

James Towne, and what might be fitt to be accomplished
there, before my searche further up for a convenient new
Site to raise a principall Towne according to my directions,
as also to unlade the provisions into a magazine of w^{ch} I
knew some of o^r y^{ell} conditiond ships require, ^{the} more speedy
as lykewyse carefull to sett sum hands lykewyse on a
worke for the lading of those ships wth all conveniencye
and speede, for their retorne, I gave the charge of Corne
setting all Charles fort under the Command and care of
the Captaines w^{ch} I now had brought leaving therefore still
on shore wth them all my new companies constituting Captaine
James Savys Taxe master of the whole 3. fortis whose
having instructions given hym from my selfe, should
appointe eache Captaine of the forte what to Command hys
Officers, and hys people to execute, who weekly therefore I
did so order yt that they shoud give accounte to Captaine Savys
and Captaine Daryes to me, These thus settled and every one
busied at hys task and dayes labour the 19th I came
before James Towne being sonday in the after noone
where I landed and first repairing to the Church the
companye thither assembled Mr Poole gave vs a Sermon,
after that Mr Strachey did openly read that Commission
w^{ch} hys fo^r had left wth hym for me, Captaine Pearce
surrendering hys yt being accordinglye so to expire, I found
heere lykewyse noe Corne sett, ^{some} few seedes put into
a private Garden or twoe, butt, the Cattell, Cowes, geates,
sum Poultrye etc. to be well and carefully on all handes
preserved, and all in good plight and liking the next daye
I called into consultation wth he whome I found heere made
of the Councell by hys fo^r where were proposed many
business necessarye and almost every one essenciall w^{ch}
indeed required much labour and many hands namely the
reparacion of the falling Church and so of the Store house,
A stable for o^r horses, a Munition house, a Powder house
a new well for the amendment of the most unwholsome

water, wth the said affoorded, Bricke to be made, A Sturgeon
 house wth the late Cutter you sent by the Hercules muche
 complaineth of, hys worke otherwyse Impossible to come to
 good ^{effect} and indeed he drisseth the same Sturgeon perfect and wth
 a block house to be raised on the North syde of o^r back River
 to prevent the Indians (whoe use ordinarily to swimme over
 unto o^r Isle at a certaine Creek) from killing o^r Cattell,
 a house to be sett up to lodge o^r Cattell in, in winter, and haye
 to be appointed in hys dewe tyme to be made At Smiths forge
 to be perfect, Caske for o^r Sturgeon to be made and (besydes
 private gardens for eache man) Common Gardens for Herbe
 and flaxe and suche other seeds, and lastly a Bridge to land
 o^r goods drye and safe uppon, for most of w^{ch} I tooke present
 order and appointed first for the Church, Captaine Edward
 Brewster, wth hys Ginge and for the stable Captaine Lawson.
 wth hys ginge, Captaine Newport undertooke the Bridge wth
 hys mariners, all the Sawyers I sett on worke, whoe daily
ply their taske, and thus when these are done sh^other shalbe
sett uppon, In the meane whyle wee now of necessitye are
 enforced to ply the unlading of o^r Shippes to w^{ch} wee call other
 hands not employd, and I my selfe by hewyse som what
 busied, 2 or 3 dayes to dispatche Captaine Adams wth all
speede wth these o^r letters of Advise, who the 21th was present
 wth us att Counsell where wee positively determind, wth Gods
 grace after the Corne setting att the twoe Primer fortis.
 to goe up unto the falls ward to searche and Advise uppon
 a site for a new Towne wth 200 men, where we will
 sett downe and build houses as fast as wee may, resolving
 to leave att James Towne sum fiftye men wth a sufficient
 Commander, for the preservacon of o^r bredders; by hewyse at
 that Counsell yet being then debated how hopefull the
 trade for a while would be unto the Northward Rivers,
 especially att Pattamack, for Corne, after harvest
 I did forbid all manner of trading wth the Indians -

least Commodities shall growe everye daye wth them more
vild. and cheape by their plenty and being polittiquely conveyed
by Powhatan, unto those Northerne people whose sting & avarice
thriveth againe as in this last winter was Captaine Argoll
in the Discoverie) might foridall o^f Trucking, by kewepe
the 21th I went to Paspatowicke into Towne, because yt
was related to me to be good ground to sow Corne in
purposing to sett there sum House and ffaxe but
surviving y^t I found yt to muche rough wooed and
overgrowne wth Shrubb and bushes w^{ch} now bring growne
and high woud not be so readlye cleared this y^{ear}e
for any service

The 22th I made divers proclamations w^{ch} I caused to be sett
up. for the publick view, one for the preservation of o^r
Cattle amongst o^r selves, another for the valuation of
provisions amongst the mariners, the Copies of w^{ch} I
have sent and came to yo^r noble considerations, energe
heere thinking those rates verye rayse and reasonable
Let me subtraite that wee may have both a Vir Admirall
and hyed Mariners, to be att all tymes resident there.
the benefitt will quicklye make good the charge, as will
by a trade of furris to be obtained wth the Salvages in
the Northerne Rivers, to be returned home, as also to
furnishe us here wth Corne and ffishe, the wante of
suche men att this tyme, whome we might trust wth
o^r pinasses leave us destitute this Season, of so groute
a quantitie of ffishe, as nott farr from Powne Bay
woud sufficiently satisfye the whole Collony for a whole
y^{ear}e.

Our wante by kewepe of able Surgeons ys not a little
be pleased to advise the Committes for us in this
pointe

And thus having nothing else att this present to be

Further vnneccessarily troublesome I humbly take my
leave in all office and Travails to the advancement of
thys yo^r hopefull Collony vowing me ever unto the
same and yo^r hon^{ble} Commands

A Constant and perpetuall
servant

Virginia James Towne
May 25: 1611

Thomas: Dale

The original in this digital image is housed in:

No further copies can be made.

Special Collections
University of Virginia Library
Charlottesville, Virginia 22904-4110

Transcript of Letter. With Notes

- 2 -

James Towne, and what might be fitt to be accomplished there, before my searche further vpp [the James River] for a convenient new seate to raise a principall Towne according to my directions, as also to vnlade the Provisions into o[ur] magazine of w[hi]ch I knew some of o[ur] yll conditioned Shippes require the more speede [sic], as lykewyse careful to sett sum hands lykewyse on a worke for the lading of these shippes w[ith] all conveniencye and speede, for their returne. I left the charge of Corne setting att Charlesfort vnder the Command and care of the Captaines w[hi]ch I now had brought, leaving therefore still on shore w[ith] them all my new companies constituting Captaine James Davys Taxe-master of the whole 3 fortes, whoe having instructions given hym from my selfe, should appoint eache Captaine of the forte what to Command hys Officers and hys people to execute, who weekely therefore I did so order yt that they should give accounte to Captaine Davys, and Captaine Davyes to me. Theise thus settled and everye one busied at hys taske and dayes labour the 19th I came before James Towne being sonday in the afternoone where I landed, and first repaireing to the Church the companye thither assembled, Mr. Poole gaue vs a sermon, after that Mr. Strachey did oppenly read that Commission w[hi]ch hys Lo[rds]hip left w[ith] hym for me, Captaine Pearcie surrendring hys, yt being accordinglye so to expire. I found heere lykewyse noe Corne sett, saue some few seedes put into a Private garden or twoe, butt the cattell, cowes, goates, sum Poultrye, etc. to be well and carefully on all hands preserued, and all in good plight and likeing; the next daye I called into consultation suche whome I found heere made of the Counsell by hys Lo[rds]hip, where were proposed many business necessarye and almost euerye one essencially, w[hi]ch indeed required much labour and many hands, namely the repara[ti]on of the falling Church and so of the Store howse, a stable for o[ur] horses, a Munition howse, a

Dale set out early in September, 1611, with three hundred and fifty men, to found the projected town of Henrico.

Sir Thomas Dale "found them [the settlers] growing againe to their former estate of penurie, being so improuident as not to put Corne in the ground for their bread; but trusted to the store, then furnished with but three months prouision. His first care therefore was to imploy all hands about setting of Corne at the two forts at Kecoughtan, Henry and Charles; whereby, the season then not [being] fully past though about the end of May, wee had an indifferent crop of good Corne." (Smith: General History of Virginia, 1624, Book 4.)

William Strachey, author of The Historie of Travaille into Virginia (first printed in 1849).

George Percy, brother of the Earl of Northumberland, author of the "Observations" in Purchas. Lord De La Warr says in his "Discourse" (quoted in Smith's General History, Book 4): "For the Colony, I left it to the charge of Captaine George Piercie, a Gentleman of honour and resolution, vntill the coming of Sir Thomas Dale, whose Commission was likewise to bee determined vpon the arriuall of Sir Thomas Gates."

Powder howse, a new well for the amendment of the most unwholsome water w[hi]ch the ould affoarded, Briche to be made, a Sturgeon howse, w[hi]ch the late curer you sent by the Hercules muche complaineth of, hys worke otherwyse Impossible to come to good effect; and indeed he dresseth the same Sturgeon perfitt and well; a block howse to be raised on the North syde of o[ur] back River to prevent the Indians (whoe vse ordinarily to swimme over vnto o[ur] Isle at a certaine Creek) from killing o[ur] Cattell, a howse to be sett vpp to lodge o[ur] Cattle in in winter, and haye to be appointed in hys dewe tyme to be made. A Smithes forge to be perfected, Caske for o[ur] Sturgeon to be made and (besydes private gardens for eache man) common gardens for Hempe and flaxe, and suche other seedes, and lastly a Bridge to land o[ur] goods drye and safe vppon; for most of w[hi]ch I tooke present order and appointed first for the Church Captaine Edward Brewsker, w[ith] hys Ginge, and for the stable Captaine Lawson w[ith] hys ginge, Captaine Newport vndertooke the Bridge w[ith] hys marriners; all the Sawyers I sett on worke whoe daily ply their taske, and thus when these are done tho'ther shalbe sett vppon. In the meane whyle wee now of necessitye are inforced to plye the vnlading of o[ur] Shippes to w[hi]ch we call other hands not employed, and I my selfe lykewyse somewhat busied 2 or 3 dayes to dispatche Captaine Addams w[ith] all speede w[ith] these o[ur] letters of Aviso, who the 21th was present w[ith] vs att Counsell where we positively determined, w[ith] Gods grace after the Corne setting att the twoe Princes fortes, to goe vpp vnto the falls ward to searche and advise vppon a seate for a new Towne w[ith] 200 men, where we will sett downe and build howses as fast as we may, resolving to leaue at James Towne sum fiftye men w[ith] a sufficient Commander for the preservation of o[ur] breeders; lykewyse at that Counsell ytt being then debated how hopefull the trade for a while would be vnto the Northward Rivers at Pattamack; for Corne after harvest I did forbid all manner

Dale to some extent abolished the pernicious system of community of property by allotting to each settler three acres of land to be worked for his individual benefit.

"Brewsker" - Brewster.
"Ginge" - Company.

Christopher Newport.

Forts Henry and Charles.

of trading wⁱth the Indians,
least o^{ur} Comodityes shall growe
euery daye wⁱth them more vild
and cheape by their plentye, and
being pollitiquely conuayed by
Powhattan vnto those Northerne people
whoe seing o^{ur} access theither
again as in thys last winter was
Captaine Argoll in the discoverye,
might forestall o^{ur} Trucking,
lykewyse the 21th. I went to
Paspahighe oulde Towne, because yt
was related to me to be good ground
to sow Corne in, purposing to sett
there sum Hempe and fflaxe, but
surueing ytt I found yt to muche
rough weeded and overgrowne wⁱth
Shrubbes and bushes, w^{hi}ch now
being greene and high would not be so
readilye clensted thys yeare for any
service.

The 22th. I made diuers procla-
ma^{ti}ons w^{hi}ch I caused to be
sett vp for the publick view, one for
the preserva^{ti}on of o^{ur}
Cattle amongst o^{ur} selves, another
for the valua^{ti}on of provisions
amongst the marriners, the Coppies of
w^{hi}ch I haue sent and leaue to
yo^{ur} noble considera^{ti}ons,
euerye^{one} heere thincking those
rates verry easye and reasonable. Let
me entreate that we may haue both a
Viz Admirall, and hyred marriners to
be att all tymes resident there; the
benefitt will quicklye make good the
charge, as well by a trade of ffurres
to be obtained wⁱth the Salvages
in the Northerne Rivers, to be re-
turned home, as also to furnishe vs
heere wⁱth Corne and ffishe; the
wante of suche men att thys tyme,
whome we might trust wⁱth o^{ur}
pinasses leaues vs destitute thys
season of so greate a quantitie of
ffishe, as nott farr from o^{ur}
owne bay would sufficiently satisfye
the whole Collony for a whole yeare.

Our wante lykewyse of able
Surgeons ys not a little; be pleased
to advise the Committee for vs in
thys pointe.

And thus haueing nothing else att
thys present to be further vnnecess-
arily troublesome, I humbly take my
leaue in all office and Travailes to
the aduancement of thys yo^{ur}
hopefull Collony voweing me euer vnto
the same and yo^{ur} hon^{oura}ble

"vild" - common.

"Trucking" - trading by
barter.

SIR THOMAS DALE IN VIRGINIA

DALE (Sir Thomas, Governor of Virginia). Contem-
porary copy of a report from Sir Thomas
Dale to the Virginia Company. 3½ pages,
folio.

Virginia, James Towne, May 25, 1611.

Sir Thomas Dale was sent to Virginia on the resignation of
Lord De La Warr from the governorship. He arrived on May 10,
1611, and on the 19th visited Jamestown. This letter gives his
first impressions of the colony and his plans for improving it.
He says that the colonists have sown no corn and that he has or-
dered this to be done at once. He is going up the river to find
a suitable site for the new town of Henrico. A large number of
constructional wor s are required, including a blockhouse on the
north side "of our back River", to prevent the Indians from raid-
ing the colony's cattle. He has allotted "private gardens" to
each man, thereby abolishing to some extent, the vicious communal
system then in vogue. He says that he has forbidden trade with
the Indians "least our Comodityes shall growe everyedaye with
them more vild /common/ and cheape by their plentye". He has
issued proclamations on the care of cattle and the control of the
prices of ships' provisions, of which he encloses copies. He
strongly recommends that a contingent of seafaring men be sent to
act as fishermen, and also for trading with the "Salvages" of the
Northern Rivers. The colony also needs surgeons.

The following names, famous in Virginian history, are mentioned;
Sir Samuel Argall, Powhattan, William Strachey, George Percy, Lord
De La Warr ("Hys Lordship"), Captain Newport, Captain James Davis,
Captain Brewster, and Captain Lawson.

A complete annotated transcript will be sent on application.

- 4 -

Commandes.

A Constant and perpetuall
servant

Thomas Dale.

Virginia, James Towne.
May 25: 1611.

AUTHORITIES: Winsor: History of America, III, pp.134, 136,
137, 138, 156; Dictionary of National Biogra-
phy: art: "Strachey"; Captain John Smith's
Works (Arber's Edition), pp.506-7; Halliwell,
Dict. of Archaic Words.