Queen Bess. They were gentlemen in Elizabeth's court. They included aristocrats such as Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Humphrey Gilbert. They were the sons of wealthy merchants, such as John Hawkins and Francis Drake. These men—called "sea dogs"—became favorites of the queen through their sea raids against the Spanish. They all wanted to, as noted by historian Peter Hoffer, "singe [King Philip's] beard." Each established his own reputation preying against the Spanish. John Hawkins raided from the coast of west Africa to the Spanish-controlled islands of the Caribbean until he was killed in a sea battle against the Spanish off the Mexican coast near the Yucatan.

Next, Elizabeth dispatched Francis Drake in 1577. Drake had already engaged in raids against the Spanish a few years earlier. Among his most daring was an attack on a mule train along the coast of Panama, which netted Drake a fortune in Peruvian silver. But his greatest exploits were yet to come. Commanding six ships, he became a terror to the Spanish. Their treasure ships were, notes Hoffer, "like chickens in a hen house caught by a fox." Commanding from the deck of his flag ship, the *Golden Hind*, Drake became legendary. He attacked Spanish ports in Central America and raided settlements along the cost of South America, including Valparaiso; Chile; and Lima, Peru. When he believed Spanish ships would be waiting for him on his return to Caribbean waters, Drake chose to sail around the southern tip of the continent. After considering a colony near the site of modern-day San Francisco, Drake sailed out into the vast South Sea—the Pacific Ocean—to the Philippines, yet another Spanish target. His voyage would take him fully around the world. He sailed around Africa and returned to Elizabeth's court with a vast cargo of East Indian spices and Spanish silver, booty worth half her income for an entire year.

The English Look to North America

While treasure reached English coffers through the deeds of their "sea dogs," Spain was still the dominant power in the Americas. By the 1580s, another of Elizabeth's courtiers, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, convinced her to pursue

another strategy in the New World. (Gilbert had already sent, in 1576, Martin Frobisher, an English sea captain, to North America in search of an all-water route through the region to the Pacific Ocean, and the effort had failed.) Gilbert suggested that raiding was not the answer. Instead, he would establish a series of military colonies along the North American coast, a kind of "picked line," to keep the Spanish from moving farther north from Florida. These colonies would also establish friendly relations with local Indians and trade with them. the English would convert them to Protestant Christianity (the Spanish were converting their Indians to Catholicism). In the meantime, Gilbert would use such colonies as bases of support while he searched for North American treasure. No one had yet discovered vast quantities of gold and silver in the North as the Spanish had in the South. But Gilbert was certain he would be the first. Queen Elizabeth had her lawyers draw up a contract for colonization with Sir Humphrey. The English were going to colonize North America at last. And Gilbert's contracts would grant him the sole right to colonize there in the name of the Queen.

But things did not go well for Gilbert. The Queen did not agree to pay for his efforts to establish colonies. His contract with the Crown did help him find willing investors, however. One of those investors was Sir Walter Ralegh. Gilbert was able to raise a small fleet of ships and made plans to sail to North America. His first attempt failed completely, as his ships did not even reach America before turning back. Then, in 1583, he managed to reach Newfoundland with three small ships. There, he claimed land he named St. John's for his queen. Unfortunately, the luckless Gilbert and his tiny New World fleet were soon lost at sea in a violent storm.

Once word of the perish of Gilbert and his fleet reached England, another of Elizabeth's courtiers stepped forward. Walter Ralegh soon petitioned the queen for permission to take over Gilbert's contract to explore and colonize North America. He was, after all, Gilbert's half-brother. The Queen agreed. Ralegh spent the next 20 years planning and replanning for establishing colonies in North America. But he did not wait long to take his first steps. Unlike Gilbert, Raleigh would not go to the New World himself. He would send others. Raleigh assembled, notes historian James Horn, "a remarkable group of men who brought together scientific knowledge and practical experience." They would include an Oxford scientist, Thomas Harriot; John White, a young artist; and Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlowe, both excellent seamen. Ralegh sent these men and others on two small boats to the southern American coast during the summer of 1584.

Ralegh chose a place in which to plant a colony along the mid-Atlantic coast. It is not clear why he chose that location. He may have been trying to avoid the problems his half-brother encountered farther north. He may also have been interested in establishing a colony to meet the challenge of the Spanish to the south head on. Such a colony could serve as a launching point for additional raids against Spanish silver ships. This was an important part of the colonizing plan. One could not depend on profits scratched out of the wilderness by a tiny English outpost. But the capture of a single Spanish silver ship might yield a prize worth 10 or 15 thousand pounds, perhaps two or three times that amount.

Harriot, White, and the others selected a spot along the modern-day North Carolina coast, between the Pimlico and Albemarle sound called the Outer Banks. Between these two bays, they reached an island they called Roanoke. Things looked so promising for the new colony that the new arrivals decided to name the lands they occupied as Virginia, in honor of the Virgin Queen. (Elizabeth had never married.) But, even as the boats reached the island, Indians were watching them from the mainland.

Raleigh and Roanoke

This first voyage was merely a scouting mission. The following year, Ralegh dispatched more than 100 colonists to Roanoke Island. They were under the command of Ralph Lane, a professional soldier. Lane was excited about what he saw when he landed at Roanoke. He reported back to England in September 1585 that the colony was located on "the goodliest and most pleasing territory of the world." The local Indians were supportive, the climate was mild, and there was a little sickness among the colonists. (New World illnesses, especially fevers, were a common problem in such colonies.) Lane believed that if the colony succeeded, "no realme in Christendome" could rival it.

The colonists, for all their excitement about the colony's potential, expected to find gold on the land they occupied. One of their number was a Jewish mineral expert, Joachim Ganz. He was supposed to search for gold and silver. To transplant English society in the New World, the colonists also included not only carpenters and farmers, but winemakers and druggists.

All did not remain well at Roanoke. Building the colony was difficult work. There were frequent storms, and the colonists had arrived too late to plant crops for food. Despite hopeful beginnings, the colonists and the local Indians clashed. The colonists relied on native gifts of food for too long, and the Indians became anxious about their own food stores running low. When the Indians cut off food to the English settlers, Ralph Lane chose to attack the local village in the spring of 1586, killing the chief of the Roanokes. This set the colonists and Indians permanently against one another. That summer, the colonists, nearly starved, were picked up by Francis Drake, who happened by on a chance. Ralegh's first attempt to colonize at Roanoke had failed.

A Second Colony

Ralegh's attempt to colonize Roanoke in 1585 and 1586 had collapsed, but the intrepid colonizer was not completely discouraged. He planned again and soon mounted another colonizing enterprise. While he had only opened his original colony to men, this time he allowed women and children as well. By the spring of 1587, everything was again in place. He had lined up 150 men, plus their family members, including two wives who were pregnant. Some of the recruits were not new at all, such as the artist John White, who signed on again. (He and Thomas Harriot had produced a book titled *Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*, which White had illustrated. It served as an advertisement for recruitment.) The new colony was to be named "The City of Ralegh in the Colony of Virginia." Ralegh even had a special coat of arms commissioned for his New World "city." In April, the party set sail for America. They were not to return to the same location as the earlier colony, however. The ship's captain, Simon Fernandez, was to land the party north of Roanoke Island, somewhere in the Chesapeake Bay region. However, Fernandez dumped the colonists off near the original Roanoke site, so he could sail south and engage in a raid against Spanish silver ships.

This change in plans was only the beginning of problems for the new Roanoke colony. As with the earlier colony, the English colonists arrived too late to plant a food crop. Too many of them spent too much time searching for gold. Supplies ran extremely low. The colonists begged White to return to England and bring back fresh supplies. White agreed, but postponed his departure until his married daughter gave birth to his grandchild, a baby girl named Virginia Dare. She was the first English baby born in the New World.

But once White returned to England for much-needed supplies, he was soon caught up in an international crisis. War broke out between Spain and England. In time, the Spanish monarch, King Philip II, sent his armada to attack England. Needing all available ships, the crown would not allow White to leave for Roanoke until 1590. Once he made his way back to his Virginia colony, it was too late. The colony was abandoned, and all the colonists he had left behind, including his daughter, son-in-law, and grandchild, had vanished. On a post, he discovered the word "CROATAN" carved into the wood. (The Croatans were a local Indian tribe.) No one is certain what happened to the colonists, even today. History would one day refer to this second effort by Ralegh to colonize in the Americas as "the lost colony of Roanoke."

Yet even before the news of the "lost colony "reached Sir Walter Ralegh back in England, he had already determined to give up new world colonizing altogether. Much money had been spent, and everything had turned to dust. There were no riches to be had in North America, he decided. My 1589, Ralegh formally transferred his rights to establish a new world colony to a group of 19 investors. The majority of them were wealthy London merchants. But these new investors made no sudden moves toward America. They studied their options invited their time. The 16th century ended, and still no new colonial attempt was made. Ralegh himself knew what the problem was. He wrote, notes historian James Horn: "No man makes his to the market where there is nothing to be bought but blows."

CHAPTER ONE: A Man of Adventure

The hopes that lay in the hearts of English adventurers to establish a successful colony in North America were repeatedly dashed during the latter years of the 16th century until all involved finally gave up. It would remain for a future generation of Englishman to succeed where an earlier generation had failed. No one would make a greater, more lasting impact on that eventual and successful colony than a young man who grew up during the

years Gilbert, Ralegh, Harriot, and others were busying themselves with their labors in America. His name would be among the most common in England–John Smith.

Humble Roots

Smith was a commoner by birth, one whose destiny would normally have remained tied to the English land as a farmer. He was born on January 9, 1580, when Elizabeth I had already been on the throne for more than 20 years. Four years earlier, English explorer and sea captain Martin Frobisher had sailed to North America in search of gold and the Northwest Passage, but had failed to find either. When Smith was only three years old, Frobisher's sponsor, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, had himself sailed to the New World to establish an English colony, along with seven ships and 400 men, only to be lost at sea. Smith was only five years old when the first English colony in America, Roanoke, was established on an island off modern-day North Carolina, only to collapse, be reestablished two years later, then completely disappear by the time young Smith turned 10. During the years of England's attempts to establish a permanent colony in North America, with all efforts ending in failure, John Smith was just a boy.

He was "born in Willoughby" as the oldest son of a freeman farmer from Lincolnshire and christened in the local parish church. In his autobiography, Smith describes his background as "poor beginnings," yet his father was a relatively prosperous land owner who owned pasture land in great Carlton, as well as property in the nearby market town of Louth. Records indicate he was also leased field lands from a local lord, the Baron Willoughby of Eresby. The house where young Smith was raised was not a meager cottage either, but included a main hall, as well as three separate rooms, with the farm buildings including a "milkhouse" and a barn called a "beast house." The Smith household also supported several servants.

Young Smith attended school at Louth. According to Smith's later writings, "his parents [died] when he was about 13 years of age," leaving their son "a competent means, which he not being capable to manage, little regarded." (For some reason, Smith is referring to himself in the third person.) This is, however, not entirely accurate. In fact, mother and father were both alive and well when Smith was 13. His father died in 1597 when young John was still 16, and his mother lived many more years, having remarried. Why Smith writes of his parents' deaths a bit prematurely is uncertain. But his "disregard" of the family farm is certain, for Smith did not remain a farmer for long. Already feeling the farm life was not for him, he was inclined "even then...upon brave adventures."

His first "brave adventure" was to apprentice himself to a willing merchant in the town of King's Lynn in Norfolk. Under their agreement, Smith was to serve his master under a seven-year indenture, all the while learning the business of trade and commerce. But he became dissatisfied, stifled in just one more way, and he escaped his indenture, tearing up the contract, and lighting up for the adventures he still had in mind. The farm was behind him, he had left a future that might have brought him a secure career, and his prospects were uncertain. But, at least, he was free to pursue his own destiny. Soon, he even put England itself aside.

Soldiering on a World Stage

By this time, Smith was ready to meet the world. He was a young man in his late teen years who had grown a great red beard, one he sported most of his adult life. However, he had a physical drawback for a would-be soldier–he was short–even among the men of his day, who were shorter generally than the average height today. But what Smith lacked in stature, he made up for confidence and bravado. He launched his military career, and his days abroad, by serving in the English Army in France fighting on behalf of Dutch independence from Catholic Spain. Unemployed following the war, with a few prospects, Smith went back to England. He then set out again for the continent, returning to France, along with Robert Bertie, the son of the Baron Willoughby of Eresby, his liege lord, from whom his father had leased grazing land. After tootling around for a while, he boarded a sailing ship bound for Scotland. During the voyage, the ship wrecked. Once back on his home turf in Lincolnshire, Smith studied warfare, reading texts and treatises on the subject, gaining knowledge of how to lead men and the responsibilities that come with such leadership. Through connections with the Earl of Lincoln's riding master, young Smith learned horsemanship

Otherwise, young Smith immersed himself from time to time in the writings of military affairs. He read the great Renaissance writer Machiavelli and his *The Art of War*. He pored over a copy of Vannoccio Biringuccio's book on explosives, *Pirotechnia*. In time, he became quite an expert in ordinance [military equipment]. He studied the Romans and how they fought. All things military he consumed. He taught himself signal codes using torchlight.

By 1600, which marked his twentieth birthday, Smith again went to Holland, yet found no work as a soldier. He then set his eyes on his military possibilities in Eastern Europe. His journey eastward took him through France and Italy, where he took in the local sights much as a tourist. He traveled through the Eastern Mediterranean, working off his passage onboard a merchant ship, landing in Egypt. Finally, Smith reached Vienna, where he ended up hiring himself out to the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II, whose Catholic empire was in a conflict with the Ottoman Empire of the Turks, who were threatening central and eastern Europe. It would become known as the "Long War." Although Smith was a Protestant, he agreed to fight for Rudolf, desperate to make himself into the soldier he longed to become.

Smith soon joined a battalion led by a military leader named Zsigmond Bathory, who marched his army straight into the conflict in Transylvania. By now, the year was 1602. These were the days of intense military activity for Smith, when he became further adept with weaponry, including handguns, battle axes, lances, and swords. His experiences included battles at sea and on land. He appears to have brought to his military encounters a certain level of natural instinct. He was brave to a fault and strong in a fight. His prowess led to Smith receiving a command of a cavalry unit of 250 men, who subsequently laid siege to a walled city. Smith could not know then, of course, that these years as a mercenary were preparing him for the extraordinary challenges he would meet in the wild and save backcountry of North America.

It was during this field of action, according to Smith's autobiography, that he first proved himself as a man of war. During a siege on the front lines, as both armies watched, the intrepid Englishman managed to kill three Turkish opponents, each in turn, in a prearranged challenged issued by the enemy leader. After defeating each in combat, as Smith claims in his later writings, he cut off all their heads with a sword. For his skill and repeated acts of bravery, Smith was awarded a coat of arms from the King of Poland, as well as a captain's rank, a pension, and recognition as "an English gentleman." (His coat included the heads of his three Turkish victims.) The days of John Smith on a farm in Lincolnshire must have seemed distant, indeed.

Compassion for the Captain

Despite his success against three Turkish challengers, Smith's luck did not hold out forever. Soon afterward, he was wounded during a battle against the Tartars and then captured. Several captives, Smith included, were delivered to the old medieval town of Axiopolis (today the city is known as Cernvoda, Romania), where the English captive was placed on the auction block. Smith later described his situation as "sold for slaves, like beasts in a market-place, where every merchant, viewing their limbs and wounds, caused other slaves to struggle with them, to try their strength." Smith's wounds did not keep him from being purchased by a slaver who represented a client. Soon, the captured mercenary found himself in the ancient city of Constantinople.

The client for whom the war-weary John Smith had been purchased turned out to be a young, prepubescent girl Smith later identified as Charatza Tragabigzanda, the daughter of a Greek noblewoman....While she appears to have taken "much compassion on him," the girl decided she could not keep Smith around as a temptation. She decided to send him on for her brother to keep until "time made her Master of her self," wrote Smith.

The young captain soon fell into miserable circumstances. The brother, a military commander who was stationed close to the Black Sea, upon Smith's immediate arrival, set about making certain the captured soldier would not prove to be a problem. He ordered one of his servants to strip Smith of his clothes, then shave his head and burgeoning red beard. Smith was then fitted with "a great ring of iron, with a long stalk bowed like a sickle, riveted about his neck." The great warrior who had defeated three Turks in a busy day of battling and beheading was reduced to nothing more than an abused slave, one far from friends and home.

Restrained and humiliated, Smith was forced to work on a farm, the very existence he had left behind years earlier in England. But the tenacious Englishman would not remain in such circumstances for long. Within just a few months, he managed to kill his captor and escape....Then, he dressed in his victim's clothing and set out on an escape to the West.

He had found a caravan road to Astrakhan, a city in southern Russia, situated along the banks of the Volga River, near the Caspian Sea. In his autobiography, he remembered reaching a crossroads with, according to historian Benjamin Woolley, "a signpost showing the way to the Crimea with a crescent moon, to Moscow with a cross, and to China with a sun." Eventually, he made his way to Prague, the Holy Roman Empire's capital city. From there, he continued on, done with fighting in eastern Europe, completing a hazardous, intrepid journey across Germany and France, then to Spain and North Africa. Along the Barbary Coast of Morocco, he encountered French pirates, who agreed to take him on as a crewman. His adventures continued, including one more Continental fight, this time against the Spanish, that almost ended in captured by Spaniards, plus a gunpowder explosion onboard the pirate ship. Finally, though, he made his way home to England, during the winter of 1604-1605.

In 1606, Smith, still restless and again unemployed, eventually heard of a plan by London merchants to plant an English colony in America, in the region of the Chesapeake Bay that had already been named for England's beloved monarch, Elizabeth I, the "Virgin Queen." (Elizabeth had died in 1603, while Smith was fighting his way across eastern Europe. A new monarch, James I, who was also the king of Scotland, had ascended to the throne.) While in London, he had made himself conspicuous, telling tales of his military adventures and extraordinary experiences.

He had heard of Virginia even before hearing of the planned colonizing effort. It is possible he had attended the Blackfriars Theater, where he could have sat or stood in the audience and seen a performance of a new production, *Eastward Hoe*, in which Virginia was described "as pleasant a country as ever the sun shined on." Such as claim might have meant something to the restless Smith, who, while only in his mid-twenties, had seen many countries and a good part of the western world. (In 1606, he could have also attended a showing of a new play by the playwright William Shakespeare, titled *Macbeth*.) As an avid reader, he was likely familiar with a poem by English poet Michael Drayton, which also extolled the virtues of Virginia: "To get the pearl and gold / And ours to hold / VIRGINIA / Earth's only paradise." This land in America—"Virginia"—was beginning to captivate the imagination of Captain John Smith.

One More Story: Smith's Questionable Duel

At times in his autobiography, John Smith presents himself as a little more than a braggart. Sometimes his claims concerning himself are either difficult to corroborate, or they are downright fabrications. One such claim has Smith the soldier engaging in a duel that sounds strikingly similar to the biblical story of David and Goliath.

While serving as a mercenary in eastern Europe against the Ottoman Turks, Smith accepted a challenge issued by the enemy, a Turkish leader named Turboshaw. The Turkish commander suggested to Smith's commander that he send his best fighter out to engage his best soldier and fight a duel to the death. Smith soon engaged his Turkish opponent. Rather than throw a stone from a sling like the biblical David, Smith and his opponent mounted horses and rode toward one another, each lowering a wooden lance at the other. When the two men came into contact range, Smith managed to pierce his enemy with his lance. The soldier fell backward off his horse, dead. The tough English mercenary then dismounted his steed, pulled out his sword, and proceeded to cut off his enemy's head, which he then presented to his commander, who, according to historian Bradford Smith, "kindly accepted it." Smith then proceeded to engage to other Turkish challengers and managed to beat each one, beheading them both.

Despite Smith's claims, history is uncertain whether he actually killed three Turkish challengers in three, back-to-back encounters. Nevertheless, when he finally returned from his eastern European exploits to England in 1604, he had gathered for himself enough of a reputation as an experienced soldier for the Virginia company to hire him on as their military leader.

CHAPTER TWO: Bound for America

History is uncertain just exactly how and from whom Smith heard about the planned venture to establish an English toehold in Virginia. It seems he was living in London with Robert Bertie, at the Willoughby lodgings.

Bertie's father seems to have had an interest in investing in the colony. (In fact, he was related to a couple of the colony's organizers, Bartholomew Gosnold and Edward Maria Wingfield.) Thus, Robert Bertie may have been the go-between to introduce Smith to those putting the expedition together.

Taking His Place

If the Jamestown colony had its "movers and shakers," Gosnold and Wingfield were chief among them. smith himself would describe Gosnold as "one of the first movers" of the Virginia effort. He was known in London, was well-connected, and had already been to America, having traveled as an explorer to New England in 1602 (it would be Smith who would actually give "New England" its name years later) where he traded with the Indians for furs and cedarwood, which were highly prized in England. Gosnold was no theoretical colonizer. He was well aware of both the opportunities and potential hazards of New World exploration, much less settlement. As for Edward Wingfield, he was also well-connected, as well as a skilled soldier of fortune. He had fought in French Flanders nearly 20 years earlier. So well-known and respected was he that the Crown, when granting the charter to build a colony in America, included Wingfield's name among those receiving the royal green light.

Throw John Smith into the mix, and the would-be Virginia venture had the backing of three known individuals from London and other parts of southern England. Once Smith was signed on, the three men were able to recruit a variety of individuals—"certain of the nobility, Gentry, and Marchants," as Smith would later write—to sign on and invest in the planned colony. Key supporters recruited included Sir John Popham, the chief justice of England, and Robert Cecil, King James's first minister. These two were able to convince the Crown to support the venture, which lured wealthy and powerful merchants to pony up the money for the startup capital. such merchants—from London, Plymouth, Bristol, and elsewhere—were ready to invest in the New World, expecting to see repayment in the form of New World natural resources, such as fish, fur, and timber.

Eventually, those who signed to finance the American colony split into two groups, which meant two colonies were ultimately planned. Popham drew up legal papers, creating the "Virginia Company of Plymouth," which included investors from Plymouth, Bristol, and Exeter, with their land grant bounded by the 38 and 45 latitudes north. In America, this region included the territory from today's Maine south to Chesapeake Bay, near the mouth of the Potomac River. The other investment group, the "Virginia Company of London," received rights to colonize between latitudes 34 and 41 degrees north, from modern-day Cape Fear, North Carolina, and north to the mouth of the Hudson River, where New York City is located today. (This meant the Virginia Company's and Plymouth Company's grants overlapped between the 38th and 41st parallel, lands to be shared between the two companies.) From north to south, the London group's potential was to establish settlement sites across 900 miles of the Atlantic seaboard.

The Plymouth Company would get out of the starting gate first, landing would-be colonists along the Kennebec River in 1602 and setting up a trading post to do business with the Abenaki Indians. Since Sir John Popham provided much of the colony's backing, it was called the Popham Colony. But many in the group of 40 colonists to arrive in 1607 did not survive the harsh winter (fire also swept through the settlement, destroying the lion's share of the colony's food stores). When relations with the local Indians deteriorated, the colony collapsed. Those who survived the harsh winter of 1607-1608 cobbled together a 30-ton ship and sailed back to Plymouth, England in defeat. By then, half of the colony's inhabitants had died trying to carve a place in the New World

Three Ships to America

Yet even before the Popham Colony in Maine had been founded, London merchants were sending their own colonists to the region of Chesapeake Bay. By November 1606, the company was organizing its fleet of three ships. The largest of the three tied up at the small hamlet of Ratcliffe, on the north bank of the Thames River. On the 23rd of the month, the 170-ton flagship *Susan Constant* arrived, filled to the gunwales with supplies. As the main vessel, measuring about 100 feet from stem to stern, she was to carry 71 colonists and crewmen and was heavily armed. She was sailed downriver where the expedition's main ship was docked with the other two vessels, the 40-ton, 70-foot-long *Godspeed* and the 20-ton *Discovery*. The first would carry 52 men, and Gosnold was given command of the vessel. The *Discovery*, measuring about 50 feet long, was the only one owned by the Virginia Company. It was not the kind of ship designed for an ocean voyage, yet it carried 21 men who found

places, according to historian James Horn, "on her decks wherever they could find space in between the clutter of provisions and equipment." Smith would utilize the *Discovery* on several occasions on the Virginia river the colonists would name after their king, the James. Altogether, the colonists and crew numbered 144 men, including four boys. The occupations represented by these colonists included a dozen craftsmen—a blacksmith, a mason, two bricklayers, four carpenters, a tailor, two barbers, and a surgeon. One man was identified as a "drummer." Most of the remainder were common, unskilled laborers. There were also those men of means, including 36 men identified as "gentlemen" who could afford to pay their passage to America. But many had hired on as indentured servants—those who agreed to work for seven years to pay off their debt.

On December 10, the ships, crew, and colonists were ready to set sail. They captain of the *Susan Constant* was the de facto leader of the colony once they made landfall in Virginia. Captain Christopher Newport was a skilled mariner, a "well-practiced" sea captain who had been to America many times, having participated in raids against the Spanish, who grudgingly referred to him as *un caballero muy principal*—"a very great knight." Newport "knew as much about American waters as any Englishman alive," and he had been the captain of the rescue ship sent to Roanoke Island in 1590. Physically, Newport's most obvious handicap was a missing arm, which had earned him another nickname: "Captain Newport of the One Hand."

With everything prepared and everyone in his place, the ships sailed from the Blackwell docks of East London on December 30, 1606, ready to set sail for the unknown challenges of the New World. before leaving port, company officials handed Newport a box containing special instruction, including the names of the local council that was to be established from among the colonists, which would lead the colony. He was to keep the box and its mysterious contents a secret until their arrival in Virginia.

Smith Runs Afoul

For nearly all the men, the voyage across the Atlantic soon turned into days of boredom. Doldrums kept the ships from catching a strong westerly wind, and for nearly six weeks, progress was slow. Accommodations were primitive, and the ships rode hard upon the waves. As for Smith, he almost immediately became friends with the expedition's minister, a 38-year-old vicar from Sussex named Richard Hunt, who was to serve as the mission chaplain. Hunt became exceedingly seasick to the point, as Smith writes, "few expected his recovery." The two men spent long hours discussing religion and matters of faith, talks that caused Smith to determine Hunt to be "an honest, religious, and courageous divine."

When some during the voyage accused Hunt of possibly being soft on Catholics, as well as other claims against him...Smith came boldly to his new friend's defense. The controversies of Hunt's past ultimately came to a head by mid-February, with factions formed that were for and against the minister. But the arguments were then interrupted by the sighting of a comet blazing across the sky, followed by a turn in the weather, which brought on new winds that blew the ships past the Canary Islands, west of Morocco, and out into the Atlantic. Unfortunately, the long delay had caused the men to consume their supplies too quickly, forcing a stop at the Canaries to purchase additional goods.

By this time, Smith had become involved in yet another controversy, one that placed him on the wrong side of several of the expedition's leaders. With the ships making little progress for so many weeks, several colonists had begun to grumble about those in charge, including Captain Newport. Smith became the leader of the faction, which also included several gentlemen. A mutiny seemed to be building. Newport finally decided to take matters into his hands, as he ordered Smith to be taken prisoner and placed below decks in the *Susan Constant*. Over the following six weeks, Smith was out of sight, his future uncertain.

At the same time, the ships finally made great progress, covering 3,000 miles during those same weeks, arriving in the West Indies by March 1607. Although the ships had passed through the icy waters of a wintry mid-Atlantic, the colonists and crew were treated to the warmth of the Caribbean. At first, local Indians were skittish to make contact with the Europeans, until they realized they were not Spaniards. Then, the Englishmen were greeted warmly as the natives came out "to our ships with their canoes, bringing us many kinds of sundry fruit, as pines [pineapple], potatoes, plantains, tobacco, and other fruits." They also received a large quantity of French linen, which the local islanders had salvaged from Spanish shipwrecks. In exchange, the English handed out knives and metal hatchets, as well as beads, copper, and jewels.

Still, John Smith was under arrest in the hold of the *Susan Constant* under a charge of insubordination. Newport, who had taken a distinct disliking to Captain Smith, actually ordered the construction of a set of gallows on the island of Nevis in the Lesser Antilles archipelago. He was ready to make an example of Smith, perhaps in hopes of establishing strict order among the colonists. But Smith never saw the wrong end of a hangman's noose. Both Reverend Hunt and Gosnold intervened on his behalf. Smith was fortunate. While he might have realized a supporter in Gosnold, he had managed to make enemies of both Newport and Wingfield, who despised him.

The Bay of Cesupioc

By April 10, the ships left the West Indies heading north to the Atlantic coast. Storms continued to batter the boats, and many onboard feared they would all be lost at sea. As for Smith, he wrote that the storms represented God's hand in the English venture: "But God, the guider of all good actions, forcing them by an extream storme to hul all night, did drive them by his providence to their desired port, beyond all their expectations." Virginia loomed into sight on April 26, and the three battered vessels "entered into the Bay of Chesupioc directly, without any let or hindrance." For four months, the colonists and crew had endured threatening storms and sailed wide of shipwreck. Among those on board, only one man had died on the wet, wintry journey. Arriving in the spring of 1607, the men knew they had time to plant a crop that would yield more food come harvest time. as the men looked out across the Virginia landscape, they saw meadows, tall forest, and freshwater streams. Some of the men left the ships and explored for most of the day. During their return to the vessels, they were attacked by some local Indians who fired a volley of arrows, wounding a couple of men, then scattered when the colonists fired their guns in answer.

That night, the men gathered for an official action that company officials had ordered before the ships had left London. Captain Newport was to open the box given to him by the company's Royal Council within 24 hours of the party's arrival in Virginia, and he saw no reason to waste any time. the names of seven men were sealed up in the box, and all gathered around to see who had been chosen. The names were important, for among them a president was to be selected who would lead the colony during its first year. When the box was opened, some of the names were obvious choices, including Newport, Wingfield, Gosnold, and John Ratcliffe. Other names included Captain John Martin, the son of London's Lord Mayor, who had sailed with Sir Francis Drake. Martin had been to America 20 years earlier as part of the crew that picked up the stragglers from the abandoned Roanoke colony. The sixth name was Captain George Kendall, cousin to a member of Parliament, who had been selected as someone who could write up accurate reports to send back to company officials. The most controversial of the seven men was the last one on the list—John Smith. It is likely that Gosnold had nominated him. Ironically, Smith was still locked away in the brig onboard the *Susan Constant*. Due to Wingfield and Newport's animosity toward Smith, they would not allow him to take his place on the council. It was a poor decision, one that further divided the colonists. After all, the company's Royal Council had chosen the names, and now, thousands of miles from England, men were making decisions against the company's wishes. For the moment, Newport decided to keep Smith under lock and key.

A New Land

This meant that John Smith would miss the opportunity to play any important or even minor role during the first several weeks after the colonists arrived in Virginia. During the first few days, some of the men sailed a small river craft called a pinnance along the river, searching for a suitable settlement site. They found Indians burning fields of grass. They encountered additional Indians as they sailed the river, who typically watched from shore. Newport and some others met with several native Americans in a village they called Kecoughtan, where the natives performed, shouting and dancing while distorting their faces and making animal noises. Meanwhile, Smith played no role and saw none of this firsthand.

Two weeks later, on May 12, Newport selected a site where the colonists would build their outpost. It was almost an island, situated along the northern banks of the James River, with a narrow causeway connecting it to the mainland. Here, the water was deep enough (nearly 20 feet) to dock the three ships. There was evidence that the peninsula had once been the home of some Indians, but that spring it was completely unoccupied. The site fit several of the expectations laid down by company officials who had said to pick a location upriver from the cost,

out of sight of any curious Spanish who might come patrolling by, and where the river was narrow enough so that a cannon on shore could be fired and hit an enemy ship in the river's middle. The peninsula, located 30 miles or so from the mouth of the James, fit the description. Word was sent downriver, the ships were brought to the site, and by May 14, supplies and equipment had been off-loaded to the place that was soon referred to as For James.

The Work Begins

Work was soon underway to establish the colony everyone had imagined for so many months. As leaders worked out a design for the "town," nearly everyone else was busy cutting down trees and pitching their tents. Work was already underway to cut trees into lumber to be sent back to England. Others began planting gardens, while some worked on fishing nets. There were no initial steps taken to build a palisade or wall to protect the settlers from Indian attack. (There was a long pile of brush placed toward the riverbank in the shape of a half-moon, but no substantial wall was ordered.) And no one was taking the time to practice the men in military drill. Smith was unable to do the job for which he had been hired in the New World, and no one else was doing it for him.

By May 21, a week after work at "Jamestown" had begun, Smith was finally released. Little is known about the circumstances, and Smith barely addresses anything about it, but he was suddenly out of the brig and even selected by Newport to participate in the second exploration trip of the James River. Some colonists were already begging the captain of the *Susan Constant* to return to England and bring back new stores of supplies, but Newport was intent on staying some time longer. He needed something to take back to the company's investors. Lumber was already being cut, but if he could find gold, that would make everyone happy, both in Jamestown and London.

The small exploring party boarded the pinnance and set out. John Smith could not know that he was headed into the very jaws of the Powhatan Confederacy, and before his adventure was over, he would experience some of the most unique circumstances of his entire life.

One More Thing: The Native Americans of Virginia

Historians estimate that the native Americans living in close proximity to Jamestown likely numbered between 10,000 and 15,000, living in disconnected villages and tribal units by the hundreds. Many of these tribes had already formed an alliance by the early 1600s as part of the powerful Powhatan Confederacy. The point of such an alliance was to provide protection from their enemies. This proved, of course, a difficulty for the colonists. With so many Indians banded together, their sheer numbers would pose a constant threat. But the nation of the Powhatan Confederacy were not the only regional native populations the Englishmen might potentially have to face. some tribes were not a part of the Indian alliance, but yet represented significant nations, including the Susquehannocks, Mannahoacs, and Massawomecks. Raids between these native Americans and those belonging to the Powhatan Confederacy were commonplace.

Thus, these new European arrivals found themselves living in a complicated world in which one tribe might be friendly toward them, while another was ready to raid against them. As for the dominant nation among the Powhatan group, perhaps the Pamunkey represented the strongest, having between 500 and 600 warriors at their disposal. The Pamunkeys lived close enough to the Jamestown settlement, about an easy day's travel, that they could regularly make life difficult for their new English neighbors.

CHAPTER THREE: In the Hands of the Enemy

Captain Smith and his party traveled about 20 miles the first day, staying with some friendly Indians that night. Indians seemed to be at every turn. It is likely that, even when the Englishmen thought they were alone, they were being watched from nearby woods or across meadow grasses by native Americans almost constantly. They were, after all, in "Indian Country." In 1607, the lands the Englishmen had reached were home to a cultural group of Indians called the Algonquins. These native groups lived along the eastern Atlantic seaboard, scattered from today's Maine (where the Popham Colony was already underway) to the south as far as modern-day Georgia.

Those in the Tidewater region of the Chesapeake belonged to dozens of tribes all scattered about, so that Jamestown was virtually surrounded, with Indians living in every direction from the English settlement.

English Diplomacy

The English exploring party progressed up the river. Two days out, the party encountered a party of eight Indians in a canoe. One of them seemed especially astute, as well as friendly. Named Navirans, he communicated with the men in signs and even drew a map of the river when given pen and ink. He told the English he would serve as their guide up the river. He then led Newport, Smith, and the others to his village, where the colonists met his brother-in-law, Chief Arahatec. The chief's people fed the Englishmen a good meal of roasted deer meat, mulberries, beans, and corn cakes. The English met with a visiting chief from another village, whom they gave small gifts such as penny knives, scissors, and beads. The locals called him Powhatan, but he was not the same, powerful "Powhatan, father of Pocahontas" whom Smith would meet early the following year. Later in their expedition, the colonists reached this "lesser" Powhatan's village, located on a high hill flanked by fields of corn, beans, peas, and pumpkins. That site was located just a couple of miles downriver from today's site of Richmond, Virginia. After meeting with these Indians, the men pressed on, but soon arrived at a waterfall, which ended their voyage up the waters of the James River.

But before leaving the region, they erected a cross bearing the name of King James, even as they claimed the land in his name. they lied to the local natives about the cross, telling them the symbol's two arms represented Newport and the chief Powhatan. On their return, the Englishmen stopped by one of the villages they had stayed at a few days earlier. There, they demonstrated their guns, which seemed to frighten Chief Arahatec, while also impressing him. As Smith would write, the musket fire "bred a better affectyon in him" toward the English.

Over the next couple of days, Newport, Smith, and their party met with the leader of another Indian nation, the Appamatuck, a woman described as "a fatt...manly woman"....She was given some of the Englishmen's trinkets, which Smith later noted "cheered somewhat her Countenance."

The next day would give the explorers some concern. Navirans, who had remained with them for several days and guided them along the river, suddenly announced he would go no farther down the river with the English. This caused some immediate concern—Smith writes it gave "just cause of jealousy [suspicion]"—which caused the party to hurry back to Jamestown, where they found their suspicion warranted. In their absence, the Jamestown settlement had been attacked by several hundred Indians. With no real palisade to protect them, the English had suffered many arrows which had ripped their tents, and wounded more than a dozen men, including four of the seven members of the council. Additionally, one of the four boys in the colony was killed, while a man would later die of his wound. An arrow had passed through Wingfield's beard, but had not struck him. Only a broadside fired from one of the ships had caused the Indians to break off their attack and flee. Suddenly, Smith's earlier concerns about the settlement's vulnerability had proven correct, and Wingfield decided "the Fort should be pallisadoed [walled], the ordinance mounted, his men armed and exercised."

Smith Vindicated

Approximately two weeks later, Captain Smith was finally given his seat on the council of seven. No claims against him remained. Newport even supported Smith, as well as Smith's minister-friend, Reverend Hunt. Writing later, the captain noted of himself in the third person: "So wel he demeaned himself in this business, as all the company did see his innocencie, and his adversaries malice; and those suborned to accuse him, accused his accusers of subornation." Wingfield would receive the greater part of the criticism for locking Smith up onboard the *Susan Constant*. Three months later, on September 10, Wingfield was judged officially to have wronged the captain and was forced to pay damages to Smith of 200 pounds. Smith then found even greater support from the members of the colony when he announced he would not keep the monies, but transfer them to the colony's general fund.

For thirteen weeks, a cloud of accusation had hung over Captain John Smith. Now, newly-sworn in as the seventh member of the council, he had been vindicated. His star was on the rise. And Smith was quickly adapting to his new environment. As a soldier, he had found himself over the previous decade or so in various exotic worlds, where cultural practices, societies, and even religions varied widely from one another. Here, I the New world,

Smith was soon making the transition from life in England to life on the American frontier. He was already proving as a master of resourcefulness. He had demonstrated such on Newport's second voyage up the James. Now that a palisade of logs was needed to protect the community, Smith's knowledge of fortification immediately came into play. No one among the party of colonists had seen more types of forts and military structures than John Smith. During his service in eastern Europe, he had repeatedly seen forts constructed, not out of stone, but out of logs, the only viable material the colonists could now possibly rely on. Since the fort was completed only five days after Smith was sworn onto the council, the work had probably already begun, which may have been one of the main reasons why Smith was finally given his rightful seat on the council. He was already proving his professional worth.

It was a fair piece of work, this new port. It was three-sided, a defensive triangle of standing logs at about eight feet in height. At intervals, loopholes were cut in the fort's walls to allow armed defenders to fire their weapons at either Indian or Spaniard. At each of the three corners, a crescent-shaped "bulwark" was built and mounted with four or five small cannon. Two of the corner gun emplacements faced out toward the river, as many of the English still feared discovery by their European enemies, the Spanish, more than the immediate threat of the Indians. Otherwise, the men of the colony were constantly busy, building more permanent shelters on the island, working in gardens, guarding the community in shifts around the clock. As for Smith, he continued to serve the colony as one of its most valuable human assets.

During the remainder of the summer and into early fall, the leadership of the colony suffered great change. Of the seven members of the council, including Captain Smith, several fell from their positions. Bartholomew Gosnold, who had taken such an early disliking of Smith, fell ill on August 1 and died three weeks later. At that same time, George Kendall was found guilty of working as an agent of the Spanish government and was put under house arrest. Edward Wingfield proved so unpopular as a leader, the men deposed him and placed him alongside Kendall in the pinnance, which was used as a sort of makeshift jail. Wingfield was returned to England in April 1608, utterly disgraced. As for Newport, he did not remain at Jamestown past late June. That date, in fact, was later than company officials had instructed him to remain before he left England. Knowing the colony would need fresh supplies, Newport finally set sail, only to return in January 1608. His ship was loaded with lumber and a large cargo of metal ore, which he hoped contained gold. (It did not, proving worthless to company officials.) Before his days in Jamestown were completed, he would make three more trips across the Atlantic and back again to Virginia.

Problems Abound

By the fall of 1607, the colonists were struggling with disease, in part due to the location of their settlement. As they were situated on low-lying, almost swampy land, mosquitoes were a constant problem. Men contracted malaria without understanding the tiny insects were the cause. In addition, the groundwater became polluted. As the ground was saturated, the water mingled with human waste, which caused typhoid and dysentery among the men, killing some. One of the colonists wrote of the water, notes historian Giles Milton: "Our drinke [was] cold water taken out of the river, which was at floud [high tide] verie salt [and] at a low tide full of slime and filth, which was the destruction of many of our men."

Additionally, Newport's departure only made matters worse, especially in regard to food. While his ships had remained docked, his crew members had engaged in a black market of providing food to the colonists on the island. As one colonists wrote, notes historian Milton, the settlement's food "allowance was somewhat bettered by a daily proportion of biskit which the sailers would pilfer to sell, give or exchange with us for mony, saxefras [sassafras], [or] furrs. But when they departed there remained neither taverne, beere-house, nor place of relief but the common kettle." The colonists, with such food sources gone, had to rely on a common cooking pot and its contents, which was unappetizing. One description went as follows: "[It] was halfe a pinte of wheat and as much barly boyled with water for a man a day, and this having fryed some 26 weeks in the ship's hold, contained as many wormes as grains."

As for the hardened Captain Smith, who had faced wretched army food on more than one occasion, he hardly flinched while eating half-cooked, wormy barley gruel. But many in the settlement could not stand such fare, and sickness spread. Death stalked the colony, and come August, scarcely a day passed without the death of one of their number, creating a scattering of grave sites around the island. By September 10, half the colony was dead.

Even the stalwart Smith became ill for a time and even thought he might die. Only a continuing supply of sturgeon fished from the river, some of them as long as seven feet, kept the colony from completely dying out. That, and a gift of Indian corn from some natives and the arrival of northbound waterfowl on the river, including, notes Smith, "swans, geese, duckes, and cranes."

Exploring the Region

The new food sources helped the remaining colonists to survive into the fall of 1607. Smith later wrote: "God so changed the hearts of the salvages [savages] that they brought such plenty of their fruits and provision as no man wanted [lacked]." But food for a day or a week did not solve the overall and constant needs of the colonists. With such men as Wingfield dead, the leadership of the settlement shifted to Captain John Ratcliffe, who appointed Smith as the colony's "chief merchant," meaning it was up to Smith to keep the colony supplied with food. To that end, he immediately organized a food-finding expedition, taking several of the men who were well enough to travel and heading off into the interior. Armed with the usual trinkets, hatchets, and such, he was soon bartering with Indians for great quantities of food, including venison, corn, and oysters. (In one version of Smith's later writings, he claimed he and his six or seven comrades stole an effigy, or religious figure of some sort, then threatened to keep it unless the native Americans filled his bota with food, to the tune of 16 bushels of corn.) Such supplies were so abundant that Smith noted "none of our Tuftaffaty humourists [cranks] desired to goe for England." Even Wingfield, no fan of Smith's, had to admit, notes historian Bradford Smith, that the capable captain's efforts had "releved the colony well."

September became October, then November, and the colony seemed fairly secure, for the moment, at least. Food could never be taken for granted, nor good relations with the Indians. By early November, the leadership decided to dispatch Captain Smith into the Virginia interior to meet with the leader of the Powhatan Confederacy, Powhatan himself. With such earlier examples of English colonizing failures as the Roanoke and more recently, the Popham Colony, one thing was clear: For Englishmen to survive in the New World, they had better stay on the positive side of the Indians with whom they shared land. Leaders at Jamestown were also still interested in any information local Indians might have concerning the fate of the colonists at Roanoke who had disappeared 20 years earlier.

On the ninth of the month, Smith set out in another of the colony's river craft, a small barge, along with nine colonists, including six oarsmen. It was decided the pinnance would follow on the next high tide, with seven more men. Powhatan lived to the north, so smith and his company sailed along the James for five miles or so to the mouth of the Chickahominy, then turned north into the wide mouth of that Virginia tributary. The virgin vegetation grew close to the river, leaving Smith to hack at tree branches with his sword. As his boat moved along, Smith worked on a map, noting each bend or turn in the river. In time, the river narrowed so that the barge could go no farther. Meeting with some local natives, Smith bartered for one of their canoes, then continued upriver with two other colonists and a pair of Indian guides. In the meantime, the rest of his crew rowed the barge downstream, where they were to wait until Smith and his reduced party joined them.

With his smaller party, Captain Smith continued up the Chickahominy, even as trouble stalked his moves. In short order, he had followed a channel of the river that was soon clogged with reeds, a marshy ground that made progress difficult. Smith chose to tie up the canoe and continue on foot with one of his Indian guides. He ordered his two English companions to stay in the boat, keep a sharp eye, and keep their fuse, or match, lit (they were carrying matchlock guns) so they could fire their muskets. The men were to fire a shot if they saw any Indians.

The captain had barely left his comrades for 15 minutes before he heard shouts from their direction. He knew immediately that something was wrong, for he heard no gun shot. Certain he would soon find himself in danger, Smith acted on his military instincts. He grabbed his Indian guide, tying his arms together with a garter, intending to use the warrior as a shield. But Smith was already surrounded, and the attack came swiftly. As Smith later recounted: "I was struck with an arrow one the right thigh, a mere flesh wound." Spinning around, two Indians came into his view, each with his bow drawn. Smith fired toward them with his French wheel-lock pistol, managing to get off three or four shots. Still, arrows, found their marks, and Smith was hit several times, each sticking in the heavy material of his buff jerkin. During these tense minutes, with arrows flying, Smith's captor was terrified, shouting at the attackers to stop. His words must have been heard, for the armed natives (Smith counts them as 200 strong, which had formed a circle around him) halted their assault, seemingly ready to parley

with the captain. With no real bargaining power, smith was obliged to cooperate. Under the circumstances, their terms were generous: “They demaunded my armes, the rest they saide were slaine, onely me they would reserve.” The claim the Indians made concerning Smith’s associates back in the canoe was true. His comrades were no more....

CHAPTER FOUR: The King and His Daughter

Yet even under such long odds, Captain Smith did not intend to give up so easily. Keeping his weapon, he made a break for the river, running as fast as he could. But the river had given way to a boggy swamp, and the more the Englishman ran, the deeper he sank, until mud reached his knees, stopping him cold in his tracks. He continued to sink farther in the mud until it was waist deep. Suddenly, he realized he might continue sinking until his entire stocky frame was underneath, a circumstance that signaled imminent death. Ironically, his only hope might be the Indians themselves. He turned to his pursuers and reached toward them, having thrown down his weapons. They in turn reached for him, pulling him from the confines of the muddy morass.

A Captive Englishman

But Smith was only out of the mud. His fate was no more certain. The Indians looked their captive over, fascinated by the breadth of Smith’s red beard, or at least the captain thought so. they took him to a campfire site where his comrades had been killed. There the captain saw the body of one man bristling with more than 20 arrows. There, the native men let Smith warm himself by the fire. Some even rubbed his limbs to restore them from the cold of the bog.

Without a weapon, Smith had to fall back on his wits. He reached into a pocket and produced an ivory compass, and the wily Englishman made certain that, no matter where he stood, the magnetized needle pointed directly at him. The Indians seemed amazed, reaching for the needle, but unable to touch it because of the glass. Smith wrote later: “Much they marveled at the playing of the fly and needle.” As if teaching a science lesson, the captive soldier then began to lecture on the nature of the cosmos, informing the Indians in a foreign tongue that the world was round and about the moon and the planets. The warriors listened, according to Smith, amazed.

It all might have saved Smith’s life, at least until the warriors took him to their village. Promptly, they started out, their prisoner in tow. The Indians took formation around Smith, with 20 warriors placed in front of their party, plus five on both Smith’s left and right, while another five brought up the rear. Three additional Indians held the captain by the arms. They reached a nearby Indian town called Rassaweck, located about six miles from his capture site, north of the Chickahominy and just south of the Youghtanan River, a tributary of the Pamunkey. This was one of the villages of Opechancanough, Powhatan’s half-brother.

Smith was led along the ridge of a red sand hill. There was a long house, typical of those in the region, but larger, extending 100 feet from end to end. The roof was a barrel vault that ran the length of the structure. The whole thing was fashioned out of wooden poles and bark, so common among the native peoples of today’s eastern United States. Close at hand were a pair of smaller long houses, about 60 feet in length. These were called Uttamussack, which Smith was informed represented an extremely holy site among the people of Powhatan. The captain reach the exterior of the large long house and was soon ushered inside.

There, a medicine man, his body slathered in black paint, his shoulders draped in weasel and snake skins, danced before Smith in the chief’s long house, shaking his rattle, followed by several other dancers painted both black and red. The dancing went on for an entire day. He was also greeted by warriors painted red from head to shoulders.

To Smith’s surprise, he was feasted on deer and Indian bread. It occurred to Smith that the natives might be fattening him up before the kill, but he ate and tried to quiz them about the region and of the great chief, Powhatan. During his “interview” with these native Americans, Smith heard a story that made him listen in wonder. The natives told him of a group of people who lived west of the Chowan River, who were, noted Smith, “cloathed like me.” Who were these strangers? Perhaps they were the remnant of the Lost Colony of Roanoke, which had been

abandoned 20 years earlier. Maybe they were the survivors of a shipwreck. Smith had little to go on, but the information piqued his interest.

Christmas passed with Smith still held prisoner. A few days later, his captors were on the move again, ready to continue their journey to the great leader Powhatan. They did not go directly to Powhatan's village of Werowocomoco, but followed a circuitous route north of the Mattapanient River, then back south where they crossed and recrossed the Youghtanan. They passed through several Indian villages, including Menapucunt and Cinquoteck. The days were wintry and cold as the men led Smith on his forced march through the gray landscape. The warriors might have been intend on showing off the extent of Powhatan's reach of power by passing through so many villages unnecessarily. At each Indian town, Smith was put on display. In one village, he was asked to demonstrate his pistol. The captain then took advantage of his opportunity to break the gun's cock, so that it could not be used on him.

Smith's captors pressed on until they finally reached Werowocomoco, the village of Powhatan. Throughout the region of the Chesapeake, Powhatan ruled his dominion that stretched from the Roanoke River to Chesapeake Bay, an alliance named for the chief himself. The lands representing his power included those of the Pamunkey, Chickahominy, and Potomac tribes. The party had trekked as far north as the Toppahannock River, perhaps 30 miles north of Werowocomoco. No other Indian leader within hundreds of miles could lay claim to the scope of territory ruled by Powhatan. The captain knew he was deep inside the belly of the beast.

As Smith entered Powhatan's capital, he was greeted by those who were aghast at the bedraggled captain's appearance, thinking him some sort of monster. Then, the English captive was taken by Powhatan's dwelling. Here, he was informed that the Indian leader's proper name was not Powhatan, but Wahunsunacock. As Smith was shown into the chief's house, his eyes took a moment to adjust to the dim light. There, before him, stood 200 warriors, decorated in red paint, their hair brimming with feathers. There was a royal woman whom Smith recognized as Opussoquonuske, the beautiful queen of the Appamattuck peoples. She approached with a basin of water so that Smith could wash his hands. A second woman brought him feathers with which to dry them. It was not immediately clear to Smith which one was Powhatan.

But then, through the subdued light, he looked toward the opposite end of the long house. Smith later wrote of what and who he saw, describing the Indian leader "proudly lying upon a bedstead a foote high, upon tenne or twelve mattes richly hung with manie chaynes of great pearles about his necke." Powhatan appeared as regal to Smith as if he were sitting on a throne in a grand palace. Smith describes him as tall and well-formed, with gray hair and a "sower [sour] look." There were women everywhere, it seemed to the Englishman: "At his heade sat aa woman, at his feete another, on each side sitting upon a matte upon the ground were range his chiefe men...and behind them as many young women, each a great chaine of white beades over their shoulders...[He had] such a grave and majesticall contenance, as drove me into admiration to see such state in a...salvage."

Both men eyed one another. Powhatan was cordial and hospitable, as he ordered food to be brought in so that Smith could eat. After the food came the questions, only this time not from the English captain, but from the great chief. *Why have you and your people come here?* The wily Smith answered without answering. He made up a story, how the ship he and his fellow Englishmen were sailing on had fought a sea battle against the Spanish and had been driven into the region of the Chesapeake and that the settlement they had built was only temporary. *Why are you encroaching so far to the north, on my land, if you are not going to stay here?* Smith explained that the English were searching for a route to the west, to the South Sea (Pacific Ocean). He also explained that a member of the English colony had been killed by Monacan Indians from the mountains to the west and that Smith was searching for them to avenge their death. These were lies, of course, but Smith was desperate to stay alive, hoping to present himself and his colleagues back at Jamestown as no threat to Powhatan and his people.

Powhatan then told his own stories, informing Smith of a great salt seas to the west beyond the Appalachian Mountains, no more than a week's journey away. He told him of a tribe of cannibals who lived there, the Pocoughtronack, who shaved their heads, and with whom Powhatan's people had battled. He also told of a people dressed like the Englishman, who wore coats and shirts, who had also arrived by ship. To whom he might have been referring, if anyone really, is uncertain. Perhaps he meant the French who had already arrived in Canada to the north and were pushing up the St. Lawrence River toward the Great Lakes. Between the two men, each had his tales to tell.

Then, in case Smith had not already been impressed with the scope of the chief's lands, Powhatan delivered a long speech describing his domain and the power he held accordingly. Smith was then invited to tell about the

place where he was from. The captain was more than happy to oblige, describing the majesty of King James I and of the royal navy at his command. He went into detail, perhaps to frighten Powhatan and his natives, describing English military might, mimicking the sound of cannon and battlefield trumpets. He described Captain Newport as a powerful medicine man, a *wereowance*, who, despite having one arm, was always referred to as the King of All the Waters.

As Smith bragged patriotically about England, Powhatan listened. But the Indian king was no fool. He was well aware of the struggles that had been taking place at the English settlement along the James River; of how dependent the English had been on support from him and his alliance of tribes. The settlement at Jamestown was not his first encounter with European arrivals to his shores. Of late middle age, he knew of the Roanoke Colony of 20 years ago, as well as an attempt by Spanish Jesuits who had landed along the coast of Chesapeake Bay. As he watched and listened to Captain Smith, he had reason to doubt the Englishman's stories. Recently, he had listened to his own elders, wise old ones in his village who had prophesied to him concerning the threat of these new people. They had told him that "from the Chesapeake Bay, a nation should arise, which should dissolve and give end to his empier." The timing of the Jamestown colony might have doubly worried Powhatan, for his elders had told him that, after the first two European attempts to establish a presence in the region, "the third time, they themselves [the Indians] should fall into their subjection and under their conquest." To Powhatan, Jamestown represented that third attempt. For nearly eight months, he had watched, through this spies, the colony at Jamestown take root. Early on, he had sent diplomats offering friendship with the English, who delivered a promise from their great chief that there should be no hostilities between them.

Now, with this warrior of the English before him, Powhatan had a decision to make. And he wasted no more time. He met with his elders, discussing what to do with Smith. Death seemed the choice. Powhatan had ordered the deaths of others before. he had two favorite means of dispatching someone—either by bashing his brains out or cooking him over an open fire. He and the elders counseled, and the choice made: The Englishman's head would be crushed. He and his encroaching people must be stopped.

Suddenly, many warriors leapt forward, taking Smith into their hands, as he struggled against them. In Smith's later, third-person account (at least in one version): "Two great stones were brought before Powhatan. Then, as many as could...dragged him to them, and thereon laid his head, and being ready with their clubs to beate out his braines."

Then, one of the most famous events in early American history might have taken place. With Smith's had on the chopping block, warriors stood ready with clubs in hand, the corners of the long house filled with their whoops and shouts. Out of the shadows stepped a young girl intent on changing Captain Smith's fate. The hapless Englishman records what happened next: "Pocahontas, the King's dearest daughter, when no intreaty could prevaile, got his [Smith's] head in her armes and laid her owne upon his to save him from death." As if from the pages of a romance novel or a modern-day movie, this young girl had stepped forward and rescued her father's would-be victim from sure death.

"Frolicsome"

Who was this impetuous girl of the great chief, whose story is remembered by school children? In his writings, Captain Smith, a man of 27 years, describes her having a beauty beyond all others among her people. She is described as well proportioned and fair. Her age on that fateful in January 1608 is uncertain. She might have been 11 or 12, or perhaps as old as 13 or 14. (When she had her portrait painted in London in 1616, her age was recorded as 21.)

....It appears that, among all the many children of Powhatan, she was his favorite. Her name was Matoaka. But she was also known by her nickname, a special name given her because "her disposition was so lighthearted and lively." The name translated into English was something close to "Frolicsome," but the Indian name was "Pocahontas."

For some reason, in the midst of this savage scene of murder on the frontier, she has been motivated to intervene against the express will of her father. Almost immediately, seemingly due to her singular actions, Powhatan changed his mind. he reacted with seeming astonishment, sensing that the actions of Pocahontas represented a sign from the spirits that Smith should be allowed to live. smith notes that, once the Indian girl asked that he be spared, "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." Not only was Smith to keep his brains inside his head after all, but Powhatan immediately adopted him. The only stipulation was that the English captain was to "goe to Jamestown to send him [Powhatan] two great gunnes and a grindstone, for which he would give him [Smith] the Country of Capahowosick, and for ever esteeme him as his sonne." What a turn of events, and all in almost no time flat.

What exactly had happened? Was this young girl infatuated with this English stranger who had been delivered into her father's presence? Or was something else taking place that Smith might not have realized at the time? There are more questions than answers. But the captain's life was spared, and Smith was soon initiated into the nation of Powhatan. The ceremony took place two days later, when the Englishman was led into a long house located off in the nearby woods and left by himself to sit in front of a fire. Then, out from behind a hanging mat emerged Powhatan and 200 of his warriors, with all their faces painted black, whooping about the room. Smith was then informed he was his son and friend, a member of his nation. smith was even given a new name—Nantaquoud. Then, the Indian chief sent the captain off packing to Jamestown in the escort of a dozen of his warriors, with two carrying a large quantity of bread, another serving as his personal bodyguard, and another carrying the captain's coat. This was an entirely different escort than the one that had delivered him to Werowocomoco.

One More Thing: The Pocahontas Story: Fact or Fiction?

It has become the singular event in the life of Captain John Smith known by more people than anything else he experienced in his lifetime. His rescue from death at the hands of the daughter of Powhatan, the beautiful maiden-princess Pocahontas, has all the hallmarks of a popular drama. Without question, the scene Smith would tell about and write about later would become legendary, a part of the folklore, not just of Smith's personal biography, but of the history of Jamestown.

But today's historians wonder whether the romanticized rescue of Smith by Pocahontas even took place at all. When Smith first wrote about his meeting with Powhatan then next year in his journal, *True Relation*, Smith did not bother to include the exciting, last-second rescue scene feature Pocahontas placing her head next to his to spare his life. In fact, he did not include the story publicly until he wrote another version of events, his *Generall Historie of Virginia*, published in 1624.

Such a discrepancy leads some historians to doubt if Smith's rescue by Pocahontas actually took place. As unique as the story was, how could the great soldier, colonist, and explore leave it out such an exciting story from his original narrative? The question needs answering. And perhaps the answer lies in examining any reasons why Captain Smith might have chosen to not tell his unique adventure story and 1608.

There are good possible answers. One might relate to Smith's wanting to maintain a certain reputation for himself as a brave soldier who was ever ready to battle Indians on the American frontier. Having to rely on an Indian girl to save your own skin might have made him look weak or even foolish to a reading audience, and not the least, to his fellow colonists back in Jamestown, who likely would never have let the otherwise macho Smith live it down.

...Yet, there is in 1624, as Smith rewrites his tale of meeting Powhatan and his own brush with death, only to be saved at the last second by teenaged native girl. Why, then, tell the story after so many years? What could he possibly have gained by telling the story then? It should be noted that, even when he included the story, he did not overtell it. His 1624 *Generall Historie of Virginia* was a large book of 248 pages, but he only gave the Pocahontas story barely 10 lines of text. The older captain simply tells the tale, without laboring the details or lingering too long on the scene, at least the part that related directly to the actions taken by Powhatan's daughter. Maybe the fault lies not with Smith, but with all those people over the centuries who have made a bigger deal about the tale than the good English captain did.

As to those who doubt the story because it was told late and not originally, why would Smith tell a false tale if it would only cause his readers to doubt him? He could expect no more fame or notoriety by relating the rescue scene, even in his second telling up his life story. But yet the story is there so long after the fact. It may be that Smith had even another reason for stalling the inclusion of Pocahontas's rescue. He had already faced charges of mutiny even before the three ships had arrived in the Chesapeake region. There were already those who doubted his intentions in the New World, and some even thought he had designs to make himself a great lord in the

wilderness. If he had told his tale of Pocahontas, some of his critics could have interpreted it to indicate a connection or even a relationship between Smith and the great Indian ruler's daughter, which could have been extrapolated into Smith's trying to ingratiate himself with Powhatan, marry his daughter, and form an Indian-English alliance with Smith as the real power.

For those who doubt the Pocahontas tale, there is another reason to believe it actually took place more or less as Smith describes its details. When the captain was captured, he had managed to kill two or three Indian warriors and their comrades had, in turn, killed both of Smith's travel companions. Thus, why should the Indians not kill Captain Smith, especially since he was responsible for the deaths of their fellow Native Americans? The answer might lie in something as simple as the fear of revenge or retaliation by the English. Smith represented to them a great warrior and leader of the English. By Smith's own account, there was a discussion between Powhatan, his half-brother, and the tribal elders to decide the fate of Smith. There were likely those who wanted to have him executed and others who wanted him left alive, for whatever reasons. It might be then, that Pocahontas's actions were actually part of a plan between father and daughter to maintain peace and harmony among his people.

The equation is simple: Chief Powhatan orders the death of Smith, which makes happy those hungry for the captain's blood. By prearrangement, the favorite daughter steps forward, begs her father to spare the Englishman, father relents, Smith is kept alive, to the satisfaction of those who want no trouble from the English over their otherwise dead leader. All this leaves Powhatan off the hook with anyone, since he had ordered the Englishman's death, but changed his mind at the request of his favorite daughter. Everybody is satisfied, at least on some level, especially Captain John Smith, whose neck is saved.

So, was John Smith a fabricator of stories involving an impetuous Indian maiden ready to risk all by intervening against her father's orders? Likely not. Unfortunately, Smith's story was never verified by other eyewitnesses, but it is also true that no one ever stepped forward in Smith's lifetime to say that he had made the whole thing up. That has remained easier for those looking back to events from which they are removed by for centuries. In the end, the tale of John Smith and Pocahontas remains in the history books as one of the most intriguing tales of American folklore.

CHAPTER FIVE: Exploring the Unknown

By the time Smith returned to Jamestown, he had been absent for more than three weeks. There were those who were angry at his long absence, others who questioned his version of events, wondering why the great Indian chief had allowed the captain to live. Smith trying to put such questions aside, explaining how he understood the "Indian mind," even if his English comrades did not. A handful wanted to try him, including Captain Gabriel Archer, whom Ratcliffe had added to the colony's council while Smith was away, for some trumped charge relating to the Bible's book of Leviticus, Chapter 24, which supposedly made Smith responsible for the deaths of his two former comrades. A trial opened the same day Smith returned to Jamestown. He was found guilty and condemned to hang. Only an immediate arrival at the fort spared Smith a second time from the colony's hangman's noose, as the captain noted later: "But it pleased God to send Captain Newport onto us the same evening...whose arrival saved master Smith's life." Newport ordered Smith placed back on the colony's council.

Smith did try to accommodate the requests Powhatan had made concerning a grindstone and a pair of cannon, but, while Indians did show up to collect the three, they were put off by the weight of the two demi-culverins Smith offered them (such a field piece might have weighed more than 3000 pounds!), so while the Indians could expect an easier means for grinding their corn, artillery would not become part of their native arsenal.

It became commonplace for Native Americans to visit before it from time to time, for trade primarily. One regular Indian visitor to Jamestown was Pocahontas. A colonist leader wrote about her, notes historian David Price: "Very often she came to our fort, with what she could get for Captain Smith. Her especially he ever much respected." She made deliveries of food to the colonists and seemed to enjoy her time among the Englishmen. Powhatan's daughter was likely not yet even a teenager, so she did not spend all her time with Smith, but played with the small number of boys at the fort.…

But it appears her primary motive for visiting Jamestown, aside from a likely general curiosity about these strange people who had invaded her father's land, was Captain Smith. She enjoyed his company, likely finding

in him a companion who respected her, one who was intent on learning her language. The visits were undoubtedly important to Smith, who wanted to hone his skills at the Indian tongue, and he probably hoped that, through hospitality to Powhatan's favorite daughter, the native king might remain friendly to the English colonists.

Events moved forward in Jamestown following Smith's return. The 38 men still left alive were excited by the return of Captain Newport and his shipload of fresh supplies, which included such exotic foods as bananas and pineapples from the Caribbean, plus a few colorful parrots for the enjoyment of the colonists. His vessel, *John & Francis*, arrived on January 2. (Smith had informed the Indians the captain would soon arrive, making his words appear prophetic.) The ship also delivered new colonists, all men, approximately 100 in number, including 33 gentlemen, 21 laborers, and an assortment of craftsman, everyone from a tailor to a gunsmith to a goldsmith to a tobacco pipe maker. Less than two weeks later, another ship, the *Phoenix*, which had originally left England with Newport's *John & Francis*, arrived along the James. The ship was a surprise, for it had been separated during the voyage, and all had thought it lost.

A Crushing Loss

But new tragedy struck soon after Smith's return. Only a week later, a fire swept through James fort, burning several thatched roof buildings. Most of the colonists' clothing and personal items were gone. Reverend Hunt lost his collection of books. Fortunately, most of the new supplies had not yet been offloaded from Newport's ship. This only marked the beginning of a litany of tragedies that would be follow the colony over the following six months. By the summer of 1608, two out of three colonists would be dead, the president of the council would be under arrest, another council member would be shot, and a third close to hanging.

Perhaps the fire led captain Newport to take his next step, one that would include Captain Smith directly. With the colony's resources at a near total loss, Newport decided to lead a new expedition in the pinnance and the barge to visit Powhatan. He still had in mind that the discovery of gold would ultimately rescue the colony (he had just brought two refiners and goldsmiths on board his ship) and that the Indians likely knew where such gold deposits could be found. Soon, a party of three dozen men or so, including Newport, Smith, and Ratcliffe, we're on their way to visit Werowocomoco.

To Powhatan's Village

The boats and their crews made their way to the Indian emperor's village, not knowing whether Powhatan would greet them as friend or foe. They road down the James and then north along the Virginia peninsula to the Pamunkey (York) River to their destination. Unfortunately, the 100-mile river voyage was necessary, even though the distance over land between the Indian settlement in Jamestown was only 15 or so miles, but across low, swampy ground. By boat was the only logical way to travel from one to the other. When they came within a short distance of Werowocomoco, Smith and half the party sent out on foot for the village, where they were soon greeted by hundreds of Powhatan's people.

The chief welcomed the English captain he had recently adopted, but asked him about the cannon he had requested. When Smith explained the Indians had chosen not to haul the two guns he had procured for them, the old chief only laughed and suggested that, next time, they should be offered smaller weapons, "some of less burthen." Smith gave gifts to his "father" Powhatan, including a suit of clothes dyed scarlet, a white greyhound, and a hat. In return, the Indian king announced "a perpetual league and friendship" with his English neighbors. The two men continued their talks, as Smith reminded Powhatan that he had promised lands for the English. The Indian leader shrewdly suggested that first, the English should surrender their weapons. The captain countered that such a thing was what "our enemies desired, but never our friends." As an alternative sign of friendship, the captain proposed that the two parties exchange individuals. Two young men were chosen, including a native named Namontack and a 13-year-old English boy named Thomas Savage (his actual name, no pun), who must've been either thrilled or frightened at the prospect. All this pleased Powhatan, who declared Smith to be a werowance, or chief, even as he stated that all the English party in his village were now members of his family.

Following this first day of diplomacy and posturing, the two sides got down to business. Trade was important to both the English and the Indians. Each had something the other needed or valued. Powhatan had corn and other foods, while the colonist said something highly prized by the American Indians they were bargaining with–

English copper. Here, Smith and Newport disagreed on how to proceed with the delicate trade negotiations. Powhatan wanted Newport to show how much copper he had to trade before negotiations could open. Smith advised the captain not to play his hand too soon, but Newport chose to comply with the chief's demands, which irritated Smith, both because it tipped the colonists hand and that it allowed Powhatan to further size up his adversaries. Before the transactions were completed, Smith used deceit to trade a few bags of glass beads (the blue ones were new to Powhatan, and he immediately placed great value on them) for two or 300 bushels of corn from Powhatan by appealing to his vanity. He told the proud chief that such "jewels" were prized by the highest monarchs in Europe. Everyone seemed satisfied with the outcome of the day's bargaining, and it was all followed with a great feast and speeches....

After several days in Powhatan's village, the English loaded up their food stores, with Newport in the pinnance and Smith manning the barge. The meetings with Powhatan had gone well, yet Newport may have overstayed his time in the colony. He did not leave Jamestown until April, which meant that each week he stayed, his own crewman were consuming supplies intended for the colonists. In addition, Newport's men were forcing those in Jamestown to pay dearly for food and other items provided by the company, supplies that should have been handed out freely to the settlers. Also, too many men were spending their time doing nothing, Smith later wrote, but "dig gold, wash gold, refine gold, loade gold." The captain disapproved of it all, for , as one colonist noted: "Never anything good more torment him than to see all necessary business neglected, to fraught such a drunken ship with so much guilded durt [gilded dirt]." As Newport departed, his ship was filled with the New World diggings the colonists had unearthed, ore they hoped contained gold.

At the Fort

For Smith's part, he escorted captain Newport's ship down the James River to the capes, then, on his return back upriver, he took time to further explore. He was in the 50-foot *Discovery*, the smallest of the three ships that had first delivered the colonists to Virginia nearly a year earlier.

As Smith's boat moved along the Nansemond River, south of the James, he was moved to note the future, writing later that the region was "so sweet, so pleasant, so beautiful, and so strong a prospect for an invincible strong city, with so many commodities, but I know as yet I have not seen." Today, that same location is home to the city of Portsmouth.

The days were turning warm, and some of the men in Jamestown were busy rebuilding the settlement following the fire, while others worked planting spring crops in the nearby fields. While overall Indian relations were good, some Indians were making trouble from time to time by approaching the fort and then stealing any tools or weapons they could get their hands on. On one occasion, while Captain Smith and a comrade were at work in a cornfield, two natives approached, threatening the Englishmen. When they followed Smith into the fort, he had them captured, along with other Indians who were loitering about. Then, one of them admitted that there was a plot to attack the fort when captain Newport returned. Exposed and held by the English, the Indians had no choice but to return the tools they had taken. (It is uncertain whether their story was actually true.)

Another Indian soon showed up at Jamestown as well. Powhatan sent to Pocahontas as his representative, to ask for the release of the captured Indians. The old chief believed Smith had a soft spot for his daughter, and he may well have been correct....In short order, Smith convinced the council to turn the foreign natives over to Pocahontas, "in regard of her father's kindness in sending her." That the Indian emperor had sent his young daughter, even though he had sons, gives an indication of how important she was to him as a spokesperson, despite her age.

By early June, the *Phoenix* sailed out of Jamestown. An argument over its cargo had developed during the weeks it was docked at the settlement. Captain Martin had wanted it loaded with more "gilded dirt," but Smith still correctly considered the search for gold to be a waste of time. Smith managed to convince the council to send back a more valuable cargo–cut cedar.

As the *Phoenix* set sail, Smith was himself off on another exploration voyage. During his previous trip to visit Powhatan along with Captain Newport, the chief had shown Smith some large canoes that his warriors used to travel along the eastern shores of the Chesapeake, which represented choppier waters then those found on the inland rivers. Talk of these waters had piqued Smith's interest. He had convinced the council of the advantages of such a trip–possible new alliances for trade, discovery of new resources (he even suggested gold), and simply

additional information about the region. Smith would begin his voyage that summer along the Chesapeake on June 2 and would not return until July 21. It would prove to be another adventure, the first of two such voyages during a busy summer he would spend exploring.

A Summer of Exploration

Captain Smith chose the 40-foot barge for his trip, along with 14 companions, selecting eight for their abilities and skills, including a doctor, carpenter, blacksmith, fisherman, fishmonger, tailor, laborer, and fellow soldier. The other six he simply referred to generically as "gentlemen." The boat was cramped with this number on board, given it was open deck, with no below decks, propelled by rowers on each side. Smith took along some water, bread, and dried meat, but hardly enough for a seven-week mission. Intending to make the most of his expedition, he brought along a notebook, compass, and probably a small quadrant to aid in any map making (it would give him a reading for latitude).

The *Phoenix* towed the barge down the James as it departed. Leaving the larger ship that evening, Smith's vessel began sailing north across the wide mouth of the bay. During the first week of exploration, Smith and his men followed the eastern shore, poking around in each inlet and estuary. The following day, the English party encountered a pair of Indians using bone-tip spears to fish for kingfish. The two natives sent the English across the bay to the Indian town of Accomac (close to modern-day Cape Charles). There they encountered a local werowance who told Smith of the recent deaths of two of the village's children, followed by others who died after visiting their gravesite. Some historians believe the Indians had been exposed to some European disease that was running through the village.

Their explorations opened up new sites and lands to Smith and his men. They continued examining local river mouths and spotted islands that the captain wanted to explore, which were likely Watts and Tangier Islands. A sudden summer squall soon struck their boat, pushing them away from the islands, back to the eastern shore mainland. A few days later, they were battered by another short-lived storm, which ripped their sale. Smith's decision to take a tailor along came in handy, as the craftsman repaired the sale with shirt material.

The English reached new Indian villages, and violence erupted as they enter the Nanticoke River, where warriors ran along the riverbank, firing valleys of arrows at the barge and crew. Smith ordered muskets fired, which wounded some of the natives. When the barge reached the local village, Smith found it abandoned. He chose to leave some trade goods, including copper, beads, bells, and mirrors. The following day, Smith and his man encountered hundreds of Indians along the shores belonging to the Nanticoke nation. (They likely had no knowledge of the violent encounter of the previous day.) Trade soon opened. Smith noted the Nanticokes had good furs to trade. Questioning them about where the furs might have come from (they were not local), the Nanticokes told him of the great village far to the north of the Massawomecks. Smith was extremely interested. Furs were highly prized back in England.

Smith and his men continued on. They covered 100 miles over the next two days, backed by good winds and cooperative tides, reaching the Patapsco River. However, they found no Indians immediately, "but the woods extreme thick, full of Woolves, Beares, Deare, and other wild beasts." (Smith could not know that one day, close by, would stand the city of Baltimore.) The English could not have known that local natives have been pushed out of the region by the Massawomeck and Susquehanna (Susquehannock) nations to the north. After two weeks of exploring, several of Smith's men were ready for the voyage to end, complaining of the wet, the weather, and their seasickness. But Smith would have none of it, reminding them they would be ashamed to return to Jamestown prematurely and that "there is as much danger to returne as to proceede. Regaine therefore your old spirits." The barge continued on.

Meeting the Susquehannas

But, once back in Chesapeake Bay, Smith continued north for only a few more miles, reaching Gunpowder River. To the north, just about 30 or 40 miles, was the future southern border of today's Pennsylvania, as well as the Susquehanna Indians. Rather than continue farther, he sent a pair of local Indians north to find the Susquehannas and ask them to come south and meet with the English party. A few days later, a party of 50 or so Susquehannas did reach the barge, their canoes filled with deer meat, baskets, shields, bows, arrows, and smoking pipes with

stems a yard long. To the English, these were some of the largest Indians they had seen yet. Smith wrote that they were "gyant-like." They were not Algonquin stock like the nations the English and Jamestown were accustomed to. These were Iroquois peoples who knew only of Powhatan by name. Yet, while the English may have been new to these northern tribes men, they were accustomed to Europeans, as they carried French hatchets from trading in Canada. The Susquehannas tried to make a singular impression on the English, especially their leader. Smith soon found himself covered in a large painted bear skin in the white bead necklace he thought might weigh seven pounds. Other gifts were placed at his feet. Perhaps their purpose was clear when they asked Smith to ally with them against the Massawomecks, even though the captain begged off, as he promised to return the next year

Up the Patawomeck

On June 15, the party turn the south back into familiar waters. The barge soon floated close to the site of modern-day Annapolis, Maryland, and continued on, making 100 miles of progress before nightfall, landing at the mouth of the Patawomeck (Potomac) River. It was here that Smith and his men left Chesapeake Bay for their longest river exploration. The captain likely had in mind, given the wide mouth of the river, the possibility that ahead of them lay the Northwest Passage, the long elusive water route across North America to the Orient.

But 30 miles up the river, they were immediately put upon by a party of three or 400 Indian warriors who, Smith notes, came out from behind trees "so strangely painted, grimed and disguised, shouting, yelling, and crying as so many spirits from hell could not have showed more terrible." Smith and his men fired warning shots along the surface of the river, the bullets skipping off the water and the echoing concussion frightening the Indians so that they dropped their bows and arrows. Interviewing the disarmed warriors, Smith believed that the attack had been ordered by Powhatan himself, who may have fallen into a plot with some of those back in Jamestown who were opposed to Smith. Some had recently tried to leave the fort on Newport's departing ship, but Smith had forced him to "stay in their country against their wills."

The Englishmen continued on in their explorations of one of Virginia's foremost rivers today, the Potomac. They made quick progress, probably traveling as far as the river's Great Falls, approximately 20 miles from today's Washington, D.C., where they were blocked from going any farther, great boulders as big as trees scattered about their path. Smith led his men down the river to the bay and then south, reaching the mouth of the Rappahannock River. At one site, the captain tried to mimic the Indian fisherman he had seen a couple of weeks earlier, using his sword as a spear. He and others caught more fish than they could possibly eat that day. But the fishing expedition ended in almost deadly fashion for Smith, whose last catch turned out to be a stingray, which thrust its barbed tail into the captain's wrist, sending deadly poison through his arm and shoulder. The swelling was so bad that everyone, including Smith, thought he would surely die, and the captain ordered his grave to be dug. But it was not to be. Again, Smith had chosen wisely and taking along a doctor, who cut open the wound and applied and oily medicine to the sore. Soon, the pain and swelling subsided, and Smith recovered enough to eat his share of the day's catch of fish.

Perhaps his brush with near death caused Captain Smith to decide to bring his explorations to an end, For he chose to bypass the York River (which meant skipping Werewocomoco), stopped for a short visit at the Indian town of Kecoughtan, then made a straight sail up the James River to the English settlement. But the weary explorers were not too tired from their trip to play a practical joke on their comrades in Jamestown. Before rounding the last bend to the settlement, the men decked out the barge with painted streamers to give their craft the appearance of a Spanish frigate. It seems they carried such items in case they ever had to fool a real Spanish ship. Smith did not describe the response of the Jamestown colonists at the site of their "disguised" boat, but at least they did not choose to fire off a couple of canon shots toward the barge.

One More Thing: Discovering Jamestown and Werewocomoco

More than 400 years have passed since the English established their toehold in America they called Fort James, or Jamestown. Over the years, the actual site of the fort fell into disrepair and was abandoned, especially as the number of colonists became too many for all to remain inside the fort. By the 19th century, no one had any knowledge even of the exact location of the old fort. It would remain for archaeologists in the 20th century to relocate the place that time had long since covered over.

Excavations of the Jamestown Rediscovery Project began in the spring of 1994 under the direction of archaeologist Dr. Bill Kelso. The Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities sponsored the project. The search for the former colonial site was a challenge, as the conventional wisdom was that the river had eaten away the shoreline of the fort's island location. If so, that would mean the fort site was actually under the waters of the James River.

Kelso chose an area for digging that had not been on earth before. He picked his location based on the only remaining, above-ground building left from the original Jamestown—a church tower. Kelso knew, from the descriptions of the fort, that the church itself had been in the midst of the fort. He selected high ground nearby and began digging. After a little more than two years, Kelso and his team of diggers located the fort's foundations. Systematic digging over the years since have revealed 87 percent of the original site, with the remaining portion of the triangular fort–basically one of the bulwark corners–underwater.

Later excavations have revealed over 1 million artifacts, including musket balls, clay pipe stems, pottery, weapons, tools, coins, fishhooks, pieces of glass, and many other common, everyday items. One intriguing find has been a small lead luggage tag, about one by two inches, stamped with its destination–"YAMESTOWNE." (The "Y" is the Latin "J.") In 2007, to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Jamestown's founding, the tag was taken onboard the space shuttle *Atlantis*, where it took yet another journey, not across the Atlantic Ocean, but a long six million miles through space.

Bones excavated have included thousands of fish, especially large sturgeon that must have been extremely plentiful. Other bones include those of dolphin and shark, apparently eaten by the colonists. Trade items have been unearthed, including shell beads and glass beads. Copper, highly prized by the local native Americans as a trade good, has also been found.

Other interesting finds have included burial sites in the skeletal remains of 85 early colonists. One of the most intriguing was a site within the fort where the skeleton of a teenage boy was found, along with an arrowhead from a leg wound. In Smith's writings, he refers to the first Indian attack at Jamestown during which a boy was killed by an arrow.

Less than 10 years after the Jamestown Rediscovery Project began, other archaeologists went to work on excavations in search of the site of Powhatan's Village Werewocomoco. Historians had generally identified a site near the north bank of the York River in modern-day Gloucester County as the Indian village, but in 2002–2003, an archaeological survey and later diggings revealed a more likely site west on Purtan Bay. (Archaeologist Daniel Mouer, from Virginia Commonwealth University, actually identified the site back in 1977.) Further excavations on a 50 acre site have an earth many artifacts leading to the 17th century, as well as a complex of earthworks that date back to approximately the year 1400. In 2006, the Werewocomoco Archaeological Site was added to the National Register of Historic Places.

The digging at the assumed Werewocomoco site has been directed by two local archaeologists, Thane Harpole and David Brown. The Werewocomoco Research Group, in 2004, unearthed two curving ditches, each more than 200 feet in length, situated about 1000 feet from the Pamunkey River. Continue to work at the site may ultimately reveal a D shaped construction that shows up on a map drawn by John Smith of Werewocomoco.

CHAPTER SIX: Up and Down the Chesapeake

Smith and his men had been gone for most of a month, making their expedition the longest exploration throughout the region of Virginia to date. They had failed to find the Northwest Passage (it did not exist, after all), nor had they found gold, although they had reached an Indian "mine" along the Potomac, which the natives told them about. This site produced a silvery, crystalline mineral, likely antinomy, which the Indians collected, noted Smith, to "sell all over the country to paint their bodies, faces, or idols." (Today it is used in metal alloys in semiconductors.) "But it was not gold." Yet Smith's venture did not come back empty-handed. They had discovered Indians with furs to sell, as well as new sources of fish, fruits, and other natural vegetation. They had met with new people, including Native Americans who had already made contact with the French to the north. Such peoples might be persuaded to "spy "for the English. Smith and his men now knew from their expedition where villages were located, how populous they were, and whom they could count as friends, as well as enemies.

The return of the exploratory party found Jamestown in bad shape. The colonists were unhappy with Ratcliffe's leadership and his insistence they build him a large "palace in the woods," as his personal domicile. There was much sickness in the small village. Some approached Smith to lead a mutiny and take over as leader. The record is unclear exactly what happened, but it seems that the captain did remove Radcliffe, with the blessing of the council, which agreed to allow a friend, Matthew Scrivener, to serve out Ratcliffe's last two months of his year-long presidency, to be followed by an election in September.

As for Smith, who had just returned from more than seven weeks of exploration, he only waited a few days and was then ready to sit off on his second reconnaissance of the summer. It appears he had put the effects of his recent stingray attack behind him. He chose 12 men to accompany him this time, including nine at his previous comrades. Before their departure, the barge was repaired. By Sunday, July 24, the faithful boat was on its way down to James River once again. The first voyage at the Chesapeake had proceeded reasonably well, making progress to the headwaters of the bay. Throughout the trip, the 15 men, except for such calamities as Smith's ordeal with the stingray, had managed to keep themselves intolerably good health. The men soon discovered that this second expedition would not experience the same levels of good fortune.

By July 25, the party reached the village of Kecoughtan, situated at the mouth of the James River. Facing a northerly wind, the men sat tight for a few days before trying to sail north. Captain Smith took time to demonstrate something new to the Indians–fireworks. He shot off several rockets that went spiraling into the sky and a stream of sparks and flame. Such things amazed the local Indians and served as a reminder to them that the English had powers and weapons they did not.

Once the winds died down, Smith and his party sit out into Chesapeake Bay to the mouth of the Rappahannock, passing Stingray Point, where the captain had been stung less than two weeks earlier. They wasted little time searching river mouths where they had already done so. Soon, they reached the Patapsco River, nearly the farthest northern point of the previous trip. By July 30, they were exploring new territory. But sickness slowed their progress. Perhaps surprisingly, of the eight in the party who became ill, six had been in Smith's first party. Vomiting was the order of the day. Some seemed close to death. Then, matters turned even more serious, as Smith's party encountered a large number of Massawomeck Indians approaching in canoes (the only birchbark canoes in the entire Chesapeake Bay region, in fact, which were better, faster boats than the typical dugout canoe used by local Indians). The captain had sought these natives on his first expedition, but had failed. Now they had found him.

With most of his men sick and a large party of Massawomecks bearing down on the barge, Captain Smith had to act quickly. To fool the Indians into thinking the English were stronger in numbers than they were, he had every man's hat placed on a stick and lined up along the side of the barge. Between his five healthy comrades, each held to muskets toward the onrushing canoes. The device was simple, but effective. The Indians turned around, convinced their enemy was too strong. Yet Smith approached his would-be enemy, guiding the barge closer to shore. Once the natives realized the English were not intending to harm them, the usual round of trade opened. Before the bargaining was over, Smith and company left with their boat filled with food, bows, arrows, wooden shields, clubs, and bearskins. Although the captain expected to sit down with the Massawomecks the following morning, come dawn, they had vanished.

That day, Smith and his men came under attack again, this time after setting out for the Eastern shore, as a small fleet of canoes surrounded the barge. Smith by this time new enough Algonquin that he told these people of his victory over the Massawomecks just the day before, which seemed to impress the warriors so, who were Tockwoughs, that they took the English to their village, where they discovered the natives already owned an abundance of trade goods, including hatchets and knives, which they said they had received trading with the Susquehanna. The duck Tockwoughs wags also told Smith that the Susquehanna lived on a river beyond the bay, which led the imaginative captain to hope they might be speaking of a route to the Pacific Ocean, the elusive Northwest Passage.

Smith soon set out northward, still intent on making contact with the Susquehanna. He did not have to wait long. Within a few days, the Susquehanna found him, these "gyant-like people" who brought gifts to the English captain such as venison, tobacco pipes, and bows and arrows, as well as great strings of beads. They must have already heard of Smith, for they begged him to become "their governor and protector...to defend and revenge them of the Massawomecks." As they entreated the captain, some of the Indian men rubbed his neck in a ritual common to them to convince him to lead them. Smith had been offered this honored by other Indians, but was

not interested in leading them unless it was to the advantage of the English colony he represented. Of course, this interpretation of the actions of these Indians was Smith's, which he later wrote about. He naturally could have misinterpreted their meeting completely. They may have just wanted to make an alliance of friendship.

In their awkward discussion, which necessitated several translations of languages between Susquehanna and English, the Native Americans said they knew of Powhatan, but knew little about him. They carried French trade goods, which they had probably only recently received. The French had only begun to settle in Quebec along the St. Lawrence river to the north about a month earlier. The Indians also spoke of a large sea west of the mountains, but it soon became clear to the English that the Native Americans were referring to a location in Canada, not the Pacific Ocean. This meant they were probably referring to one of the great lakes, such as Erie or Huron. After a few days, Smith and his party gave their leave of the Susquehanna. The captain was intent on returning to Jamestown in time for an important council meeting scheduled for September 10. By August 8, he and his men were on their way south. They continued to explore, choosing to further examine the Rappahannock River, since they had already collected information concerning the Susquehanna, the Potomac, and the James. This river held out the last possibility of a route to the Pacific. Over the next two weeks, although the English had developed largely positive relations with local Indians, problems lay ahead.

A Violent Encounter

After sailing south for a week, the English reached the mouth of the Potomac River on August 14, and began their exploration of the Rappahannock. Thirty miles inland, they reached an Indian village they had seen before, Moraughtacund. There, they met with a chief named Mosco, whom they had encountered on their earlier exploration that summer. He was an Indian, but appeared to be partially of European origin. He had a large beard and reminded Smith of someone who looked Spanish or perhaps French. Mosco took the opportunity to warn Smith and his men not to visit the Rappahannocks, who lived farther up the river, because they would kill the English. It seems the two Native American nations were fighting at the time, perhaps because the more attacking peoples had recently stolen three wives of the Rappahannock chief. Smith chose not to believe Mosco, thinking he did not want the English to continue on and wind up trading with the Rappahannocks.

But Mosco's words turned out to be prophetic. Continuing upriver, the crew on the barge encountered Rappahannock warriors on the shore, who gestured for the English to come closer. Smith sent a member of the crew to the riverbank as part of an exchange of "hostages," a goodwill gesture. Only when Smith's pick, a young man named Anas Todkill, reached the bank did he spot several hundred Rappahannock hiding in the tall grass. As he tried to warn Smith and the other is, Todkill was captured by the Indians. A fight unfolded, with the Englishman using the shields they had received from the Massawomeck to protect themselves from Rappahannock arrows. Smith and his party fired their muskets toward the Indians, which sent them scattering. Fortunately, Todkill managed to escape and make his way to the shore. In retaliation for the attack, the English captured the Rappahannock canoes and took them back to the village of the Moraughtacund. Yet Smith intended to return upriver. He and his men spent most of a day preparing the barge's defenses, uncertain what the next morning might bring.

As Smith and his men approached the region of the Rappahannock village, they readied themselves for possible attack. It came swiftly. As the colonists passed beneath a high white chopped cliff, more than three dozen Indians hid among the bushes, waiting to attack. Soon, a barrage of arrows descended on the barge, hitting the shields the men had placed along the boats sides for protection. Smith ordered them in to fire off a round each, which ended the native assault, but, as the boat continued, the warriors moved upriver and jeered at the English as they passed by.

Continuing on, Smith's barge reached three additional villages, where he and his men were well received. A little farther upstream, the party suffered a loss as one of their members, a Richard Featherstone, who had accompanied to Smith on his first voyage of discovery that summer, died. While the cause of death is uncertain, it may have been from heat stroke or the feverish effects of malaria. The barge pushed onward, and the men reached the fall line on the river, at the future site of Fredericksburg, Virginia, where they left their ship long enough to place a brass cross at the site to mark their farthest advance up yet another Virginia river. As the men scattered to collect freshwater and search for gold, Indians once again attacked, sending their arrows flying toward the barge from every direction. It was during this battle that Mosco, who had joined the English on this leg of

their explorations, played a decisive role. Just as Smith had earlier fooled the Massawomecks by placing hats up and down the length of the barge, so Mosco moved around in the bushes, making as much noise as he could, leading those attacking to believe that there were more Indians helping the English than just him. This seems to have convinced the attackers to break off their assault.

The English docked their barge until nightfall, then quietly began floating back down the Rappahannock, hoping to slip by any hostile Indians. The ploy didn't work. Soon arrows were striking the shield along the sides of the barge, even though no one on the boat was hit. With few options, Smith ordered the crew to continue their trip down the river, finally dropping anchor in a wide bay, out of range of arrow shots. That morning the Mannahoack showed up along the banks nearby and indicated they no longer intended to attack by hanging their bows in the branches of trees close by. Smith soon sat down with four of the Indian nation's chiefs, where they discussed trading. By the time the English left them, the Mannahoack had received goods and were pleased enough with the transactions for 500 of them to begin dancing and singing as the English barge slipped down the river and out of sight.

This time, as they passed the Rappahannock encampment again, the Indians came out and made it clear that they did not intend to fight. When they saw the Mannahoack bows and arrows captured by the English, they were overjoyed, as the Mannahoack were their enemies. The Rappahannock called for a council with Smith, indicating they wanted to become friends with the English, even though they had attacked them just days earlier. Smith took a hard line with him, reminding the Rappahannocks that they had attacked him and his men twice. Threatening to destroy their village, Smith forced them to turn over their leaders bow and arrows, then promised they would not approach him and his men with any weapons. Then, the captain met with the chief, who offered to Smith, as gifts, the three wives the Moraughtacund had taken, which had been the source of the recent violence between them. The colonists then took the barge back to the Moraughtacunds to tell them of the Rappahannock chief's offer. Their chief agreed and turned the three Indian women over to Smith. As Smith was not interested in receiving any Indian women, he used them for diplomatic purposes, allowing one to remain with the Moraughtacunds, another to return to the Rappahannock, and the third to his faithful friend, Mosco.

All this seems unimaginable today, but the agreement meant that the two Indian nations became friends, he diplomatic coup of sorts for Captain Smith. The following day, both tribes celebrated together, 600 strong between them. Smith leader wrote of each nation "promising to be our friends and to plant corn purposely for us; and we to provide hatchets, beads, and copper for them." Even as the celebrations continued, Smith and his party loaded their boat and headed back down the river, with Indians shouting their farewells. The next day marked the end of August, And the barge reentered the Chesapeake Bay, dropping anchor at the mouth of the Piankatank, the next river to the south.

The explorations of the Piankatank were quick and without dramatic incident, but followed by a strong, harrowing thunderstorm, with Smith guided by lightning flashes as the crew rowed on into the mouth of the James River on September 4, 1608. As the settlement beckoned ahead, Captain Smith took one last jaunt up a nearby river, perhaps the Elizabeth, but the stream narrowed after only a short distance, leading Smith to take another tributary of the James, the Nansemond, where they encountered a party of Indians repairing their fishing *wiers* or nets. Smith handed out yet another bundle of trade trinkets, which led one more group of natives to sing and dance, begging the English to remain with them.

Smith decided to allow some of them to board his barge before leaving, but was suspicious when they asked to keep their bows and arrows. While doing so would have left the Native Americans defenseless, their insistence in the indicated to Smith that something was afoot. Sure enough, the astute captain and his men, after progressing farther up the river, were attacked by 200 warriors. One of his men was shot in the sleeve and his hat, but there were no others hit. A few shots by Smith and his men and their attackers melted away, with the whole assault reminiscent of earlier attacks that had ended with the crack of English muskets. Smith and the colonists then began hacking away at the Indians' canoes tied up on shore. Given the value of such canoes (carving out a single dugout canoe could take weeks for such Indians), these Native Americans surrendered and indicated they wanted to talk in trade. Smith extracted significant payments for their attack, demanding 400 bushels of corn and a long necklace of pearls. The goods demanded by Smith were soon produced, and Smith then returned to them their threatened dugouts. The English, having subdued yet one more native population, headed back up to James River, reaching Jamestown on September 7, having completed yet a second expedition of exploration for the summer of 1608.

While those summer river voyages of Captain Smith and his small crew were hardly epic (he had, after all, not crossed an unknown ocean or an entire continent), they were important for the men in the future of the Jamestown Colony. Smith and his man had traveled more than 1000 miles on each of his expeditions that summer and made first contact with several previously uncontacted Indian nations. Trade had taken place, even as some fighting had occurred, but much of that violence was really defensive. The natives could not know with certainty what or who these strange looking, bearded men were. Smith, naturally, wrote up his summers exploits in glowing terms, pondering how "many ever with such small meanes as a Barge of two tuns...with twelve or sixteene men did ever discover so many fayre and navigable rivers, subject so many several Kings, peoples, and Nations to obedience, and contribution, with so little bloodshed." He had a point. For Jamestown, he had accomplished great things.

One More Thing: John Smith and His Many Languages

When Europeans landed in the New World, they faced many problems and challenges. One difficult aspect of settling in a strange land was trying to communicate with the native populations, all of whom spoke their own special language or dialect. The English who landed and settled into Virginia tidewater region at Jamestown had to learn these languages as quickly if they were going to have any meaningful exchange with the Indians, including conducting trade. This is one more way Captain John Smith was able to serve the colony well.

He came to the New World with several languages under his belt. His years as a soldier of fortune across the length of Europe had given him opportunity to learn tongues that might have been foreign to the average Englishman. It appears he spoke a basic form of French, as well as Dutch and Italian. It is likely that he also spoke more than one regional central or eastern European language. Thus, his work in the New World exposed him to more languages, and he took to learning Indian words and ways of expression as quickly as he could. In time, the captain would be among the colony's best speakers of various native Algonquin dialect.

Soon, his personal vocabulary was expanding. His journals include words and phrases of which he made personal notes. One of his earliest phrases, key and learning foreign words and the names of everything from the sun to local foods, was the Algonquin sentence *Ka torawincs yowo*, which translates as "What call you this?" Pointing to something he wanted to learn the name of became a common means of learning Indian words. He learned the Indian name for "shoes" was *moccasins*; that *pokatower* meant "fire," and that "water" was *sukhanna*. The Indian word for "arrows" was *attonce*. When sorting out who were the friends of the English and who were the enemies, the words *wingapoh* or *netoppew* identify the former, while those opposed to you where the *marrapough*. When engaging in trade or other activities with native populations, it was good to know one's numbers. Smith learned that the numbers "one," "two," and "three" were *necut*, *ningh*, and *nuss*, and so on up to the Algonquin word for "1000," which was *necutweunquaough*. The English needed to know the Indian names for common trade goods, as well, so Smith committed to memory such words as *tomahawks* for axes, *pamesacks* for knives, *mattassin* for copper and *pawcussacks* for guns.

CHAPTER SEVEN: Saved Again

Once again, when Smith returned to Jamestown after an extended absence, the colony had both ongoing and new struggles. A mutiny had taken place against Radcliffe, who had tried to reestablish his own authority. Sickness had continually dogged the settlement. Heavy rains and ruined some of the colonists' food stores. Three days after Smith's return, the annual election on September 10 took place, and Smith was elevated to the position of president. This was no surprise to many. Of the seven original members of the settlement's counsel, Smith was the only surviving member still in Jamestown, and most men saw him as the only true and fit leader among them. The able military leader and now successful explorer took immediately to his new role. He could not know that fall of 1608 that he would remain in Jamestown for only one more year. In the meantime, over the following months, he proved himself to be the most successful leader of the early Jamestown colony.

Smith set to work immediately. He ordered the fort to be expanded into a "five square form," as part of the palisade was badly need of repair. The expansion doubled the size of the fort. Houses were built, the church in

store house repaired. Still concerned about Indian attack, Smith kept his men under military discipline, ordering them to drill daily outside the fort in a grassy area dubbed "Smithfield" after the captain. (The men would have known, too, of London's Smithfield, a market district outside the cities old walls.) Here, the men would practice their manual of arms, sometimes with as many as 100 Indians watching in amazement.

A month after Smith had taken the reins of leadership, Captain Newport returned with a shipload of supplies and additional colonists, including two women (described by Smith as a gentlewoman and her servant), the first English women in the all-male colony and eight Germans and Poles, some of whom were skilled glassmakers. As for the women, the gentlewoman was married, making her 14-year-old servant girl, Anne Burras, the only available white women in a colony of approximately 200 men. She and one of the original 1607 colonists, John Laydon, were married before the end of the year. Newport carried the same old orders from company officials back in London. The colonists were to find gold and the Northwest Passage. (They were also to continue to look for signs or information concerning the lost Roanoke Colony.) To aid in the search, Newport delivered a dismantled barge that the colonists were to carry above the falls, assemble, then continue westward. Newport also carried special orders to organize a "crowning" ceremony for Powhatan.

Immediately, renewed clash was developed between Smith and Newport. To Smith, Newport represented a challenge to his authority and personal agenda for the settlement. He also considered such goals impractical. He had looked for both the gold and the westerly route and found neither. Smith also knew that the colony was still struggling along, even survive, something that officials in London seemed to be taking for granted. He was equally opposed to the coronation plans, but he did take steps to comply. He went to visit Powhatan to ask him to come to Jamestown to receive great honors.

When the great chief warily turned the offer down, Smith and Newport were forced to take the coronation to him. The special event came off rather oddly. Fifty men from Jamestown went to Werowocomoco for the "crowning" of Powhatan, carrying many gifts, including a bed, bed clothes, a pitcher and basin, and the highly prized copper. The chief wore a "scarlet cloake and apparel" provided by the English. At the point when he was supposed to drop to his knees and receive his honors, he refused, uncertain what the English might do to him. After "many perswasions," he finally stooped enough to be crowned. Then, the Jamestown men fired off a celebratory volley of musket fire, which startled the king with a "horrible fear." When it was all over, the chief thanked the English by giving Newport an old pair of shoes and an old deerskin cloak. To Smith, it was all overdone. Since one goal of the ritual was for Powhatan to recognize the authority of King James I, which he probably did not understand he was doing, the whole affair seemed to the captain to be a little more than a waste of time and an overindulgence of the Indian leader. If anything, the coronation had only managed to add to his personal prestige. He had forced to be English to come to him, give him attention, give him gifts, and the whole thing it only cost him shoes and a coat.

Later that fall, Captain Newport and Smith set out with 120 men to deliver the collapsible barge upriver to the falls as ordered by company officials. Smith writes little about the track (which he also thought a waste), only that the five piece boat could not be carried to its destination and that he thought it should be burned. Otherwise, Newport was often not present at Jamestown, as he scurried around looking for gold and silver. This left Smith the latitude to carry out his more practical goals. He sought a greater economic base for the colony, encouraging the production of such goods as naval stores, including tar and pitch, glass (the craft of some of the newly arrived Germans and Poles), soap ashes, and clapboard. In addition, Smith taught his men new skills for living in the woods. When he heard complaining or even heard them swear, he was swift to react. Smith created an odd punishment which involved keeping a daily tally of each man's outbursts of profanity, and each evening, a container of water was poured inside his shirt sleeve for every earth. After a while, the men stopped swearing. With each of the duties Smith placed on his men, he always led by example. There was no work he assigned that he did not do himself.

Captain Smith was so successful in leading the Jamestown colonists that some of the men, including Radcliffe and a small faction, became jealous. This led them to try and remove Smith from his position by accusing him of dealing too heavy-handedly with the local Indians. Company officials had always encouraged, without really knowing the true nature of the situation in Virginia, cooperation with the natives instead of threatening them. But the charges against the captain did not stick, and the whole cabal against him fell apart. Smith was having too much success at Jamestown for the majority of the residence to question his leadership style or his authority. By December, Captain Newport set sail for England, which suited Smith just fine. Among the items the sea captain

took with him was a new map Smith had drawn up based on his explorations in the Chesapeake region the previous summer.

Left to Starve

With Captain Newport's departure, Captain Smith was only too happy to return to his previous policies, both toward the colonists and Native Americans. He thought Powhatan had been elevated to highly by the company's coronation, so he returned to his old strongarm tactics and getting from the natives what he and his colonists might need to survive. The pattern was generally repeated from village to village: Smith would threaten to attack an Indian town whose people did not cooperate with the colonists and trade them food for trade goods. But the Indians clearly understood how vulnerable the Jamestown colonists were. If the natives chose to deny their white neighbors such necessities as food, it was likely the colony would die out, perhaps literally by starvation. That December, the number of colonists stood close to 200, with only 30 remaining among the original arrivals. While the death rate had dropped from 60 percent during the first year of settlement to about 20 percent, still, food was the weapon the Indians might use to bring down the colony. There was generally not enough food on a regular basis in the town, as each person required approximately one pint of corn at a minimum per day just to survive.

Powhatan knew he could squeeze the colonists for more as they moved into their second winter in Virginia. His demands seemed endless, as he requested such European conveniences as grindstones, guns, swords, glass beads, old country animals such as chickens, and the prized copper. He even wanted to English to build him a house similar to the ones they had built at Jamestown, a request Smith agreed to, sending the Germans to Werowocomoco for that purpose. To a point, the English had to respond to such demands, regardless of their threats to destroy Indian villages. Such destruction would only leave them isolated, with no place to turn to for their badly needed food. The bargains became hard one deals for the English.

Four days after Christmas, Smith and some 50 English set out for Werowocomoco to trade for food. It was a difficult boat voyage due to bad weather, for the Pamunkey River was slushy with ice, which slowed their progress. They finally arrived on January 12, where they found Powhatan prepared to demand much for his corn–40 baskets for an equal number of swords. Smith told the native leader he did not have that many swords to spare. To trade swords for corn meant the colonists would have fewer weapons with which to defend themselves. The captain tried to act indifferently to Powhatan, telling him the colonists could just trade with someone else instead. Such a thing may have been a part of Powhatan's plan to tip the balance of power between the colonists and his people.

But these negotiations soon became a mere backdrop to Powhatan's true intentions–to put to an end the assumed threat to himself and his people that the English represented. Even as he and Smith (along with only one other Englishman, a heavyset gentleman named John Russell) negotiated in the chief's house, orders had been given by Powhatan for his warriors to surround the hut. Smith became aware of their movement outside and told Russell that they should escape before it was too late. The two men rose and dashed out, with Smith firing a warning shot from his pistol. With this, the waiting warriors stood down as Smith and his comrade and ran to the relative safety of a couple dozen English who were making their way to Powhatan's house at that very moment. With guns pointed out from their group, Captain Smith intended to make a stand if need be. But Powhatan soon assured the captain that he had merely misunderstood the presence of his warriors. They had only been there to protect the chief's corn, in case some of Smith's men wanted to steal it.

Smith put the conflict aside and concluded his dealmaking with Powhatan. The English would get their corn. The captain was put off dramatically by the actions taken by the Indian leader and his warriors that day. He was in no mood when the corn was delivered to his boats when the native men told him they could guard the colonists' guns, pistols, and swords while Smith and his men loaded their boats. The captain made it clear: You load our boats, and we'll guard ourselves. There was little trust between the Jamestown settlers and their Indian neighbors. But it should be noted that, while Powhatan was dealing hard with Smith, the captain had only recently said in council that, if the Indians don't cooperate and provide us provisions, we can just take it from them. Distrust seems to have become the order of the day.

The bartering took so long that, by the time the boats were loaded, the tide was out, and the colonists were stuck in Werowocomoco for an uneasy night. Smith and Powhatan continued their charade of friendliness, but the colonists were ready for anything to happen. Their fears were warranted. Once night fell, someone came calling on Captain Smith. It was Pocahontas, whom Smith refers to as Powhatan's "dearest jewel and daughter,"

who had two messages for the captain–that her father was sending men with food for the evening meal, and that those same men had orders to kill the English as they ate, using their own swords. Should those attackers fail, she added, Powhatan had a backup plan. He had readied a larger group of warriors against the English. She pleaded, as Smith leader wrote: "Therefore if we would live, she wished us presently to be gone."

What may have motivated the young teenaged Indian princess to deliver such a warning to Captain Smith, one that clearly revealed a loyalty to the Englishman and not to her own father? Historians may only guess. Perhaps this impressionable girl was infatuated with the older (Smith had turned 29 just a few days earlier) Englishman, which should come as no surprise. He certainly represented something foreign and exotic to her, which may have had a significant appeal, and his mastery of such skills as leadership, hunting, and engaging in military affairs were the types of qualities she would've been raised to appreciate among the men of her tribe.

Yet for Pocahontas to come to Smith under cover of darkness to give him such information was a significant risk. To reach Smith's hut required her to sneak through the village to reach him and then make her way secretly back without being detected. If caught, she might've had a difficult time explaining her purposes. It would not suffice that she was the favorite daughter of Powhatan. We're here to discover her purposes, there is no certainty what fate might have befallen her.

But if Pocahontas was motivated by some sort of affection towards Smith, other than the friendship he had already acknowledged between the two of them, his writings concerning this encounter do not reveal it. Instead, he simply thanked her for giving him a warning, then try to reward her with a handful of beads and English baubles. Smith's own text notes that, when the offer was made, Pocahontas began to cry. It is not certain why. Perhaps, as the captain indicates, she liked such trinkets, it could not take them in this instance, for fear her father might notice them and ask where they came from. On the other hand, as historian David Price suggests, Smith's offer may have offended her. She had come, perhaps, to Smith to warn him because she felt something strongly for him....to be offered a few beads for the risk she had just taken might have seemed to the Indian princess the kind of thing one might offer a mere messenger. Smith's offer to Pocahontas may have indicated he did not share her feelings. The disappointment may have led her to tears. At any rate, she did not remain long, as Smith notes, "so she ran away by herself as she came."

Just as Pocahontas predicted, less than an hour later, 10 or so strong Indian men arrived with plates of venison. In the meantime, Smith had his men prepare their guns. As most carried matchlock guns, they had to keep a long fiber cord, or "match," lit, which was used to ignite the powder in their guns. (Only a handful of the colonists at Jamestown, including Smith, carried more up-to-date weapons that were fired using flint and steel.) When the Indians entered the hut where Smith and his men waited anxiously, the natives complained of the smoke from the matches and asked the English to put them out. Smith refused. The request would have seemed odd anyway, as fires burned in such Indian lodges and smoke breaking around the ceilings of such a wigwams would have been commonplace. Captain Smith, thanks for the warnings from Pocahontas, and his men had managed to foil the first plot to kill them. Just to make certain, Smith had the Indian food bearers taste the venison first, in case it had been poisoned.

Then, the captain sent a message to Powhatan, stating that the English were expecting him and wanted a visit from him. It was a subtle message to the Indian leader that Smith and his men were aware of the second plan to attack them with larger numbers. The English posted guards throughout the night, but the attack never materialized. Taking advantage of the midnight tides, Smith and his men left Powhatan's village. (As for Powhatan, his own distrust of the English had let him to pack up his court of wives and children and leave his own village. He and Smith would never speak directly again.) Smith allowed another colonist named Edward Brinton to remain at Werowocomoco to hunt game birds for the Indians, but it was really a ploy to keep a loyal Englishman in the Indian capital to keep an eye on the people whom the captain felt he could not really trust.

What Smith did not know at the time was that some of his men were acting as traders and spies. The Germans whom Smith had sent to Powhatan to build an English townhouse for him had decided to turn against the English colonists. They found the Indian village to be better stocked with food than Jamestown, and they came to believe their chances of survival might be better among the Indians and under Smith's leadership. All the Germans agreed to spy for Powhatan. The Indian leader had welcomed their offer and even suggested that they slow down their progress on building his house so they could have reason to go back-and-forth between Werowocomoco and Jamestown for a longer period of time.

After Smith left Powhatan's village in January, a pair of the Germans went to Jamestown to ask for guns and tools on behalf of Captain Smith, who knew nothing of their plot. The whole point was to procure guns to give to Powhatan. While the Germans were in the English settlement, half a dozen additional colonists chose to join them and turn against a colony, they too, thinking their chances of making it successfully through the winter might be increased by along with the natives. Soon, the Germans left with a load of guns, powder, shot, and swords, all for their Indian allies. When they arrived back at Werowocomoco, it did not take Brinton long to realize what the Germans were up to. He and an English trader in the village, Richard Savage, set out to tell Captain Smith of the treachery afoot. But they were captured by some of Powhatan's men before they could reach the captain, then placed under restraint.

In the meantime, Smith had gone with his man to the village of Opechancanough, Powhatan's brother, located 25 miles up the Pamunkey River, again, to bargain for food. They were no better received there than they had been at Werowocomoco. There, the Indian greeting was hostile, as the English were ambushed by hundreds of Indians. When Opechancanough promised the English no harm, a doubting Smith grabbed the chief by his scalp lock and stuck a pistol in the older native's chest. Before the English left the village, the Indians had filled their boat with corn and other food stuffs. The English had gained their cargo only at risk to their lives. As Smith wrote later: "Men may think it's strange there should be such a stirre for a little corne, but had it been gold, with more ease we might have got it." Ultimately, he had emerged from the threats mounted against him and his men without any loss of life, on both sides.

CHAPTER EIGHT: Leading and Leaving

After taking his leave of Opechancanough, Smith visited other Indian villages...to augment his food supplies, but found these natives with a little surplus to spare. He soon heard some tragic news. Nearly a dozen men at Jamestown had met their deaths while taking a boat from Jamestown east to a place called Hog Island. Winds had capsized the boat, and all had drowned. Smith never knew why the men were headed to the island. By early February 1609, he and his men were back in Jamestown with 279 bushels of corn and other food stuffs in tow.

"He That Will Not Worke"

Back in Jamestown, Captain Smith once again found a village struggling to survive. Word had reached the colonists of the drowning deaths of their fellow colonists, and morale was at a new low. In addition, although several in the county had busied themselves as they could, there were still several in the settlement who were shirkers, often those of the gentlemen in class who thought they should not have to work. Others were soldiers who saw themselves as defenders of the fort, not meant to be misused with farming or fishing or mending nets. Smith responded forcefully, issuing an edict to all that is remembered even today: *He that will not work shall not eat.* (Smith actually took his famous words from the Bible New Testament book of 2 Thessalonians 3:10.) Upon his return, Smith also discovered the works of the Germans and others who had turned traitor against the colony, and he took a party of 20 armed men back to Werowocomoco to seize them. Along the way, Smith was attacked by the chief of the Paspahegh Indians, Wowinchopunck, who was intent on killing the captain to win Powhatan's approval. Smith nearly lost his life, as the two men wrestled in a hand-to-hand battle during which the men fell into the nearby river. The chief was trying to drown the English leader, but a pair of Smith's colleagues rescued him. Quickly recovering, the maddened Smith led an attack on the chief's village, where the English killed six or seven warriors, took prisoners, burned the town, and stole their canoes. For the moment, the march to where Werowocomoco was halted, and Smith and his man returned to Jamestown, fearing reprisals from any friends of the Paspahegh.

Spring Arrives

During the weeks that followed, Smith let his Jamestown colonists into the spring of the year. Work was done on the fort's defenses, and colonists planted 40 acres of corn close to the fort. Food was still an issue, and a new

wrinkle emerged, one that threatened what food supply the colony had at hand–rats. Smith writes that they must have arrived in the colony off the ships docked from time to time, and they bred into the thousands, raiding barrels of corn with a voracious destruction. Had the loss of corn taken place a few months earlier, it might have spelled doom for the colony. But the captain responded by scattering his people out to smaller settlements, away from Jamestown. Smith's "divide and survive" strategy included sending some downriver to harvest oysters, while others went down to Chesapeake Bay to fish. Some went upriver, where scattered tribes of Indians helped feed them in exchange for copper. Smith's efforts paid off. When one colonist, "a most crafty knave," named William Dyer plotted to leave Jamestown by stealing the *Discovery*, Smith was informed and the culprit punished, probably with a whipping. The captain threatened to hang anyone who schemed against the colony. His military discipline kept many in line, even if he continually struggled with some who saw no purpose in working if the colony could always get food from the natives. Some even suggested to the captain that he trade everything—guns, swords, even the fort's cannon—to keep them supplied. Smith wrote later how his strict orders helped the colony to survive its second winter: "Such was the strange condition of some 150 that had they not been...forced to gather and prepare their victuals [food] they would have all starved or eaten one another." (This was no self-serving analysis on his part. During the next winter [1609–1610] colonists were reduced to cannibalism.) The colony was also aided by the regular arrival of Indians, from which tribe is a mystery, almost daily bearing wild game, including squirrel, turkeys, and venison. Through his years spent leading the colony, the death rate remained very low—only 18 out of 200 colonists. Of that number, 11 had died when their boat capsized.

During the intervening months, Smith sent another party to seize the traitorous Dutchmen, who were returned to Jamestown and their executions soon ordered. Before the sentence could be carried out, a ship arrived at Jamestown on July 9, with news that a fleet of nine additional ships was on its way with fresh supplies and 500 new colonists, including women and children. But along with these new arrivals came word of a new leader, Governor Thomas West, Lord De La Warr, whom Virginia company officials had selected to administer the colony. As governor, he would replace the system of governor and council. Despite two years of struggles and little payoff, company officials were nowhere near ready to give up on Jamestown. They were, however, ready to give up on Captain Smith. The English leader had always, by the preferences of company officials, been the wrong man to lead the colony. He had never been one to play politics and was seen as to abrupt and impatient. (It is certainly true that Captain John Smith did not like to suffer fools.) Plus, Smith was, to many company officials, a commoner, not a man born to lead. There had been no gold discovered, and despite Smith's extensive explorations during the summer of 1608, the Northwest Passage had not been discovered. The captain had dealt strongly, even harshly, with the Indians. While West had not sailed with the fleet, intending to come over later, he had sent someone to lead in his place until he arrived—Sir Thomas Gates. As for Smith, it was clear that he would be playing a reduced role in Jamestown. He could not have known then that his very days in the colony he had helped found were numbered.

The first of the nine ships arrived on August 11, as four of them sailed up the James River to the fort. Although Smith's year long tenure as president had another month to go, Smith refused to surrender his authority, as Gates himself was not on board any of these ships. The ships had crossed in midsummer, suffered storms and heat stroke (40 had died on the voyage, including two infant boys, born at sea), and had become separated along the way. Additional ships arrived in the days that followed. As for Gates, his ship had wrecked on an island in the Bermuda chain, although his fate was unknown to anyone in Jamestown. Those on board did not reach Jamestown until May 1610.

In Gates's absence, Francis West, the brother of Thomas, was chosen to lead the colony. West had arrived in the fall of 1608 on one of Captain Newport's ships. He was younger than Smith by six or seven years, had not proven himself during his months in Jamestown, but had the all-important connections and name. The young West tried to institute his control over the colony as if Smith did not even exist.

As for the demoted Captain Smith, he continued to carry out important duties for the colony. He had sent groups out months earlier to establish new settlement sites, and in late summer, he went upriver to check on one of those "hivings out." There he found a fort that colonists had built too close to the river and was in danger of flooding. Its inhabitants had also managed to mistreat the local Indians. When Smith suggested the fort should be moved away from the offended natives, its occupants refused, sending the captain on his way. Soon after Smith left, a small party of Indians attacked the remote settlement and killed several colonists. The survivors tracked

down Smith and pleaded with him to return to their fort. Only Smith's presence managed to send the attacking Indians away.

An Unfortunate Accident

Captain Smith then sailed back down the James River towards Jamestown, which had served as his roughhewn home for more than two years. His future in the colony was uncertain, but an accident soon determined his fate in Virginia. Arriving back in Jamestown, the captain chose to spend the night on his boat, taking a place on the deck where, notes historian Benjamin Woolley, "an autumn dew collecting on the tarpaulin pulled over his shoulders." Sometime during his sleep, someone carelessly loosed a spark, perhaps from a pipe or a musket match cord, which landed on Captain Smith's powder bag, which he was still wearing. The bag of gunpowder ignited, which "tore the flesh from his body and thighs, nine or 10 inches square and a most pitiful manner; but to quench the tormenting fire he leaped overboard into the deep river." Badly burned from the incident, Smith almost drowned before being pulled from the cold waters of the James. His comrades took him into Jamestown, but there was no doctor available. The surgeon, Dr. Walter Russell, who had treated Smith following his stingray poisoning a year earlier, was not present, nor the other doctor in the colony. Ironically, they had probably relocated at one of those new settlements Smith had ordered to help the colonies survive the previous spring. The captain's wounds were quite severe, and the pain caused Smith to hallucinate. One of his visions was of an assassin who pointed a pistol at him, but stopped from firing, having taken pity on the hapless captain. (Some historians think such an assassin might have actually existed and that Smith was not hallucinating at all.)

Ultimately, his wound helped Smith to see his future. He had made what contributions he was going to make to Jamestown, and he was no longer, in the minds of company officials, needed. He was still struggling to instill complete discipline among the colonists. Relations with the Indians had seemed to deteriorate of late. There were new rumblings of an imminent attack by the Spanish. Things have never gone perfectly in Jamestown, but the problems seem to be mounting. By early September, just days before the official end of his year tenure as president of the colony, he sent word to each of the captains of six of the ships that had delivered the hundreds of new arrivals that he wanted to sail on one of them back to England.

But when Smith's detractors in the county learned he was leaving, they were more concerned with what stories he might tell to company officials than by the fact that they would no longer have to contend with him. The departure of the ships was held up for weeks, while accusations against Smith were collected, claims that included everything from nearly letting the colonists starve to trying to kill one of the German conspirators with rat poison. For three weeks, the accusations were collected. It all would come to nothing, of course. By October, five of the ships were ready to leave, and Smith was on board. He writes nothing of the moment he left Jamestown behind for the last time that cool fall day in 1609. Whether he stood on the deck of the ship that was carrying him home and watched until Jamestown receded in the distance until completely out of sight is unknown. But if he was there, watching as the ships slipped between the banks of the James River toward the great day and into open waters, he was viewing a land he had come to know well, even intimately. He had sailed to America almost three years earlier. Now he had played his part in the high drama of 17th century English colonization in the New World. Captain Smith could not know it at the time, but Jamestown would survive, even if barely, due in no small part to the contributions he had made.

With his departure came one separation that may well have given him pause. The young Indian princess, Pocahontas, had become one of his constant friends. They had not seen one another regularly, but they had developed a clear companionship. It is unlikely they were ever more than friends, but especially for Pocahontas, Smith would continue to hold a place in her heart, one made more poignant by the lie she was told after the captain's departure. Rather than tell their native neighbors that Smith had left the colony and returned to England, colonists told them that he had died of his injuries. It was a lie that devastated her, one she would continue to believe for years to come. As for Jamestown, it meant nothing to her without Captain Smith's presence. She turned away from having anything to do with the county and did not return to Jamestown for four years.

One More Story: The "Starving Time"

During the first two years of English colonization of Jamestown, Captain Smith had become something of the colony's "glue." He held a colony together, and when he departed in the fall of 1609, the colonists soon experienced their roughest times yet.

Just prior to Smith's departure in October 1609, 400 new colonists had arrived at Fort James. They found the colony in disarray. There was little food, and housing was scant and inadequate. There was a little true leadership or order within the settlement. The new arrivals, many weakened from their transatlantic voyage, never recovered once they arrived, and death, once more, was commonplace among the James River.

Life in Jamestown became one of desperation and starvation. Local Indians turned against the village and menaced the inhabitants regularly. They roamed the woods around a little English community, keeping the settlers trapped inside the walls of the fort. In addition, the natives killed the Jamestown livestock, destroying another food source.

The horrors of that winter of 1609–1610, often called "the starving time," slowly reduced the number of residents. One colonist wrote of the dreadful experience: "We were constrained to eat dogs, cats, rats, snakes, toadstools, horsehides, and whatnot; one man out of the misery endured, killing his wife, powdered [salted] her up to eat her, for which he has burned. Many besides fed on the corpses of dead men." One resident became so accustomed to eating human flesh, he developed an appetite for it, and had to be executed by the colonists. By the spring of 1610, the population of Jamestown have been reduced from nearly 500 inhabitants to 60.

CHAPTER NINE: New and Distant Shores

By the time Smith reached London, the great 17th century city of 250,000 residents, three months had passed since he had been burned. Those wounds were likely healed enough that he could walk about the city he had not seen in three years. During the months that followed, his future was unknown. The same ship that delivered him back to England carried letters of accusation against him, thrown together at the last minute by his various enemies back in Jamestown. He met with company officials, but little is known of the specifics of his testimony before them or the fingers they might have pointed back at him. In the end, little came of the claims against Smith, yet, even two years later, the accusations against him were still circulating, with no resolution. The dangling claims only managed to stay in Smith's reputation without providing a verdict by the Virginia company merchants. It might have become clear during those years that the policies established by Smith—including firm diplomacy with the Indians, farming out colonists to various plantations, the dictum of "no work, no food"—had been necessary at the time and vital to the colony's ultimate survival. But Smith's days as an employee of the Virginia company were over. He never returned to Jamestown.

Word Smith

Little is known of Smith's comings and goings over the next two years. He busied himself with the writing of his *Map of Virginia*, which included information about the colony and the natives who lived nearby, including their customs and social structures, all of which would have seemed quite exotic to the typical Londoner. The book was published in 1612 by Joseph Barnes, University Printer at Oxford. It included Smith's Virginia map, *A Description of the Countrey*, and *The Proceedings of the English Colonie*. Perhaps the most important part of his book was the map, which remained the best version of the landscape of Virginia through the mid-1700s. Even as late as the 19th century, it was used to help establish exact boundaries between Maryland and Virginia.

Smith took advantage of his literary forum to blast away at those early colonists who had been lazy and had not contributed significantly to the colony; men who had grumbled constantly "because they found not English cities, Nor such faire houses...with feather beds and downe pillows, tavernes and alehouses in every breathing place, neither such plenty of gold and silver and dissolute liberty as they expected." Otherwise, he touted his own successes in making treaties with nearly three dozen Indian chiefs. He also spoke highly of Virginia, observing how "the mildness of the air, the fertility of the soil, and the situation of the rivers are so propitious to the nature

and use of man has no place is more convenient for pleasure, profit, and men's sustenance." Even though he was no longer working for the Virginia Company, here was Smith still recruiting would-be colonists.

How Smith occupied his time otherwise can only be guessed at. He had his friends, of course, and London had plenty to offer in the way of entertainments and diversions. He likely attended plays, at the Swan or Globe Theatres, where he could have seen productions in which life in Virginia was highly criticized. As a friend of Smith's, Reverend Samuel Purchas, wrote some stage performers "abuse Virginia...they disgrace it." If Smith was in the audience at such a performance, he may well have spoken out, even booed the production. While little is known of Captain Smith's days in London, it is known he was not content. He wanted to return to the New World. It was there that he had found adventure. The place had become his passion. His exploits in Europe, fighting wars for someone else, may have brought him excitement, but they had all been for a little more than money and employment. Virginia and Jamestown had brought him a sense of purpose, of involvement in something that could become permanent, an extension of the reach of the English Crown, something larger than himself.

He kept his ear to the ground, questioning those who returned on ships directly from the Chesapeake region, picking up a little bits of information about Jamestown and its survival. He learned that the winter of 1609–1610 had been the most miserable of them all, with starving colonists forced to commit acts of cannibalism. He also learned that the colonists had come close to completely abandoning Virginia, only to encounter rescue ships at the mouth of the James just as they were intent on sailing back to England. Captain Smith also heard the news of the introduction of tobacco growing in Virginia, brought about by a colonist named John Rolfe. Rolfe had discovered that Caribbean tobacco grew well in Virginia, and if the leaves were dried properly, retained their sweet, full flavor. As tobacco was highly popular in England at the time, the weed became the colony's salvation as a cash crop. Smith, however, was not happy with this turn of events. The captain despised smoking, considering it a filthy habit.

Smith remained for four years in England, longing to return to America. Company officials were not interested in reemploying him, so his possibilities were limited. Yet Virginia was not the only place along the Atlantic seaboard for would-be English colonizing. Under the 1606 charger, two colonizing companies had been established, each with its assigned region between the 38th and 45th parallels. Southern Virginia (the entire Atlantic coast, from Georgia to Nova Scotia was referred to as "Virginia") was closed off to him, but there was still northern Virginia. The Popham Colony, established in modern-day Maine at the same time as Jamestown, had failed miserably within its first two years, And no one had really followed up with a second attempt. Smith began to consider such possibilities. He wrote: "As I liked Virginia well, though not their proceedings, so I desired also to see this country [New England], and spend some time in trying what I could finde."

Smith had likely heard descriptions of the region from someone who had been there. At Jamestown, he had known Bartholomew Gosnold, who had served on the Virginia Council. Gosnell had explored the region in 1602. He had been one of the first English explorers to show a keen interest in colonizing the region between Cape Cod and Nova Scotia (he had given Cape Cod its name). Smith may also have heard more recently about the region from another old friend—Henry Hudson. Hudson was in England in 1610, fresh from sailing to New England under the employee of the Dutch East India Company, searching for the Northwest Passage. (Hudson would sail again to Canada later that year and meet his death following a mutiny by his men which ended in Hudson being set adrift in a small boat in Hudson Bay and left.) To Smith, New England became his next obsession.

He began drumming up the capital for a colonial venture, managing to get agreements from four London merchants to pony up monies for a couple of ships and provisions. During the early months of 1614, he excitedly made plans to return to America, even if not to Jamestown. By the end of February, the ships were readied, setting sail down the Thames River, with Smith commanding one and Captain Thomas Hunt in charge of the other. Smith, now 34 years old, was headed back to sea, once again bound for the New World. Among those on board was an Indian name Squanto, who had spent several years in England. He was from New England, and Smith agreed to return him to his native lands.

New Englande

By April 1614, the two ships reached Monhegan Island off the coast of today's Maine, close to the mouth of the Kennebec River. The Popham Colony had been built nearby. Those English men whom Smith had recruited, all

sponsored by London merchants, were expected to deliver a profit to those who held the purse strings. Orders had been given to search for whales, as well as gold and copper. If such efforts failed, they were to collect fish and trade for furs from the Indians.

These English men were not alone as the original Jamestown colonists had been seven years earlier. Monhegan was a familiar place, a site where as many as 200 ships might land during a single fishing season. The men set about searching for whales. Smith wrote later: "We saw many and spent much time in chasing them; but could not kill any." Some men searched for gold, but with no more success than the colonists at Jamestown had. By the time the new arrivals turned to harvesting fish and fur, the peak season had passed. The men had managed to catch 50,000 pounds of fish in two months, and more than 1000 beaver pelts were taken, but it was not enough to represent a profit.

As for Smith, he participated in none of these activities, but spent much time doing what he had come to enjoy during his time in Virginia—explore. He was and knew he was good at that type of endeavor, as his maps indicate even today. The captain ventured along the northern coast in a small boat, poking around in various bays and inlets, just as he had done along the James, Pamunkey, Potomac, and other Virginia waterways. Smith was unaccustomed to considering America as a place to simply tap the natural resources. Jamestown had been intended as a permanent colony for English men and women. He was now intent on discovering a suitable place for another such settlement site. Smith had become convinced that the New World represented great opportunities for England, and men, those similar in background to himself. As he wrote later, it was here, in America, that a man could carve out a place for himself, regardless of background, with "only his merit to advance his fortunes." With his Jamestown experiences to fall back on he could imagine what others might not. He wrote later of the things that came to mind to him as he explored, of the opportunities the wilderness offered to industrious people. He even worked out a basic plan: Those English ships that came regularly to New England waters to fish could begin delivering settlers and colonists who would work as fish dryers and packers. This would provide an economic base on which to build a colony. When the great ships were filled with their season's catch, they could depart for England and leave their smaller fishing vessels behind in the care of the settlers. England could be transplanted into North America at one more location. This view of creating a new place of permanent English occupation let Captain Smith to create the name by which the region is still known today—New England.

His explorations included Penobscot Bay, which he mapped as he floated its estuaries. He took a trip up the Kennebec river as far as 40 miles, noting the "great high cliffs of barren rocks overgrown with wood." The Maine coastline he described as "a Countrie rather to a fright, then delight one." He explored bays and shoals, islands and inlets. He sailed south to the Massachusetts coastline, and it was duly impressed with the landscapes before him, calling it "the paradise of all those parts," a land featuring great woods and good harbors. He had learned the difficulties of settling in a marsh, so when he arrived at today's Boston Bay, he became ecstatic, seeing it as a place providing a natural defense then he reached a site that appeared destined for English occupation. He observed before him "an excellent good harbor, good land, and no want of anything but industrious people." It would be named Plymouth. Six years later, Puritans from England, remembered as the "Pilgrims," arrived on board the ship, *Mayflower*, and established themselves at that very location.

Just as in Virginia, Captain Smith made contact with the local Indians, including the Massachusetts nation. As they spoken Algonquin dialect, Smith was able to converse with some of them and what he later described as "a broken language." It was also reminiscent of his days in Virginia that he became as excited about the potential the land represented as he had been about launching an expedition to New England months earlier. By July, the fishing season over, his ship headed back toward England loaded with fish oil, salt fish, and furs, including beaver, otter, and martins. The second ship left later, carrying a cargo of dried fish, bound for Spain. Smith would later learn that Captain Hunt had tricked the Indian Squanto onto his ship and kidnapped him, only to sell him as a slave to the Spanish. Smith was angered by the news, fearing Hunt's actions might have angered the local natives so much, they would never allow a settlement to be established. Captain Smith later described Hunt as a "a worthlesse fellow of our Nation."

Organizing a Colony

Soon, Smith began advertising his plan for a permanent colony in New England. He called on an old friend, Sir Ferdinando Gorges, who had helped bankroll the Popham Colony, who, though he had never been to America,

still had a deep interest in the region. Smith immediately impressed him, leading Gorges to collaborate with other Plymouth company officials in support of colonization spearheaded by Smith. Smith did have to take the time to report into the London merchant. They, however, were only interested in financing a second whaling and fur expedition, an offer that the anxious Smith passed on. Ultimately, the Plymouth group was unable to raise the necessary funds. Part of the problem late in Smith's timing. Plymouth had already sent another captain to the regions.

Undaunted, Captain Smith continued to bang the drum for colonization and financial support through the winter of 1614–1615. After several stops and starts and failed promises, Plymouth, with Gorges in support, scared up investors for a colony. A ship of 200 tons was procured, a large vessel of that day, along with a smaller ship of 50 tons. Smith began signing up men for his settlement. Several agreed to join the expedition, but only 16 contracted to remain in New England with Smith to make a go of his would-be colony. In some ways, his short list of colonists was similar to those who had sailed with him to found Fort James in 1607. They included 14 men and two boys, including gentlemen, soldiers, and laborers. Smith and his men set sail for America in March 1615, with the seasoned captain on the deck watching the port recede into the distance as he left England for yet another adventure.

Ill Winds

Immediate trouble stalked the ships, as strong winds blew into a gale which separated the two vessels. The masts on the large ship were broken, and its hull badly damaged, necessitating its return to port. A replacement ship was arranged, a smaller vessel of 60 tons. Smith and his men, including 16 colonists and a crew of 14 sailors, set sail again on June 24. The next problem Smith faced was with pirates. The Atlantic was a great ocean of piracy in the early 17th century, with many an English pirate preying on hapless Spanish treasure ships. Suddenly, a pirate vessel was bearing down on Smith's ship. For two days, a chase unfolded. Unable to escape, the pirates caught up with and boarded they would be colonizing vessel.

What a surprise awaited Captain Smith when he discovered that the pirates boarding his ship included men whom he had commanded during his days as a mercenary during the Turkish wars. Immediately, the men were ready to allow Smith and his party to go their way. They even offered to join with him in his latest venture. But Smith seems to have given them the cold shoulder. It is unclear just why he was so unresponsive. Perhaps he was embarrassed about his past, those years spent fighting for money on foreign soil. At any rate, he separated from the pirates and continued on his way without them.

Foreign Interference

Smith and his party pressed on, even as they soon faced more pirates, this time a group of Frenchmen who followed the English vessel, but failed to catch it. Sailing past the Azores, Smith again was set upon, this time by four French warships. Although Smith and his men prepared to put up a fight, they soon learned the French were Protestants with orders to only harass Spanish and Portuguese vessels, as well as pirate ships. They invited Smith to join them in their flagship, only to take him prisoner. Having carried out a ruse, the French vessels pressed Smith's ship into action as part of their squadron, dividing his men between the five vessels. After six days or so, the French finally allowed Smith and his men to rejoin their ship and continue their voyage. While they returned all the provisions they had commandeered earlier, they did not give back most of the weapons they had taken.

At this point, the ship's master and his first mate decided the voyage should be called off, as they had faced an endless stream of bad luck during their Atlantic crossing. Fortunately, the majority of the men on board sided with Smith, who was determined to continue on. But it was not that simple. Captain Smith knew he would have to recollect the confiscated weapons before taking their full leave of the French. Before he was able to do so, the French fell upon several ships, set on plunder. Smith had a little recourse but to stay attached to the French pirates. Finally, the prize the French had been looking for showed up in a distance, a fleet of Spanish ships from the West Indies. As Smith and his men had no appreciation for the Spanish, they agreed to participate in the attack. For all practical purposes, captain John Smith had embarked on a new, if a temporary career—that of a pirate.

The attack went well for the French and Smith's vessel. During a four- or five-hour exchange of cannon fire, the French defeated several Spanish ships, yielding prizes that included thousands of animal skins, 370 chests of

sugar, and 38,000 ryles, known popularly as "pieces of eight." (These were wedged shaped pieces of Spanish dollars, equal to approximately one-eighth of the original coin.) This gave Smith a taste of the pirate life, which he continued through the following months until October. The captain probably expected to receive a share of the spoils for him and his men, but it was not to be. By November, the French fleet landed in their home port of La Rochelle. They then turned on Smith (they had no purpose for him any longer) and not only refused to give him his share of the captured prizes, but accused him of having burned a French colonial settlement in modern day Canada. Smith, of course, had done nothing of the sort. Uncertain of his fate, Smith decided to escape. Under cover of darkness, he commandeered a rowboat and headed out to see.

Smith's bad luck continued, as his small craft fell into a great storm, the caravel rising and falling on giant waves. The storm continued for 12 hours, with captain Smith desperately trying to keep his tiny boat afloat. He was finally thrown up onto an island, and after pawning his little craft, made his way back to La Rochelle. There he was surprised to find out the French pirates' flagship had gone down in the same storm he had struggled through, along with his valuable cargo. Before the end of the year, after months of frustration, storms, delay, and piracy, Captain Smith was back in England. He later discovered that some of his men had also found their way free from the French and reached Plymouth as well.

One More Story: Smith Delivers an Indian Home

As Captain Smith set sail for America, bound for New England, and 1614, he took along with a special passenger, an Indian named Squanto. The Native American's story is its own special adventure. A member of the Pawtuxet tribe, Squanto had been taken on an English fishing vessel to England in 1605. There he had lived until 1614, spending several years in London. But, ready to return home, he caught a ride on Smith's ship.

But Squanto's adventure was not over. A short time after his return to New England, he was kidnapped, this time by the notorious captain Thomas Hunt, and sold into slavery in Spain. In time, Squanto escaped and returned to England. By 1619, he was delivered back to New England. Upon his return, he was saddened to find his former village have been wiped out by smallpox. Without a tribe or a home, Squanto had joined the Wampanoags, a neighboring Indian nation in modern-day Massachusetts. He served as an advisor an interpreter for his adopted tribe's leader, a sachem named Massasoit.

Squanto's paths would cross that of other Englishmen soon after his arrival back in New England. In late 1620, A shipload of English colonists arrived at a site along the Massachusetts coast. History remembers them as the "Pilgrims," who anchored their ship, the *Mayflower*, off the coast of land they would call Plymouth. Able to speak English, the Indian who had been to England more than once provided valuable help to the new English arrivals. He taught them how to live off the bounty of the New England landscape, including how to plant corn and where to fish. Thus, Squanto managed to cross the path of not only Captain Smith, but those who would eventually plant the first successful English colony in New England. Thus, the paths of Smith, Squanto, and the Pilgrims came together through an unlikely interconnectedness of events in America.

CHAPTER TEN: The Reunion

The previous months and all the activity that had distracted Smith from reaching New England represented nothing but loss to the captain. He had been separated from his personal belongings, including his clothes, books, weapons, and instruments. He only had a manuscript to show for his days of sailing with the French pirates, which he had written in his spare hours.

New Writings

By June 1616, Smith was as busy as he had ever been in England. His book, *The Description of New England*, came in to print, a small work of 64 pages. He also received word that a party from Jamestown had landed in Plymouth, England, and would soon be in London. Among the new arrivals was his young friend among the Powhatan people—Pocahontas. Since his departure from Virginia seven years earlier, Pocahontas had married an English colonist, John Rolfe. She also had an infant son named Thomas.

Much had happened to Smith's young acquaintance during the captain's seven-year absence from Jamestown. For four years, she had not returned to Jamestown, having been informed that Smith was dead. By 1611, she was living in the village of the Patawomecks, approximately 65 miles from Werowocomoco, in the care of a chief allied to her father. When a pair of English traders reach to the village, they learned of Pocahontas's presence and worked up a plot to kidnap her for the purpose of exchanging her for some English captives held by her father. After Powhatan had returned the captives, but not some tools and weapons his warriors had also taken, the English kept Pocahontas, holding her for a year. Apparently she was well treated and even converted to Christianity, taking the English name Rebecca following her baptism. By the spring of 1614, Pocahontas had an opportunity to meet with some of her people. She spoke against her father, accusing him of valuing her "less than old swords, pieces, or axes." Pocahontas told her fellow tribesmen to tell Powhatan she was going to remain with the English.

It was during her "captivity" that Pocahontas met John Rolfe, a widower who had already introduced Caribbean tobacco as a successful cash crop into Virginia. The two married on April 5, 1614, at the little wooden church at Jamestown, then settled on Rolfe's plantation, Varina Farms, situated along the banks of the James River. On January 30, 1615, Thomas was born. A peripheral result of the marriage between the English colonist and the Indian princess was a peaceful period that followed. As one colonial writer, Ralph Hamor, noted, following the Rolfe-Pocahontas wedding, "We have had friendly commerce and trade not only with Powhatan, but also with his subjects roundabout us."

Now Pocahontas and Rolfe were in England, headed by coach toward London, along with 11 other people from Powhatan's nation. By this time, she might have no longer still been a teenager, but a young married woman of 20 or so. Her days of turning cartwheels in Jamestown were long past her, and she had since adopted much of the English world she had only begun to understand when she and Smith had met nine years earlier. She had learned the English language and English customs and social mores, and had become a Christian, married, and was the mother to a young son. If the two met again after nearly seven years apart, it would likely be a unique homecoming for them both. But Pocahontas had no plans to find Smith. As far as she had always known, her old friend was dead.

Old Friends Reunited

At the same time, Smith's new book, *Description of New England*, was coming into print. He sent a copy to Prince Charles and then wrote a letter to Queen Anne, explaining how Pocahontas had saved his life in Virginia and helped keep the colony alive by supplying food. He asked the queen to give the Indian woman a royal welcome. This 1616 letter does not exist today, but it represents the first written mention of Pocahontas's famous rescue of the captain. Otherwise, Smith would include the story in his 1624 *Generall Historie of Virginia*.

Little is known of the early days Rolfe and Pocahontas spent in England, but they did take residence in Brentford, a small town just outside of London. It was there that John Smith made the trip to see his old friend. It is not clear when exactly he went, but it appears he did not go immediately after Pocahontas's arrival. He was busy at the time with new plans for a voyage to America, so perhaps that delayed his visit. He might have been embarrassed to go and see the one person from America he should have tried and made some type of contact with previously. Seven years had passed, and he had never sent a single message back to Virginia intended for Pocahontas, not a single missive to tell her of his whereabouts, his comings and goings, or even a reminiscence of their days together in Virginia.

But go he did. He later wrote: "But hearing she was at Brentford...I went to see her." He found her dressed not as he would have remembered her, but in the finery of a well-bred English woman. The reunion began awkwardly. At first, Pocahontas seemed diffident, perhaps angry. Smith described their encounter: "After a modest salutation, without any word, she turned about, obscured her face, as not seeming well contented; and in that humor her husband, with diverse others, we all left her two or three houres, repenting myself to have write she could speak English. But not long after, she began to talke, and remembered mee well what courtesies shee had done."

Perhaps the two were struggling to remind themselves of just exactly what their relationship had or had not been back in Virginia. Certainly, Smith had seen the young Pocahontas as a good friend, had enjoyed her company, and was clearly beholden to her for having twice saved his life. Perhaps she recalled earlier feelings for the captain, her young girl infatuations that had never gone farther than a longing admiration of the older, 20-something

English swashbuckler who was so different from anyone else she had ever met. What feelings each might have struggled with that day or not clear. But when Pocahontas spoke to her old friend, she made it clear what relationship she thought they now had. She reminded Smith: "You did promise Powhatan what was yours should bee his, and he the like to you; you called him father being in his land a stranger, and by the same reason so I must I do you." Smith would have none of it. He would not allow her to call him "father," reminding her she was the daughter of a king. But her Pocahontas stood firm—"with a well set countenance"—and spoke again to Smith: "Were you not afraid to come into my father's Countrie, and caused feare in him and all his people (but mee), and feare you here I should call you father? I tell you then I will, and you shall call mee childe, and so I will bee forever and ever your Countrieman."

Then she told Smith that after his departure from Jamestown in the fall of 1609, his countrymen had told her he was dead. And Smith wrote: "They did tell us always you were dead, and I knew no other till I came to Plymouth; yet Powhatan did command Uttamatomakkin to seeke you, and know the truth, because your Countriemen will lie much." Here is Pocahontas revealing her feelings, recalling her pain at thinking Smith dead all those years only to discover he was alive. Whether the knowledge of Smith still living and breathing created in Pocahontas feelings of relief, joy, regret for opportunities lost between the two of them, it is impossible to know. Smith writes a little else about their encounter after years of separation. It is known, however, that Captain Smith did return to see Pocahontas more than once at Brentford. Whatever might have been lost between them or whatever awkwardness might have marred their first reunion, these things did not keep them from seeing one another several times over as they both had opportunity. Smith tells his readers nothing of those additional conversations, but it is hard to imagine that the two old friends did not recall other adventures and other days of curious wonderment they had spent together years earlier as an 11-year-old Indian girl and a 27-year-old English adventurer.

Unfortunately, perhaps, these days of reunion would come to an end forever. By March 1617, John Rolfe and Pocahontas were bound for America, ready to return to Virginia. During their departure, barely down the river and out of London, Pocahontas became sick, unable to continue the trip. Soon after, she died. What exactly her ailment was is uncertain. It might have been smallpox. She might have had pneumonia or tuberculosis. But before the month's end, the young Indian princess, who had transformed herself into Rebecca, a married Englishwoman, died. Her husband Rolfe later described her death, recounting her last words as she noted that "all must die, but it is enough that her child liveth." She was buried at the Parish of Saint George's, Gravesend. Her death occurred just a few months short of the 10th anniversary of the arrival of three English ships along the James River, filled with eager colonists and settlers, among them, her future friend, Captain John Smith.

More Dreams of America

During the same months the Rolfes were coming and going about in England, Captain Smith was intent on his plans for his next colonizing venture in New England. It might well have become all-consuming for him, this business of leading another expedition of Englishmen ready to settle another corner of the New World. To establish such a colony would make him more than he had been at Jamestown—the actual founder of the colony, in a region he had already named. He was a known in London, a name associated with those who had established Englishmen in Virginia. No one in England had more practical, hands-on experience to bring to a colonial endeavor than Captain Smith. And he had not only learned during his years how to remake himself in the wilderness of America, he had also made himself into a grand promoter and publicist.

He had accomplished great things for Virginia. After 10 years since its founding, the miracle that was Jamestown owed no small debt to the contributions made by Captain Smith. But he could not help but believe that his greatest achievements lay ahead of him. He was, after all, only 37 years old as 1617 opened.

With support from old and new investors in backers, Smith procured three more ships, primarily for yet another fishing and whaling expedition. But the good captain signed on another 15 men to remain in New England after the fishing season was complete. It is not known whether any of them were from among those who had joined Smith in his earlier, misbegotten adventure. It appears that all things were ready by December 1616, but something delayed their departure from England. Captain Smith and his men did not sail. It seems that his flotilla of ships might have missed the seasonal winds. He wrote later: "I was wind bound three months, so that the season being passed, the ships went for Newfoundland: whereby my design was frustrated; which was to me and my

friends, no small loss." No, indeed. If Smith was hanging everything, perhaps even his ultimate legacy, on his next expedition to New England, the failure that year must have stung and disappointed. Newfoundland was not New England, and he had no interest in fishing in Canada. Apparently he could not even convince his backers to allow even one ship to make its way even as far south as modern-day Maine, where Smith could have followed his dreams of his next colony. All company officials could muster in his support was bestowing a title on him, making him admiral of New England for life.

Smith was put off by his failure to colonize in 1617 (not to mention his 1615 misadventure), but he was not discouraged to the point of giving up. However, others were not so positive. Smith lived in an age when people took signs seriously, and to such individuals, especially those gentlemen and merchants providing support for Smith's company work, the captain was getting the reputation of having bad luck. Some began to separate themselves from him, turning to other would-be adventurers. The good captain had a little success getting everything lined up for another attempt at reaching New England and planting an English presence there. By the summer of 1617, the discouragement that he had avoided finally caught up with him, as he gave up recruiting backers outside London. But nothing came of his efforts. It appears the doors were closing on the captain.

Smith's frustrations continued into the summer, as the season passed for an expedition to sail to America and carry out the dual purposes of fishing and settlement. The spring of 1618 arrived, and Smith continued to be frustrated by the lack of progress on his return to colonize in New England. He likely met that year with George Yeardley who had arrived in Jamestown in 1609, the same year Captain Smith had departed. While Yeardley was in London, he was knighted by King James, then set sail to return back to America the following January. How much Smith might have been envious of the attention Governor Yeardley received by the crown is unknown, but it must have rankled him. Yeardley had not been in Jamestown during its first two formative years, those during which Smith had played such a key role in helping the colony ultimately survive. He would have also been aware of the significant changes taking place in Virginia at the same time. Yeardley had taken back to Jamestown his orders from Virginia Company officials to end the harsh military rule that had remained in the colony for several years. He was also supposed to establish in assembly (it would be called the House of Burgesses) which would promote representative government in Virginia. The governor was also empowered to hand out land grants to each Virginia colonist to the tune of 100 acres for all who had been in the colony prior to 1616, and 50 acres to all those who had arrived since. Perhaps Smith could take a measure of pride and such developments for Jamestown. After all, had he not provided singular leadership in its early years, the colony might not have survived to enjoy such measures of success.

Smith and the Pilgrims

Little is known specifically concerning Smith's comings and goings during these years. It is known, however, that he was approached by others who were preparing to make their way to America. In 1619, he was contacted by agents representing a sect of religious nonconformists who had read about America through Smith's own words. England's state-supported religious body was the church of England. During the early 1600s, several other Christian sects tried to worship in their own ways in England, but were persecuted by King James as agents for failing to support the Church of England. One such group was a sect that called themselves "Puritans" or "Separatists." They rejected the Anglican Church's ecclesiastical practices, most of which were old Catholic practices once removed. One group of Puritans living in Scrooby, England had previously packed up and moved to Holland, so they could practice their faith according to their own beliefs. Dissatisfied with life in the low countries, several of them moved back to England, having decided to leave for America. They first negotiated with the Dutch for support, but those efforts had fallen apart. Then, they approached the London Virginia Company, again, only to be rebuffed.

While searching for a viable New World opportunity, the leaders of the Puritans were introduced to the possibilities of moving to New England. And their source was one of only a few available—Captain Smith's book, *Description of New England*. It is known for certain that the Puritan minister, William Brewster, had a copy of Smith's book in his library when he died in 1643. Smith's descriptions appealed to the Puritans—today those who came to America are remembered as the "Pilgrims"—and Brewster would himself write that he and his followers were drawn "chiefly for the hope of present profits to be made by the fishing." It is extremely unlikely that the Scrooby separatists would have considered the advantages of New England without Captain Smith's descriptions.

Thus, John Smith had not only a direct impact on the early history of Jamestown, the first successful English colony in North America, but an important indirect influence on the establishment of a second successful English venture. At one point, Smith even made it clear to it to the agents to the agents representing the Puritans that he would be willing and available to go to America with them as their guide and military leader. (While Smith refers to this offer, William Brewster never did, with the minister only mentioning Smith and his valuable map.) Ultimately, though, Smith claims that the Puritan sect chose not to hire him because of the expense. The Scrooby Puritans were a relatively poor group that decided they could utilize the information found in Smith's book without actually having to employ him. As Smith later wrote, the Puritans were so unaware and ignorant of what lay ahead for them in America that it "caused them, for more than a yeare, to endure a wonderful deale of misery, with an infinite patience, saying my Books and Maps were much better cheape to teach them, than my selfe."

The captain is certainly accurate when he refers to the "misery" the Puritans experienced when they landed in New England following their voyage on the *Mayflower* in 1620. Despite what Smith might have caused them if they had hired him on, their efforts might have been eased by his presence, his leadership, and his skills and knowledge of how to successfully colonize in the New World. It should be mentioned that Smith might have fit in well with another of the Pilgrims' leaders, William Bradford. Bradford had grown up just 60 miles from Smith's Lincolnshire roots. Both men had grown up the sons of independent farmers, had the same regional accent, the same folk habits, and their local knowledge would have dramatically overlapped. As Smith was a fairly pious, even morally conservative individual, he and Bradford, as well as the Puritans generally, might have gotten along swimmingly. But, while the Pilgrims finally left England, taking passage on the now famous ship, the *Mayflower*, Captain John smith remained stuck in the Old Country.

The record of Smith's activities otherwise during 1620 are few, but it is known that, come December, his next book, *Newe England Trials*, came into print. It was a pamphlet, really, at only 16 pages in length. At its center, the book was Smith's presentation on how England could go about establishing a royal Navy. He used the text, though, to propose once again a new joint stock company. He carried copies with him when he went around England giving inspirational speeches in support of his proposed adventure. Again, nothing came of it. True frustration began to stalk Smith. Speech after speech, written work after written work—few seemed to have responded to his efforts. In his later writings, he expressed his increasing bitterness over at all: "These fourteene yeres I have spared neither pains nor money according to my abilitie, and the discovery of Norumbega [legendary settlement in northeastern North America]." He described how he had invested in Virginia "near five yeares worke, and more than 500 pound of my owne estate; beside all the dangers, miseries and encumbrances and losse of other employments I endured gratis." With each passing year, Smith was coming no closer to getting support to return to the New England and start up another colony. And in 1621, he turned 41.

One More Story: The Pilgrims Reach Smith's New England

Not only did Captain John smith have a direct impact on the early years of Virginia and the Jamestown colony, he also left his thumbprint on New England and the Plymouth colony. The leaders of those religious dissenters remembered today as the "Pilgrims," had read of New England through Smith's writings, and their agents had talked with Smith directly. The Pilgrims chose not to hire on Smith as their military leader, however, and prepared in 1620 to make the trip to America without his direct assistance.

The party of 102 would-be colonists left England in August 1620 on board two ships, the *Speedwell* and the *Mayflower*. When the *Speedwell* proved less than seaworthy, the Pilgrims loaded themselves on the *Mayflower* exclusively and set out for America. The voyage on the *Mayflower* proved to be one of hardship and danger. The people crowded together and had a few comforts. They also encountered violent storms that blew them off course, with one hurricane splitting the main beam below decks, crippling the vessel and spelling disaster. When the ship appeared doomed, the Pilgrims saved themselves by using one of their jacks, which they had loaded for the voyage to use in raising their houses in America. The beam was put back in place, and the party of colonists were saved.

When they reached the shores of New England, they searched for the sites Captain Smith had mentioned as likely locations for a settlement. They dropped anchor off Cape Cod on November 21. Over the following weeks, the Pilgrims explored the coast around Cape Cod Bay. At a site they later called Plymouth, the colonists found an abandoned Indian village, which had been struck by a smallpox epidemic a few years earlier. Smith had explored

this very spot and had written a bit in glowing terms. Here the Pilgrims anchored the *Mayflower* and soon began the hard work of building their colonial outpost in the New World.

CHAPTER ELEVEN: The Twilight Years

Meanwhile, both the Plymouth and London Companies were being restructured and revitalized. New leadership took over, and in 1620, the Plymouth Company became the Council for New England, represented by 40 upper class investors. Although Smith's old friend, Ferdinando Gorges, was chosen as the group's president, no call to Smith was forthcoming. Looking to establish a colony, the organization called for it to be named "New England." While Smith was not included in any of these plans, his name for the region was. The good captain was not involved in these new efforts by the revitalized Plymouth colony, probably because his dream of a new colony did not fit the company's plans. Smith, who would fight to overcome the lazy, gold-bedazzled gentlemen in early Jamestown, always envisioned a colony without such individuals.

His colony, he planned, would be one for common in men such as himself. In New England, these men would achieve success through hard work and other enterprising efforts. Such men would have opportunity to become landowners in the New World and would be beholden to almost no one of a higher class, including landlords to collect rents from them. They would be fisherman, working their own nets in their own boats, seeing personal profit from their labors. In time, he planned, his colonists would be able to develop a domestic shipbuilding industry, tapping the endless acres of woods throughout the region. The Plymouth group, on the other hand, was made up almost entirely of members of the aristocracy or well-to-do merchants who imagined a New England colony they would rule as lords, almost a direct extension of the late medieval English world.

Although Smith would not get his opportunity to bring his colonizing dream to fruition, the Englishmen who did come to occupy New England created an economy based on exactly the expectations of Captain Smith, complete with a reliance on fishing, and later, shipbuilding. Smith's vision would come true, only not with his direct involvement.

Despite his discouragement, Smith continue to hope for a future in New England, or at least in Virginia. He began petitioning London Company officials to allow his return to the Jamestown region. In addition, he appealed to officials to pay him for the services he had rendered so many years earlier. And the company did respond positively, deciding in May 1621, to "reward him either out of the treasury here or out of the profits the generality in Virginia." However, no payments were ever paid to Smith. He was never even reimbursed for his earlier expenses while living in Jamestown, nor did he receive any land. In reality, the London Company was soon to fall on hard times. The company no longer held the exclusive right to hold lotteries by which they could raise investment capital. As historian Bradford Smith notes, "The company was too disorganized, too poor, and too discouraged to give the colonists any effective relief," not to mention someone like Captain Smith, who was no longer part of the colony, and his earlier efforts some in the company had never fully appreciated.

Then, in 1622, shocking news arrived from Virginia: A massive Indian uprising, led by Smith's old nemesis, Opechancanough, Powhatan's brother, had torn through the Virginia countryside, raiding settlements up and down the James River, murdering 350 colonists. Had a friendly Indian not warned the colonists before the uprising took place, everyone in Virginia might have been killed. It was a hard blow against the London Company, and Smith's fortunes with the company were destroyed.

Smith, the eternal soldier, saw in the massacre a potential opportunity for himself, though. He suggested to company officials that he be hired to lead a party of 130 soldiers, with which he would train colonists in the military arts to defend themselves. In addition, Smith also promised to explore and discover new lands for the company. While the offer was a good one, and one that probably would have proven beneficial to the company, the captain was yet again turned down. It appears that company officials decided they simply could not afford someone of Smith's experience and expertise. What might he have accomplished if given another opportunity to further his legacy in America will never be known. For Smith was not destined to ever return to the New World, employed by the London or Plymouth Companies or anyone else.

Yet even though Smith was never to step foot on the shores of Virginia or New England again, he was never far from either in his thoughts and actions. In the fall of 1622, he published a revised version of *New England's Trials*, which included new information on the progress of the Puritan plantation at Plymouth. Of this new foothold in America and of his Jamestown, which was entering its second generation of settlement, Smith still

held a fondness, believing each to represent an important part of his life's work. He wrote of these colonies: "I may call them my children, for they have bin my wife, my hawks, my hounds, my cards, my dice, and in total my best content, as indifferent to my heart as my left hand to my right." Perhaps he had never stated it all clear: America was his obsession, his worst vice, his offspring, and he the father.

Writer and Historian

Over the next two years, Captain Smith spent much of his time looking backward. He was approached by company officials, those with whom he was friendly, to write a larger work on English colonization in the New World. As he wrote later: "In the company's name I was requested to do it." The project was such a bold one, requiring significant printing costs (the work was to include his maps) that he had to find a benefactor to cover the costs. That supporter was a woman, Princess Frances, the Duchess of Richmond and Lennox. At the same time Smith was putting his papers together for the project, the Duchess's husband died, leaving her a substantial estate of several thousand pounds. Because of her patronage, the book Smith produced was very handsome, indeed.

He put in countless hours and days working on a new edition of his earlier writings on America. When published, the work was issued as *The Generall History of Virginia, the Somer Iles, and New England*. It would become his magnum opus. He wrote original text, included old versions of earlier writings (in all, he quoted directly from at least 45 other documents, many of them previously published), introduced the story of his first rescue by Pocahontas, and myriad other details. He even included a special illustrated page showing some of his more extraordinary exploits during his days in Virginia, such as his capture by the Powhatans, the resulting powwow before Powhatan over his fate, his last-second rescue by the Indian chief's daughter, his fight with the Paspahegh chief in 1609. It was all there—the engraved scenes of Smith's adventures, the words, the history, his life's biography and personal legacy, the ultimate success of Jamestown, the pride of England's efforts in the New World. It must have been time-consuming, yet rewarding for the former leader of the Virginia colony, and experience that was likely two-edge. It served as a reminiscence of all he had done all those years earlier, while reminding him of how much he continued to miss America.

When the work was published, it marked something at the end of the Virginia company as a colonizing institution. While the company continued on for another six years as a trading business, its days of recruiting men, women, and children were over. Thousands had found their way to Virginia through the company, and thousands had died trying to survive in the New World, from disease, starvation, Indian attack, and a dozen other causes. In 1624, Virginia was home to only 1200 English colonists. And of that number, only three had arrived at the future site of Jamestown in the spring of 1607. Perhaps that was the company's point in having Smith publish a great history of the company's efforts in America—to help provide the company itself. But it all came too late.

To an extent, the publication of Smith's great book fell under the shadow of larger events, including the death of King James I in the early spring of 1625. James had ruled throughout most of Smith's life, and those who had founded Jamestown a generation earlier had honored him by naming their settlement after him. In addition, a great plague struck London with such a ferocity that by the summer of 1625, English men and women were dying at the rate of 3000 a week. By September, large portions of the city had been abandoned, as thousands of frightened residents fled in all directions to the countryside. It is not clear whether Captain Smith was living in London at the time. If so, he might have taken refuge with friends or have made his way back to his old lands in Lincolnshire. The plague had run its course by October. Four months later, a new monarch was crowned—Charles I. Soon, England was at war with Spain. Such changed and upheaval likely took away some of the attention Smith's *Generall Historie* might have won otherwise.

Despite lackluster sales, Smith continued to write during his final years. He issued a handbook of sorts designed to train English seamen. By 1627, the old soldier participated in the war with Spain as part of an expedition to the Isle of Re off the French coast, near the site of La Rochelle. It was here that Smith had been cast onto the coast after fleeing French pirates. Little came of the campaign. Otherwise, little is known of Smith's whereabouts or what he was up to between 1627 and 1629, other than he wrote another work, *True Travels*, which was published in 1630. The book further rounded out Smith's biography, as it served as a description of his early years, those spent as a mercenary across the European continent, years that helped prepare him for his work in the New World. (It was in this late work but Smith tells the story of the three Turks who challenged him to duels, with each losing his head.)

That same year—1630—captain Smith turned 50. He was living out his middle age quietly, in a suburb of London known as Newgate. Although little is known of the specifics of his final months, he would be written about years later in a book by Thomas Fuller titled *Worthies of England*: "He led his old age in London, where his having a prince's mind in prison and a poor man's purse rendered him to the contempt of such who are not ingenious. Yet he forted his spirits with the remembrance in relation of what formally he had been and what he had done." So much has been taken away from him over the years. Stripped of much of the glory he should have received for his adventures and solid leadership in America, not to mention his explorations and maps, Smith could still rely on his memories of it all, and that was something no one could take from him. That he was poor goes without saying. He was barely and often rarely employed during his years following his exploits in Virginia and New England. Historian Samuel Eliot Morison would be prompted to write up Smith's contributions to early America: "Few of her founders gave so much, and got so little, as Captain John Smith."

The old soldier, explorer, and New World promoter worked right up to the end of his life, busying himself with projects, taking time out to spend with good friends, and dreaming of tomorrow. When he fell ill in the summer of 1631, he kept his wits and was able to make out a will. Just before his death, Smith's final work, a reflective pamphlet on colonization titled *Advertisements for the Unexperienced Planters of New England, or Anywhere*, was published. Death came quietly, with Captain Smith passing on June 21, 1631.

The pages of American history are littered with the names of those who, through dedication, skill, perseverance, chance, opportunity, or sheer luck manage to leave their mark. John Smith left his through each of these circumstances. Other names would loom larger than his over the four centuries that have passed since that fateful May of 1607 when three small ships reached the waters of the New World. But few men contributed more to those first fledgling steps of the English whose efforts would eventually bring about the founding of 13 colonies in North America than Captain Smith. Throughout his life, he had put his humble origins past him and had mounted the stage of history to become the one man who may be most credited with founding an English presence along the Atlantic coast. The Smith family motto had always been a simple one, and it might have provided at least a part of the drive that pushed him from one end of the earth to another through years of exploits worth the retelling: "To overcome is to live." Perhaps a variation on that homely phrase might more fittingly describe the life of Captain John Smith: "Life is an adventure."

One More Thing: Smith's Great Book of 1624

Captain Smith produced no longer or greater work during his career as a writer than his *Generall Historie*. It is a work of extraordinary research, the result of collecting the works of others, including published books and letters and company reports. Although he often writes of his own exploits in the work, he also pens in information that he received second-hand. Although it might be seen as a hodgepodge of many different subjects, Smith's work is of true importance concerning the history of early America. From the start, his goal had been to tell the complete story, beginning back in the 1490s with the English sponsored voyages of to America of John Cabot and later his son Sebastian. He included Raleigh's attempts to colonize, and certainly of Jamestown and Plymouth.

Structurally, Smith's *Generall Historie* is actually six books massed together. He covers the early voyages of exploration in Book I, then uses Book II to reprint his *Map of Virginia*. In this part of his larger work, Smith includes descriptions of the Native Americans, which makes for a decent anthropological study. Book III is a reprint with some additions and subtractions of the second part of his *Map of Virginia*. In Book IV, he recounts the history of Virginia beginning with his personal departure and 1609 until 1624, the year King James revoked the Virginia company's charter. The fifth book tells about the history of colonizing in Bermuda, while the last book relates the history of New England through the first years of the Puritan colony at Plymouth

Although Smith does give a considerable amount of space in his work to his own adventures in contributions to New World colonization, he also takes the opportunity to mention others and the value of their contributions. Smith, despite his intentions, did not include in his great works a complete picture of the history of the London Company, choosing instead to focus on the "hands-on" aspects of colonizing, rather than a closed door meetings that took place in London. It is obvious in the reading of the *Generall Historie* that the part of his book that Smith enjoyed the most included the telling of his adventures, including his explorations of rivers in Virginia and New England, of his exploits with Indians and battles with pirates, as well as such "mundane" excitements as planting crops in the New World. At his heart, John Smith the Writer loved to tell the stories of John Smith the Adventurer.