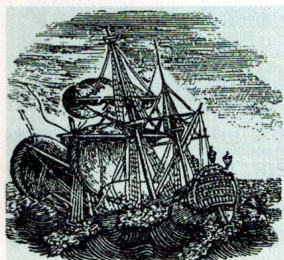


7 A Lord, A Hurricane, A Wedding

A modern study of cypress tree rings in Tidewater, Virginia shows stunted growth between 1606 and 1612. It was the worst drought in nearly 800 years and not the best time to try and grow crops.

A **flotilla** is a group or small fleet of ships. **Unholsome** is the old spelling. Today we would write it as **unwholesome**. (See opposite page.)

On board ship the expression **all hands** means "all people."



Shakespeare wrote a play, *The Tempest*, after reading about the storm that wrecked the *Sea Venture* off Bermuda.

The people who walked off the two English ships in May of 1610 were horrified by what they saw. Jamestown was a wreck. Fear of Indians had kept everyone inside the fort through the cold winter. The settlers had been forced to burn their buildings to keep warm. By spring there were hardly any buildings left. The few survivors looked like skeletons. "We are starving!" they gasped.

Those on the ships had been through an ordeal themselves. On their way to Jamestown yellow fever broke out. There was no

treatment for the disease then, so people died and their bodies had to be thrown overboard. They were barely over the epidemic when they ran into a fierce Atlantic hurricane.

Do you know what a hurricane at sea is like? Here it is: phenomenal, roaring winds; towering, crashing waves; fierce, crackling lightning; ear-splitting thunder. One ship, the *Catch*, went down; all hands lost. The *Sea Venture*, with sturdy Christopher Newport as captain, was wrecked on coral rocks. Luckily the rocks were within wading distance of the island of Bermuda. If you have to be shipwrecked, Bermuda is not a bad place to be. The voyagers set to work and built two new ships, the *Patience* and the *Deliverance*. They were eager to get to Jamestown and start a new life there. They imagined that the colony was thriving.

You know what they found at Jamestown. Are you surprised that they decided to leave? They had had enough of this New World. On June 7, 1610, everyone marched out of the wretched settlement, climbed aboard ship, said, "Goodbye, Jamestown," and headed for England.

They didn't get far. Lord de la Warr (what state is named for him?) was on his way up the James River with a big flotilla and 300 settlers. He was the new governor, and a good one. He made them turn around and start Jamestown again.

Lord de la Warr called Jamestown "a very...unholosome place." Still, he stayed. The colonists set to work. They cleaned, fixed, and built. The Indians continued to make their lives miserable, but now the settlers fought back. Then a few Indians and a few colonists began to trade. Some Englishmen began going up the rivers to trade with distant tribes. Tom Savage, who had lived as an adopted son of the Powhatan, was able to interpret for both peoples.

More ships came. Artisans and laborers arrived, together with "gentlemen of quality" and more livestock.

And still many died, not from starvation but from the diseases that abounded in the damp atmosphere at Jamestown.

Lord de la Warr was one of those who got sick. He went back to England, and Sir Thomas Dale took command. Dale understood the need for a healthier settlement. So one was built at a great bend of the James River, near the falls that John Smith had mistaken for the Pacific Ocean. The new settlement was named Henrico, for Henry, the king's oldest son. It had "two fair rows of houses," three "store houses," a hospital, and a "fair and handsome church." All of it was constructed in four months—Thomas Dale saw to that. Dale was a stern man, strict and religious. Anyone who swore, broke a rule, or didn't work got whipped. Three offenses and you were executed. You can see why everyone worked.

Henrico soon had a visitor. Unfortunately she was dragged there. Her name was Pocahontas.

The Indian princess was visiting some Potomac Indians when an Englishman, on a trading expedition, lured her onto his ship and wouldn't let her off. He took Pocahontas as a hostage to Henrico,



Pocahontas had two names. Her real name was Matoax. It means "little snow feather." Pocahontas, her nickname, means "playful." Then Pocahontas married John Rolfe. She was baptized and given a third name: Rebecca.

What is a hostage? Where do we hear the word today?

Governor Dale's

law code for Jamestown was tough. This was one rule: "No man shall dare to kill, or destroy any Bull, Cow, Calfe, Mare, Horse, Colt, Goate, Swine, Cocke, Henne, Chicken, Dogge, Turkie, or any tame Cattel or Poultry... without leave from the Generall, upon paine of death in the Principall, and in the accessory, burning in the Hand, and losse of his eares."



English noblemen like Lord de la Warr (above) often have two names: a title (such as Lord de la Warr) and their own given and family names. Lord de la Warr's name was Thomas West.

held her there, taught her the Christian religion, and gave her a new name, Rebecca.

Now it happened that a young Englishman named John Rolfe had a plantation nearby. He fell in love with the beautiful Indian princess and she fell in love with him.

Rolfe wrote to Governor Dale, asking to marry Pocahontas "to whom my heart and best thoughts are, and have a long time been so entangled, and enthralled in so intricate a labyrinth, that I was even wearied to unwind myself thereout."

It was a fine wedding, and it took place in the church at Jamestown. The Powhatan wouldn't come. Perhaps he feared a trap, or perhaps he was sad to see his daughter leave the Indian world. He sent two of her brothers and her uncle, Chief Opechancanough. They came wearing handsome garments of leather, furs, feathers, and beads. Pocahontas's marriage helped bring peace between Indians and colonists.

Soon Pocahontas had a baby and John Rolfe was so proud he took his family to England. There Pocahontas charmed everyone—even King James. (And King James didn't charm easily; he was a bit of a grouch.) The English people called her Lady Rebecca and treated her as the princess that she was. People fussed over her and pointed to her when she walked down the street. She was a celebrity. But she must have longed for a familiar face, someone she could talk to in her native language. And then she learned that John Smith was alive! She expected him to come and see her at once, but he didn't. She waited and waited. Finally, when he did come, she was so hurt that at first she wouldn't even talk to him.

John Smith had been honored by her father. He was a member of her family. How could he ignore her? But Smith seemed different, and awkward. Perhaps he didn't know how to be her brother now that she wore a long dress like a proper Englishwoman. Perhaps Pocahontas herself didn't know in which world she belonged. When John Rolfe decided to go back to Virginia, she didn't want to go. She didn't feel at all well when they boarded a ship and sailed down the Thames River. Before they reached the open sea, she was so sick that her husband took her off the ship. It was smallpox. Pocahontas died, and was buried in the churchyard at Gravesend, a town that is now part of London, but in those days was in the country. She was 22.

Let's take ourselves back in time to Jamestown. The Powhatan has not yet learned that his beloved daughter is dead. When he does, the peace will be finished. The Indians will attack. They will kill settlers, burn their homes, and try to drive them from the land. But now, for a while, there is calm.