

THE JAMESTOWN SETTLEMENT

In the spring of 1606, a group of English investors formed a joint-stock company called the London Company. They hoped to make money by trading with a new colony that they planned to establish in North America. Investors in the London Company believed that gold and silver could be found in America.

King James I of England gave the London Company a charter which permitted them to start a colony in Virginia. Investors spent \$10,000 to organize the expedition. Three ships -- the "Susan Constant," "Godspeed," and "Discovery" -- left England with 140 men and 4 boys. The four month voyage across the Atlantic Ocean was a difficult one, claiming the lives of 40 of the colonists.

The three ships reached the coast of Virginia on April 26, 1607. Captain Christopher Newport, commander of the fleet, began looking for a suitable location for a settlement. The ships sailed about 60 miles up the James River where they came to a small peninsula. Here they founded Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in America. Both the river and the town were named in honor of King James. The location of the settlement on a peninsula made it easier to defend, but the land was swampy and the drinking water impure. The swamp bred disease-carrying mosquitoes.

The settlers spent much of their time looking for gold and silver instead of planting crops. They hoped to strike it rich and share the profits with the London Company. Being well-educated gentlemen of noble rank, they were not used to hard work. They chose to live in tents instead of building houses. Raising crops seemed too difficult and unprofitable. As a result, the men ate poorly and steadily grew weaker. During the first year, over half died of malnutrition, malaria, pneumonia, and dysentery. By January 1, 1608, only 38 colonists were still alive.

The London Company sent more settlers to Jamestown during the second year. Captain John Smith, a former English soldier, became the leader of the settlement. He convinced the colonists to plant crops and strengthen their defenses against hostile Indians. According to a story told by Smith, he was once captured by the Indians and condemned to death. Just before being killed by a stone war club, he was saved by Pocohontas, daughter of Chief Powhatan. Smith claimed that Pocohontas put her head upon his and begged her father to spare his life. Historians now doubt the truth of Smith's story.

John Smith was severely injured in a gunpowder explosion and was forced to return to England in 1609. After his departure, hard times again fell upon Jamestown. Fire, drought, Indian attacks, disease, and starvation took a heavy toll. Hundreds died during the winter of 1609-1610. This period became known as the "starving time." When spring arrived, the 60 remaining men decided to return to England. But just as they were leaving, several ships arrived with supplies and more colonists. With spirits uplifted, they decided to return to Jamestown. The settlement grew stronger in the years ahead.

The first farm products to be raised successfully were hogs and Indian corn. Early industries included glass blowing, iron smelting, the making of potash, and shipbuilding. In 1612, a settler named John Rolfe began growing a new type of tobacco using seed from the West Indies. Smoking soon became popular in England, and the Jamestown colonists found that they could sell as much tobacco as could be produced. White indentured servants came to America, and were used to grow tobacco. In 1619, a Dutch ship arrived from Africa carrying 20 Negroes. They were indentured servants, not slaves. Indentured servants had to work for several years for a Virginia planter in return for his passage to America. He then became a free man, and could own his own land. As the small farms grew into large plantations, more and more workers were needed. Eventually, slaves were imported from Africa.

The population of Jamestown reached about one thousand by 1619. In that year, the London Company sent a number of young women to the colony to become wives of the young bachelors. The company wanted the men to marry and make permanent homes in Virginia. Also in 1619, the House of Burgesses was established. The people could now elect representatives to help make laws for the colony. This type of "representative government" later spread to other English colonies in America.

Directions: Fill in the blank spaces in the following story. The list below includes words and names that are missing from the story. Other words have been added to the list that do not belong in the spaces.

plantations	marry	cigar making	representatives	estates	indentured serv
Potomac River	Asia	corporation	four month	malaria	joint-stock company
Georgetown	1607	London Company	four week	believe	planting crops
population	1609	Jamestown	Walter Raleigh	colonists	"starving time"
King George	compact	Indian corn	over half	grain	shipbuilding
planter	charter	Negroes	"hungry days"	soldier	King James I
1611-1612	England	plant crops	James River	1609-1610	Christopher Newport
mountain	France	English colonies	Williamsburg	tobacco	House of Burgesses
swamp	English	Congressmen	John Smith	drought	nine-tenth
officials	French	Virginia Company	peninsula	weapons	gunpowder explosion
gentlemen	lake	Powhatan	yellow fever	doubt	representative
John Rolfe	Africa	the West Indies	immigrants	merchant	government
John Henry	1614	gold and silver	North America	floods	Sir James Wilson

In the spring of 1606, a group of English investors formed a (1) _____ called the (2) _____. They hoped to make money by trading with a new colony that they planned to establish in (3) _____. Investors in the London Company believed that (4) _____ could be found in America.

(5) _____ of England gave the London Company a (6) _____ which permitted them to start a colony in Virginia. Investors spent \$10,000 to organize the expedition. Three ships -- the "Susan Constant," "Godspeed," and "Discovery" -- left (7) _____ with 140 men and 4 boys. The (8) _____ voyage across the Atlantic Ocean was a difficult one, claiming the lives of 40 of the colonists.

The three ships reached the coast of Virginia on April 26, (9) _____. Captain (10) _____, commander of the fleet, began looking for a suitable location for a settlement. The ships sailed about 60 miles up the (11) _____ where they came to a small peninsula. Here they founded (12) _____, the first permanent (13) _____ settlement in America. Both the river and the town were named in honor of King James. The location of the settlement on a (14) _____ made it easier to defend, but the land was swampy and the drinking water impure. The (15) _____ bred disease-carrying mosquitoes.

The settlers spent much of their time looking for gold and silver instead of (16) _____. They hoped to strike it rich and share the profits with the London Company. Being well-educated (17) _____ of noble rank, they were not used to hard work. They chose to live in tents instead of building houses. Raising crops seemed too difficult and unprofitable. As a result, the men ate poorly and steadily grew weaker. During the first year, (18) _____ died of malnutrition, (19) _____, pneumonia, and dysentery. By January 1, 1608, only 38 colonists were still alive.

The London Company sent more settlers to Jamestown during the second year. Captain (20) _____, a former English (21) _____, became the leader of the settlement. He convinced the colonists to (22) _____ and strengthen their defenses against hostile Indians. According to a story told by Smith, he was once captured by the Indians and condemned to death. Just before being killed by a stone club, he was saved by Pocohontas, daughter of Chief (23) _____. Smith claimed that Pocohontas put her head upon his and begged her father to spare his life. Historians now (24) _____ the truth of Smith's story.

John Smith was severely injured in a (25) _____ and was forced to return to England in 1609. After his departure, hard times again fell upon Jamestown. Fire, (26) _____, Indian attacks, disease, and starvation took a heavy toll. Hundreds died during the winter of (27) _____. This period became known as the (28) _____. When spring arrived, the 60 remaining men decided to return to England. But just as they were leaving, several ships arrived with supplies and more (29) _____. With spirits uplifted, they decided to return to Jamestown. The settlement grew stronger in the years ahead.

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