

ORIGINS OF ENGLISH SETTLEMENT

Viewpoint 1A *National and Economic Reasons to Colonize the New World (1585)*

Richard Hakluyt

INTRODUCTION *During the long reign (1558–1603) of Queen Elizabeth I, England was on the sidelines of the European rush to colonize the New World following Christopher Columbus's 1492 voyage. Spain, on the other hand, created an empire of profitable colonies in South America and the Caribbean Sea. Ships from Spain's colonies laden with gold and silver made Spain the envy of other European nations. Portugal established a colony in what is now Brazil. France sent explorers up the St. Croix River in an attempt to find a trade route to Asia, established fur trading posts, and laid claims to much of North America. England sponsored several exploring expeditions, but its colonizing efforts were limited to small fishing settlements off the coast of North America and failed attempts at colonizing Newfoundland in 1583 and Roanoke Island (off what is now North Carolina) in 1587.*

A growing number of Englishmen began to promote the idea that England needed to establish colonies in the New World to compete with Spain and other nations. The following is taken from a 1585 treatise by Richard Hakluyt the elder, a prominent English lawyer who became interested in overseas colonization in the 1570s (his cousin, Richard Hakluyt the younger, also was a noted colonization promoter). The following excerpt lists thirty-one reasons ("Inducements") why England should begin colonizing efforts in the New World. Although he mentions the spread of Protestant Christianity as a reason for settlement, many of Hakluyt's arguments dwell on strategic and economic benefits for England, including trade opportunities and the ability to provide employment for England's poor.

What commodities does Hakluyt believe could be cultivated in America? Why do you think Hakluyt placed religion first on his list of "Inducements?" How does Hakluyt anticipate dealing with native peoples in the New World?

1. The glory of God by planting of religion among those infidels.

2. The increase of the force of the Christians.

3. The possibility of the enlarging of the dominions of the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, and consequently of her honour, revenues, and of her power by this enterprise.

4. An ample vent [market] in time to come of the woollen cloths of England, especially those of the coarsest sorts, to the maintenance of our poor, that else starve or become burdensome to the realm; and vent also of sundry our commodities upon the tract of that firm land, and possibly in other regions from the northern side of that main.

5. A great possibility of further discoveries of other regions from the north part of the same land by sea, and of unspeakable honour and benefit that may rise upon the same by the trades to ensue in Japan, China, and Cathay, etc.

6. By return thence, this realm shall receive (by reason of the situation of the climate, and by reason of the excellent soil) woad, oil, wines, hops, salt, and most or all the commodities that we receive from the best parts of Europe, and we shall receive the same better cheap than now we receive them, as we may use the matter.

7. Receiving the same thence, the navy, the human strength of this realm, our merchants and their goods, shall not be subject to arrest of ancient enemies and doubtful friends as of late years they have been.

8. If our nation do not make any conquest there but only use traffic and change of commodities, yet, by means the country is not very mighty but divided into petty kingdoms, they shall not dare to offer us any great annoy but such as we may easily revenge with sufficient chastisement to the unarmed people there.

9. Whatsoever commodities we receive by the Steelyard Merchants, or by our own merchants from Eastland, be it flax, hemp, pitch, tar, masts, clapboard, wainscot, or such-like; the like good[s] may we receive from the north and north-east part of that country near unto Cape Breton, in return for our coarse woollen cloths, flannels, and rugs fit for those colder regions.

10. The passage to and fro is through the main ocean sea, so as we are not in danger of any enemy's coast.

TRADE OPPORTUNITIES

11. In the voyage we are not to cross the burnt zone [tropics], nor to pass through frozen seas encumbered with ice and fogs, but in temperate climate at all times of the year; and it requireth not, as the East Indies voyage

Richard Hakluyt, "Inducements to the Liking of the Voyage Intended Towards Virginia in 40. and 42. Degrees," from *The Original Writings and Correspondence of the Two Richard Hakluyts*, edited by E.G.R. Taylor (London: Hakluyt Society, 1935).

doth, the taking in of water in divers places, by reason that it is to be sailed in five or six weeks; and by the shortness the merchant may yearly make two returns (a factory [trade center] once being erected there), a matter in trade of great moment.

12. In this trade by the way, in our pass to and fro, we have in tempests and other haps all the ports of Ireland to our aid and no near coast of any enemy.

13. By this ordinary trade we may annoy the enemies to Ireland and succour the Queen's Majesty's friends there, and in time we may from Virginia yield them whatsoever commodity they now receive from the Spaniard; and so the Spaniards shall want the ordinary victual that heretofore they received yearly from thence, and so they shall not continue trade, nor fall so aptly in practice against this government as now by their trade thither they may.

14. We shall, as it is thought, enjoy in this voyage either some small islands to settle on or some one place or other on the firm land to fortify for the safety of our ships, our men, and our goods, the like whereof we have not in any foreign place of our traffic, in which respect we may be in degree of more safety and more quiet.

15. The great plenty of buff [buffalo or wild ox] hides and of many other sundry kinds of hides there now presently to be had, the trade of whale and seal fishing and of divers other fishings in the great rivers, great bays, and seas there, shall presently defray the charge in good part or in all of the first enterprise, and so we shall be in better case than our men were in Russia, where many years were spent and great sums of money consumed before gain was found.

16. The great broad rivers of that main that we are to enter into, so many leagues navigable or portable into the mainland, lying so long a tract with so excellent and so fertile a soil on both sides, do seem to promise all things that the life of man doth require and whatsoever men may wish that are to plant upon the same or to traffic in the same.

17. And whatsoever notable commodity the soil within or without doth yield in so long a tract, that is to be carried out from thence to England, the same rivers so great and deep do yield no small benefit for the sure, safe, easy, and cheap carriage of the same to shipboard, be it of great bulk or of great weight.

18. And in like sort whatsoever commodity of England the inland people there shall need, the same rivers do work the like effect in benefit for the incarriage of the same aptly, easily, and cheaply.

19. If we find the country populous and desirous to expel us and injuriously to offend us, that seek but just and lawful traffic, then, by reason that we are lords of navigation and they not so, we are the better able to

defend ourselves by reason of those great rivers and to annoy them in many places.

20. Where there be many petty kings or lords planted on the rivers' sides, and [who] by all likelihood maintain the frontiers of their several territories by wars, we may by the aid of this river join with this king here, or with that king there, at our pleasure, and may so with a few men be revenged of any wrong offered by any of them; or may, if we will proceed with extremity, conquer, fortify, and plant in soils most sweet, most pleasant, most strong, and most fertile, and in the end bring them all in subjection and to civility.

21. The known abundance of fresh fish in the rivers, and the known plenty of fish on the sea-coast there, may assure us of sufficient victual in spite of the people, if we will use salt and industry.

22. The known plenty and variety of flesh of divers kinds of beasts at land there may seem to say to us that we may cheaply victual our navies to England for our returns, which benefit everywhere is not found of merchants.

23. The practice of the people of the East Indies, when the Portugals came thither first, was to cut from the Portugals their lading of spice; and hereby they thought to overthrow their purposed trade. If these people shall practise the like, by not suffering [allowing] us to have any commodity of theirs without conquest which requireth some time), yet may we maintain our first voyage thither till our purpose come to effect by the sea-fishing on the coasts there and by dragging for pearls, which are said to be on those parts: and by return of those commodities the charges in part shall be defrayed; which is a matter of consideration in enterprises of charge.

EMPLOYING ENGLAND'S POOR

24. If this realm shall abound too too much with youth, in the mines there of gold (as that of Chisea and Saguenay), of silver, copper, iron, etc., may be an employment to the benefit of this realm; in tilling of the rich soil there for grain and in planting of vines there for wine or dressing of those vines which grow there naturally in great abundance; olives for oil; orange trees, lemons, figs and almonds for fruit; woad, saffron, and madder for dyers: hops for brewers: hemp, flax; and in many such other things, by employment of the soil, our people void of sufficient trades may be honestly employed, that else may become hurtful at home.

25. The navigating of the seas in the voyage, and of the great rivers there, will breed many mariners for service and maintain much navigation.

26. The number of raw hides there of divers kinds of beasts, if we shall possess some island there or settle on the firm, may presently employ many of our idle people in

divers several dressings of the same, and so we may return them to the people that cannot dress them so well, or into this realm, where the same are good merchandise, or to Flanders, etc., which present gain at the first raiseth great encouragement presently to the enterprise.

27. Since great waste woods be there of oak, cedar, pine, walnuts, and sundry other sorts, many of our waste people may be employed in making of ships, hoys, busses [types of ships], and boats, and in making of rosin, pitch, and tar, the trees natural for the same being certainly known to be near Cape Breton and the Bay of Menan, and in many other places thereabout.

28. If mines of white or grey marble, jet, or other rich stone be found there, our idle people may be employed in the mines of the same and in preparing the same to shape, and, so shaped, they may be carried into this realm as good ballast for our ships and after serve for noble buildings.

We shall not only receive many precious commodities. . . but also shall in time find ample vent of the labour of our poor people at home.

29. Sugar-canes may be planted as well as they are now in the South of Spain, and besides the employment of our idle people, we may receive the commodity cheaper and not enrich infidels or our doubtful friends, of whom now we receive that commodity.

30. The daily great increase of wools in Spain, and the like in the West Indies, and the great employment of the same into cloth in both places, may move us to endeavour, for vent of our cloth, new discoveries of peopled regions where hope of sale may arise; otherwise in short time many inconveniences may possibly ensue.

INCREDIBLE THINGS MAY FOLLOW

31. This land that we purpose to direct our course to, lying in part in the 40th degree of latitude, being in like heat as Lisbon in Portugal doth, and in the more southerly part, as the most southerly coast of Spain doth, may by our diligence yield unto us, besides wines and oils and sugars, oranges, lemons, figs, raisins, almonds, pomegranates, rice, raw silks such as come from Granada, and divers commodities for dyers, as anil and cochineal, and sundry other colours and materials. Moreover, we shall not only receive many precious commodities besides from thence, but also shall in time find ample vent of the labour of our poor people at home, by sale of hats, bonnets, knives, fish-hooks, copper

kettles, beads, looking-glasses, bugles, and a thousand kinds of other wrought wares that in short time may be brought in use among the people of that country, to the great relief of the multitude of our poor people and to the wonderful enriching of this realm. And in time, such league and intercourse may arise between our stapling seats there, and other ports of our Northern America, and of the islands of the same, that incredible things, and by few as yet dreamed of, may speedily follow: tending to the impeachment of our mighty enemies and to the common good of this noble government.

The ends of this voyage are these:

1. To plant Christian religion.
2. To traffic.
3. To conquer.

Or, to do all three.

Viewpoint 1B *Religious Reasons to Colonize the New World (1629)*

John Winthrop (1588–1649)

INTRODUCTION *The first two lasting English settlements in what is now the United States were at Jamestown, Virginia, 1607, and Plymouth, Massachusetts, 1620. Jamestown was sponsored by the Virginia Company of London, a joint-stock corporation whose investors (some of whom settled in Jamestown) hoped to make a quick profit from the colony. The leaders of the Plymouth colony—the Pilgrims—as well as the Puritans who settled close by in Massachusetts in subsequent years, had different motives.*

The Puritans and Pilgrims were religious people who were dissatisfied with the pace of Protestant reform in the Church of England, the official established church that all English people were then obliged to support. Under Queen Elizabeth I and her successor, King James I, the Church of England was closely linked to the royal government. Many Puritans came to America to avoid being persecuted for their beliefs and to create a new society that harmonized with their conceptions of true Christianity. A passionate summary of Puritan motives comes from the following viewpoint, excerpted from a 1629 pamphlet by John Winthrop. Winthrop, one of the wealthiest and most distinguished of the Puritan settlers, served as governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony for thirteen of his nineteen years in America following his migration in 1630. In his 1629 pamphlet he argues that the true Christian church is hopelessly corrupt in England and that the faith can be preserved only by creating a new society in the New World. Puritan settlers were not to be adventurers seeking their fortune or the desperately poor seeking

employment, but rather people inspired by God to practice their faith free of the constraints of the Church of England.

How do Winthrop's views of religion and of God expressed here differ from those expressed by Richard Hakluyt in the opposing viewpoint? What comments does Winthrop make about Jamestown? Hakluyt was writing to persuade government officials, while Winthrop is hoping to attract fellow settlers; how much might their differences in their arguments be attributed to the fact that their essays are aimed at different audiences?

Reasons to be considered for justifying the undertakers of the intended plantation in New England and for encouraging such whose hearts God shall move to join with them in it.

First, it will be a service to the church of great consequence to carry the gospel into those parts of the world, to help on the coming in of fullness of the Gentiles, and to raise a bulwark against the kingdom of anti-Christ which the Jesuits labor to rear up in those parts.

RESCUING THE CHURCH

2. All other churches of Europe are brought to desolation, and our sins, for which the Lord begins already to frown upon us, do threaten us fearfully, and who knows but that God hath provided this place to be a refuge for many whom he means to save out of the general calamity. And seeing the church hath no place left to fly into but the wilderness, what better work can there be than to go before and provide tabernacles and food for her, against she cometh thither?

3. This land grows weary of her inhabitants, so as man who is the most precious of all creatures is here more vile and base than the earth we tread upon, and of less price among us than a horse or a sheep; masters are forced by authority to entertain servants, parents to maintain their own children. All towns complain of the burthen of their poor, though we have taken up many unnecessary, yea unlawful, trades to maintain them. And we use the authority of the law to hinder the increase of people, as urging the execution of the state against cottages and inmates, and thus it is come to pass that children, servants, and neighbors (especially if the[y] be poor) are counted the greatest burthen, which if things were right it would be the chiefest earthly blessing.

4. The whole earth is the Lord's garden, and He hath given it to the sons of men with a general condition, Gen. 1:28, "Increase and multiply, replenish the earth and subdue it," which was again renewed to Noah. The end is double moral and natural: that man might enjoy the fruits

From *Reasons to be Considered for Justifying the Undertakers of the Intended Plantation in New England* by John Winthrop. (Proceedings, vol. 8, Massachusetts Historical Society, 1864-65).

of the earth, and God might have his due glory from the creature. Why then should we stand here striving for places of habitation (many men spending as much labor and cost to recover or keep sometimes an acre or two of land as would procure them many hundred as good or better in an other country) and in the meantime suffer a whole continent as fruitful and convenient for the use of man to lie waste without any improvement?

5. We are grown to that height of intemperance in all excess of riot, as no man's estate almost will suffice to keep sail with his equals, and he who fails herein must live in scorn and contempt. Hence it comes that all arts and trades are carried in that deceitful and unrighteous course, as it is almost impossible for a good and upright man to maintain his charge and live comfortably in any of them.

If any such who are known to be godly, and live in wealth and prosperity here, shall forsake all this to join themselves to this church, . . . it will be an example of great use . . . to give more life to the faith of God's people in their prayers for the plantation.

6. The fountains of learning and religion are so corrupted (as beside the unsupportable charge of the education) most children (even the best wits and fairest hopes) are perverted, corrupted, and utterly overthrown by the multitude of evil examples and the licentious government of those seminaries, where men strain at gnats and swallow camels, use all severity for maintenance of capes and other complements, but suffer all ruffian-like fashion and disorder in manners to pass uncontrolled.

7. What can be a better work and more honorable and worthy a Christian than to help raise and support a particular church while it is in the infancy, and to join his forces with such a company of faithful people as by a timely assistance may grow strong and prosper, and for want of it may be put to great hazard, if not wholly ruined.

8. If any such who are known to be godly, and live in wealth and prosperity here, shall forsake all this to join themselves to this church, and to run a hazard with them of a hard and mean condition, it will be an example of great use both for removing the scandal of worldly and sinister respects which is cast upon the adventurers, to give more life to the faith of God's people in their prayers for the plantation, and to encourage others to join the more willingly in it.

9. It appears to be a work of God for the good of His church, in that He hath disposed the hearts of so many of His wise and faithful servants (both ministers and others)

not only to approve of the enterprise but to interest themselves in it, some in their persons and estates, others by their serious advice and help otherwise. And all by their prayers for the welfare of it, Amos 3. The Lord revealeth His secrets to His servants the prophets; it is likely He hath some great work in hand which He hath revealed to His prophets among us, whom He hath stirred up to encourage His servants to this plantation, for He doth not use to seduce His people by His own prophets but commits that office to the ministry of false prophets and lying spirits. . . .

OBJECTIONS AND REPLIES

Objection 1: We have no warrant to enter upon that land which hath been so long possessed by others.

Answer 1: That which lies common and hath never been replenished or subdued is free to any that will possess and improve it, for God hath given to the sons of men a double right to the earth: there is a natural right and a civil right. The first right was natural when men held the earth in common, every man sowing and feeding where he pleased, and then as men and the cattle increased they appropriated certain parcels of ground by enclosing, and peculiar manurance, and this in time gave them a civil right. . . . And for the natives in New England, they enclose no land, neither have any settled habitation, nor any tame cattle to improve the land by, and so have no other but a natural right to those countries. So as if we leave them sufficient for their use, we may lawfully take the rest, there being more than enough for them and us.

Secondly, we shall come in with a good leave of the Natives, who find benefit already by our neighborhood and learn of us to improve part to more use than before they could do the whole. And by this means we come in by valuable purchase, for they have of us that which will yield them more benefit than all the land which we have from them.

Thirdly, God hath consumed the Natives with a great plague in those parts so as there be few inhabitants left.

Objection 2: It will be a great wrong to our church to take away the good people, and we shall lay it the more open to the judgment feared.

Answer 1: The departing of good people from a country doth not cause a judgment but foreshew it, which may occasion such as remain to turn from their evil ways that they may prevent it, or to take some other course that they may escape it.

Secondly, such as go away are of no observation in respects of those who remain, and they are likely to do more good there than here. And since Christ's time, the church is to be considered as universal without distinction of countries, so as he who doeth good in any one place serves the church in all places in regard of the unity.

Thirdly, it is the revealed will of God that the gospel should be preached to all nations, and though we know not whether those barbarians will receive it at first or not, yet it is a good work to serve God's providence in offering it to them; and this is fittest to be done by God's own servants, for God shall have glory by it though they refuse it, and there is good hope that the posterity shall by this means be gathered into Christ's sheepfold. . . .

Objection 4: The ill success of other plantations may tell us what will become of this.

Answer 1: None of the former sustained any great damage but Virginia; which happened through their own sloth and security.

2. The argument is not good, for thus it stands: some plantations have miscarried, therefore we should not make any. It consists in particulars and so concludes nothing. We might as well reason thus: many houses have been burnt by kilns, therefore we should use none; many ships have been cast away, therefore we should content ourselves with our home commodities and not adventure men's lives at sea for those things that we might live without; some men have been undone by being advanced to great places, therefore we should refuse our preferment, etc.

3. The fruit of any public design is not to be discerned by the immediate success; it may appear in time that former plantations were all to good use.

4. There were great and fundamental errors in the former which are like to be avoided in this, for first their main end was carnal and not religious; secondly, they used unfit instruments—a multitude of rude and misgoverned persons, the very scum of the people; thirdly, they did not establish a right form of government.

FOR FURTHER READING

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Alan Taylor, *American Colonies: The Settling of North America*. New York: Penguin, 2001.

The complete text of Richard Hakluyt's *Inducements* can be found in Peter C. Mancall, ed., *Envisioning America: English Plans for the Colonization of North America, 1580–1640*. Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1995. The complete text of Winthrop's sermon can be found online at the web site of the Winthrop Society at <http://www.winthropsociety.org/doc-reasons.php>.

Viewpoint 2A
Virginia Is an Abundant New Paradise (1613)

Alexander Whitaker (1585–1617?)

INTRODUCTION *Jamestown, the first enduring English settlement in the New World, was financed by the Virginia Company of London, a private joint-stock company. Much of the historical record of Jamestown comes from company records and publications. The company's efforts to recoup its expenses and make a profit in its venture were jeopardized in Jamestown's early years as reports of hardship and starvation reached England. In order to attract additional investors and settlers, the company published several pamphlets describing the resources of the new land of "Virginia" and the riches to be attained there. The following viewpoint is one example of such writing; it is excerpted (with modernized spelling) from a 1613 pamphlet published by the Virginia Company and written by Alexander Whitaker, a minister who had arrived in the new colony in 1611. Whitaker was motivated to move to America to preach Christianity to the Indians, according to William Crashaw, a minister who stayed in England and who wrote the preface to Whitaker's pamphlet. Little else is known about Whitaker other than a 1617 letter from Samuel Argall, the colony's deputy governor, stating that the young minister had drowned.*

What Virginia resources does Whitaker describe? What major questions and problems about the new colony does he address? What are his concluding arguments for urging people not to give up on Jamestown?

The whole continent of Virginia, situate within the degrees of 34 and 47, is a place beautified by God with all the ornaments of nature and enriched with His earthly treasures. That part of it which we already possess, beginning at the Bay of Chesapeake and stretching itself in northerly latitude to the degrees of 39 and 40, is interlined with seven most goodly rivers, the least whereof is equal to our river of Thames; and all these rivers are so nearly joined as that there is not very much distance of dry good between either of them, and those several mainlands are everywhere watered with many veins or creeks of water, which sundry ways do overthrow the land and make it almost navigable from one river to the other. The commodity [advantage] whereof to those that shall inhabit this land is infinite in respect of the speedy and easy transportance of goods from one river to the other. I cannot better manifest it unto you but in advising you to consider whether the water or land hath been more beneficial to the Low Countries; but here we shall have the commodity both of water and land more ready, with less charge and labour, than hath been bestowed by them in turning land into water. . . .

Alexander Whitaker, "Good News from Virginia" (London: Virginia Company of London, 1613).

HEALTH AND CLIMATE

The air of the country (especially about Henrico and upward) is very temperate and agreeeth well with our bodies. The extremity of summer is not so hot as Spain nor the cold of winter so sharp as the frosts of England. The spring and harvest are the two longest seasons and most pleasant; the summer and winter are both but short. The winter is for the most part dry and fair but the summer watered often with many great and sudden showers of rain, whereby the cold of winter is warmed and the heat of summer cooled. Many have died with us heretofore through their own filthiness and want of bodily comforts for sick men; but now very few are sick among us: not above three persons amongst all the inhabitants of Henrico. I would to God our souls were no sicker than our bodies and that other of God's blessings were as general and common as the bodily health. I have seen it by experience and dare boldly affirm it that sickness doth more rage in England quarterly than here yearly. I doubt [fear] that hereafter, when our hospital or guest house is built up, you hear of many more cut off by the sword of justice (unless the better people be sent over) than perished by the diseases of the country.

THE NATIVE INHABITANTS

The natural people of the land are generally such as you heard of before: a people to be feared of those that come upon them without defensive armour, but otherwise faint-hearted (if they see their arrows cannot pierce) and easy to be subdued. Shirts of mail or quilted cotton are the best defence against them. There is but one or two of their petty kings that for fear of us have desired our friendship, and those keep good quarter with us, being very pleasant amongst us and (if occasion be) serviceable unto us. Our eldest friends be Pipsco and Chopoke, who are our overthrow neighbours at Jamestown and have been friendly to us in our great want. The other is the werowance of Chesapeake, who but lately traded with us peaceably. If we were once the masters of their country and they stood in fear of us (which might with few hands employed about nothing else be in short time brought to pass), it were an easy matter to make them willingly to forsake the Devil, to embrace the faith of Jesus Christ, and to be baptized. Besides, you cannot easily judge how much they would be available to us in our discoveries of the country, in our buildings and plantings and quiet provision for ourselves, when we may peaceably pass from place to place without need of arms or guard.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The means for our people to live and subsist here of themselves are many and most certain, both for beasts, birds, fish, and herbs. The beasts of the country are for

the most part wild: as lions, bears, wolves, and deer; foxes, black and red: raccoons; beavers: possums; squirrels; wild-cats, whose skins are of great price; and muskrats, which yield musk as the muskcats do. There be two kinds of beasts among these most strange: one of them is the female possum, which will let forth her young out of her belly and take them up into her belly again at her pleasure without hurt to herself; neither think this to be a traveller's tale but the very truth, for Nature hath framed her fit for that service: my eyes have been witness unto it and we have sent of them and their young ones into England. The other strange-conditioned creature is the flying squirrel, which, through the help of certain broad flaps of skin growing on each side of her forelegs, will fly from tree to tree twenty or thirty paces at one flight and more, if she have the benefit of a small breath of wind. Besides these, since our coming hither we have brought both kine, goats, and hogs, which prosper well and would multiply exceedingly if they might be provided for.

*Let now the fear of starving hereafter,
or of any great want, dishearten your
valiant minds from coming to a place
of so great plenty.*

This country besides is replenished with birds of all sorts, which have been the best sustenance of flesh which our men have had since they came; also eagles and hawks of all sorts, amongst whom are osprey, fishing hawk, and the cormorant. The woods be everywhere full of wild turkeys, which abound and will run as swift as a greyhound. In winter our fields be full of cranes, herons, pigeons, partridges, and blackbirds; the rivers and creeks be overspread everywhere with water-fowl of the greatest and least sort, as swans, flocks of geese and brants, duck and mallard, sheldrakes, divers, etc., besides many other kinds of rare and delectable birds whose names and natures I cannot yet recite; but we want the means to take them.

The rivers abound with fish both great and small. The sea-fish come into our rivers in March and continue until the end of September; great schools of herrings come in first; shads, of it great bigness, and rock fish, follow them. Trouts, bass, flounders, and other dainty fish come in before the other be gone; then come multitudes of great sturgeons, whereof we catch many and should do more but that we want good nets answerable to the breadth and depth of our rivers: besides our channels are so foul in the bottom with great logs and trees that we often break our nets upon them. I cannot reckon

nor give proper names to the divers kinds of fresh fish in our rivers. I have caught with mine angle [fishhook] pike, carp, eel, perches of six several kinds, crayfish, and the torope or little turtle, besides many smaller kinds.

DO NOT FEAR STARVATION

Wherefore, since God hath filled the elements of earth, air, and waters with His creatures, good for our food and nourishment, let not the fear of starving hereafter, or of any great want, dishearten your valiant minds from coming to a place of so great plenty. If the country were ours and means for the taking of them (which shortly I hope shall be brought to pass), the all of these should be ours; we have them now but we are fain to fight for them; then should we have them without that trouble. Fear not, then, to want food but only provide means to get it here. We have store of wild-fowl in England, but what are they better for them that cannot come by them, wanting means to catch them? Even such is and hath been our case heretofore.

But even these are not all the commodities which we may find here: for the earth will yield much more fruit to our industrious labours, as hath been proved by the corn and other things which we have planted this last year. . . . Our English seeds thrive very well here, as peas, onions, turnips, cabbages, coleflowers, carrots, thyme, parsley, hyssop, marjoram, and many other whereof I have tasted and eaten.

What should I name unto you the divers sorts of trees, sweet woods, and physical [medicinal] plants: the divers kinds of oaks and walnut trees; the pines, pitch-trees, soap-ashes trees, sassafras, cedar, ash, maple cypress, and many more which I daily see and admire at the beauty and riches which God hath bestowed upon this people that yet know not how to use them.

BE NOT DISCOURAGED

Wherefore, you (right wise and noble adventurers of Virginia) whose hearts God hath stirred up to build Him a temple, to make Him an house, to conquer a kingdom for Him here: be not discouraged with those many lamentable assaults that the Devil hath made against us: he now rageth most because he knoweth his kingdom is to have a short end. Go forward boldly and remember that you fight under the banner of Jesus Christ, that you plant His kingdom Who hath already broken the serpent's head. God may defer His temporal reward for a season, but be assured that in the end you shall find riches and honour in this world and blessed immortality in the world to come. And you, my brethren, my fellow labourers, send up your earnest prayers to God for His church in Virginia, that, since His harvest here is great but the labourers few, He would thrust forth labourers into His harvest. And pray also for me that the

ministration of His Gospel may he powerful and effectual by me, to the salvation of many and advancement of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory forevermore.

Amen.

Viewpoint 2B

Virginia Is Not a New Paradise (1624)

Richard Ffretthorne (dates unknown)

INTRODUCTION *A stark counterpoint to the glowing reports of life in Virginia published by the Virginia Company of London is found in the following viewpoint, a 1623 letter from a Virginia colonist to his parents in England. Richard Ffretthorne came to Virginia an indentured servant, bound to work for a planter for a fixed period of time (probably four years). The letter describes the lack of food and harsh conditions Ffretthorne faced in his small settlement ten miles from Jamestown, and helps to explain why by 1624 four out of five Virginia colonists had perished. The letter also includes accounts of Indian attacks. Historians know little about Richard Ffretthorne other than the information found here.*

How do Ffretthorne's descriptions of Virginia's food resources and Indian inhabitants differ from those of Alexander Whitaker, author of the opposing viewpoint? Ffretthorne was in debt for his voyage to America; is this a focus of complaint in his letter?

Loveing and kind father and mother my most humble duty remembered to you hoping in God of your good health, as I my selfe am at the making hereof, this is to let you understand that I your Child am in a most heavie Case by reason of the nature of the Country is such that it Causeth much sicknes, as the scurvie and the bloody flix, and divers other diseases, wch maketh the bodie very poore, and Weake, and when wee are sicke there is nothing to Comfort us; for since I came out of the ship, I never at[e] anie thing but pease, and loblollie (that is water gruell) as for deare or venison I never saw anie since I came into this land, ther is indeed some foule, but Wee are not allowed to goe, and get it, but must Worke hard both earelie, and late for a messe of water gruell, and a mouthfull of bread, and beife, a mouthfull of bread for a pennie loafe must serve for 4 men wch is most pitifull if you did knowe as much as I, when people crie out day, and night, Oh that they were in England without their lymbes and would not care to loose anie lymbe to bee in England againe, yea though they beg from doore to doore, for wee live in feare of the Enemy [Indians] everie hower, yet wee have had a Combate with them on the Sunday before Shrovetide, and wee

tooke two alive, and make slaves of them, but it was by pollicie, for wee are in great danger, for our Plantacon is very weake, by reason of the dearth, and sicknes, of our Companie, for wee came but Twentie for the marchaunts, and they are halfe dead Just; and wee looke everie hower When two more should goe, yet there came some for other men yet to live with us, of which ther is but one alive, and our Leiftenant is dead, and his ffather, and his brother, and there was some 5 or 6 of the last yeares 20 of wch there is but 3 left, so that wee are faine to get other men to plant with us, and yet wee are but 32 to fight against 3000 if they should Come, and the nighest helpe that Wee have is ten miles of us, and when the rogues ouercame this place last, they slew 80 Persons how then shall wee doe for wee lye even in their teeth, they may easilie take us but that God is mercifull, and can save with few as well as with many; as he shewed to Gilead and like Gilead's Souldiers if they lapt water, wee drinkee water wch is but Weake.

And I have nothing to Comfort me, nor ther is nothing to be gotten here but sicknes, and death, except that one had money to lay out in some thinges for profit; But I have nothing at all, no not a shirt to my backe, but two Raggess nor no Clothes, but one poore suite, nor but one paire of shooes, but one paire of stockings, but one Capp, but two bands, my Cloke is stollen by one of my owne fellowes, and to his dying hower would not tell mee what he did with it but some of my fellows saw him have butter and beife out of a ship, wch my Cloke I doubt [fear] paid for, so that I have not a penny, nor a penny Worth to helpe me to either spice, or sugar, or strong Waters, without the wch one cannot live here, for as strong beare [beer] in England doth fatten and strengthen them so water here doth wash and weaken theis here, onelie keepe life and soule togeather, but I am not halfe a quarter so strong as I was in England, and all is for want of victualls, for I doe protest unto you, that I have eaten more in day at home then I have allowed me here for a Weeke, you have given more then my dayes allowance to a beggar at the doore; and if Mr. Jackson had not releived me, I should bee in a poore Case, but he like a ffather and shee like a loveing mother doth still helpe me, for when wee goe up to James Towne that is 10 myles of us, there lie all the ships that Come to the land, and there they must deliver their goods, and when wee went up to Towne as it may bee on Moonedaye, at noone, and come there by night, then load the next day by noone, and goe home in the afternoone, and unload, and then away againe in the night, and bee up about midnight then if it rayned, or blowed never so hard wee must lye in the boate on the water, and have nothing but alitle bread, for when wee go into the boate wee have a loafe allowed to two men, and it is all if we staid there 2 dayes, wch is hard, and

Reprinted from *The Records of the Virginia Company of London*, edited by Susan Kingsbury, vol. 4 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1935).

Part 1: Colonial America (1582–1750)

must lye all that while in the boate, but that Goodman Jackson pityed me & made me a Cabbin to lye in alwayes when I come up, and he would give me some poore Jacks home with me wch Comforted mee more then pease, or water gruell. Oh they bee verie godlie folkes, and love me verie well, and will doe anie thing for me, and he much marvelled that you would send me a servant to the Companie, he saith I had beene better knockd on the head, and Indeede so I fynd it now to my greate greif and miserie, and saith, that if you love me you will redeeme me suddenlie, for wch I doe Intreate and begg, and if you cannot get the marchaunts to redeeme me for some little money then for God's sake get a gathering or intreat some good folks to lay out some little Sum of moneye, in meale, and Cheese and butter, and beife, anie eating meate will yeald great profit, oile and vyniger is verie good, but ffather ther is greate losse in leakinge, but for God's sake send beife and Cheese and butter or the more of one sort and none of another, but if you sent Cheese it must bee very old Cheese, and at the Ches-mongers you may buy good Cheese for two-pence farthing or halfepenny that will be liked verie well, but if you send Cheese you must have a Care how you packe it in barrells, and you must put Coopers Chips betweene everie Cheese, or els the heat of the hold will rott them, and looke whatsoever you send me be it never so much looke what I make of it I will deale trulie with you I will send it over, and begg the profit to redeeme me, and if I die before it Come I have intreated Goodman Jackson to send you the worth of it, who hath promised he will; If you send you must direct your letters to Goodman Jackson, at James Towne a Gunsmith. (you must set downe his frayt) because there bee more of his name there; good ffather doe not forget me, but have mercie and pittye my miserable Case. I know if you did but see me you would weepe to see me, for I have but one suite, but it is a strange one, it is very well guarded, wherefore for God's sake pittie me, I pray you to remember my love my love to all my ffreinds, and kindred. I hope all my Brothers and Sisters are in good health, and as for my part I have set downe my resolucon that certainelie Wilbe, that is, that the Answere of this letter wilbee life or death to me, therefore good ffather send as soone as you can, and if you send me anie thing let this bee the marke.

ROT

Richard Ffrethorne

Martyns Hundred.

FOR FURTHER READING

Dorothy and Thomas Hoobler, *Captain John Smith: Jamestown and the Birth of the American Dream*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2006.

James Horn, *A Land As God Made It: Jamestown And The Birth Of America*. New York: Basic Books, 2005.

Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1995.

Edward D. Neill, *History of the Virginia Company of London*. La Crosse, WI: Brookhaven, 2001.

The complete original texts of the both the Whitaker and Ffrethorne documents can be found online at the Virtual Jamestown project at <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/etcbin/jamestown-browse?id=J1024> (Whitaker) and <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/etcbin/jamestown-browse?id=J1012> (Ffrethorne).

CONTACT AND CONFLICT WITH NATIVE AMERICANS

Viewpoint 3A

Indians and Colonists Should Live in Peace (1609)

Powhatan (ca. 1550–1618)

INTRODUCTION *Powhatan (also called Wahunsonacock) was the leader of a group of Indian tribes that lived in what is now the state of Virginia, and was thus one of the first Indian leaders to have extensive contact with European colonists in North America. The following viewpoint is taken from a 1609 speech Powhatan made to John Smith, the leader of the English settlement of Jamestown. Smith recorded Powhatan's call for peaceful relations between the two peoples, including his remarks on the importance of the Indians' providing food to help Jamestown settlers survive. Despite occasional skirmishes and confrontations, the Indians of the Powhatan Confederacy and the English settlers maintained a general truce until 1622 (a truce aided in part by the marriage of Powhatan's daughter, Pocahontas, to English settler John Rolfe in 1614).*

What benefits of peaceful relations for both colonists and Indians does Powhatan list? What dangers does he say might threaten the settlers if they fail to deal peacefully with him and his tribe?

I am now grown old, and must soon die; and the succession must descend, in order, to my brothers. *Opitchapan*, *Opekankanough*, and *Catataugh*, and then to my two sisters, and their two daughters. I wish their experience was equal to mine; and that your love to us might not be less than ours to you. Why should you take by force that from us which you can have by love? Why should you destroy us, who have provided you with food? What can you get by war? We can hide our provisions, and fly into the woods; and then you must consequently famish by wronging your friends. What is the cause of your jealousy? You see us unarmed, and willing to supply your wants, if you will come in a friendly manner, and

From *Biography and History of the Indians of North America* by Samuel Drake. 8th ed. Boston: Antiquarian Bookstore, 1841.