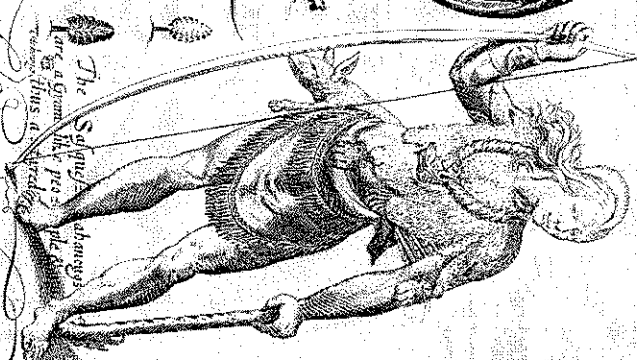
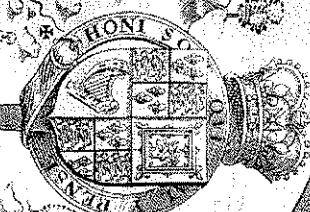


THE VIRGINIAN SEA

POWHEATAN

POWHEATAN  
Held his feast St. Gilbert when Capt. Smith was directed to him by the pilot  
1607

VIRGINIA



Signification of his name:  
As the eagle hath his wings  
marked by the redness  
A single feather 1  
Ordinary height 2

TSARAKOXS  
WOGS  
IOWA  
WOGS  
SALTS  
SALTS  
SALTS

SALTS

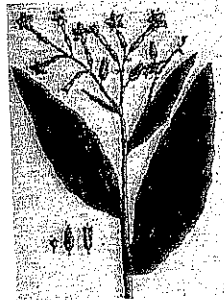
Discovered and first settled in 1607  
Governor by Sir Thomas Dale



Page 44

# 9 Jamestown Makes It

**In the words** of the king of England himself, James I: "Smoking is a custom loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmful to the brain, dangerous to the lungs, and in the black, stinking fume thereof, nearest resembling the horrible Stygian smoke of the pit that is bottomless."



Taino Indians of the Bahamas grew tobacco; Spaniards copied its Taino name, *tabaco*.

At last the settlers found gold. Gold in the form of a leaf. A leaf that dried to a golden brown and could be put in a pipe and smoked. That tobacco leaf made people rich; it made the Virginia colony prosperous.

King James hated tobacco. He thought it unhealthy and he was right. But there is a limit to what even kings can do when money is involved. Growing tobacco was very profitable, especially after John Rolfe, Pocahontas's husband, developed a sweet variety that was all the rage in England.

But there was a problem. It takes hard fieldwork to grow tobacco, and Englishmen were not anxious to work in the fields. Besides that, even the best farmers could tend only a limited number of tobacco plants. So if you wanted to get rich by growing tobacco, you had to have people working for you. The more people you had, the more tobacco you could grow. The more tobacco you sold, the richer you would get. That made servants and other workers very valuable in Virginia.

So the Virginians did everything they could think of to get people to come to America. But since most of the settlers were dying, it wasn't easy. Most of those who came were poor or in trouble with the law.

The colonists were so eager to have workers that they were willing to pay for them. Sometimes they paid so much money that ship's captains would kidnap people from the streets of London.

Many of those who came to Virginia started out as indentured servants, and usually they were very poor. Some of them were criminals who were let out of jail if they would agree to come to the colony. You can understand that most people didn't want to go to a land where so many people were dying. The indentured servants



European tobacco merchants advertised their product with fanciful pictures of the exotic New World and its inhabitants.

didn't have enough money to pay their boat fare to the New World. They had to work for the person who paid the fare. They worked from four to seven years before they were free. That was their time of indenture. Some indentured servants were treated just like slaves.

What about slaves? Were there slaves in Jamestown? Yes, there were. Slavery in the English colonies began without much thought, which is the way bad things often begin.

In 1619 a Dutch ship brought a boatload of Africans to Jamestown. These people had been kidnapped from their homes by African traders and sold to the ship's captain. He in turn sold them to the Virginia settlers. Those first African Virginians were treated like indentured servants. After a few years of working for someone else, they became free. Soon there were Africans who had land of their own—and servants, too. But some colonists got the idea of making black people into slaves. That way they wouldn't have to keep buying workers on the docks. It must have seemed a good idea to people who were desperate for workers. Tobacco agriculture demanded much labor as well as a lot of land. There was an abundance of land in America, but few people willing to do hard work in the fields.

When Indians were enslaved, they ran away. It was difficult for the blacks to run away. Where would they go? Everything was new and strange to them. Gradually laws were passed to trap black people in slavery. It was the beginning of a way of life that would bring misery to many, many innocent African-Americans.



Why did Europeans go to the trouble of importing African slaves instead of forcing Native Americans to work for them? Because the Indians didn't make good slaves. They got sick from Old World diseases, and often they just ran away.

### How Tobacco Beat Out Silk

King James wanted to start a silk industry in Virginia, and the colonists needed a doctor. Dr. Lawrence Bohune was the perfect man for both tasks; he was a physician and he had scientific curiosity. He planned to experiment with silkworms and also to investigate the native herbs and plants the Indians used for healing purposes. Bohune had visited the colony in 1610 as Lord de la Warr's personal doctor, and he had impressed everyone with his good sense. So when he made plans to bring silkworms to Virginia, the king and the settlers were pleased.

In 1620, Dr. Bohune set sail for Jamestown on a ship named the *Margaret and John*. (It was the very year the Pilgrims arrived in Massachusetts Bay.) After 11 tough weeks at sea, the small ship

*The silkworm is the caterpillar stage of the silk moth. The material the silkworms spin into their cocoons is what makes the silk thread.*



reached the West Indies, and found itself facing two armed Spanish warships. The Spaniards fired their cannons. The English ship was outclassed; a cannonball struck the good doctor, and he fell into the arms of the captain. "Oh, Dr. Bohune, what a disaster this is!" said the captain. With his last breath the doctor replied, "Fight it out, brave man, the cause is good, and the Lord receive my soul!"

When the damaged ship limped into Jamestown, the doctor was dead and the silkworms had all been lost at sea. King James had hoped that silk would replace tobacco as Virginia's gold. It never did.

115