



*John Marshall*

The Life of  
GEORGE  
WASHINGTON

**John Marshall**

# **The Life of George Washington**

**Biography of the First President of the USA (Vol. 1-5)**

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# **PREFACE**

## **BY THE AUTHOR**

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A desire to know intimately those illustrious personages, who have performed a conspicuous part on the great theatre of the world, is, perhaps, implanted in every human bosom. We delight to follow them through the various critical and perilous situations in which they have been placed, to view them in the extremes of adverse and prosperous fortune, to trace their progress through all the difficulties they have surmounted, and to contemplate their whole conduct, at a time when, the power and the pomp of office having disappeared, it may be presented to us in the simple garb of truth.

If among those exalted characters which are produced in every age, none can have a fairer claim to the attention and recollection of mankind than those under whose auspices great empires have been founded, or political institutions deserving to be permanent, established; a faithful representation of the various important events connected with the life of the favourite son of America, cannot be unworthy of the general regard. Among his own countrymen it will unquestionably excite the deepest interest.

As if the chosen instrument of Heaven, selected for the purpose of effecting the great designs of Providence respecting this our western hemisphere, it was the peculiar lot of this distinguished man, at every epoch when the

destinies of his country seemed dependent on the measures adopted, to be called by the united voice of his fellow citizens to those high stations on which the success of those measures principally depended. It was his peculiar lot to be equally useful in obtaining the independence, and consolidating the civil institutions, of his country. We perceive him at the head of her armies, during a most arduous and perilous war on the events of which her national existence was staked, supporting with invincible fortitude the unequal conflict. That war being happily terminated, and the political revolutions of America requiring that he should once more relinquish his beloved retirement, we find him guiding her councils with the same firmness, wisdom, and virtue, which had, long and successfully, been displayed in the field. We behold him her chief magistrate at a time when her happiness, her liberty, perhaps her preservation depended on so administering the affairs of the Union, that a government standing entirely on the public favour, which had with infinite difficulty been adopted, and against which the most inveterate prejudices had been excited, should conciliate public opinion, and acquire a firmness and stability that would enable it to resist the rude shocks it was destined to sustain. It was too his peculiar fortune to afford the brightest examples of moderation and patriotism, by voluntarily divesting himself of the highest military and civil honours when the public interests no longer demanded that he should retain them. We find him retiring from the head of a victorious and discontented army which adored him, so soon as the object for which arms had been taken up was accomplished; and

withdrawing from the highest office an American citizen can hold, as soon as his influence, his character, and his talents ceased to be necessary to the maintenance of that government which had been established under his auspices.

He was indeed, "first in war,<sup>[1]</sup> first in peace, and first in the hearts of his fellow citizens."

A faithful detail of the transactions of a person so pre-eminently distinguished will be looked for with avidity, and the author laments his inability to present to the public a work which may gratify the expectations that have been raised. In addition to that just diffidence of himself which he very sincerely feels, two causes beyond his control combine to excite this apprehension.

Accustomed to look in the page of history for incidents in themselves of great magnitude, to find immense exertions attended with inconsiderable effects, and vast means employed in producing unimportant ends, we are in the habit of bestowing on the recital of military actions, a degree of consideration proportioned to the numbers engaged in them. When the struggle has terminated, and the agitations felt during its suspense have subsided, it is difficult to attach to enterprises, in which small numbers have been concerned, that admiration which is often merited by the talents displayed in their execution, or that interest which belongs to the consequences that have arisen from them.

The long and distressing contest between Great Britain and these states did not abound in those great battles which are so frequent in the wars of Europe. Those who expect a continued succession of victories and defeats; who can only



feel engaged in the movements of vast armies, and who believe that a Hero must be perpetually in action, will be disappointed in almost every page of the following history. Seldom was the American chief in a condition to indulge his native courage in those brilliant achievements to which he was stimulated by his own feelings, and a detail of which interests, enraptures, and astonishes the reader. Had he not often checked his natural disposition, had he not tempered his ardour with caution, the war he conducted would probably have been of short duration, and the United States would still have been colonies. At the head of troops most of whom were perpetually raw because they were perpetually changing; who were neither well fed, paid, clothed, nor armed; and who were generally inferior, even in numbers, to the enemy; he derives no small title to glory from the consideration, that he never despaired of the public safety; that he was able at all times to preserve the appearance of an army, and that, in the most desperate situation of American affairs, he did not, for an instant, cease to be formidable. To estimate rightly his worth we must contemplate his difficulties. We must examine the means placed in his hands, and the use he made of those means. To preserve an army when conquest was impossible, to avoid defeat and ruin when victory was unattainable, to keep his forces embodied and suppress the discontents of his soldiers, exasperated by a long course of the most cruel privations, to seize with unerring discrimination the critical moment when vigorous offensive operations might be advantageously carried on, are actions not less valuable in themselves, nor do they require less capacity in the chief

who performs them, than a continued succession of battles. But they spread less splendour over the page which recounts them, and excite weaker emotions in the bosom of the reader.

There is also another source from which some degree of disappointment has been anticipated. It is the impossibility of giving to the public in the first part of this work many facts not already in their possession.

The American war was a subject of too much importance to have remained thus long unnoticed by the literary world. Almost every event worthy of attention, which occurred during its progress, has been gleaned up and detailed. Not only the public, but much of the private correspondence of the commander in chief has been inspected, and permission given to extract from it whatever might properly be communicated. In the military part of this history, therefore, the author can promise not much that is new. He can only engage for the correctness with which facts are stated, and for the diligence with which his researches have been made.

The letters to and from the commander in chief during the war, were very numerous and have been carefully preserved. The whole of this immensely voluminous correspondence has, with infinite labour, been examined; and the work now offered to the public is, principally, compiled from it. The facts which occurred on the continent are, generally, supported by these letters, and it has therefore been deemed unnecessary to multiply references to them. But there are many facts so connected with those events, in which the general performed a principal part, that they ought not to be omitted, and respecting which his

correspondence cannot be expected to furnish satisfactory information.

Such facts have been taken from the histories of the day, and the authority relied on for the establishment of their verity has been cited. Doddesly's Annual Register, Belsham, Gordon, Ramsay, and Stedman have, for this purpose, been occasionally resorted to, and are quoted for all those facts which are detailed in part on their authority. Their very language has sometimes been employed without distinguishing the passages, especially when intermingled with others, by marks of quotation, and the author persuades himself that this public declaration will rescue him from the imputation of receiving aids he is unwilling to acknowledge, or of wishing, by a concealed plagiarism, to usher to the world, as his own, the labours of others.

In selecting the materials for the succeeding volumes, it was deemed proper to present to the public as much as possible of general Washington himself. Prominent as he must be in any history of the American war, there appeared to be a peculiar fitness in rendering him still more so in one which professes to give a particular account of his own life. His private opinions therefore; his various plans, even those which were never carried into execution; his individual exertions to prevent and correct the multiplied errors committed by inexperience, are given in more minute detail; and more copious extracts from his letters are taken, than would comport with the plan of a more general work.

Many events too are unnoticed, which in such a composition would be worthy of being introduced, and much useful information has not been sought for, which a

professed history of America ought to comprise. Yet the history of general Washington, during his military command and civil administration, is so much that of his country, that the work appeared to the author to be most sensibly incomplete and unsatisfactory, while unaccompanied by such a narrative of the principal events preceding our revolutionary war, as would make the reader acquainted with the genius, character, and resources of the people about to engage in that memorable contest. This appeared the more necessary as that period of our history is but little known to ourselves. Several writers have detailed very minutely the affairs of a particular colony, but the *desideratum* is a composition which shall present in one connected view, the transactions of all those colonies which now form the United States.

# CHAPTER I.

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Commission of Cabot.... His voyage to America.... Views of discovery relinquished by Henry VII.... Resumed by Elizabeth.... Letters patent to Sir Humphry Gilbert.... His voyages and death.... Patent to Sir Walter Raleigh.... Voyage of Sir Richard Grenville.... Colonists carried back to England by Drake.... Grenville arrives with other colonists.... They are left on Roanoke Island.... Are destroyed by the Indians.... Arrival of John White.... He returns to England for succour.... Raleigh assigns his patent.... Patent to Sir Thomas Gates and others.... Code of laws for the proposed colony drawn up by the King.

The United States of America extend, on the Atlantic, from the bay of Passamaquoddi in the 45th, to Cape Florida in the 25th, degree of north latitude; and thence, on the gulf of Mexico, including the small adjacent islands to the mouth of the Sabine, in the 17th degree of west longitude from Washington. From the mouth of the Sabine to the Rocky mountains, they are separated from Spanish America by a line which pursues an irregular north-western direction to the 42d degree of north latitude, whence it proceeds west, to the Pacific. On the north they are bounded by the British provinces; from which, between the Lake of the Woods and the Rocky, or Stony mountains, they are separated by the

49th parallel of north latitude. Their northern boundary, west of these mountains, has not yet been adjusted.

The extent of this vast Republic, in consequence of its recent acquisition of almost unexplored territory, has not yet been accurately ascertained; but may be stated at two millions of square miles.

Its population, which began on the Atlantic, and is travelling rapidly westward, amounted in 1820, according to the census of that year, to nine millions six hundred and fifty-four thousand four hundred and fifteen persons. The enumerations which have been made under the authority of government, show an augmentation of numbers at the rate of about thirty-four *per centum*<sup>[2]</sup> in ten years; and it is probable, that for many years to come, this ratio will not be materially changed.

Public sentiment, to which the policy of the government conforms, is opposed to a large military establishment; and the distance of the United States from the great powers of the world, protects them from the danger to which this policy might otherwise expose them.

The navy has become an object of great interest to the nation, and may be expected to grow with its resources. In April 1816, Congress passed an act appropriating one million of dollars annually, to its gradual increase; and authorising the construction of nine ships, to rate not less than seventy-four guns each, and of twelve, to rate not less than forty-four guns each.

The execution of this act is in rapid progress. Inconsiderable as the navy now is, with respect to the number and force of its ships, it is deemed inferior to none



in existence for the bravery and skill of its officers and men. When we take into view the extensive sea coast of the United States, the magnificent lakes, or inland seas, which form a considerable part of their northern frontier, the abundance of their materials for ship building, and the genius of their population for maritime enterprise, it is not easy to resist the conviction that this bulwark of defence will, at no very distant period, attain a size and strength sufficient to ensure the safety of the nation and the respect of the world.

The net revenue of the United States amounted, in the year 1822, to considerably more than twenty millions of dollars; and, unless a course of legislation unfavourable to its augmentation be adopted, must grow with their population.

In arts, in arms, and in power, they have advanced, and are advancing, with unexampled rapidity.

The history of their progress, from the first feeble settlements made by Europeans on a savage coast, to their present state of greatness; while it has just claims to the attention of the curious of all nations, may be expected deeply to interest every American.

Soon after the return of Columbus from that memorable voyage which opened the vast regions of the west to civilized man, the maritime states of Europe manifested a desire to share with Spain, the glory, the wealth, and the dominion to be acquired in the new world. By no one of these states, was this desire carried into action more promptly than by England, Henry VII. had received communications from Columbus, during the tedious and

uncertain negotiations of that great man, at the dilatory court of Ferdinand, which prepared him for the important discoveries afterwards made, and inclined him to countenance the propositions of his own subjects for engaging in similar adventures. On the 5th of March 1495, he granted a commission to John Cabot, an enterprising Venetian who had settled in Bristol, and to his three sons, Lewis, Sebastian, and Sanctius, empowering them, or either of them, to sail under the banner of England, towards the east, north, or west, in order to discover countries unoccupied by any Christian state, and to take possession of them in his name.

It does not appear that the expedition contemplated at the date of this commission was prosecuted immediately; but in May 1496, Cabot, with his second son, Sebastian, sailed from Bristol in a small squadron, consisting of one ship furnished by the King, and four barks fitted out by merchants of that city; and, steering almost due west, discovered the islands of Newfoundland and St. Johns, and, soon afterward, reached the continent of North America, along which he sailed from the fifty-sixth to the thirty-eighth degree of north latitude, in the vain hope of discovering a passage into the Pacific.

Thus, according to the English historians, was first discovered that immense continent which stretches from the gulf of Mexico as far north as has yet been explored; and to this voyage, the English trace their title to the country they afterwards acquired by settlement, and by arms.

France, which has since contested with Britain the possession of a considerable portion of this important territory, has also advanced claims to its discovery; but they seem not to be well founded.

The ardour which had been excited in the bosom of Henry for making acquisitions in the new world, expired with this first effort. Cabot, on his return, found that monarch entirely disinclined to the farther prosecution of a scheme in which he had engaged with some zeal, the commencement of which had been attended with encouraging appearances.

*The scheme of  
making  
settlements  
relinquished.*

Several causes are supposed to have contributed to suspend the pursuits of the English in America. Previous to its discovery, the Portuguese had explored the Azores, or Western Islands; in consequence of which they claimed this continent, and contended for the exclusion of the Spaniards from the Western Ocean. The controversy was decided by the Pope, who, on the 7th of May 1493, of his own "mere liberality and certain knowledge, and the plenitude of apostolic authority," granted to Spain, the countries discovered or to be discovered by her, to the westward of a line to be drawn from pole to pole, a hundred leagues west of the Azores; (excepting such countries as might be in the possession of any other Christian prince antecedent to the year 1493;) and to Portugal, her discoveries eastward of that line.

The validity of this grant was probably strengthened, in the opinion of Henry, by other circumstances. He set a high value on the friendship of the King of Spain, with whom he was then negotiating the marriage which afterwards took

place between his eldest son and Catharine, the daughter of that monarch. Ferdinand was jealous to excess of all his rights; and Henry was not inclined to interrupt the harmony subsisting between the two crowns, by asserting claims to the country discovered by Cabot, which was obviously within the limits to which the pretensions of Spain extended.

The fisheries of Newfoundland were carried *Renewed by Elizabeth.* on by individuals, to a considerable extent, and a paltry traffic was continued with the natives; but no serious design of acquiring territory, and planting colonies in America was formed until the reign of Elizabeth, when a plan for making permanent settlements was proposed and patronized by several persons of rank and influence. To select a man qualified for this arduous task, and disposed to engage in it, was among the first objects to which their attention was directed. Sir Humphry Gilbert had rendered himself conspicuous by his military services, and by a treatise concerning the north-west passage, in which great ingenuity and learning, are stated by Dr. Robertson, to be mingled with the enthusiasm, the credulity, and sanguine expectation which incite men to new and hazardous undertakings. On this gentleman the adventurers turned their eyes, and he was placed at the head of the enterprise. On the 11th of June 1578, he obtained letters patent from the Queen, vesting in him the powers that were required; on receiving which, he, with the associates of his voyage, embarked for America. But his success did not equal his expectations. The various difficulties inseparable from the settlement of a distant, unexplored country, inhabited only by savages; the inadequacy of the supplies which could be

furnished for a colony by the funds of a few private individuals; the misfortune of having approached the continent too far towards the north, where the cold barren coast of Cape Breton was rather calculated to repel than invite a settlement; have been assigned as the probable causes of his failure.<sup>[3]</sup>

Two expeditions conducted by this gentleman ended disastrously. In the last, he himself perished; having done nothing farther in the execution of his patent, than taking possession of the island of Newfoundland, in the name of Elizabeth.

Sir Walter Raleigh, alike distinguished by his genius, his courage, and the severity of his fate, had been deeply interested in the adventures in which his half brother, Sir Humphry Gilbert, had wasted his fortune, and was not deterred by their failure, or by the difficulties attending such an enterprise, from prosecuting with vigour, a plan so well calculated to captivate his bold and romantic temper.

On the 26th of March, he *Patent to Sir 1584*  
obtained a patent from the *Walter Raleigh.*  
Queen; and, on the 27th of April, dispatched two small vessels under the command of captains Amidas and Barlow for the purpose of visiting the country, and of acquiring some previous knowledge of those circumstances which might be essential to the welfare of the colony he was about to plant. To avoid the error of Gilbert in holding too far north, Amidas and Barlow took the route by the Canaries, and the West India islands, and approached the North American continent towards the gulf of Florida. On the 2d of July, they touched at a small island situate on the inlet into Pamplico

sound, whence they proceeded to Roanoke, near the mouth of Albemarle sound.

After employing a few weeks in traffic with the Indians, from whom they collected some confused accounts respecting the neighbouring continent, they took with them two of the natives, who willingly accompanied them, and embarked for England, where they arrived on the 15th of September. The splendid description which they gave of the soil, the climate, and the productions of the country they had visited, so pleased Elizabeth, that she bestowed on it the name of Virginia, as a memorial that it had been discovered during the reign of a virgin Queen.<sup>[4]</sup>

Raleigh, encouraged by their report to hasten his preparations for taking possession of the property, fitted out a squadron consisting of seven small ships, laden with arms, ammunition, provisions, and passengers, *Voyage of Sir* 1585 which sailed from Plymouth on the 9th of *Richard* April, under the command of Sir Richard *Grenville.*

Grenville, who was his relation, and interested with him in the patent. Having taken the southern route, and wasted some time in cruising against the Spaniards, Sir Richard did not reach the coast of North America, until the close of the month of June. He touched at both the islands on which Amidas and Barlow had landed, and made some excursions into different parts of the continent around Pamplico, and Albemarle sounds.

Having established a colony, consisting of *First colony.* one hundred and eight persons, in the island of Roanoke, an incommodious station, without any safe



harbour, he committed the government of it to Mr. Ralph Lane; and, on the 25th of August, sailed for England.<sup>[5]</sup>

An insatiate passion for gold, attended by an eager desire to find it in the bowels of the earth, for a long time the disease of Europeans in America, became the scourge of this feeble settlement. The English flattered themselves that the country they had discovered could not be destitute of those mines of the precious metals with which Spanish America abounded. The most diligent researches were made in quest of them; and the infatuating hope of finding them stimulated the colonists to the utmost exertions of which they were capable. The Indians soon discerned the object for which they searched with so much avidity, and amused them with tales of rich mines in countries they had not yet explored. Seduced by this information, they encountered incredible hardships, and, in this vain search wasted that time which ought to have been employed in providing the means of future subsistence. Mutual suspicion and disgust between them and the natives ripened into open hostility; and, the provisions brought from England being exhausted, they were under the necessity of resorting for food to the precarious supplies which could be drawn from the rivers and woods. 1586 In this state of distress, they were found, in June, by Sir Francis Drake, who was then returning from a successful expedition against the Spaniards in the West Indies. He agreed to supply them with about one hundred men, four months' provisions, and a small vessel; but, before she could be brought into a place of security, and the men and stores disembarked, she was driven out to sea by a sudden and violent storm. Discouraged by this misfortune,

and worn out with fatigue and famine, the colonists unanimously determined to abandon the colony, and were, at their own request, taken on board the fleet which sailed for England.<sup>[6]</sup>

*Colonists  
carried back to  
England by  
Drake.*

Thus terminated the first English colony planted in America. The only acquisition made by this expensive experiment, was a better knowledge of the country and its inhabitants.

A few days after the departure of Drake with Lane and his associates, a small vessel which had been dispatched by Raleigh with a supply of provisions, reached its place of destination. Not finding the colonists, this vessel returned to England. Soon after its departure, Sir Richard Grenville arrived with three ships and ample supplies. Having searched in vain for the colonists he had left, and being unable to conjecture their fate, he placed fifteen men in the island with provisions for two years, for the purpose of retaining possession of the country, and returned to England. This small party was soon destroyed by the Indians.

*Grenville plants  
a second  
colony.*

*Destroyed by  
the Indians.*

Not discouraged by the ill success which had thus far attended his efforts to make a settlement in America, Raleigh, in the following year, fitted out three ships under the command of captain John White, and, it is said, directed the colony to be removed to the waters of the Chesapeake, which bay had been discovered by Lane in the preceding year. Instructed by calamity, he adopted more efficacious means for preserving and continuing the colony than had

*1587*

before been used. The number of men was greater; they were accompanied by some women, and their supply of provisions was more abundant. Mr. White was appointed their governor, twelve assistants were assigned him as a council, and a charter incorporating them by the name of the governor and assistants of the city of Raleigh in Virginia, was granted them.

Thus prepared for a permanent settlement, *Third colony* they arrived in July at Roanoke, where they *arrives.* received the melancholy intelligence of the loss of their countrymen who had been left there by Sir Richard Grenville. They determined, however, to remain at the same place, and began to make the necessary preparations for their accommodation. Aware of the danger to be apprehended from the hostile disposition of their neighbours, they endeavoured to effect a reconciliation with the natives, one of whom, who had accompanied Amidas and Barlow to England, and who was distinguished by his unshaken attachment to the English, was christened, and styled Lord of *Dassa Monpeake*, an Indian nation in the neighbourhood.<sup>[7]</sup>

About the same time the first child of English parentage was born in America. She was the daughter of Ananias Dare, and, after the place of her birth, was named *Virginia*.

Soon perceiving their want of many things essential to the preservation, and comfortable subsistence of a new settlement, the colonists, with one voice, deputed their governor, to solicit those specific aids which their situation particularly and essentially required. On his arrival in England, he found the whole nation alarmed at the

formidable preparations for their invasion, made by Philip II. of Spain; and Raleigh, Grenville, and the other patrons of the colony, ardently engaged in those measures of defence which the public danger demanded. Mingling, however, with his exertions to defend his native country, some attention to the colony he had planted, Raleigh found leisure to fit out a small fleet for its relief, the command of which was given to Sir Richard Grenville; but, the apprehensions from the Spanish armament still increasing, the ships of force prepared by Raleigh were detained in port by order of the Queen, and Sir Richard Grenville was commanded not to leave Cornwall, where his services were deemed necessary. 1588 On the 22d of April, White put to sea with two small barks, but, instead of hastening to the relief of his distressed countrymen, wasted his time in cruising; and, being beaten by a superior force, was totally disabled from prosecuting his voyage.<sup>[8]</sup>

The attention of Raleigh being directed to other more splendid objects, he assigned his patent to Sir Thomas Smith and a company of merchants in London.

After this transfer, a year was permitted to elapse before any effort was made for the relief of the colony. In March, three ships fitted out by the company, in one of which Mr. White embarked, sailed from Plymouth; but, having cruelly and criminally wasted their time in plundering the Spaniards in the West Indies, they did not reach Hatteras until the month of August. They fired a gun to give notice of their arrival, and sent a party to the place where the colony

*Raleigh assigns his patent. 1589*

*Third colony lost.*

had been left; but no vestige of their countrymen could be found. In attempting the next day to go to Roanoke, one of the boats, in passing a bar, was half filled with water, another was upset, and six men were drowned. Two other boats were fitted out with nineteen men to search the island thoroughly on which the colony had been left.

At the departure of Mr. White, it was in contemplation to remove about fifty miles into the country; and it had been agreed that, should the colonists leave the island, they would carve the name of the place to which they should remove, on some tree, door, or post; with the addition of a cross over it, as a signal of distress, if they should be really distressed at the time of changing their situation. After considerable search, the word CROATAN was found carved in fair capital letters on one of the chief posts, but unaccompanied by the sign of distress which had been agreed on.

Croatan was the name of an Indian town on the north side of Cape Lookout, and for that place, the fleet weighed anchor the next day. Meeting with a storm, and several accidents, they were discouraged from proceeding on their voyage, and, determining to suspend their search, returned to the West Indies.

The company made no farther attempt to find these lost colonists; nor has the time or the manner of their perishing ever been discovered.<sup>[9]</sup>

The subsequent voyages made by the English to North America were for the sole purpose of traffic, and were unimportant in their consequences, until the year 1602,

*Voyage of  
Gosnald. 1602*

when one was undertaken by Bartholomew Gosnald, which contributed greatly to the revival of the then dormant spirit of colonising in the new world. He sailed from Falmouth in a small bark with thirty-two men; and steering nearly west, reached the American continent, on the 11th of May, in about forty-three degrees of north latitude.

Finding no good harbour at this place, Gosnald put to sea again and stood southward. The next morning, he descried a promontory which he called cape Cod, and, holding his course along the coast as it stretched to the south-west, touched at two islands, the first of which he named Martha's Vineyard, and the second, Elizabeth's Island. Having passed some time at these places, examining the country, and trading with the natives, he returned to England.<sup>[10]</sup>

This voyage was completed in less than four months, and was attended with important consequences. Gosnald had found a healthy climate, a rich soil, good harbours, and a route which shortened considerably the distance to the continent of North America. He had seen many of the fruits known and prized in Europe, blooming in the woods; and had planted European grain which grew rapidly. Encouraged by this experiment, and delighted with the country, he formed the resolution of transporting thither a colony, and of procuring the co-operation of others by whom his plan might be supported. So unfortunate however had been former attempts of this sort, that men of wealth and rank, though strongly impressed by his report of the country, were slow in giving full faith to his representations, and in entering completely into his views. One vessel was fitted out by the merchants of Bristol, and another by the earl of



Southampton, and Lord Arundel of Wardour, in order to learn whether Gosnald's account of the country was to be considered as a just representation of its state, or as the exaggerated description of a person fond of magnifying his own discoveries. Both returned with a full confirmation of his veracity, and with the addition of so many new circumstances in favour of the country, as greatly increased the desire of settling it.

Richard Hackluyt, prebendary of Westminster, a man of distinguished learning and intelligence, contributed more than any other by his judicious exertions, to form an association sufficiently extensive, powerful, and wealthy, to execute the often renewed, and often disappointed project of establishing colonies in America.

At length, such an association was formed; and a petition was presented to James I., who had succeeded to the crown of England, praying the royal sanction to the plan which was proposed. That pacific monarch was delighted with it, and immediately acceded to the wishes of its projectors.

On the 10th of April, letters patent were issued under the great seal of England, to the petitioners, Sir Thomas Gates and his associates, granting to them those territories in America, lying on the sea coast, between the 34th and 45th degrees of north latitude, and which either belonged to that monarch, or were not then possessed by any other Christian prince or people; and also the islands adjacent thereto, or within one hundred miles thereof. They were divided, at their own desire, into two companies. One, consisting of certain knights, gentlemen, merchants, and other

*Patent to Sir Thomas Gates and others.*

adventurers of the city of London, and elsewhere, was called the first colony, and was required to settle between the 34th and 41st degrees of north latitude; the other, consisting of certain knights, gentlemen, merchants, and other adventurers of Bristol, Exeter, Plymouth, and elsewhere, was named the second colony, and was ordered to settle between the 38th and 45th degrees of north latitude; yet so that the colony last formed should not be planted within one hundred miles of the prior establishment.

The adventurers were empowered to transport so many English subjects as should be willing to accompany them, who, with their descendants, were, at all times, to enjoy the same liberties, within any other dominions of the crown of England, as if they had remained, or were born, within the realm. A council consisting of thirteen, to be appointed and removed at the pleasure of the crown, was established for each colony, to govern it according to such laws as should be given under the sign manual and privy seal of England.

Two other boards to consist also of thirteen persons each, and to be appointed by the King, were invested with the superior direction of the affairs of the colonies.

The adventurers were allowed to search for, and open mines of gold, silver, and copper, yielding one-fifth of the two former metals, and one-fifteenth of the last, to the King; and to make a coin which should be current both among the colonists and natives.

The president and council were authorised to repel those who should, without their authority, attempt to settle, or trade, within their jurisdiction, and to seize, and detain the persons, and effects, of such intruders, until they should pay

a duty of two and one-half *per centum ad valorem*, if subjects, but of five *per centum* if aliens. These taxes were to be applied, for twenty-one years, to the use of the adventurers, and were afterwards to be paid into the royal exchequer.

While the council for the patentees were employed in making preparations to secure the benefits of their grant, James was assiduously engaged in the new, and, to his vanity, the flattering task of framing a code of laws for the government of the colonies about to be planted. Having at length prepared this code, he issued it under the sign manual, and privy seal of England. By these regulations, he vested the general superintendence of the colonies, in a council in England, "composed of a few persons of consideration and talents." The church of England was established. The legislative and executive powers within the colonies, were vested in the president and councils; but their ordinances were not to touch life or member, were to continue in force only until made void by the King, or his council in England for Virginia, and were to be in substance, consonant to the laws of England. They were enjoined to permit none to withdraw the people from their allegiance to himself, and his successors; and to cause all persons so offending to be apprehended, and imprisoned until reformation; or, in cases highly offensive, to be sent to England to receive punishment. No person was to be permitted to remain in the colony without taking the oath of obedience. Tumults, mutiny, and rebellion, murder, and incest, were to be punished with death; and for these

*Code of laws  
for the colony  
drawn up by  
the King.*

offences, the criminal was to be tried by a jury. Inferior crimes were to be punished in a summary way, at the discretion of the president and council.

Lands were to be holden within the colony as the same estates were enjoyed in England. Kindness towards the heathen was enjoined; and a power reserved to the King, and his successors to ordain farther laws, so that they were consonant to the jurisprudence of England.<sup>[11]</sup>

Under this charter, and these laws, which manifest, at the same time, a total disregard of all political liberty, and a total ignorance of the real advantages which a parent state may derive from its colonies; which vest the higher powers of legislation in persons residing out of the country, not chosen by the people, nor affected by the laws they make, and yet leave commerce unrestrained; the patentees proceeded to execute the arduous and almost untried task of peopling a strange, distant, and uncultivated land, covered with woods and marshes, and inhabited only by savages easily irritated, and when irritated, more fierce than the beasts they hunted.