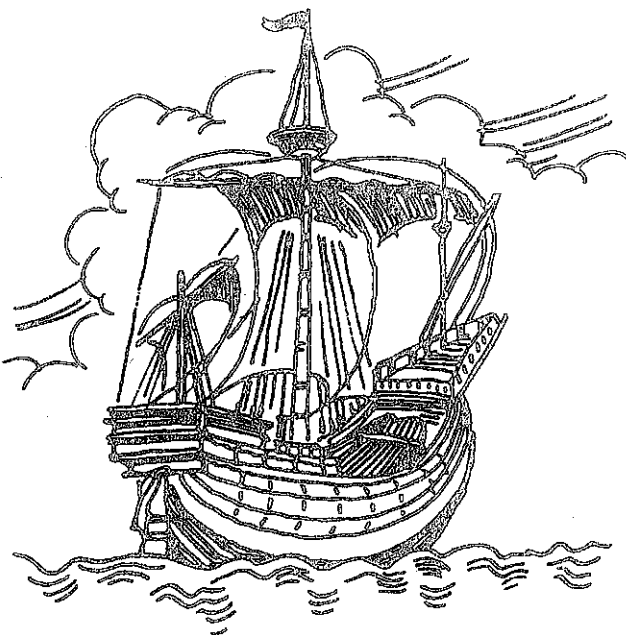


THE FIRST COLONIES NORTH OF MEXICO

After the failure of de Soto and Coronado to find natives who owned gold and silver, the Spanish gave up on the region north of Mexico and planted a few outposts like St. Augustine (1565) to keep raiders away. The region to the north was open for others to explore and colonize. France and England became the main competitors for the region, but both moved cautiously.



FRANCE. In 1535 Jacques Cartier sailed to the St. Lawrence River and named the region New France (Canada). It wasn't until the next century that the French began settling New France. In 1608, Samuel de Champlain established Quebec and made allies of the Huron (Algonquian). In 1609, he joined a Huron raiding party into Iroquois country where he killed two Mohawks with his musket. That incident turned the Iroquois against France.

French and English explorers laid claims to land in the New World for their respective countries.

ENGLAND. The first to sail west for England was an Italian, John Cabot, who explored the Maine and Nova Scotia coastlines in 1497. Sailing westward again in 1498, Cabot was lost at sea.

By the end of the next century, interest in establishing a North American colony was increasing. Two writers had encouraged the interest. Sir Thomas More's book, *Utopia* (1516), told of a mythical island in the New World where an ideal society might exist. Richard Hakluyt, a Protestant minister and geographer, wrote books urging colonization to accomplish five goals: (1) extend Protestantism, (2) expand trade, (3) increase England's markets, (4) reduce unemployment, and (5) provide bases to attack Spanish ships in case of war.

SIR HUMPHREY GILBERT, a friend of Queen Elizabeth I, was given permission to establish a colony in North America. Colonists were guaranteed all the rights of any English subject. His efforts to establish a colony in Newfoundland in 1583 failed. After Gilbert's death, his half-brother, **SIR WALTER RALEIGH**, continued the effort and established a colony on Roanoke Island, off North Carolina, in 1585, but the settlers did not stay. In 1587 new settlers went to the island. The intention was to send supplies the next year, but war with Spain interfered, and it was not until 1590 that a supply ship returned. Its crew found the colony deserted, and mystery has existed ever since about the fate of the "Lost Colony."

Raleigh was accused of high treason by King James I, and his rights to establish a colony were given to the Virginia Company of London (London Company). Hoping to find gold and diamonds, they sent 100 colonists in 1607 to establish a settlement on the coast of Virginia.

JAMESTOWN. In honor of the king, they named the colony Jamestown. The 100 men spent their time looking for gold and jewels on the beach. They neglected details like

planting crops and building shelters and defenses. This settlement faced destruction until Captain John Smith arrived. Smith was a soldier of fortune who had fought the Turks and had been enslaved by them. After killing his master, Smith fled to Russia and returned to England in 1604. The company gave Smith control of the colony, and he came down hard. His policy was "no work, no food."

Smith's relations with the Indians were interesting. Of native religion, he wrote: "Their chief God they worship is the Devil. Him they call *Oke* and serve him more out of fear than love." Chief Powhatan was the wise ruler of the local tribes. His younger brother, Opechancanough, hated the English intruders and captured Smith. As Smith was about to be killed, Powhatan's favorite daughter, Pocahontas, pled with her father to save him. Smith was released. After Smith returned to Jamestown, Opechancanough refused to sell food to the settlement; Smith took some men to Opechancanough's camp, grabbed the chief by his hair and took him hostage. To save him, the Indians brought supplies in many boats to Jamestown. After his release, Opechancanough's hatred for the English settlers grew. However, Powhatan kept his brother under control.

In 1609, Smith was injured in a gunpowder explosion and returned to England. That same year, the company appointed Lord De La Warr (Delaware) as governor, and he sent Sir Thomas Gates to rule until he arrived. Gates was shipwrecked in Bermuda, but 400 other settlers made it. Without leadership, the men suffered illness, hunger, and lack of organization.

When Gates and his 60 men arrived on little boats they had built in Bermuda, only 60 settlers were still alive. In 1610, Lord Delaware also came and built a settlement upstream at Henrico (Richmond).

Delaware left Gates in charge in 1611, and he ruled with an iron hand. The colony began to grow. In 1612 John Rolfe's blend of West Indian tobacco with that used by natives paid off in a profitable crop that could be sold in England. In 1613, Pocahontas was kidnapped by the settlers, which would have brought war with Powhatan had not Rolfe married her. After she bore a son, Pocahontas went with Rolfe to England, where she quickly became a celebrity. After her death, Rolfe returned to Virginia.

In 1619, two important developments occurred in Virginia. The company decided to allow them to form a legislature that, with the governor, was to rule the colony. That same year, a passing Dutch ship sold 20 blacks to the settlers. Thus, democracy and slavery came in the same year.

Opechancanough became chief after Powhatan's death and carefully plotted his revenge on the English colonists. Without warning, the Indians attacked in 1622, killing 347 settlers, including John Rolfe. James I then decided it was time to remove the charter from the London Company and made Virginia a royal colony in 1624. He planned to take power away from the legislature, but his death in 1625 saved representative government.

Activity

Arrange a CNN interview in England after John Rolfe and Pocahontas arrive in London.

Name _____

Date _____

CHALLENGES

1. What name did Cartier give to the region we call Canada?

2. How did Champlain's friendship with Algonquians hurt his relations with the Iroquois?

3. We sometimes use the word utopian. What would a utopia be?

4. Hakluyt listed five goals for colonies. What three goals had to do with improving the English economy?

5. Why weren't supplies sent to the Roanoke colony in 1588?

6. For whom was Jamestown named?

7. With which native did Captain John Smith have the most trouble?

8. Who saved Smith's life?

9. What crop did Rolfe plant that saved the colony's economy?

10. What two institutions came to the colony in 1619?

Name _____ Date _____

POINTS TO PONDER

1. If you were going to create a utopian society, what elements of our society would you keep, and what would you drop?

2. How might a lack of organization lead to disaster for colonists in a place like Jamestown?

3. An old saying is that first impressions make a big difference. Would the incidents mentioned in this chapter tend to prove or disprove this statement? Give examples.
