

The day before Captain Smith returned for England with the ships [October 4, 1609], Captain Davis arrived in a small pinnace [light sailing vessel], with some sixteen proper men more. . . . For the savages [Indians] no sooner understood Smith was gone but they all revolted, and did spoil and murder all they encountered. . . .

Now we all found the loss of Captain Smith; yea, his greatest maligners could now curse his loss. As for corn provision and contribution from the savages, we [now] had nothing but mortal wounds, with clubs and arrows. As for our hogs, hens, goats, sheep, horses, and what lived, our commanders, officers, and savages daily consumed them. Some small proportions sometimes we tasted, till all was devoured; then swords, arms, [fowling] pieces, or anything we traded with the savages, whose cruel fingers were so often imbrued in our blood that what by their cruelty, our Governor's indiscretion, and the loss of our ships, of five hundred [persons] within six months after Captain Smith's departure there remained not past sixty men, women, and children, most miserable and poor creatures. And those were preserved for the most part by roots, herbs, acorns, walnuts, berries, now and then a little fish. They that had starch [courage] in these extremities made no small use of it; yea, [they ate] even the very skins of our horses.

Nay, so great was our famine that a savage we slew and buried, the poorer sort took him up again and ate him; and so did divers one another boiled and stewed, with roots and herbs. And one amongst the rest did kill his wife, powdered [salted] her, and had eaten part of her before it was known, for which he was executed, as he well deserved. Now whether she was better roasted, boiled, or carbonadoed [broiled], I know not; but of such a dish as powdered wife I never heard of.

This was the time which still to this day [1624] we called the starving time. It were too vile to say, and scarce to be believed, what we endured. But the occasion was our own, for want of providence, industry, and government, and not the barrenness and defect of the country, as is generally supposed. For till then in three years . . . we had never from England provisions sufficient for six months, though it seemed by the bills of loading sufficient was sent us, such a glutton is the sea, and such good fellows the mariners. We as little tasted of the great proportion sent us, as they of our want and miseries. Yet notwithstanding they ever overruled and ruled the business, though we endured all that is said, and chiefly lived on what this good country naturally afforded, yet had we been even in Paradise itself with these governors, it would not have been much better with us. Yet there were amongst us who, had they had the government as Captain Smith appointed but . . . could not maintain it, would surely have kept us from those extremities of miseries.

## 2. Governor William Berkeley Reports (1671)

*Sir William Berkeley, a polished Oxford graduate, courtier, and playwright, was appointed governor of Virginia in 1642, when only thirty-six years of age. Conciliatory, energetic, and courageous, he served well in his early years as both administrator and military leader. He cultivated flax, cotton, rice, and silk on his own lands, and in one year sent a gift of three hundred pounds of silk to the king. In response to*

<sup>2</sup>W. W. Hening, *The Statutes at Large . . . of Virginia . . .* (Richmond: Samuel Pleasants, 1823), vol. 2, pp. 514–517.

*specific questions from London, he prepared the able report from which the following extract is taken. From what economic and social handicaps did Virginia suffer? Which one was the most burdensome? What is significantly revealed of Berkeley's character and outlook?*

12. What commodities are there of the production, growth, and manufacture of your plantation [colony]; and particularly, what materials are there already growing, or may be produced for shipping in the same?

*Answer.* Commodities of the growth of our country we never had any but tobacco, which in this yet is considerable, that it yields His Majesty a great revenue. But of late we have begun to make silk, and so many mulberry trees are planted, and planting, that if we had skillful men from Naples or Sicily to teach us the art of making it perfectly, in less than half an age [generation] we should make as much silk in an year as England did yearly expend three score years since. But now we hear it is grown to a greater excess, and more common and vulgar usage. Now, for shipping, we have admirable masts and very good oaks; but for iron ore I dare not say there is sufficient to keep one iron mill going for seven years. . . .

15. What number of planters, servants, and slaves; and how many parishes are there in your plantation?

*Answer.* We suppose, and I am very sure we do not much miscount, that there is in Virginia above forty thousand persons, men, women, and children, and of which there are two thousand black slaves, six thousand Christian servants [indentured] for a short time. The rest are born in the country or have come in to settle and seat, in bettering their condition in a growing country.

16. What number of English, Scots, or Irish have for these seven years last past come yearly to plant and inhabit within your government; as also what blacks or slaves have been brought in within the said time?

*Answer.* Yearly, we suppose there comes in, of servants, about fifteen hundred, of which most are English, few Scotch, and fewer Irish, and not above two or three ships of Negroes in seven years.

17. What number of people have yearly died, within your plantation and government, for these seven years last past, both whites and blacks?

*Answer.* All new plantations are, for an age or two, unhealthy, till they are thoroughly cleared of wood. But unless we had a particular register office for the denoting of all that died, I cannot give a particular answer to this query. Only this I can say, that there is not often unseasoned hands (as we term them) that die now, whereas heretofore not one of five escaped the first year. . . .

23. What course is taken about the instructing of the people, within your government, in the Christian religion; and what provision is there made for the paying of your ministry?

*Answer.* The same course that is taken in England out of towns: every man, according to his ability, instructing his children. We have forty-eight parishes, and our ministers are well paid, and by my consent should be better if they would pray oftener and preach less. But of all other commodities, so of this, the worst are sent us, and we had few that we could boast of, since the persecution in Cromwell's tyranny drove divers worthy men hither. But, I thank God, there are no free schools nor printing, and I hope we shall not have these hundred years. For learning has

brought disobedience, and heresy, and sects into the world, and printing has divulged them, and libels against the best government. God keep us from both!

## B. The Mix of Cultures in English America

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### I. The Great Indian Uprising (1622)

*From the outset, the Indians attacked the Virginia colonists with arrows, and relations between the two races remained uneasy for many years after 1607. As if deaths from famine, exposure, improper food, and malarial fever were not enough, the colonists lost perhaps a quarter of their number in the great attack of 1622. Among other grievances, the Indians resented the clearing of their forests and the seizure of their cornfields by the whites. Edward Waterhouse, a prominent Virginia official, sent home this firsthand report. What does it reveal about how the colony subsisted, how earnest the Christianizing efforts of the colonists were, and how the disaster could be used to the advantage of the Virginians?*

And such was the conceit of firm peace and amity [with the Indians] as that there was seldom or never a sword worn and a [fowling] piece seldomer, except for a deer or fowl. By which assurance of security the plantations of particular adventurers and planters were placed scatteringly and stragglingly as a choice vein of rich ground invited them, and the farther from neighbors held the better. The houses generally sat open to the savages, who were always friendly entertained at the tables of the English, and commonly lodged in their bed-chambers . . . [thus] seeming to open a fair gate for their conversion to Christianity.

Yea, such was the treacherous dissimulation of that people who then had contrived our destruction, that even two days before the massacre, some of our men were guided through the woods by them in safety. . . . Yea, they borrowed our own boats to convey themselves across the river (on the banks of both sides whereof all our plantations were) to consult of the devilish murder that ensued, and of our utter extirpation, which God of his mercy (by the means of some of themselves converted to Christianity) prevented. . . .

On the Friday morning (the fatal day) the 22nd of March [1622], as also in the evening, as in other days before, they came unarmed into our houses, without bows or arrows, or other weapons, with deer, turkeys, fish, furs, and other provisions to sell and truck with us for glass, beads, and other trifles; yea, in some places, sat down at breakfast with our people at their tables, whom immediately with their own tools and weapons, either laid down, or standing in their houses, they basely and barbarously murdered, not sparing either age or sex, man, woman, or child; so sudden in their cruel execution that few or none discerned the weapon or blow that brought them to destruction. In which manner they also slew many of our people then at their several works and husbandries in the fields, and without [outside] their houses, some in planting corn and tobacco, some in gardening, some in making

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<sup>1</sup>Susan M. Kingsbury, ed., *The Records of the Virginia Company of London* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1933), vol. 3, pp. 550–551, 556–557.