

“For all men love to see the country as well as to heare of it”:  
Views of Unsettled Virginia, 1649-1676

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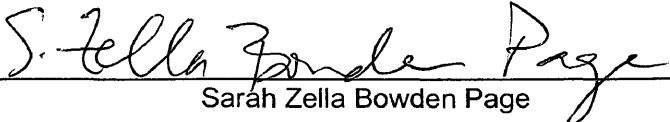
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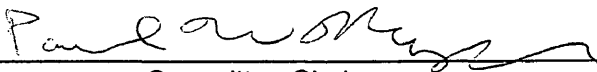
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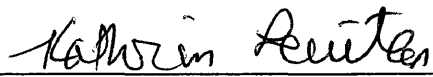
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## ABSTRACT PAGE

The first recorded English expeditions into the interior of Virginia occurred between 1650 and 1674, earning this period the name "Virginia's age of exploration." During the third quarter of the seventeenth century, explorers struck out from the settled parts of Virginia and probed the west and south, traveling across the Appalachian Mountains and deep into the Carolina region. In the course of their explorations, Edward Bland, Abraham Wood, John Lederer, Thomas Batts, Robert Fallam, James Needham, and Gabriel Arthur encountered lands previously only described in the works of colonial promoters who had never been there themselves. Promoters like John Ferrar, Edward Williams, and William Bullock had described the parts of Virginia yet unsettled by the English as a treasury of nature's bounty, an earthly paradise where an ideal climate, fertile soil, prosperity, and easy access to the riches of the East via the South Sea awaited settlers.

The explorers traveled into the interior with expectations about what they would find which had been shaped by the beliefs disseminated by the promoters. However, the explorers quickly realized that the land through which they traveled was not another Eden, but a dangerous place where hostile Indians, savage beasts, and even the landscape itself could prove hazardous. Their experiences and observations challenged the traditional English image of Virginia put forth by the promoters, especially with regards to the topographic depiction of Virginia, most notably of the mountains. Whereas the promoters had described the mountains as mere hills, and had not considered them to be an obstacle that might impede the English march to the South Sea, the explorers reported that the mountains were in fact a cold, barren, huge, and all but impassable barrier. This is best illustrated by the 1651 map of the promoter John Ferrar and the 1672 map of the explorer John Lederer. These maps show how the English image of Virginia originally defined by the ideals of the promoters was altered by the explorers' encounters in the unsettled parts of Virginia. This paper will investigate the changes in the depiction of Virginia in writings of colonial promoters and explorers during the period 1650-74.

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## I. Introduction

The first recorded English expeditions into the interior of Virginia occurred between 1650 and 1674, earning this period the name “Virginia’s age of exploration.”<sup>1</sup> During the third quarter of the seventeenth century, explorers struck out from the settled parts of Virginia and probed the west and south, traveling across the Appalachian Mountains and deep into the Carolina region. In the course of their explorations they encountered lands previously only described in the works of colonial promoters who had never been there themselves. The promoters had described the parts of Virginia yet unsettled by the English as a treasury of nature’s bounty, an earthly paradise where an ideal climate, fertile soil, and prosperity awaited settlers. The majority of promoters also believed that the North American continent was narrow, or narrowed in the vicinity of Virginia, and argued that there would be a simple route across the mountains to the South Sea and the riches of the Eastern kingdoms of China, Persia, and Japan.

The hope of finding such a route to the South Sea was largely responsible for the explorations of 1650-74: the explorers traveled into the interior with expectations about what they would find which had been shaped by the beliefs disseminated by the promoters. However, the explorers quickly realized that the land through which they traveled was not another Eden, but a dangerous place where hostile Indians, savage beasts, and even the landscape itself could prove hazardous; thus it was perceived by these Europeans as a threatening and uncontrollable wilderness. While the explorers’ accounts of their expeditions were not altogether negative, their experiences and observations challenged the traditional English image of Virginia put forth by the promoters.

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1. Alan Vance Briceland, “British Explorations of the United States Interior,” in *A Continent Defined*. Vol. 2 of *North American Exploration*, ed. John Logan Allen (Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 297.

This was especially true with regards to the topographic depiction of Virginia, most notably of the mountains. Whereas the promoters had described the mountains as “hills,” and had not considered them to be an obstacle that might impede the English march to the South Sea, the explorers reported that the mountains were in fact a cold, barren, huge, and all but impassable barrier.<sup>2</sup> The four written accounts and one map that these explorers produced detailing their experiences in the wilderness altered the English image of Virginia, both conceptually and cartographically.

A comparison of how Virginia is described in the promoters’ and explorers’ works of this period, and an investigation of the changes that transpired in the depiction of the region have not been adequately pursued; consistently in scholarly writings, the works of these two groups of men are studied apart from one another. Additionally, their cartographic output and its implications are rarely discussed in tandem. Studying the writings of the promoters and explorers in conjunction with the maps they produced provides an enriched understanding of English attitudes towards Virginia, and elucidates previously unrecognized shifts in their beliefs about and expectations for the unsettled parts of Virginia during the period 1650-74. The most striking aspect of this comparison is geographic, as can be seen in the differing depiction of the mountains and the western region in the 1651 map of the promoter John Ferrar and the 1672 map of the explorer John Lederer.

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2. [John Ferrar], *A Perfect Description of Virginia*, London, 1649, 7. Hereafter attributed to Ferrar. Both Peter Thompson (“William Bullock’s ‘Strange Adventure’: A Plan to Transform Seventeenth-Century Virginia,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Series, vol. 61, no. 1 (2004): 107, note 1) and Warren M. Billings (“Sir William Berkeley and the Diversification of the Virginia Economy,” *The Virginia Magazine of History and Bibliography*, vol. 104, no. 4 (1996): 442, note 14) cite David Ransome’s paper, “An Old Man’s Dream: John Ferrar and the Promotion of Virginia,” delivered at the July 1992 Samuel Hartlib Papers Conference, “Peace, Unification and Prosperity: The Advancement of Learning in the Seventeenth Century,” at the University of Sheffield as providing the evidence for proving Ferrar to be the undisputed author of *A Perfect Description of Virginia*; this paper, however, has proved impossible to obtain.

This study will undertake a new examination of the maps and writings of the explorers and promoters of Virginia's "age of exploration," investigating the influences that the works of each group had on the other and how they contributed to defining the image of Virginia; this study will work principally from these primary sources. First, it will be important to examine the depiction of Virginia publicized by the promoters at the beginning of the period. In 1649 and 1650 three colonial promoters, John Ferrar, Edward Williams, and William Bullock all wrote tracts praising the parts of Virginia unsettled by the English and encouraging prospective settlers to immigrate there. The Virginia portrayed by Ferrar, Williams, and Bullock was indebted to the writings of previous promoters and contemporary assumptions about the geography of North America. In 1651, Ferrar drew *A Mapp of Virginia discouered to ye Falls* to illustrate Williams' tract; this map epitomized in visual form the promoters' optimistic view of Virginia as a bountiful land in close proximity to the South Sea. This view of Virginia was the one which most settlers brought with them when they arrived in colony, and colored the explorers' expectations about the lands to the south and west.

The second part of this study will examine the accounts of the only recorded explorations of the period, comparing the Virginia experienced by the explorers with that envisioned by the promoters. The explorations from Virginia occurred in two waves: the earliest took place in 1650, and the remainder occurred between 1669 and 1674. Edward Bland's account of his 1650 venture drew attention to, with a similar intent as the promoters, the benefits of the unsettled area to the south of the colony, but also introduced the more threatening aspects of the landscape and inhabitants of the wilderness which were to be more strongly reiterated by later explorers. The explorations that occurred at the end of the period probed farther west and south into the interior of the North American continent from

Virginia than any had before. Thomas Batts and Robert Fallam, James Needham and Gabriel Arthur, and John Lederer traveled to the west and southwest in a series of expeditions which revealed that both the continent and the Appalachian Mountains were far vaster than the English had expected. John Lederer was the only explorer to draw a map illustrating his travels: published in 1672, *A Map of the Whole Territory Traversed by John Lederer in His Three Marches* depicted the mountains as a substantial barrier to westward movement, illustrating what the explorers discovered.

This investigation of the written and cartographic works of the promoters and explorers will be supplemented by material from relevant contemporary correspondence, legislation, and cartography. While primary sources provide the central evidence for this project, the examination of their contents and intentions will be informed by secondary sources from an array of disciplines, including the history and literature of colonial Virginia, early modern England, exploration, and cartography. This comparative study seeks to break from the traditional historiographical sub-disciplines in order to gain a new and deeper understanding of the way seventeenth-century Englishmen portrayed the unsettled parts of Virginia in both word and image.

While older works focused on English colonial promotional literature in a broader sense, either identifying overarching trends or discussing the typical form and content of propaganda colony by colony, in recent decades, scholarly writings on promotional literature have for the most part taken the form of articles and now concentrate on a certain facet of the literature.<sup>3</sup> These more recent writings include Karen Ordahl Kupperman's research on how contemporary beliefs about climate influenced the promoters' depictions of different

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3. An example of the former is: Howard Mumford Jones, "The Colonial Impulse: An Analysis of the 'Promotion' Literature of Colonization," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 90, no. 2 (1946): 131-161. An example of the latter is: Hugh T. Lefler, "Promotional Literature of the Southern Colonies," *The Journal of Southern History*, vol. 33, no.1 (1967): 3-25.

colonies, Timothy Sweet's study of how early promotional authors developed new ideas about the intersection of economy and ecology in the context of America, and Andrew Fitzmaurice's investigation into the use of classical rhetoric in the promotion of the New World.<sup>4</sup> Only rarely is work done on individual promoters, such as Peter Thompson's recent article on John Ferrar's marginalia in a copy of William Bullock's promotional tract. Thompson's article is additionally unique, however, in that most scholars who write about the promotional literature of Virginia focus on the literature from the first couple decades of the seventeenth century, when the Virginia Company produced a large amount of propaganda advertising the colony. Thus the writings of the later, mid-century promoters are often ignored or given only a cursory glance.

Another framework in which promotional writings are discussed is in wider studies that deal with some aspect of contemporary textual production. In *Writing North America in the Seventeenth Century*, Catherine Armstrong focuses on the cultural context in which works about Virginia and New England were written; she compares descriptions of the two colonies and advocates the importance of examining both authors' motivations for writing and their connections.<sup>5</sup> However, her book only discusses works on North America through 1660, and the writings of the explorers are not included. The works of promoters and explorers are not typically studied together for reasons of both chronology and genre: the historians who write about the promoters usually focus on the writings of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods and do not extend their studies into the latter decades of the

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4. Karen Ordahl Kupperman, "Fear of Hot Climates in the Anglo-American Colonial Experience," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, vol. 41, no. 2 (1984): 213-240. Timothy Sweet, "Economy, Ecology, and Utopia in Early Colonial Promotional Literature," *American Literature*, vol. 71, no. 3 (1999): 399-427. Andrew Fitzmaurice, "Classical Rhetoric and the Promotion of the New World," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol. 58, no. 2, (1997): 221-243.

5. Catherine Armstrong, *Writing North America in the Seventeenth Century: English Representations in Print and Manuscript*, Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2007. See especially pp. 2-3, 29, and 201.

seventeenth century. Additionally, whereas the writings of the promoters are most often studied as or with other literary works, the explorers' accounts are not.<sup>6</sup>

The deeds and written accounts of the Virginia explorers are most often discussed in works on the history of British explorations, where they are included in a chronological survey of British movement in North America. Historians who write about the explorers, such as Clarence Walworth Alvord, Lee Bidgood, and Alan Vance Briceland, are primarily interested in using the explorers' accounts to establish exactly where they went in the course of their travels.<sup>7</sup> Scholars who write about the promoters are mostly interested in what they said; scholars who write about the explorers are interested in what they did. Thus how the explorers described what they saw on their expeditions and their reactions to the people and places they encountered are largely overlooked. This study seeks to correct this oversight by treating the explorers' accounts as literary productions, and compares their descriptions of the unsettled parts of Virginia with those of the promoters to gain a better understanding of the way contemporary Englishmen thought about Virginia over the course of the period 1649-76. The previous works on the promoters and the explorers can be viewed as the "preliminary monographs" which Marc Bloch believed to be the necessary groundwork for practitioners of comparative history.<sup>8</sup>

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6. The notable exception to this is Edward Bland's *Discovery of New Brittain* (London, 1651) which is often included with the writings of the promoters because of their stylistic and chronological similarities.

7. Clarence Walworth Alvord and Lee Bidgood, *The First Explorations of the Trans-Allegheny Region by the Virginians, 1650-1674*, Cleveland, OH: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1912. Alan Vance Briceland, *Westward from Virginia: The Exploration of the Virginia-Carolina Frontier, 1650-1710*, Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1987, and "British Explorations of the United States Interior." In *Westward from Virginia* Briceland provides a very detailed summary of the historiography of the ideas about the explorers' destinations and posits his own highly developed theories about the real route of each trip.

8. Marc Bloch, "Toward a Comparative History of European Societies," in *Enterprise and Secular Change: Readings in Economic History*, ed. Frederic C. Lane, Homewood, IL: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1953.

In 2001 Stephen Adams, a literary scholar, wrote *The Best and Worst Country in the World* hoping “to present the widest variety of perspectives of Virginia” from pre-historic times through 1700 which he could discover. Adams uses a variety of printed, manuscript, archeological, and geological evidence to explore “the perception and experience of the land itself” in Virginia; his book provides an excellent overview of “the inhabitation, use, and representation of the early American environment.”<sup>9</sup> Adams primarily focuses on the portrayal of the settled areas of Virginia, and while he includes the writings of both the promoters and the explorers in his study, for the most part he follows the pattern of previous scholarship and discusses where the explorers went without interpreting their observations.<sup>10</sup> Although Adams includes maps in his book, he does not discuss them in any depth as individual sources and does not recognize the exchange of ideas between cartographic and written sources, using maps primarily as illustrations. He introduces John Farrer’s map but dismisses it as outdated even at the time it was printed, and does not mention John Lederer’s map in the text of his book, only including it as an image. The frequent use of maps as illustrations exhibits these authors’ recognition of the power of visual images to communicate ideas and emotions; however, their failure to analyze the content of the maps they use denies them a new angle of inquiry into their fields of study.

In recent decades the discipline of cartographic history has been significantly altered by a wave of new theories about the production of maps. Reacting against the tendency of previous historians of cartographic history to value only scientific accuracy in maps, J.B. Harley and his associates argued that mapmakers “manufacture power” and that maps should be read as texts. Harley advocated the deconstruction of map-texts to find the meanings

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9. Stephen Adams, *The Best and Worst Country in the World: Perspective on the Early Virginia Landscape*, Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 2001, 6-8.

10. The exception to this is his treatment of Lederer: Adams talks briefly about Lederer’s representation of the landscape through which he passes. (See Adams, 240-46.)

behind the signs and symbols they utilize.<sup>11</sup> Harley has since been criticized by scholars such as J.H. Andrews for over-generalizing in his evaluation of maps and attributing greater authority to theoretical elements of maps, such as rhetoric, silences, and power, than is actually in play.<sup>12</sup> However, the argument that maps measure more than the accuracy of contemporary geographical knowledge, and therefore should be examined for agendas other than a simple representation of the landscape or a political territory, has proved to be enduringly invaluable.

Integrated studies of related maps and literature are rarely pursued, and the insights they bring remain under-appreciated. While a survey like Adams' is useful for demonstrating broad patterns in the use and perception of a place like Virginia, it necessarily lacks the depth that would come from a closer study of any one of the periods he covers. This study seeks to provide a detailed evaluation of the changing perception of Virginia's geography between 1649 and 1676 by including maps to a greater degree in the discussion of contemporary writings.

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11. See J.B. Harley, "Deconstructing the Map," *Cartographica* vol. 26, no. 2 (1989): 1-20. However, the work of the cartobibliographers should not be disparaged: the massive lists of maps and their derivations which they compiled remain invaluable resources for new investigations to this day.

12. See J.H. Andrews' introductory essay, "Meaning, Knowledge, and Power in the Map Philosophy of J.B. Harley," in *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography*, J.B. Harley, ed. Paul Laxton (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001): 1-32.

## II. The Promoters' "Fortunate Virginia"

### Promoting Virginia: "Plenty, Health, and Wealth"

The Virginia described by the colonial promoters John Ferrar, Edward Williams, and William Bullock was a land of fertile soil, ideal climate, and an easy route to the opulent wealth of the east: a virtual garden in the midst of the North American wilderness. These promoters presented the optimistic vision of a Virginia where, according to Bullock, immigrants "of all degrees, from the highest Master, to the meanest Servant," could "suddenly... raise their fortunes."<sup>13</sup> Their conception of Virginia was indebted to classical, Germanic, and Judeo-Christian ideas contrasting wilderness and paradise: while the wilderness was characterized as being "indifferent, frequently dangerous, and always beyond control," paradise, with its original Persian meaning of a "luxurious garden," was a place of plenty where fear and want were no longer found.<sup>14</sup> Thus, although the New World, uncivilized to contemporary European eyes, might be called a wilderness by some, such a description was incompatible with the bounty that the promoters believed awaited settlers in Virginia.

The hope of finding a paradise amid apparent wilderness generated a great deal of promotional literature, particularly during the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods. This was especially true for Virginia while the colony was under the control of the Virginia Company, for the Company mounted an extensive print campaign consisting of promotional pamphlets, broadsides, and sermons. However, the printing of tracts about North America had declined substantially by the 1640s because of the dissolution of the Virginia Company, troubles in

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13. William Bullock, *Virginia Impartially Examined, and left to publick view, to be considered by all Iudicious and honest men...*, London, 1649, title page.

14. Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974, 1-2, 9. The modern English word "wilderness" comes from the Old English word *wildēor*, which originally was used to refer to creatures not controlled by men – wild beasts.

the colony, and “over-riding domestic concerns” such as the political and religious conflict that would lead to the English civil wars.<sup>15</sup> Ferrar, Williams, and Bullock’s tracts, all written in a two year span during a politically unstable time in England, present a positive image of Virginia’s future, despite present circumstances in both England and the colony. The promoters argued that the path to Virginia’s future glory lay not only in political reformation, but in proper use of the colony’s bountiful natural resources and the discovery of the elusive route to the South Sea leading to the riches of Asia. They advocated the exploration and colonization of Virginia’s unsettled parts in order that the English could better utilize all that Virginia had to offer. Many of the views found in the promoters’ tracts were reflected in the two maps of the colony drawn by John Ferrar in 1650 and 1651.

Promoters who had never seen Virginia with their own eyes relied upon older published works about the colony as well as correspondence with current settlers to inform their tracts. Despite having no personal experience of Virginia, William Bullock justified the “confidence” with which he wrote by saying “it is no new thing, out of collections to make up the Historie of a Kingdom,” and went on to list his sources: “the discoveries of M. Heriot [Thomas Hariot], M. Laine [Ralph Lane], and Captaine [John] Smith,” several recent books, and personal conversations with many of the “principall men of that Country,” including several ship captains.<sup>16</sup> John Ferrar corresponded with settlers who kept him informed about events and conditions in the colony; in turn, he encouraged the planters in their attempts to improve Virginia and diversify its economy. Ferrar himself developed grand plans to make sericulture a significant component of the Virginia economy, repeatedly trying to convince Englishmen at home and abroad that Virginia’s climate was perfectly suited for that

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15. Armstrong, 175. According to Catherine Armstrong, “The most significant and lasting achievement of the Elizabethans in America was to encourage ordinary English men and women to believe that there were fortunes to be had by everyone in this paradise.” (Ibid., 7.)

16. Bullock, 1.

endeavor. In 1646 he sent out a questionnaire to at least eight different colonists, requesting specific information about the geography, climate, plants, animals, potential commodities, human inhabitants and exploration of Virginia. The letters, and especially the answers to the questionnaire, that Ferrar received greatly influenced the pamphlet which he published anonymously in 1649, *A Perfect Description of Virginia*.<sup>17</sup> At the beginning he confidently states that the contents of the “ensuing Relation are certified by divers Letters from Virginia, by men of worth and credit there,” and towards the end of the tract there is a section in which he quotes from “Letters came now this March, 1648.”<sup>18</sup>

Ferrar’s pamphlet contained his ideas about and hopes for the future of the colony, as well as his rather traditional promotional views about the landscape and geography of Virginia. The fondness Ferrar had for this land of opportunity led him to name his daughter Virginia, and she, true to her name, shared her father’s interest in the colony. Virginia corresponded with settlers, wrote about sericulture, and even published several editions of her father’s map in her own name.<sup>19</sup> An illustrative example of her correspondence with Virginia colonists is a May 1650 draft of a letter to Lady Berkeley, the wife of Virginia’s royal governor, Sir William Berkeley: in the draft Virginia Ferrar mentioned sending Lady

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17. *A Perfect Description* is very much like his questionnaire, some of the items are even the same, e.g. the questionnaire inquires (#8) about “Poultry, hens, geece” (Ferrar, 2) and the pamphlet says “That for Poultry, Hens, Turkies, Ducks, Geese, without number” (John Ferrar to various recipients in Virginia, August 30, 1646, *The Ferrar Papers*, 1590-1790, 1106:6, Magdalene College, Cambridge (East Ardsley, England: Microfilm Academic Publishers, 1992); however, not all the numbers match up with such precision. In his entry on Ferrar in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, (“Ferrar, John (c. 1588–1657),” Oxford: Oxford University Press, September 2004; online edition, October 2008) Ransome states that in addition to *A Perfect Description of Virginia* Ferrar was the author of at least seven more pamphlets and broadsheets, which are often not recognized as his work because most of them were published either anonymously or in his daughter Virginia’s name. Ransome does not name the publications.

18. Ferrar, 1, 13.

19. Bernard Blackstone, “A Life of Nicholas Ferrar,” in *The Ferrar Papers*, Cambridge, UK: The University Press, 1938. In a letter John Ferrar wrote that he planned to name his daughter Virginia, “that [I] might dayly more and more have the memorial of it as not to cease praying for the prosperity of it.”

Berekeley “a large Mapp of Virginia” along with some books and seeds.<sup>20</sup> The Ferrar family had a passionate connection to Virginia and the promotion of the colony: John Ferrar, his younger brother Nicholas, and their father had all been members of the Virginia Company.<sup>21</sup> When the Company’s charter was threatened, the Ferrars helped to lead the faction fighting to prevent the dissolution of the Company, often hosting meetings in the Ferrar family home on St. Sithes Lane in London.<sup>22</sup> After the Virginia Company’s charter was revoked, the Ferrars left London for financial reasons and moved to a manor house in Little Gidding in Huntingdonshire.<sup>23</sup> However, John Farrer’s interest in the colony had developed into a passion that long outlived the Virginia Company and survived his new distance from the capital and the center of mercantile activity.<sup>24</sup>

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20. Virginia Ferrar to Lady Berkeley, ca. May 1650, *The Ferrar Papers*, 1590-1790, 1167:6.

21. Thompson, 112. David Ransome, “Introduction,” *The Ferrar Papers*, ii. Wesley Frank Craven, *Dissolution of the Virginia Company: The Failure of a Colonial Experiment* (Oxford University Press: New York, 1932), 28. John Ferrar served as the Company’s Deputy Treasurer from 1619 to 1622; Nicholas held the office from 1622 to 1624. Additionally, their elder brother William had emigrated to Virginia in 1619 but died either during the passage across the Atlantic or soon after his arrival in the colony. (Nicholas W. S. Cranfield, “Ferrar, Nicholas (1593-1637),” Oxford: Oxford University Press, September 2004; online edition, October 2008.)

22. Thompson, 112. David Ransome, “Introduction,” *The Ferrar Papers*, ii. A.L. Maycock, *Nicholas Ferrar of Little Gidding* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), 67. Ferrar blamed the Virginia Company’s destruction on the machinations of the Spanish ambassador to the court of James I, Diego Sarmiento de Acuna, conde de Gondomar, and remained upset about the matter for the rest of his life. For an example of Farrer’s opinions, see his responses to Bullock’s criticisms of the Company in Peter Thompson, “Transcription of John Ferrar’s Marginalia in the Bodleian Library’s Copy of William Bullock’s *Virginia Impartially Examined*,” web supplement for “William Bullock’s ‘Strange Adventure;’” Thompson, “William Bullock’s ‘Strange Adventure,’” 111-12, and 112 note 18.

23. *Ibid.*, 112. For more on the financial troubles of the Ferrars see David Ransome’s entry on John Ferrar in the Dictionary of National Biography and H.P.K. Skipton, *The Life and Times of Nicholas Ferrar* (London: A.R. Mowbray & Co., Ltd., 1907), 76-77. At Little Gidding, Nicholas, who was ordained a deacon by Archbishop Laud in 1626, founded a religious community in which John and his family participated.

24. Today, John Ferrar’s ideas are more accessible than ever before because of David Ransome’s discovery of a previously unrecognized collection of papers relating to the Ferrar family at Magdalene College. Ransome edited the papers and published them as a fourteen-reel microfilm collection in 1992. In the words of Karen Ordahl Kupperman, Ransome found “nothing less than the lost archive of the Virginia Company for the years 1619 to 1624, as well as continuing records of the Virginia project going in to the 1650s and 1660s.” (Karen Ordahl Kupperman, “The Founding Years of Virginia – And the United States,” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. 104, no.1 (1996): 104.) Despite their availability these records have not been extensively used by scholars. Additionally,

Ferrar's "affections to that incomparable Country" were known to his contemporaries: Edward Williams, for example, sought Farrer's advice in the late 1640s when preparing a promotional tract about the colony.<sup>25</sup> Farrer was evidently eager to share his knowledge about Virginia with Williams, and went so far as to write a draft of the tract for Williams, which he entitled "Virginia Truly & Richly Valued."<sup>26</sup> While the essay is not exactly the same as the text of Williams' book, the two are quite similar, and in some places practically identical in form and content. Williams admitted in his prefatory remarks to the reader that he was not the sole author of the text, writing, "there is little of mine in this, but the Language, and some few additional collections." He went on to say that "The whole substance of it... was communicated to me by a Gentleman of merit and quality... Mr. John Farrer of Geding in Huntingdonshire."<sup>27</sup> Accordingly, the Virginia of Williams' 1650 promotional tract, *Virgo Triumphans: or, Virginia richly and truly valued; more especially the South part thereof*, is much like that of Ferrar: Williams describes Virginia as an abundant land of limitless possibilities where "what ever single [product] is the staple of

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although Ransome has proved that Ferrar is indeed the author of *A Perfect Description of Virginia*, the pamphlet is still cited as "anonymous" by some recent authors, including Stephen Adams, reveals the lack of scholarly interest in Ferrar.

25. Edward Williams, *Virgo Triumphans: or, Virginia richly and truly valued; more especially the South part thereof*, (London, 1650), no pagination. Little is known of Edward Williams, other than that he wrote a promotional tract in 1650 with the help of Ferrar. (David R. Ransome, "Williams, Edward (fl. 1650)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, September 2004; online edition, October 2008.) NB: Irregular pagination in Williams' tract: 23, 24, 25, 34, 35, 28, 29, 39, 38, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41...47. After this there is an unnumbered "Table," and the tract ends with more text, on unnumbered pages (thus, are two pages numbered 34, 35, 38, and 39, and no pages numbered 26 or 27).

26. This manuscript essay, written in Ferrar's hand, can be found in the microfilm collection *The Ferrar Papers*. (1184:6)

27. Williams, no pagination. An example of the similarities between the two texts: Ferrar text taken from p. 2B: "Into Cambula the Cheife City of Tartary there Comes every day from China a lone a Thousand wagons laden w<sup>th</sup> Silke. as Authours of noe Small Credit and one that was there reports: China Also is full of Navigable Rivers And is fertill of all graine Maiz, Rice, and others of w<sup>ch</sup> hath 3 or 4 harvest in one yeare." Williams text taken from pp. 11-12: "Into *Cambula* the chiefe City of Tartary (as Authors of great repute and credit, and one who was personally there, reports) there comes every day from China, a thousand waggons laden with silke. Nor is China lesse happy in its multitude of navigable Rivers, in its wonderfull fertility of all sorts of graine, Maize, Rice,&c. of which it receiveth every yeere three or foure most plentifull Harvests."

other Nations, shall be found in this [land] joyntly collected.”<sup>28</sup> In writing about Virginia, Farrer and Williams focused on the prospects of the colony’s unsettled regions, especially those to the south.

In response to Williams’ tract, Ferrar illustrated the promoters’ conception of the colony’s geography in a 1650 manuscript map, drawn in pencil, ink, and watercolor. He inserted “Ould Virginia 1584, now Carolana 1650 New Virginia 1606 New England 1606” in his personal copy of Edward Williams’ *Virgo Triumphans* in addition to drawing the map, Ferrar wrote comments throughout his copy of Williams’ book.<sup>29</sup> The map, altered somewhat and given the name *A mapp of Virginia discourd to ye Hills, and in it’s Latt: From 35. deg: & ½ neer Florida to .41.deg: bounds of new England*, was engraved and printed in a new edition of Williams’ book the following year.<sup>30</sup> Both of Farrer’s maps depicted the North American continent as narrow, the Appalachian Mountains as unobtrusive, and highlighted the relative ease with which the promoters believed the South Sea could be reached from Virginia.

The third promoter of Virginia writing at the time, William Bullock, held many of the same views about the abundant possibilities to be found in the colony as Ferrar and Williams, although his conception of North American geography, which allowed for a

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28. Williams, *Virgo Triumphans*, no pagination.

29. Farrer’s copy of Williams’ book is now owned by the New York Public Library. Farrer’s manuscript map seems to only be known to cartographic historians, and is rarely depicted or even cited. The only two sources this author has ever seen it in are William P. Cumming, *The Southeast in Early Maps*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, revised and enlarged by Louis de Vorsey, Jr. (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998) and Richard W. Stephenson and Marianne M. McKee’s *Virginia in Maps: Four Centuries of Settlement, Growth, and Development* (Richmond, VA: The Library of Virginia, 2000).

30. According to David Ransome (“Williams, Edward (*fl.* 1650),” Oxford: Oxford University Press, September 2004; online edition, October 2008), there were only two editions of Williams’ tract, both dated 1650, and Ferrar’s map was printed in the second one. However, William P. Cumming (*Southeast in Early Maps*, 149) says that Ferrar’s map was printed in the third edition of Williams. This author’s own investigation of the copies of Williams’ tract available on Early English Books Online identified three distinct printings of the tract, all with the same pagination, but with different titles and (unpaginated) prefatory remarks.

broader continent, differed somewhat from theirs. Bullock was very optimistic about the future of the colony and its settlers; he said that his 1649 tract, *Virginia Impartially Examined, and left to publick view*, was published with the hope of “advising people of all degrees, from the highest Master, to the meanest Servant, how suddenly to raise their fortunes.” It is somewhat ironic that Bullock believed himself to be qualified to advise others about striking rich in the colony, for by his own admission, he had “in this place lost some thousands of pounds” in the course of managing his father’s estate in Virginia.<sup>31</sup> While it is not known whether Bullock and Farrer communicated, the historian Peter Thompson has discovered that Farrer, doubtless driven by his interest in all things relating to Virginia, owned a copy of Bullock’s tract and commented extensively in its margins. Farrer’s comments reveal that even if he and Bullock did not personally know each other, they had mutual acquaintances and likely at the very least knew of each other. Thompson’s recent article, “William Bullock’s ‘Strange Adventure’: A Plan to Transform Seventeenth-Century Virginia,” and his transcription of Farrer’s marginalia, provide further corroboration of the views mid-seventeenth century promoters held regarding Virginia.

The promoters were not profiteers: at the time of their writing, although both Bullock and Ferrar had lost money in the colony, they remained interested in the colony’s future and eager to aid those who shared their interest. They viewed themselves as “the Adventurers or Planters faithfull Steward[s]” and sought to advise potential settlers and current colonists about the advantages to be had in Virginia.<sup>32</sup> Their tracts and Ferrar’s map all attest to their belief that Virginia was ripe with opportunity for personal gain; as Ferrar

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31. Bullock, dedication “To The Reader,” no pagination. Bullock, however, refused to blame the loss on his beloved Virginia, and instead said that “the fault was onely in the men I trusted.” Bullock’s father, Hugh Bullock, was the captain of the ship *Indeavour* and settled in Virginia between 1626 and 1628; he lived in the colony for around a decade, and by the time he departed from Virginia he owned a 5,000 acre estate in Warwick County. (Thompson, “William Bullock’s ‘Strange Adventure,’” 108.)

32. Bullock, title page.

wrote in *A Perfect Description of Virginia*, “there is nothing wanting there to produce them, Plenty, Health, and Wealth.”<sup>33</sup>

### Virginia, the “Garden of the World”

The Virginia that John Ferrar, Edward Williams, and William Bullock described was a land of peace and plenty, designed by Nature to welcome and bless the English nation. Although the promoters admitted it was overgrown with vines, heavily-forested and inhabited by dangerous Indians, they described it as if it were a luscious garden and framed potential disadvantages as profitable opportunities. Their Virginia was a place where the mountains were mere “hills,” where wolves were “not fierce,” and where the natives, while not to be trusted, had been subdued and made tributary subjects of the English.<sup>34</sup> Ferrar, in his essay “Virginia Truly & Richly Valued,” envisioned Virginia in the form of a helpful handmaiden. His essay is framed as “Natures Speech to the Planters in Virginia 1649 And to all in England that wish well to that Plantation,” and is written from the perspective of a feminine Nature who proclaims Virginia to be “an other Paradise,” a part of Nature’s “harty Blessing” bestowed upon her “Best beloved Nation.”<sup>35</sup> While Williams did not retain Ferrar’s proposed structure in his *Virgo Triumphans*, the theme of a helpful Nature is certainly present in his work. Instead of describing the forest as an unfamiliar or threatening place, Williams declared that the forest would “refresheth” the man who sought shelter there

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33. Ferrar, 12.

34. Ibid., 7-9, 17. One historian, Virginia Bernhard, described the Virginia of the promoters as not a paradise of natural bounty, but “an economic paradise, promising all that England lacked. From the mother country, where land was scarce, beggars plentiful, diet monotonous, sport such as hunting reserved for the wealthy, and economic opportunity restricted to the middle and upper classes, Virginia was indeed an earthly paradise. It had an intoxicating abundance of land, an amazing variety of fruits and vegetables, rivers teeming with fish, forests alive with game, and all above, the promise of economic gain for even the poorest who settled there.” (Virginia Bernhard, “Poverty and the Social Order in Seventeenth-Century Virginia,” *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. 85, no. 2 (1977): 143.)

35. John Ferrar, “Virginia Truly and Richly valued,” in *The Ferrar Papers*. (1184:6)

by feeding him with “*Strawberries & Grapes* of a most delicious taste, which grow there in abundance.”<sup>36</sup> Later, he equated the woods to a “Cooks shop” where a settler could browse through an unlimited number of deer, hares, birds, and fish to make his dinner selection.<sup>37</sup> While acknowledging that potentially threatening animals such as bears were present in the woods, Williams discouraged fearful thoughts with talk of profit by including bears along with raccoons, hares, beavers, and squirrels in his list of animals which were “all of a delightfull nourishment for food, and their Fures rich, warme, and convenient for clothing and Merchandise.”<sup>38</sup>

According to Catherine Armstrong, colonial promoters had to confront the “indoctrinated view of the huge, alien forests of America” held by their readers, and worked to dispel readers’ fears about the dangers that might be hidden in the American wilderness.<sup>39</sup> In his tract Williams transformed the untamed Virginia wilderness into an exotic garden:

“Nor is the present wildnesse of it without a particular beauty, being all over a naturall Grove of Oakes, Pines, Cedars, Cipresse, Mullberry, Chestnut, Laurell, Sassafras, Cherry, Plum trees, and Vines, all so delectable an aspect, that the melanchollyest eye in the World cannot looke upon it without contentment, nor content himselfe without admiration.”<sup>40</sup>

In describing the unsettled parts of Virginia both Williams and Ferrar conceded that Virginia was heavily treed, and Ferrar wrote that “the great labour in *Virginia*” would be to clear the land of trees so that it could be plowed.<sup>41</sup> However, lest anyone be discouraged by the amount of labor which “this Improvement of the Woods” would require, Williams reminded his readers that “the very clearing of the ground carries an extraordinary benefit with it,” and

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36. Williams, 2.

37. *Ibid.*, 42.

38. *Ibid.*, 2. According to Armstrong, promotional writers “felt a need to explain whether the native fauna would be useful or dangerous, or perhaps useless but harmless.” (Armstrong, 105.)

39. *Ibid.*, 63, 70.

40. Williams, 1.

41. Ferrar, 9.

discussed commodities that the Virginians could produce from the wood to sell in Europe: pot-ashes, pipestaves, and clapboard.<sup>42</sup> Later editions of Williams' *Virgo Triumphans* contained an essay on "The making of the Saw-mill, very useful in Virginia, for cutting of Timber and Clapboard to build with-all, and its Conversion to many as profitable Uses" to aid the colonists in their efforts to reap the benefits of the American wilderness. Both Williams and Bullock assured their readers that the woods were easily passable, and not places where potential threats such as hostile Indians or wild beasts might be lurking unseen, or where a settler might become trapped or lost. Bullock insisted that the woods were "not like ours in *England*, for they are so cleare from Under-woods, that one may be seen above a mile and a half in the Wood, and the Trees stands at that distance, that you may drive Carts or Coaches between the thickest of them."<sup>43</sup> Somewhat paradoxically, Williams admitted in his tract "that wild Vines runne naturally over Virginia;" however, the promoter did not view the presence of so many vines as a problem and hypothesized that their existence was proof that grape vines would flourish in Virginia, enabling the colony to produce "the Noblest Wine in the World."<sup>44</sup>

The goal of the promoters was not merely to describe the land; rather, they were intent upon convincing their readers of its boundless fertility, and of how to best take advantage of Virginia's "most fruitfull" soil.<sup>45</sup> They often depicted Virginia, or the land itself, as a virgin maiden, eager and waiting for the English settlers to arrive and fill her soil

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42. Williams, 6, 4.

43. Bullock, 3. Williams concurs, maintaining that in the Virginia forests there are "No shrubs or underwoods to choake up your passage." (Williams, 1.)

44. *Ibid.*, 6, 7. Williams went on to argue that Virginia wine "would be[come] a Staple which would enrich this Countrey to the envy of France and Spaine;" not only would the Virginians no longer have to import wine, but they could supply the other British colonies with it.

45. Farrer, 9.

with the efforts and products of their husbandry.<sup>46</sup> Bullock declared, “you shall not finde the Earth ungratefull for any thing you trust her with.”<sup>47</sup> Besides hoping to convince new settlers to immigrate with promises of “A fat rich Soile every where,”<sup>48</sup> the promoters also tried to persuade the current colonists not to waste their time focusing solely on tobacco, for as they claimed, Virginia’s fertile soil would be perfect for growing silk, indigo, rice, flax, maize, rapeseed, and “fifteene kinds of fruits.”<sup>49</sup> The promoters were not alone in believing that Virginia’s economic dependence on tobacco was dangerous; those responsible for governing the colony recognized this as well. Charles I’s 10 August 1641 instructions to the new royal governor, Sir William Berkeley, ordered Berkeley to pursue the production of a variety of commodities, including hemp, flax, rapeseed, dye stuffs, pitch, tar, vineyards, mulberry trees, silkworms, orchards, and pig iron, and to limit the production of tobacco. The English authorities were concerned by the colony’s obsession with tobacco because it led the colonists to settle on distant, scattered plantations, instead of in ordered, English-style towns; additionally, the dropping price of tobacco was causing the planters to go into debt. Stephen Adams notes that by 1650 overproduction, poor quality control, competition from other colonies, and increasing restrictions imposed by England were serious problems for Virginia’s tobacco industry.<sup>50</sup> While Berkeley himself experimented with many of these new products, he had trouble convincing his fellow Virginians to do so.<sup>51</sup> In an attempt to encourage the Virginia planters to diversify their economy, Farrer included information in

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46. Adams, 103-04, 179. Armstrong, 68. See also Annette Kolodny, *The Lay of the Land: Metaphor as Experience and History in American Life and Letters* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1975).

47. Bullock, 8.

48. Farrer, 9.

49. *Ibid.*, 2.

50. Adams, 211.

51. Billings, “Diversification,” 439. Warren M. Billings, *The Old Dominion in the Seventeenth Century: A Documentary History of Virginia: 1606-1700*, rev. ed. (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 67. Sir William Berkeley to the Committee for Trade and Plantations, January 22, 1671/2, in Alvord and Bidgood, 178-9.

his tract about contemporary Virginians, such as Governor Berkeley, Captain Brocas, and Captain Samuel Matthews, who were successfully broadening the range of plants they cultivated, and Williams provided his readers with specific instructions about the planting and harvesting of products such as silk.<sup>52</sup> Farrer believed that the abundantly fertile Virginia soil could potentially supply England, as well as other British colonies, with commodities they were currently forced to purchase from nations diverse as “Spain, France, Denmark, Swede and Geremany, Poland, *yea, from the East-Indies.*”

Influenced by the writings of Elizabethan and Jacobean promoters and contemporary ideas about latitude, climate, and the location of paradise, mid-seventeenth century promoters believed that Virginia’s natural abundance was made possible by the colony’s fortuitous location. According to the famous explorer and promoter, Sir Walter Raleigh, “Paradise was created a part of this Earth, and seated in the lower part of Eden or Mesopotamia... it stands thirty-five degrees from the Equinoctiall.”<sup>53</sup> Virginia’s similar location led Williams to describe the New World as the World before the Fall, writing that Virginia had “an affinity with Eden, to an absolute perfection above all but Paradize.”<sup>54</sup> According to Timothy Sweet, Europeans’ expectations about the climate of the New World were indebted to the theories described in Aristotle’s *Meteorologica*, which argued that “latitude predicts weather and other environmental factors (*clima* being the classical geographic term for latitudinal bands of the globe);” this led Europeans to assume “that Old World environments [could] simply be mapped laterally onto New.”<sup>55</sup> Such beliefs had long been supported by promoters: in his 1584 *Discourse on Western Planting* the younger

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52. Farrer, 14. Williams, 21ff. Berkeley and Matthews were among Ferrar’s Virginia correspondents. Berkeley was one of the people in Virginia to whom John Ferrar sent a questionnaire in 1648. (Billings, “Diversification,” 442.)

53. Sir Walter Raleigh quoted in Edward Bland, *The Discovery of New Brittain* (London, 1650), in Alvord and Bidgood, 112.

54. Williams, 10, 44.

55. Sweet, 405; Kupperman, “Fear,” 218.

Richard Hakluyt insisted “that this westerne voyadge will yelde unto us all the commodities of Europe, Affrica, and Asia, as farr as we were wonte to travell.”<sup>56</sup> Nearly seventy years later, Williams excitedly wrote that China, “the richest and mightiest Empire in the World, lies in the same latitude and climate with our fortunate Virginia,” and expressed his belief that the same kinds of plants would grow in the same latitude all across the globe.<sup>57</sup> Williams compared Virginia to the wealthy eastern kingdoms of both China and Persia, insisting that Virginia had the capacity to produce all of the grains, ores, pearls, silks, and minerals of her “noble Sister[s] of the same Latitude.”<sup>58</sup> He boldly declared that “what ever singularity of Nature that Nation [China] may imagine her selfe Victorious over others, will be found equall in this Garden of the World.”<sup>59</sup> Such comparisons of Virginia to eastern lands, and even other European countries, like Italy, enabled promoters to advance their interpretation of Virginia’s natural state as more like that of a garden or paradise rather than a rude wilderness. The purpose of these comparisons was to lead readers to imagine wealthy and exotic places when they pictured Virginia in their minds, since few promotional works could afford to include maps or other illustrations.<sup>60</sup>

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56. Richard Hakluyt, quoted in Sweet, 405.

57. Williams, 11.

58. *Ibid.*, 10-12.

59. *Ibid.*, 19.

60. Armstrong, 27. Farrer wrote of the colony that, “with *Italy* they will compare for delicate Fruits.” (Farrer, 2.) Another reason for such comparisons was explored by Andrew Fitzmaurice in his article “Classical Rhetoric and the Promotion of the New World.” Citing Quintilian, an authority on classical rhetoric who argued that the way to convince an audience of something was to “appeal to the familiar” by describing “the unknown in terms of the known,” Fitzmaurice argued that elements of classical rhetoric, including comparisons, were both used purposefully by the authors of promotional tracts and understood by readers. Fitzmaurice described how contemporary English grammar schools and universities educated students in the theory and practice of classical rhetoric, and explained how during the mid-sixteenth century the art of preaching had been revised along the guidelines of classical rhetoric. Consequently it was likely that the authors of promotional tracts knew how to employ the tactics of classical rhetoric, and most commoners were familiar with its “vocabulary and values” without “necessarily being aware of the provenance of that language.” (Fitzmaurice, 224, 241.)

However, as the work of Katherine Ordahl Kupperman has shown, despite its correlation to paradise, the promoters' contemporaries had many concerns about the climate of the New World. Kupperman's article "Fear of Hot Climates in the Anglo-American Colonial Experience" investigates the interaction between the perception and the reality of the English colonists' encounters with the climates of North America and the West Indies. In general, she claims that the English feared warmer climates because of their demonstrated greater susceptibility to illnesses in the more southerly colonies. Application of the Hippocratic theory regarding the equilibrium between the four bodily humors to weather and climate led the English to believe that people moving from temperate climates to more extreme ones would consequently have unbalanced humors, potentially resulting in sickness or extreme actions. Kupperman has shown that in order to dispel such fears "from the 1630s on, propagandists for southern mainland colonies began to stress that the places they promoted lay between the extremes of northern cold and Caribbean heat and therefore would contain the riches of hot areas without their evils."<sup>61</sup> Williams opted to use this tactic in his *Virgo Triumphans*, and wrote that the climate of southern Virginia was characterized by "the excellent temper of the aire" which "dispences a moderate equality of heat and cold between the two violent extremes thereof in *Barbadoes* and *New England*."<sup>62</sup> Specifically addressing those with fears about the climate being too hot, he argued that the frequent showers, large number of rivers, streams, and other bodies of water present in Virginia "cannot but adde coolnesse and moisture to the neighbouring Elements of earth and aire," making the moderate climate yet another of Virginia's ideal attributes.<sup>63</sup>

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61. Kupperman, "Fear," 217.

62. Williams, no pagination.

63. *Ibid.*, no pagination.

**Geography and Cartography in the Promoters' Virginia: "And now all the question is only how broad the Land may be"**

The promoters' conception of Virginia's geography, like their understanding of Virginia's abundantly fertile soil, was based on the optimistic ideas of older promoters, explorers, and even mapmakers. As there had been no new explorations of the colony since its early years, all those depicting Virginia in word or image were forced to rely upon dated geographic information. For the most part, the promoters envisioned a narrow North American continent, or at least a continent that narrowed in the vicinity of Virginia, with an easily traversable mountain range at its center, and wide, navigable rivers awaiting explorers on the west side of the mountains, ready to carry them to the shores of the South Sea. However, these opinions were not universal, and some of the promoters' contemporaries argued for a wider North America; partly in response to such ideas, John Ferrar produced two maps of Virginia in the early 1650s which illustrated the Virginia he had portrayed in *A Perfect Description of Virginia*. Ferrar inherited his views from the promoters, explorers, and mapmakers who came before him, and whose works he, like Williams and Bullock, cite in his promotional tract.

Both Ferrar and Bullock referred their readers to the famous English mathematician Sir Henry Briggs' 1622 *Treatise on the Northwest Passage to the South Seas, through the Continent of Virginia and Hudson's Bay*, which made "it plaine, that a Trade from *Virginia* may be easily driven into the South and West Sea, lying on the backside of *Virginia*, not farre distant from thence, and so consequently to the *East Indies*."<sup>64</sup> Briggs also believed that California was an island, which put the shores of the South Sea even closer to Virginia. The belief that the North American continent would narrow in the vicinity of Virginia originated

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64. Bullock, 9. Ferrar, 8.

with the Florentine sailor Giovanni da Verrazano who explored the east coast of North America for the French in 1524. Verrazano returned to Europe claiming that at the 34<sup>th</sup> parallel he had glimpsed a large body of water glimmering on the other side of the land.<sup>65</sup> His ideas were recorded in cartographic form by his brother Gerolamo da Verrazano in a 1529 map. On the map the south and northwest boundaries of the western sea are very long, emphasizing to the viewer its size and importance; this greatly exaggerated the amount of water that Verrazano had actually seen. However, this information was believed and copied by other European mapmakers and led to the appearance of the hypothetical body of water entitled “Sea of Verrazano” on many sixteenth-century maps, including the Englishman John Dee’s 1582 manuscript drawn to aid Sir Humphrey Gilbert’s search for the Northwest Passage.<sup>66</sup> Knowledge of this geographic theory was still present in England during the seventeenth century, as an anonymous late-1630’s Thames School chart containing “A Branch of the South Sea” confirms.

Ferrar was a staunch defender of the belief that the North American continent was narrow, and repeatedly highlighted the ease with which the continent could be crossed; for example, the mountains which only a couple decades later would halt astounded explorers he referred to as mere “hills.” He believed that Sir Frances Drake had been on “the back side of Virginia in his voyage about the world” and that “now all the question is only how broad the Land may be to that place from the head of the James River above the Falls.” Repeatedly Farrer maintained that the journey from the falls of the James River to the shores of the

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65. Nellis M. Crouse, *In Quest of the Western Ocean* (New York: W. Morrow & Co., 1928), 67. Verrazano’s story was probably not a deliberate fabrication. J.C. Brevoort has estimated it is more likely that Verrazano was actually at 39° 30’, and Nellis Crouse posited it was probable that from the southern part of modern New Jersey Verrazano saw the Delaware Bay glimmering to the southwest and assumed it was the South Sea. (Crouse, 69.)

66. *Ibid.*, 69.

South Sea would be only an eight to ten days march by a land and water route.<sup>67</sup> These views appeared in his published pamphlet, his marginal comments in Bullock's tract, and later in his printed map. Williams' descriptions of Virginia's geography, unsurprisingly, matched Ferrar's: he wrote that Virginia was "divided from it [China] only by the Southsea, and... not of any long distance from it."<sup>68</sup>

Bullock's views, however, were somewhat different. He described the North American continent as wide, saying, "to the West it hath no bounds, untill you come to the West and South Sea, which is many miles over," and went on to say that "on the South side is many thousands of miles of Land; on the North is Land to *New-England*, and many thousand miles further."<sup>69</sup> Farrer vehemently disagreed with Bullock, and wrote an impassioned comment in the margins of Bullock's tract beside the description, declaring that "The westerly sea is not as is too commonly believed and we all abused by the Spanishe cards and Mapps for noe else we have: soe Farr from Virginia as many thousand miles or hundreds Either." He went on to confidently suggest that to cross the continent would be "an 8 or 10 days March naye it maybe not a 4 days Journy wth 40: or 50. Men."<sup>70</sup>

The "Spanishe cards and Mapps" that Ferrar referred to were likely ones that contained depictions of the west coast of North America, as Spain was the only European nation currently conducting explorations on the "backside of Virginia."<sup>71</sup> On these Spanish maps, such as Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas's 1622 *Descripción de las Yndias*

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67. Farrer, 7-8. Thompson, web supplement for "William Bullock's 'Strange Adventure,'" 1-3.

68. Williams, 11. Williams also wrote of the continent that, "The Indians unanimously consent that twenty two miles beyond the Falls, is a Rocke of Crystall, and this they evidence by their arrows very many whereof are headed with it. And that 3 dayes journey from thence, is a Rocke or Hill of Silver Oare. Beyond which, over a ledge of Hills, by a concurrent Relation of all the Indians, is the Sea, which can be no other but that Sea which washes the shore of China, &c." (Ibid., (the first) 35.)

69. Bullock, 2.

70. Thompson, web supplement for "William Bullock's 'Strange Adventure,'" 1-2.

71. Farrer, 48. By the "backside of Virginia" he means the west coast, where Sir Francis Drake landed in 1577.

*Ocidentales*, North America is very wide and full of mountains in the middle, making a trek across the continent to the “Mar del Svr” seem all but impossible, and much longer than the short march Farrer envisioned. It is clear that the promoters recognized the power of a map to sum up in a single image the land that they took pages to describe and its capacity to sway a viewer’s opinion, for they cited maps as authorities in their tracts.

The best-known representation of Virginia at the time was certainly Captain John Smith’s 1612 map *Virginia*. This influential map acquired a wide audience, as it was revised at least eleven times and reprinted repeatedly in works all across Europe, including the popular seventeenth-century atlases of Blaeu, Mercator, and Jansson. Smith’s *Virginia* provided future mapmakers with the outline of Virginia’s coast and rivers, as well as the locations of many native settlements: products of his explorations in the young colony. Additionally, he depicted Virginia oriented with west at the top of the map. Because of the publicity Smith’s map received, that particular orientation for maps of Virginia became very popular and was imitated by subsequent cartographers of the colony. It is also important to note that at that time there was no standard orientation for maps, and north was not always assumed to be at the top. A likely explanation for the orientation of Smith’s map is that it depicts Virginia from the direction which the English would have first encountered it as they sailed west across the Atlantic. Smith’s map remained the standard image of Virginia for seven decades, until it was surpassed by Augustine Herrman’s 1673 map, *Virginia and Maryland*. Farrer referenced Smith’s image when describing the way the rivers of Virginia feed into the Chesapeake Bay.<sup>72</sup> In his attempt to “cleare all Doubts” of his readers, Bullock offered to satisfy queries about Virginia by “shew[ing] them the best and newest Draught, or

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72. Farrer, 6.

Plot, of the Countrey;” the maps he recommended were Smith’s and Mercator’s *Atlas*.<sup>73</sup>

Williams, believing that the cartographic image of Virginia was both widely available and familiar to his audience, did not bother to mention any specific maps, and began the text of his tract by stating that, “The scituation and Climate of Virginia is the Subject of every Map, to which I shall refer the curiosity of those who desire more particular information.”<sup>74</sup>

Williams’ comment evidently did not sit well with Ferrar, who wrote in the margins of the first edition of Williams’ tract “But a map had binn very proper to this Book For all men love to see the country as well as to heare of it and the Eye in this kind is alsoe to be satisfied as well as the Eare. Therefore vnder Correction and Error in not doing it.”<sup>75</sup> Ferrar then proceeded to draw, in pencil, ink, and watercolor, an image of “Ould Virginia 1584, now Carolana 1650 New Virginia 1606 New England 1606,” which he later inserted into his personal copy of William’s book. The map presents a relatively simple view of the parts of North America settled by the English, demarcating the three provinces named in its title. The primary purpose of the map is to illustrate the proximity of Virginia to the “West Sea:” Virginia and “Carolana” contain many wide, welcoming rivers that would take prospective explorers directly to the low, narrow mountain range which is all that lies between them and the shores of the other sea. The coloration of the map serves to further emphasize how close Virginia is to that other shore, as the mountains, the western coast of America, and the South Sea are all colored in the same brownish hue, enabling the eyes of the viewer to easily glide from the western edge of the Carolana and Virginia colonies into the Sea. This manuscript map became the draft image for Ferrar’s 1651 printed map, *A mapp of Virginia discoured to ye Falls, and in it’s Latt: From 35. deg: & ½ neer Florida to .41.deg: bounds of new*

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73. Bullock, no pagination, 3. Mercator’s maps of North America depicted a wide continent like the one Bullock described.

74. Williams, 1.

75. Ferrar, quoted in Cumming, *The Southeast in Early Maps*, 148.

*England*, which was added to the second or third edition of Williams' *Virgo Triumphans*.<sup>76</sup>

The printed map covers a smaller geographical area, from north to south, in greater detail than its predecessor.

When Ferrar wrote that "all men love to see the country as well as to heare of it" he did not intend that his map should be used merely as an illustration for Williams' text; his *mapp of Virginia discouered to ye Falls*, and in later editions, *to ye Hills* is the best visual representation of the promoters' Virginia, summing up in a single image their most fervently held beliefs about the colony.<sup>77</sup> However, scholars, although willing to use Ferrar's "imaginative drawing" as an illustration in their books, have paid little attention to the significance of this work of promotional cartography, dismissing Ferrar's 1651 printed map, as Stephen Adams does, for its "fanciful geography."<sup>78</sup> Like its manuscript predecessor, Ferrar's printed map repeats the trope of an easy route to the "Sea of China and the Indies." Giving this name to the western ocean instead of calling it by one of the two most popular contemporary names, the "Pacific Ocean" or the "South Sea," again emphasizes Virginia's proximity to the riches of the east. The letters proclaiming this name are some of the largest on the map, second only to the text "Virginia." Its placement in the far left corner, where the English-speaking eye first looks, coupled with its isolation from any distracting background illustrations, makes the name "The Sea of China and the Indies" one of the most noticeable

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76. See note 30.

77. The image of the Ferrar map used in the Maps Appendix is of the map's fifth state. The first and second states of the map lack the portrait of Sir Francis Drake found on the later three. The third state says "Domina Virginia Farrer" instead of "John Farrer Esq<sup>3</sup>," and some decorative features have been added. In the fourth state, which possibly dates from 1652, the word "Falls" in the title has been changed to "Hills," and the way to the South Sea is not as easy as it had been in the previous states: the "Canada flu" is separated from the "Sea of China" by an isthmus dividing the previously unobstructed "Mighty great Lake." The fifth state of the map was sold by "Tohn Ouerton" instead of John Stephenson, who sold the previous four. (Cumming, *The Southeast in Early Maps*, 150.) For a more detailed analysis of the different states of Ferrar's map, see Coolie Verner, "The Several States of the Farrer Map of Virginia," in *Studies in Bibliography*, Papers of the Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA., III, 1950, 281-84.

78. Adams, 199.

features of the map. The location and size of the sea's name are so prominent that they could easily be mistaken for the map's title. Another prominent feature, found on the latter three states of the map, is the medallion portrait of Sir Frances Drake at the center of the top. Both Farrer's printed and manuscript maps bear legends that tell of Drake's 1577 landing on the shores of "new Albion," which he claimed for the English in the name of Queen Elizabeth, and go on to assert that the "happy shores" of Drake's Albion "in ten dayes march with 50 foote and 30 horsmen from the head of James River, ouer those hills and through the rich adiacent Vallyes beautified with as proffitable rivers, which necessarily must run into yt peacefull Indian Sea may be discovered to the exceeding benefit of Great Brittain, and joye of all true English."<sup>79</sup> This belief was very strongly held by Farrer, and an almost identical passage can be found twice in both *A Perfect Description* and Farrer's marginalia in Bullock's *Virginia Impartially Examined*.<sup>80</sup>

Both of Farrer's maps advertise an easy land route across the continent but also suggest the existence of an even simpler route: by water along the Hudson River. This belief was common among those who hoped for a Northwest Passage, and a corresponding section in Williams' text states that, "wee may entertaine grounds of hope and confidence, that this discovery of the South Sea may be made without any tedious Land-journey, since it is certaine that from the great confluence of Waters in the Gulf of St. Laurence, foure mighty Rivers receive their source."<sup>81</sup> The message of a near and easy discovery of the south sea can also be found in the illustrations on the map: in the northwest corner a herald blows a horn, anticipating the announcement of the English nation's triumphant entry into the western

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79. "Albion" was the name given to England in Ptolemy's *Geographia*.

80. See Farrer, 7-8, 13-14 and Thompson, web supplement for "William Bullock's 'Strange Adventure,'" 1-3.

81. Williams, 38.

ocean. The rivers which the promoters describe as contributing to Virginia's good climate and fertile soil will also help explorers to reach the other shore.

Although the depiction of Virginia's proximity to the south sea is the primary and most visually striking element of *A mapp of Virginia discouered to ye Falls*, the map serves to further illustrate many other aspects of the Virginia described in the writings of the promoters. The Virginia which Farrer depicts in his printed map is welcoming and attractive, as the abundance and variety of birds, animals, and trees suggest a land of plenty, where all that prospective settlers could want has been helpfully provided by nature. The land is well-watered and open, with widely-spaced shapely trees that appear to have been carefully pruned, making Virginia look more like a garden or aristocrat's hunting grounds than an untamed, unexplored wilderness. This serene image rests in rather stark contrast with Smith's *Virginia*, which is so densely covered in trees, hills, and the names of Indian towns that it must be examined closely in order to be understood. Smith's map was the standard image of Virginia at the time, and like most contemporary mapmakers, Farrer copied the cartographic information about Virginia's shoreline and rivers from Smith's map; however, he very consciously edited out many of the trees, hills, and almost all evidence of native presence. Farrer's map is somewhat unusual in decoration, as it contains no images of American Indians, a standard feature on many North and South American maps of the day. Although he does mark the locations of several native settlements and nations, Farrer downplays the native presence in Virginia; such an omission was likely deliberate, as just seven years before the Indians had attacked the English settlements, killing over five hundred colonists.

Similarly, in their writings the promoters were somewhat ambivalent about the Indians. Farrer spoke of them negatively, but emphasized that they had been defeated and

were now loyal tributary subjects to the British Crown, while Bullock called them “a wild people of a subtile and treacherous nature,” and yet laid out plans for their conversion to Christianity. Williams admitted that they posed a danger to the colonists, and therefore provided instructions for how to lay out a settlement so that it would be protected from an Indian attack and advised his readers to use Indian laborers only if very carefully supervised, “as sensible how apt they and the Divell their Tutor may be to embrace an occasion of being treacherous.” Despite this, Williams, along with all other contemporary promoters and mapmakers, relied heavily on the Indians for geographic information about Virginia. In a statement very similar to the text found on Farrer’s map Williams declared “that this report of the great Sea Southwest beyond the Mountains, cannot have the least of fiction or confederacy, since all the Indians from Canada to Florida, doe unjarringly agree in the Relation, is obvious to the meanest apprehension.”<sup>82</sup> The promoters, however, were not completely satisfied to rely upon Indian information, and strongly encouraged the colonists to undertake an expedition in search of the route to “the great Sea” and all the riches to which it would lead them.

Little is known of Farrer’s motivations for drawing his watercolor image of Virginia and having it printed and published, other than the evidence from his statement that “a map had binn very proper to this Book.” Of course, the fact that Farrer, the man who had provided Williams with all of his information for *Virgo Triumphans*, believed that Williams had made an “Error” by not including a map raises several questions, which, although

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82. Farrer, title page. Bullock, 55. Williams, (the first) 39, (the first) 35. The English had been relying upon the Indians for geographic information since the earliest days of Jamestown. Towards the end of the year 1607, Captain John Smith and a small party explored up the Chickahominy River; on this expedition they were attacked by a group of Indians and Smith was captured and taken before their leader, Powhatan. During his time in captivity, Smith asked Powhatan about the South Sea. Powhatan told him, confirming reports he had previously obtained from other Indians, that five to eight days away there was a place where salt water “dashed amongst many stones and rocks, each storm; which caused oft tymes the heade of the river to bee brackish.” (Smith, quoted in Crouse, 211.)

unanswerable at this time, are important to mention. Firstly, if Farrer wanted Williams' tract to have a map, why did it not have one from the very beginning? And, secondly, why did Farrer not include a map in the pamphlet that he himself published only a year previously? Additionally, it is interesting to note that when Farrer's map was inserted into the later editions of Williams' book no changes were made to the tract's text; the map appears between the parliamentary dedication and the body of the text without any comment or explanation, and was likely inserted by John Stephenson, the publisher of both Williams' tract and Farrer's map.

Although it is not known why Farrer thought a map was so necessary in this particular instance, he could have had several general motivations for drawing and publishing a new map of Virginia. Before *A mapp of Virginia discouered to ye Falls* was published, there was no map that specifically illustrated the promoters' view of the colony: a Virginia with copious natural resources, easy access to the South Sea, and a garden-like appearance. Farrer also likely wanted to counter the geographic ideas found in contemporary Spanish maps, which depicted a much wider North American continent; perhaps in retaliation he completely suppressed the Spanish presence in North America, and showed the territorial claims of the Swedes, Dutch, and French, but not the Spanish, on his map.<sup>83</sup> While Farrer's map was printed and sold for a number of years, it did not influence the cartography of any subsequent map. Farrer, who died in 1657, might have been disappointed with such knowledge, but that cannot be known for sure, as the promoters had an indelible belief in the promise and future glory of Virginia. When broaching the possibility that the passage to the South Sea might be harder to find than was initially predicted, Williams confidently wrote,

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83. The description of the Swedish Plantation on page eight of *A Perfect Description* meshes well with the depiction in Farrer's map.

“What if it should faile, why may not Virginia in her future felicity of silke be a new China and Persia to Europe?”<sup>84</sup>

Even though the cartographic image created by Farrer was not copied by other mapmakers, the promoters’ ideas lived on in the beliefs, writings, and maps of later generations. In 1666, Robert Horne drew the map, *Carolina Described*, to go with his tract *A Brief Description of the Province of Carolina*.<sup>85</sup> The coast is the focal point of *Carolina Described* and Horne provides no geographic details about the colony’s interior, which is blank except for several decorative depictions of the abundant flora and fauna the promoters described as inhabiting the New World. The images on *Carolina Described* include a mulberry tree and large silkworm, allusions to the promoters’ promises of the wealth that would come from silk production.<sup>86</sup> However, while this 1666 map inherited some of the agricultural beliefs of the promoters, it shows no evidence of utilizing their geographic ideas. In the decade after the publication of Horne’s map, the geographical conceptions held by the promoters would be challenged by the discoveries of the explorers.

**“Wishing you all prosperous happinesse and happy prosperity”**

John Ferrar, Edward Williams, and William Bullock stood to gain little, except perhaps personal satisfaction, from convincing their readers of the bounty and opportunities to be found in the wilderness garden of Virginia. They wrote because they were confident in the future of the colony and believed that both prospective and current settlers needed to be reassured about the promises of Virginia, since as of late they had, according to Ferrar, “little

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84. Williams, (the second) 39.

85. The map and tract were published by Horne, and while it is unclear whether he wrote and drew the works himself or not, they are commonly attributed to him.

86. The silkworm is the only decorative image on the map to be labeled, revealing its importance to the mapmaker.

Incouragement, and great uncertainties."<sup>87</sup> All three were sincere in wanting to advise their readers, and Bullock and Williams especially went to great lengths to provide helpful information to the prospective colonists. Both *Virgo Triumphans* and *Virginia Impartially Examined* included several sets of dedicatory remarks, each addressed to a different group of people whom the promoters thought would be particularly interested in their project, including members of Parliament, current planters in Virginia, and the general reader. These dedications represent attempts on the part of the promoters to reach out to specific groups of readers and connect with them on a more personal level. Catherine Armstrong argues that "The prevalence of epistles to the more generally defined reader shows that the power of the ordinary reader, as understood by authors, was growing throughout the early modern period."<sup>88</sup> Bullock, in his attempt to help prospective planters, carefully calculated all of the expenditures that a new settler could expect during his first year in the colony, and provided information about which crops the settlers should plant, when they ought to be planted, and how much to plant to make a profit. He also vigorously encouraged prospective immigrants to contact him personally with any questions they might have about the colony so that he could put all their fears to rest.<sup>89</sup>

In a dedication addressed "To the worthy Gentlemen, Adventurers and Planters in Virginia," Williams carefully listed all of the "Necessaries" that new planters and their servants would need in the colony, including clothing, supplies, tools, and household goods.<sup>90</sup> Later in his tract, Williams explained how multiple harvests, one of the many blessings of Virginia's fertile soil and ideal climate, worked and gave very specific

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87. Ferrar, 10. Ferrar, always the advocate of the Virginia Company, attributed the hard times of the past two decades to the lack of Company rule in Virginia.

88. Armstrong, 34.

89. Bullock, 35ff, unpaginated introduction.

90. Williams, no pagination.

instructions for plowing and caring for a field with one man and one boy.<sup>91</sup> He also explained in great detail some of the skills he thought necessary for the colonists to have; for example, he laid out step-by-step instructions of the silk-making process for interested adventurers, and explained why sericulture would work so well in Virginia.<sup>92</sup> Williams concluded his dedication to the planters by reminding his readers that he sincerely wanted them to succeed and declared that he wished them “all prosperous happinesse and happy prosperity.”

While they did genuinely want to help the colonists, the promoters’ writings were not without motivation. Seeking to address what he saw as the flaws of the colony, Bullock laid out detailed plans in his tract to reform the political and judicial system. Moreover, all three promoters wanted to convince their readers of the benefits of agricultural and economic diversification. They shared a distaste for Virginia’s reliance on tobacco, which both Bullock and Williams called a “disease;” Williams complained of the “Planters who are so infected with that disease of the Countrey, that they cannot admit of any other Staple, though more gainfull and lesse laborious.”<sup>93</sup> Because the planters’ single-minded obsession with tobacco caused them to not take advantage of Virginia’s great agricultural potential, Farrer called tobacco “a witch indeed” for consuming all of the Virginians’ time and energy and distracting them from making the “Soe Easy Sure and most Rich Discovery to a West Sea or South Sea over the hills.”<sup>94</sup> Farrer and the other promoters wrote to counsel the planters, but they also wanted to encourage prospective explorers to venture out past the “hills” to

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91. *Ibid.*, 3.

92. *Ibid.*, 21-24. As David Ransome argues in his *Dictionary of National Biography* article on Williams, it is likely that Williams obtained all of his information about silk from Ferrar, who was an avid proponent of sericulture in Virginia.

93. Bullock, 10. Williams, 21. It should be noted, however, that Williams did not have a completely negative opinion of tobacco: he admitted in the very next sentence, “Yet is not Tobacco without its virtues.” Besides stating the fact that tobacco makes money, he mentioned that the Spanish had recently discovered that its juice could be used for a medicinal purpose, to help cure wounds.

94. Thompson, web supplement for “William Bullock’s ‘Strange Adventure,’” 2- 3.

discover the passage to the east and to bring back new geographic information.<sup>95</sup> Williams even developed a plan of action for future explorers and suggested that they “fall upon it by degrees,” establishing forts every twenty to twenty-five miles along the way which would both support the English discoverers and defend the territory from the Spanish.<sup>96</sup> Several times throughout *A Perfect Description* Farrer mentions he has heard that the planters have resolved “to make a further Discovery into the Country West and by South;” his excitement over the prospect of an impending expedition of exploration and discovery and his confidence that the explorers will return with good news is palpable in his writing.

It is certain that the promoters wanted to aid and encourage the colonists, but it is very difficult to measure the impact they had on their readers or even how many readers they had. There is little statistical information available for the works of Ferrar, Williams, and Bullock; however, the fact that Williams’ *Virgo Triumphans* was printed multiple times in 1650 alone would suggest that it was popular. Although the number of copies in each printing is unknown, the book was being purchased by a readership that exhibited some demand for it. Slightly more is known about Ferrar’s *mapp of Virginia discouered to ye Falls*, which was printed in five different states and was reprinted over the course of several decades in various publications, as well as independently. John Stephenson, the original publisher of Ferrar’s map, used it to illustrate several contemporary works about Virginia that he published, including Williams’ *Virgo Triumphans* and the merchant and explorer Edward Bland’s 1651 *Discovery of New Brittain*, which will be discussed later. The latter three states of the map were modified by and printed under the name of Ferrar’s daughter Virginia, making *A Mapp of Virginia discouered to ye Falls* the first map of North America with a woman’s name printed on it. The plate for Ferrar’s map was later obtained by the

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95. One of the items in Farrer’s questionnaire inquired about new geographic information or news of the south sea.

96. Williams, (the first) 35, 37.

publisher John Overton, who published the fifth state of the map and printed copies of the map for both atlases and individual purchase. William Blathwayt, Secretary to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, included a copy of the fourth state of the map among the forty-eight maps he assembled between 1680 and 1685 into a reference atlas for the Office of Trade and Plantations.<sup>97</sup>

Although more precise information may be lacking, it is apparent that the promoters had a receptive audience. According to Ferrar, William Bullock convinced three hundred people to immigrate to Virginia with him shortly after the publication of *Virginia Impartially Examined*; in Virginia Bullock hoped to live out the social reforms and agricultural diversification he had called for in his tract.<sup>98</sup> One contemporary observer in England, Samuel Hartlib, recorded that Bullock and his “planters intend mainly for corne, Cattle, flaxe and rice.” Additionally, a resident of Virginia, Edward Johnson, the minister of Mulberry Island parish, called Bullock’s efforts the “good proi[e]ct of the Plow,” which he considered to be “much better than Tobacco.”<sup>99</sup> Johnson was a correspondent of Ferrar’s, and in a June 12, 1650 letter Johnson informed the promoter of Bullock’s recent death; Ferrar recorded in the endpapers of his copy of Bullock’s *Virginia Impartially Examined* that the “poore Gentellman” had run out of provisions less than a fortnight after his arrival in Virginia, and “forced to goe Seeke to buy Corne,” he died after being exposed to the elements in an open

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97. Philip D. Burden, *The Mapping of North America: A List of Printed Maps, 1511-1670* (Raleigh Publications, 1996), 338. Cumming, *Southeast in Early Maps*, 149-50. Stephenson and McKee, 34. Jeanette D. Black, ed., *The Blathwayt Atlas*, vol. II (Providence, RI: Brown University Press, 1975) 141-44. In 1975 Brown University published a two-volume set with facsimiles of all 48 maps in the first volume, and a second volume of commentary.

98. Ferrar’s marginalia in *Virginia Impartially Examined* in Thompson, web supplement for “William Bullock’s ‘Strange Adventure,’” 16. Samuel Hartlib, however, had an even more generous estimate: the second book of Hartlib’s *Ephemerides* for 1649, written between April and August of that year, states that “Bullock is going over with diverse good families,” and that “Hee carries over many hundreds if not thousands of all manner of brave men that purpose to settle there.” (Samuel Hartlib, quoted in Thompson, “William Bullock’s ‘Strange Adventure,’” 20.)

99. Samuel Hartlib, quoted in Thompson, “William Bullock’s ‘Strange Adventure,’” 20. Edward Johnson to John Ferrar, 12 June 1650, *The Ferrar Papers*, 1159:6.

boat on a cold night.<sup>100</sup> Despite all his careful planning, for Bullock, as for so many others, the abundant Virginia that the promoters promised did not materialize.<sup>101</sup>

The promoters sung Virginia's praises because they genuinely believed in the colony, as both Ferrar's decades of correspondence and Bullock's attempt to actually settle in Virginia and live out his ideas demonstrated. The primary goal of their works was, as Bullock wrote, "to take off that Odium that malitious tongues have thrown upon" the colony, and to convince their readers that "this Countrey of Virginia is abundantly stored with what is by all men aimed at, viz. Health and Wealth."<sup>102</sup> Ferrar wanted to provide the public with a new "perfect description" of Virginia because he believed that "there ha[d] been nothing related of the true estate of this Plantation these 25 years," and Williams eagerly extolled the virtues of his "fortunate Virginia," where planters and adventurers alike could acquire "infinite profits."<sup>103</sup> The Virginia that the promoters envisioned was a place that, although lacking roads and towns, covered with "wild Vines," with hills full of "Lyons," "Beares," "Leopards," "Elkes," and "treacherous" natives, could be re-imagined into the peaceful and plentiful "Garden of the World," a land of perfect climate, fertile soil, and endless natural bounty.<sup>104</sup> Bullock, sure of Virginia's promise, wrote towards the end of his tract that, "I know it is a common opinion received, that such as go to *Virginia*, come to a wilderness,

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100. Thompson, web supplement for "William Bullock's 'Strange Adventure,'" 16. Ferrar's notes actually include two different versions of Bullock's death: in the first Bullock dies from the effects of falling out of the boat during a winter storm, and in the second his death is the result of having to sleep in the open boat on a cold night.

101. Bullock had planned, as he suggested to his readers in *Virginia Impartially Examined*, to depend upon the hospitality of older planters in Virginia upon his arrival there. Ferrar commented in the margins of Bullock's book that "in this you must be very wary how you runn upon trust the Old planters are some of them too hard for New Commers." Ferrar stated in his report of Bullock's death that the would-be planter was "failed of Some frinds helpe" in Virginia. (Bullock, 37. Thompson, web supplement for "William Bullock's 'Strange Adventure,'" 16.) Evidently Bullock was not a good judge of character, for both the men in Virginia to whom he entrusted his father's Warwick County estate and those to whom he entrusted the wellbeing of himself and his followers proved to be poor choices.

102. Bullock, 1.

103. Ferrar, title page. Williams, 11.

104. Williams, 6. Ferrar, 17. Bullock, (the first) 39. Williams, 55, 19.

and that they must lie in the fields, till they can build them a house, such false rumors hath lockt up this paradice of the earth from many a deserving man.”<sup>105</sup> Although, as Bullock discovered, there were flaws in the promoters’ view of Virginia as a paradise, their vision was still an attractive one and it successfully persuaded many prospective colonists to leave everything they knew behind them and venture out into the New World. Moreover, the ideas about Virginia’s geography and proximity to the South Sea espoused by the promoters influenced the expectations of colonial explorers for decades to come. Yet it was the explorers’ observations and experiences on the very expeditions prompted by these ideas which challenged the geographical view of Virginia held by the promoters.

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105. Bullock, 51-2.

### III. The Explorers' Virginia

#### Embarking on “discoveries to the westward and southward of this country”

Despite the best efforts of the promoters, most of the colonists living in Virginia did not have a positive view of the areas unsettled by the English to the west and south of the Tidewater, which they perceived to be a wilderness. According to the historian Alan Vance Briceland, “seventeenth-century Virginians... stood in dread of the unknown, savage-inhabited wilderness beyond the fall line.”<sup>106</sup> The Virginia colonists concentrated their efforts on raising tobacco on their Tidewater plantations, and expressed little curiosity in what lay outside the settled regions of the colony or beyond the mountains. Michael Upchurch, one of the seven respondents to John Ferrar’s 1646 questionnaire, exhibited no interest in the unsettled parts of Virginia despite having been there himself: in reply to Ferrar’s question about the land of Virginia, he wrote “here wee have discovered enough of the Country 4 or 5 hundred miles some way I myselfe have been a 100 miles above ye falls when wee were out upon our March after ye Indians wee have discovered enough of it.”<sup>107</sup> Perhaps Upchurch had not been impressed with what he saw “above ye falls;” evidence from the surviving accounts of European explorers who ventured past the fall line and the Blackwater River, the western and southern perimeters of English settlement in the seventeenth century, reveals that they did not encounter the agreeable paradise so lavishly described by the promoters. Instead, they discovered a wilderness where opportunities for profit were limited by hostile Indians, dangerous beasts, and an indifferent landscape.

English explorations were driven by the promises of early promoters that Virginia contained a route to the much-sought-after South Sea and rich mineral deposits.<sup>108</sup> Some

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106. Briceland, *Westward from Virginia*, 13.

107. Michael Upchurch to John Ferrar, 1650, *The Ferrar Papers*, 1182:6.

108. In 1607 and 1608 Captain John Smith explored along the Chesapeake Bay and its tributary rivers searching for a waterway that would take the English to the South Sea; his initial report stating that

explorers had additional motivations, such as the acquisition of land or involvement in the Indian fur trade. Because exploration was an expensive pursuit, expeditions were most often financed by private individuals and therefore reflected the desires of their patrons; however, even privately-funded expeditions had to be approved by the Virginia General Assembly because the colonial government wanted to prevent conflict with the Indians and the other Europeans present in America.<sup>109</sup>

The first recorded English expeditions into the interior of the continent took place between 1650 and 1674. There had been one petition to the Assembly for permission to undertake an exploratory expedition to the southwest in 1641, but it apparently had little support as it was not acted upon by the legislators until 1643. The proposed venture was never carried out, most likely because of the major Indian uprising of 1644 in which the Powhatan Indians killed more than five hundred colonists. This uprising increased the settlers' fear of the Indians and of the Virginia interior and frontier regions, which were the most susceptible to Indian attacks. The colonists, led by their new governor, Sir William Berkeley, retaliated against the Powhatan Confederacy, defeated the Indians, and forced them to sign a treaty in 1646 which relegated them to tributary subjects of the English Crown. The 1646 treaty also defined a boundary between the settlers and the natives, which neither was allowed to cross without permission from the English colonial government, and

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information gathered from the American Indians suggested the existence of a water route to the South Sea so excited the members of the Virginia Company in England that they sent Captain Christopher Newport to Virginia with a commission "not to return without a lump of gold, a certainty of the South Sea, or one of the lost company of Sir Walter Raleigh." (John Smith, quoted in Crouse, 215.) In 1609 the Virginia Company had its royal charter altered to extend the Company's grant to the land from "sea to sea," seeking to secure their claim on whatever route to the other shore might be found; the original 1606 charter had entitled the Company a block of land stretching one hundred miles along the coast and one hundred miles inland.

109. Briceland, "British Explorations," 270. The English conception of the size of the North American continent caused some to fear that the explorers might encounter the Spanish as soon as they crossed the mountains.

established four English forts along the western border of the fall-line to help prevent another attack.<sup>110</sup>

The southwestern-most of the four forts, Fort Henry, was placed under the command of Captain Abraham Wood. Wood had come to the colony as an indentured servant as a boy in 1620 and in 1636 moved to Virginia's southwestern frontier on the Appomattox River where he became a recognized leader and Indian fighter, a large land owner, and eventually a burgess representing Henrico County in the Virginia Assembly.<sup>111</sup> In 1650 Wood, the merchant Edward Bland, four other Englishmen, and an Appomattox Indian guide named Pyancha set out from Fort Henry "intending a South westerne Discovery," and began the first documented English venture into the interior of North America.<sup>112</sup> The following year Bland published an account of their expedition into southern Virginia and present-day North Carolina entitled *The Discovery of New Brittain*.<sup>113</sup> The explorers' motivations for participating in and writing about the expedition were not made clear in the tract. When questioned by the Indians, Bland replied that they were interested in trading, but this explanation does not seem entirely plausible as the explorers brought no trade goods with them. It is more likely that Bland and his companions were interested in promoting the colonization of the area.<sup>114</sup> As he and his fellow explorers traveled between Indian villages,

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110. These forts soon proved too expensive for the Virginia Assembly to maintain, and they came under the management of individuals who received certain benefits from the government for providing for the colony's defense, including six thousand acres of land, the right to trade with the Indians, and exemptions from some taxes.

111. The fort on the James River, Fort Charles, was commanded by William Byrd, who, like Wood, used his position on the frontier to develop a profitable trade with the Indians and thereby learned a great deal about the wilderness; however, while Byrd was a prolific letter-writer, he kept his knowledge of the wilderness to himself, and therefore little is known of his exploits or discoveries.

112. Edward Bland, *The Discovery of New Brittain* (1651), in Alvord and Bidgood, 114.

113. "New Brittain" was not a new name for English holdings in the New World; in 1609 Robert Johnson published a tract entitled: *Nova Britannia. Offering Most Excellent fruites by Planting in Virginia. Exciting all such as be well affected to further the same.*

114. Edward Bland was a relative newcomer to Virginia at the time of his expedition; he, his wife, and son immigrated in the mid-1640s and he soon became one of the largest landowners in the colony. A member of a large London merchant family, Bland was transferred from the Canary Islands

Bland frequently commented on the “very rich and fertile soil,” and suggested ways that the English could profitably use or “improve” the land. Bland was also very interested in the mineral wealth that the land might contain. In his descriptions of the land and the peoples who inhabited it, Bland, like the promoters, used references to the East to stir up thoughts of paradise and opulent riches in the minds of his readers.<sup>115</sup> The promoters themselves evidently felt an affinity with Bland’s work, as John Farrer’s *mapp of Virginia discoured to ye Falls* was included in some editions of the merchant explorer’s book. However, from the perspective of the explorers, the wilderness through which they traveled was not the open, inviting, and well-pruned paradise the promoters envisioned; instead, it contained thick woods, marshes, and rivers that were difficult to cross. In addition, it was populated by a variety of Indian peoples who had already claimed the land for themselves and whose relationships with each other were often fraught with enmity. Eventually, because of the increasingly hostile and threatening reactions of the Indians, Bland’s party turned back towards the relative safety of Fort Henry and English settlement.

After Bland and Wood’s explorations, the Virginia colonists did not successfully mount another expedition until 1669. Most historians gloss over the intervening two decades either by ignoring them altogether or by arguing, as Alan Vance Briceland does, that the

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to Virginia after the death of his brother Adam, the family’s original representative in the colony. The Bland family had been interested in Virginia since the days of the Virginia Company, of which Bland’s father had been a member. (Briceland, *Westward from Virginia*, 14-15, 17-22.) Alan Vance Briceland has suggested that Bland’s expedition and tract were parts of a larger Bland family effort to obtain a grant for the land to the south of Virginia. Briceland expounds his speculations in his book *Westward from Virginia*, 55-67.

115. Bland, quoting from Raleigh’s *Marrow of History*, in Alvord and Bidgood, 112. Bland’s account was not the only one to utilize comparisons with the East. In his letter detailing the exploits of Needham and Arthur, Wood writes of the Tomahitans that “all ye wesocks [another tribe] children they take are brought up with them as ye lanesaryes [Janissaries] are a mongst ye Turkes.” (Abraham Wood to John Richards, 22 August 1674, in Alvord and Bidgood, 218.) In her section on how writers “subdued” the Virginia landscape, Catherine Armstrong argued that the writers would compare features of the American landscape to those in Britain to help make them sound more familiar to prospective colonists. She, however, seems not to recognize that they made comparisons to the East as well. (Armstrong, 78.)

1650 expedition “proved such a harrowing experience for the participants that it discouraged follow-up attempts.” According to this theory, Governor Berkeley and the colonial government became convinced that the only safe way to travel through Indian lands was with a large and well-armed group of men, and so they discouraged explorations, believing that such a show of force might arouse Indian hostility.<sup>116</sup> While it is true that in the wake of Bland’s experience the Virginia colonists believed that a large party was necessary for protection in the wilderness, legislative evidence shows that the Virginia Assembly did not discourage explorations from taking place. Edward Bland himself was eager for another try, and in October 1650 he obtained an order from the Assembly “allowing him to explore and colonize the new country;” however, his untimely death put an end to these plans.<sup>117</sup>

Between 1652 and 1660 the Assembly issued four separate Orders granting the petitions of three groups and one individual to pursue “discoveries to the westward and southward of this country,” “to discover the Mountains,” and “to endeavour the finding out of any Commodities that might probably tend to the benefit of this Country.”<sup>118</sup> There are, however, no records of these proposed expeditions taking place; factors such as the costliness of exploratory ventures, the death of patrons like Bland, and the worsening political situation in England contributed to the lack of significant exploratory activities in Virginia for the next two decades. Additionally, the strict regulation of the fur trade by the colonial government prohibited the involvement of many colonists in a lucrative business that might have provided stimulus for further exploration. Trade with the Indians was limited to the frontier

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116. Briceland, *Westward*, 13. Briceland, “British Explorations,” 284.

117. Bland, in Alvord and Bidgood, 52. Bland died between 1651 and 1653. After Edward Bland’s death, his brother Theodorick replaced him as the family’s representative in Virginia; Thodorick did not seem to share his brother’s interest in exploration, and is not recorded to have participated in any expedition.

118. See Alvord and Bidgood, 102-4.

forts for the decade after their 1646 founding, and after 1661 traders were required to be licensed by the government to participate in Indian trade.<sup>119</sup>

While their perception of the threatening nature of the American wilderness undoubtedly dissuaded many colonists from venturing past the boundary line marked by the English frontier forts, there were some who maintained an interest in the unexplored lands. Abraham Wood and Sir William Berkeley were two such men. Berkeley had a long-standing interest in discovering the South Sea: Farrer reported in *A Perfect Description* that as early as 1649 there was a rumor that Governor Berkeley himself was going to discover “the Country West and by South above the Fall and over the Hills” with “30 horse, and 50 foot.”<sup>120</sup> In 1669 Berkeley wrote a letter to Lord Arlington in England describing the expedition “to find the East India sea” that he and a “Company of Two hundred Gent” had planned that spring, but had been unable to execute because of “unusual and continued Raynes.”<sup>121</sup> Although Berkeley was never able to participate in an expedition himself, he commissioned the enigmatic German physician, John Lederer, to undertake three separate explorations between 1669 and 1670 to discover “a passage to the further side of the mountains.”<sup>122</sup> On his first and third expeditions Lederer journeyed due west, attempting

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119. It is interesting to note that the two major restrictions on Indian trade were passed by the Assembly during the tenure of Governor Berkeley (1642-52, 1660-77); in 1676 Nathaniel Bacon criticized Berkeley, claiming that the governor had “monopolized a trade wth the Indians” in the 1660s and 1670s. Berkeley is normally portrayed as a proponent of exploration, but perhaps it is time to develop a more nuanced view of Berkeley and his motivations. In their book, *Bound Away*, David Hackett Fischer and James C. Kelly mentioned that Berkeley encouraged exploration and the fur trade among his “cavalier-foresters,” but did not like settlement beyond the fall line; further inquiry into this idea is necessary. (Briceland, *Westward*, 94, quoting Nathaniel Bacon, June 18, 1676, in “Bacon’s Rebellion,” *WMQ*, 1<sup>st</sup> ser., vol. 9 (1900): 6. David Hackett Fischer, and James C. Kelly, *Bound Away: Virginia and the Westward Movement* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 2000), 82-3.)

120. Farrer, 7.

121. Sir William Berkeley to Lord Arlington, 27 May 1669, in Alvord and Bidgood, 175.

122. John Lederer, *The Discoveries of John Lederer* (London, 1672), in William P. Cumming, ed. *The Discoveries of John Lederer* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1958), 24. Knowledge of the Spanish presence on the “backside of Virginia” combined with contemporary English geographic beliefs caused some to fear that crossing the mountains would lead to a run-in with the

unsuccessfully to cross the Appalachian Mountains, and on the second, deserted by his English companions, he veered southwest and ventured deep into the wilderness of the Carolina region with his Indian guide Jackzevaton. Lederer's second expedition is his most famous, and most controversial. His account of this journey contains descriptions of a ten league-wide brackish lake, a huge desert, and reports of many strange native peoples; such details have consistently presented a problem for historians who attempt to determine where exactly Lederer went or establish the veracity of his tract.<sup>123</sup> Lederer's contemporaries, however, were glad to have new information about the interior of the North American continent, and quickly incorporated his report into their maps and writings. Although Lederer was unable to help Berkeley and the English in their quest to find a route to the South Sea, he returned from his expeditions with first-hand knowledge of the vastness of the mountain range to the west of Virginia and important information regarding the various Indian nations that peopled the Carolina region. After his return, Lederer wrote an account of his three expeditions in Latin and drew a map of the area through which he had traveled.

After a brief five years in the English colonies, Lederer disappeared from the historical record as quickly as he appeared. Lederer left Virginia for Maryland under somewhat mysterious circumstances in 1671, and later traveled to New England before returning to Germany.<sup>124</sup> While in Maryland, Lederer became acquainted with Sir William

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<sup>1</sup> Spanish. It is possible that Berkeley commissioned a German because of his fear of conflict with Spain if an English explorer was to be caught in Spanish territory. (Briceland, *Westward*, 95-7. Adams, 240.)

123. Despite these difficulties, many, including Dieter Cunz, William P. Cumming, and Alan Vance Briceland, have tried. As previously stated, for the purposes of this project, Lederer's exact destination is not as important as his description of his trip.

124. In his preface "To the Reader," Talbot claimed that Lederer was not well-received in Virginia after returning from his expeditions because he had gone "into those Parts of the American Continent where Englishmen never had been, and whither some refused to accompany him," and "that the Publick Levy of that year, went all to the expence of his Vagaries." Talbot went on to say that he had published Lederer's tract "to give him an occasion of vindicating himself." (Talbot, in Cumming, *Discoveries*, 5.)

Talbot, an Irishman and nephew of Lord Baltimore who served as the Secretary of the colony of Maryland. In 1671 Talbot returned to Ireland and the following year he published a translation of Lederer's Latin account augmented by information from his own conversations with the German explorer entitled, *The Discoveries of John Lederer from Virginia to the West of Carolina, and other parts of the Continent*.<sup>125</sup> In addition to narrations of the explorer's three expeditions, *The Discoveries of John Lederer* contained five small essays that reveal Lederer's ideas about the geography of North America, exploration, and the Indians, as well as *A Map of the Whole Territory Traversed by John Lederer in His Three Marches*, which, according to Talbot, was "copied from [Lederer's] own hand."<sup>126</sup> Since Lederer's original Latin text does not survive, Talbot's translation is the only record of Lederer's account.

The record of Lederer's experiences, and especially those from his second journey, reinforced much that the English had learned of the wilderness from Edward Bland's expedition twenty years before: south of the parts of Virginia settled by the English lay a region that was potentially both profitable and dangerous. However, Lederer also successfully proved that a large, heavily-armed party was not necessary for wilderness exploration; Lederer himself advised his readers that "half a dozen, or ten at most," were all that were necessary. He further suggested that "the major part" of the group should be Indians, warning that the natives whose lands the explorers would have to pass through "are prone to jealousy and mischief towards Christians in a considerable Body" but would "apprehend no danger" from a smaller party. Lederer's contemporaries heeded his advice,

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125. Cumming, *Southeast in Early Maps*, 15.

126. Talbot, in Cumming, *Discoveries*, 6.

and the subsequent expeditions of the 1670s consisted of a small number of Englishmen accompanied by several native guides.<sup>127</sup>

The final two expeditions of the period were planned and financed by Wood, now a Major General. Although the 1650 southwestern expedition is the only exploratory venture that Wood is recorded to have made, he remained active on the Virginia frontier for the rest of his life, maintaining an interest in exploration and organizing an annual party of fur traders.<sup>128</sup> In 1671 Wood commissioned Thomas Batts, Robert Fallam, Thomas Wood, and their Appomattox guide Penecute to undertake a journey “for the finding out the ebbing and flowing of the Waters on the other side of the Mountaines in order of the discovery of the South Sea.”<sup>129</sup> This expedition is the first recorded account of Europeans successfully crossing the Appalachian Mountains; however, these explorers were not likely the first Europeans to make this journey. During their expedition through the mountains they passed several trees that had been marked with the initials “M.A N I.”<sup>130</sup> Robert Fallam kept a daily journal of their venture which was never published, although the existence of Fallam’s private account was known to other prominent English Virginians. It was copied and sent to England on at least two separate occasions: Dr. Daniel Coxe sent it to the Lords of Trade, and the Reverend John Clayton sent a copy to be read for the Royal Society, of which Clayton was a member, entitled “A Journal from Virginia, beyond the Apailchian mountains,

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127. Lederer, *Ibid.*, 39.

128. Briceland, *Westward From Virginia*, 15, 23ff. Briceland, “The Search for Edward Bland’s New Britain,” 134-35.

129. Robert Fallam, “John Clayton’s Transcript of the Journal of Robert Fallam,” in Clarence Walworth Alvord and Lee Bidgood, *The First Explorations of the Trans-Allegheny Region by the Virginians, 1650-1674* (Cleveland, OH: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1912), 184. Thomas Wood died on the expedition. It is possible that he was a relation of Abraham Wood, but there is no known evidence to prove such a connection. Some scholars have posited that Thomas was Abraham’s son, but this was not likely the case, as no where in the source is much made of Thomas’ death, and it is reasonable to assume that if he was the son of the expedition’s patron, his death would have rated at least a minimal comment to that effect.

130. Fallam, in Alvord and Bidgood, 186. Later the party encountered one tree marked “MA NI” and another with “MA” on it. (*Ibid.*, 188.)

in Sept. 1671.” Terser than either Bland or Lederer, Fallam recorded only basic details about the direction in which the party traveled, the terrain they crossed, and the Indians they encountered. While the natives of the mountains were fewer in number and much more hospitable than those to the south, the topography of the mountains was far more treacherous. Batts and Fallam returned to Wood claiming to have discovered a westward-flowing tidal river, which was evidence, they believed, of the South Sea. While Wood was undoubtedly glad to hear this, the rest of the explorers’ report was not as promising: the mountains were very sparsely populated and were so difficult to cross that they had to leave their horses behind, meaning that there would be little opportunity for trade or planting, as pack trains would be unable to travel where the explorers had.

Despite the apparent difficulties, two years later Wood sent James Needham and Gabriel Arthur out in search of “ye discovery to ye south or west sea.”<sup>131</sup> After one abortive attempt in April 1673 when the explorers’ native guides expressed an “unwillingness... that any should discover beyond” the mountains, Needham and Arthur set out again from Fort Henry the following month heading more to the southwest. Needham and Arthur traveled across the mountains in southwestern Carolina to the home of the Tomahitan Indians in the north of modern Georgia; leaving Arthur behind to learn the language, Needham returned to Wood to make a report and was shortly dispatched back into the wilderness. On this return trip Needham was killed by one of his Indian guides. Because of the threat to his own life, Arthur was forced to live with the Tomahitan for ten months until he could safely travel back to Virginia, past the hostile Occaneechee. Since Needham did not leave behind any written account and Arthur was illiterate, the only record for Needham and Arthur’s journeys comes from a letter written by Wood to John Richards of London on 22 August 1674, compiled

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131. Letter of Abraham Wood to John Richards, 22 August 1674, in Alvord and Bidgood, 210.

from the recollections of Arthur and several Indians.<sup>132</sup> Arthur had traveled extensively through southeastern North America with the Tomahitan, and his report provided Wood with a better understanding of how vast the continent was, how far from Virginia the South Sea was likely located, and informed Wood that there were several groups of Indians eager to trade with the English. With this new knowledge, Wood, who by his own admission had already spent at least “two hundred pounds sterling in ye discovery to ye south or west sea,” ceased to fund trans-Appalachian expeditions, and focused his energy and resources on the Indian fur trade.<sup>133</sup>

While the expeditions of what has been called Virginia’s “age of exploration” did not culminate in the discovery of the South Sea as had been hoped, they enhanced English knowledge of the lands beyond the settled parts of their oldest American colony.<sup>134</sup> The experiences of the explorers taught the English colonists that although in many ways they had been right to fear the wilderness, the lands unsettled by the English also presented the possibility for financial gain. Combined, the explorers’ writings and Lederer’s map depicted a new image of Virginia in which the colony was bounded by mountains and where the greatest opportunities lay to the south instead of to the west, challenging the traditional portrayal of the colony by the promoters.

### **The Explorers Describe Virginia: “It was a pleasing tho’ dreadful sight”**

In the course of their travels, the explorers venturing out from Virginia between 1650 and 1674 encountered a variety of topographical regions and Indian nations. Most

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132. John Richards was a correspondent of Abraham Wood and John Locke; in December 1674 the Lords Proprietors of Carolina appointed him their “Treasurer, and Agent in matters relating to their joint carrying on of that Plantation.” (Alvord and Bidgood, 210, note 180, citing *Colonial Papers, Amer. and W.I.*, 1669-1674, no. 1402.)

133. Letter from Abraham Wood to John Richards of London, 22 August 1674, in Alvord and Bidgood, 210.

134. Briceland, “British Explorations,” 297.

historians who study the works of the Virginia explorers use the information contained their accounts only to argue about where the explorers actually traveled; the result of such a limited examination of the explorers' writings is that the image of Virginia that their accounts portray is overlooked, and their contributions to the changing English perception of Virginia and the geography of eastern North America remain uninvestigated. At times the explorers' descriptions of the peoples and places they encountered coincided with the way the promoters envisioned them, but often the explorers discovered that the Virginia wilderness could be a very dangerous and uninviting place. The expeditions of the 1670s especially taught the explorers and their patrons that the lowland and piedmont regions offered more opportunities for profit than the mountains, which John Lederer described as "barren Rocks."<sup>135</sup> The mountains lacked the fertile soil, natural commodities, and Indian populations eager for trade with the Europeans that the other regions possessed. The Indians and the access to furs they represented were one of the most profitable resources of the wilderness – but the explorers learned that the Indians were also perhaps its most dangerous inhabitants. Combined, the exploration accounts of Edward Bland, John Lederer, Robert Fallam, and Gabriel Arthur, provide a glimpse into the unsettled parts of Virginia as they were experienced and narrated by men who actually traveled there.

In the course of their expeditions, the explorers encountered some landscapes similar to those which the promoters had promised awaited them, but this new Eden was not without its thorns and snakes. According to John Lederer, overall the Piedmont region of Virginia was a "happie" place with a "temperate and healthful air." His account reveals that the soil was indeed fertile, noting that where the Indians had cleared the trees now lay "pleasant and

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135. Lederer, in Cumming, *Discoveries*, 11. Robert Fallam's account corroborates Lederer's statement about the lack of food in the mountains: Fallam recorded that he and his party left the mountains because of "our Indians being impatient of longer stay by reason it was like to be bad weather, and that it was so difficult to get provisions." (Fallam, in Alvord and Bidgood, 191.)

fruitful” fields; however, in the absence of a caretaker, the promoters’ garden had become overgrown with underbrush “and that so perplex and interwoven with Vines, that who travels here must sometimes cut through his way.” Additionally, Lederer recorded that the tangled underbrush “habour[ed] all sorts of beasts of prey, as Wolves, Panthers, Leopards, Lions, &c.”<sup>136</sup> Fortunately for the explorers, these dangerous beasts were not the only animal inhabitants of the region. Lederer enumerated “wilde turkeys, pigeons, partridges, pheasants” and deer among the bountiful selection of game available in the Piedmont in a list suggestive of Edward Williams’ labeling the Virginia forest a “Cooks shop.”<sup>137</sup> Some regions, however, appeared to have no redeeming value: Lederer warned his readers that in the mountains there was “no game,” writing that the mountains were “deserted by all living creatures but bears, who cave in the hollow cliffs.”<sup>138</sup>

The profit which could be derived from the earth was evident to Lederer and Edward Bland as they traveled across similar parts of southwestern Virginia and Carolina. Lederer claimed that he had seen “a great store of Pearl” among the Indians and wrote that the “rich Soyl” found there was “capable of producing many Commodities” in addition to containing useful minerals like antimony and cinnabar.<sup>139</sup> Lederer intimated that if the land was “possessed by an ingenious and industrious people” it would provide them with great wealth.<sup>140</sup> Bland, like Lederer, valued the “rich” soil:<sup>141</sup> upon reaching one Nottoway town Bland wrote that the land was “very rich... well timbered, watered, and very convenient for Hogs and Cattle,” subtly dispossessing the Indians of their land and converting it to English

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136. Lederer, in Cumming, *Discoveries*, 10.

137. *Ibid.*, 40. Williams, 42.

138. Lederer, in Cumming, *Discoveries*, 40, 10.

139. *Ibid.*, 27, 23.

140. *Ibid.*, 29.

141. Bland, in Alvord and Bidgood, 115, 118, 120, 122, 123, 126, and 129.

purposes.<sup>142</sup> As he described his party's movements from one Indian village to the next Bland commented on the quality of the land through which they passed, evaluating the soil and other features of the landscape, and suggested potential English uses for them.

Despite the benefits it offered, the landscape Bland and Lederer encountered was not the idealized garden promised by the promoters. Lederer described crossing a river with a current "so strong, that [his] Horse had much difficulty to resist it; and [he] expected every step to be carried away with the stream."<sup>143</sup> On his return trip to Virginia, Lederer faced further obstacles: he tried to avoid the marsh "over-grown with Reeds, from whose roots sprung knotty stumps as hard and sharp as Flint" which he had struggled through on the way south, only to stumble into "a barren Sandy desert, where [he] suffered miserably for want of water."<sup>144</sup> However, when Bland recorded the land's imperfections, he adopted the promoters' technique of quickly suggesting remedies for potential disadvantages and was always on the lookout for a profitable opportunity. He and his companions had to cross several rivers during their journey through "New Brittain," and whenever Bland related the details of the crossing, even when they "were forced to swim [their] horses over," he cheerfully remarked that the river "with a little labour may be made passeable."<sup>145</sup> Moreover, this labor would not be without reward: the ground at one fording site was covered with "very great Rocky stones, fit to make Mill-stones with."<sup>146</sup> The wilderness the explorers described traveling through was heavily-wooded and so tightly packed with trees that Lederer recalled the forest as being a place of "melacholy darkness," a far cry from the leisurely spaced trees in avenues wide enough for carts to pass through described by William

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142. *Ibid.*, 115.

143. Lederer, in Cumming, *Discoveries*, 21, 24.

144. *Ibid.*, 30, 32.

145. Bland, in Alvord and Bidgood, 130.

146. *Ibid.*, 130.

Bullock.<sup>147</sup> Bland, conversely, was not worried by the presence of so many trees, for he recognized the “extraordinary benefit” that Edward Williams promised would come from clearing the land. Bland, ever the businessman, calculated that by an Indian village that there were “timber trees above five foot over, whose trunk are a hundred foot in cleare timber, which will make twenty Cuts of Board timber a piece, and of these there is abundance.”<sup>148</sup>

Bland’s optimism, unmatched by any of the other explorers, aligns with the stated objective that his tract was published specifically to attract settlers to “that happy Country of New Brittain.”<sup>149</sup> Like the promoters, Bland wanted to paint a positive image of the parts of Virginia unsettled by the English and so actively sought to mediate any negative attributes of the land. With differing objectives in mind, Robert Fallam’s journal was written as a personal account of his expedition, and not meant to be widely read: his intended audience consisted of his patron, Abraham Wood, and possibly other interested Virginians. Fallam’s descriptions reflect this awareness of his audience, for while Bland wrote of making hazardous terrain “more passeable,” Fallam recorded only that it was “difficult to pass.”<sup>150</sup> Instead of referencing the opulent kingdoms of the East when describing Virginia as the promoters do, Fallam portrays the landscape in terms of the familiar, describing the “great River” that he hopes will lead to the South Sea as being “much like the James River at Col. Stagg’s.”<sup>151</sup>

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147. Lederer, in Cumming, *Discoveries*, 35. Bullock, 3.

148. Williams, 4. Bland, in Alvord and Bidgood, 120.

149. Bland, in *Ibid.*, 110.

150. Fallam, *Ibid.*, 184. Bland, in *Ibid.*, 130.

151. Fallam, in *Ibid.*, 192. Catherine Armstrong discusses the difference between “public,” meant to be read at the time it was written by “a large number of individuals in order to spread information and opinion,” and “private,” meant for a limited, specific audience, documents in the context of a seventeenth-century author’s relationship to his intended audience. Additionally, she notes that some writings which were intended to be private were made public by other contemporary authors or publishers. (Armstrong, 20ff.) Bland’s tract is a good example of the first, the accounts of Fallam and Arthur’s journeys exemplify second, and Lederer’s account is of the third variety. William Talbot admitted in his note “To the Reader” that Lederer had never intended to print the record of his expeditions; Talbot edited and published the account because he hoped it would advance the interests

Another way in which Bland hoped the English could profit from the newly-explored lands was by mining precious metals, for he believed that “’tis very probable that there may be Gold and other Mettals amongst the hills.”<sup>152</sup> Consequently, he eagerly recorded that “Tobacco Pipes have beene seene among these Indians tipt with Silver, and they weare Copper Plates about their necks,” and reported that between the head of Farmers Chase River and Blackwater Lake there was “ground that gives very probable prooffe of an Iron, or some other rich Mine.”<sup>153</sup> Lederer also recorded seeing Indians wearing “pieces of bright copper in their hair and ears,” and claimed that he had purchased “some pieces of Silver unwrought” from the Indians at Ushery.<sup>154</sup> The hope of finding mines in Virginia was among the earliest motivations for founding the colony; ever since the earliest charter of the Virginia Company most grants for exploration included a clause that mentioned the possibility of finding gold or other minerals, stipulating that the king was to receive a fifth of the profits from any mines.<sup>155</sup> Influenced by contemporary beliefs about latitudinal bands, Governor Berkeley wrote that the explorers “should have found some Mines of silver; for certaine it is that the spaniard in the same degrees of latitude has found many.”<sup>156</sup>

It is interesting to note that while the search for mineral wealth almost always figured among the motivations of seventeenth-century explorers, by 1650 colonial promoters

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of the newly established Carolina Proprietary and “might prove a Service to the Publick.” (Talbot, in Cumming, *Discoveries*, 7.) In his article, “John Lederer: Significance and Evaluation,” Dieter Cunz wrote that he doubted Lederer’s account was originally only intended to be private, because he believed it had too much of an “apologetic character.” (Dieter Cunz, “John Lederer: Significance and Evaluation,” *William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ser., vol. 22, no. 2 (1942): 181.)

152. Bland, in Alvord and Bidgood, 127.

153. *Ibid.*, 110-111, 130.

154. Lederer, in Cumming, *Discoveries*, 33, 43.

155. E.g. the March 1642/3 Act of Assembly, in Alvord and Bidgood, 102.

156. Letter from Berkeley to Lord Arlington, 27 May 1669, in *Ibid.*, 176. Edward Williams stated a similar rationalization in *Virgo Triumphans*, citing Thomas Gage’s report that the Spanish had a silver mine “on the back side of Florida Westward, in 34 degrees Latitude.” (Williams, 17-18.) According to Kupperman, seventeenth-century Europeans believed that the sun was responsible for natural bounty both in minerals and in vegetation, “for the hottest climate was also the most fruitful.” (Kupperman, “Fear,” 218.)

no longer stressed the presence of precious metals when arguing in support of the colonization of Virginia. According to Catherine Armstrong, in as early as 1625 the promoter Samuel Purchas “tried to convince potential investors and migrants that it did not matter that Virginia contained no mineral resources as it was so rich in other commodities, and anyway, paradise had contained no minerals.”<sup>157</sup> Instead of dreaming of gold, John Ferrar suggested that the colonists pursue mining iron ore, and William Bullock listed “Copper, Tinne, Iron and Lead” as the mineral wealth of Virginia.<sup>158</sup> The promoters had realized that it was more important for the colonists to focus on surviving and diversifying their economy so that they could produce trade goods other than tobacco, than for them to waste resources searching for minerals that might not exist.<sup>159</sup>

Despite the hope expressed by Thomas Ludwell, the Secretary of the Virginia colony, that “the bowells of those barren hills are not without silver or gold,” the explorers who actually traveled to the mountains did not record seeing or hearing about any mineral deposits there. Furthermore, their reports of the mountains were far from positive. Although Robert Fallam claimed to have found a westward-flowing tidal river and to have seen “a fog arise and a glimmering light as from water” which he “supposed... to be a great Bay,” the route his party took to reach that hopeful spot was very difficult. The mountains were so treacherous that the explorers had to leave their horses behind, and the riverside itself was

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157. Armstrong, 73, citing *Virginias Verger* in *Purchas, His Pilgrims*, Vol. XIX p. 234.

158. Ferrar, 3. Bullock, 32. Thompson, web supplement for “William Bullock’s ‘Strange Adventure,’” 7. While Bullock also wrote that “there is without question in this Country, store of Gold, and Silver Mynes,” he went on to say that he would not tell where they were for “the discovery will bring ruine to the place, for all Princes, and Potentates clayme an interest in Gold and Silver, which they will reach with their swords.” (Bullock, 32.)

159. Armstrong, 74. In light of this, it is somewhat ironic that the promoters, except perhaps Bullock, did not think that advocating the discovery of the South Sea was an equal waste of time.

“grown up with weeds and small prickly Locusts and Thistles to a very great height that it was almost impossible to pass;” even the “good ground” they encountered was “stony.”<sup>160</sup>

From the perspective of the explorers, the Appalachian Mountains were much more imposing than the “hills” that Farrer described. Lederer said their “prodigious height” kept him and his party from crossing them, and both Lederer and Fallam described the ascent up the mountains as too steep for their horses. James Needham and Gabriel Arthur crossed the mountains farther south, where they were lower, but the journey to get there was so long and hard that all but one of their horses died along the way. The harsh conditions of the mountains were exacerbated by the width of the range. On both Lederer’s first and third expeditions he and his companions journeyed due west towards the mountains, and after the difficult climb required to crest a single peak they turned back, cold, and too discouraged by the sight of the vast barrier separating Virginia from the rest of the continent “to proceed to a further discovery.”<sup>161</sup> Describing his view from the top of a mountain where he and his companions had “set down very weary” from the ascent up a mountain, Fallam wrote that the explorers “saw very high mountains lying to the north and south as far as we could discern... It was a pleasing tho’ dreadful sight to see the mountains and Hills as if piled one upon another.”<sup>162</sup>

While Fallam makes no mention of seeing any dangerous animals in the mountains, encounters with perilous beasts figured prominently in Lederer’s accounts of his first and third expeditions, and served to illustrate the precarious nature of life in the wilderness. Lederer himself almost died during the third expedition when he was stung in his sleep by a

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160. Fallam, in Alvord and Bidgood, 192, 189. Lederer described the explorers’ route to the mountains as “very uneven, and cumbred with bushes,” and said that the steep ascent up the mountainside “proved very difficult” because the slope was covered in underbrush; at one point he was even “almost swallowed in a Quicksand.” (Lederer, in Cumming, *Discoveries*, 17-18.)

161. Lederer, in Cumming, *Discoveries*, 36.

162. Fallam, in Alvord and Bidgood, 188.

spider; fortunately, his life was saved by one of his Indian guides who “suckt out the poyson.” The German explorer recorded that the venom and pain spread through his body so quickly that his torment was indescribable.<sup>163</sup> At the beginning of Lederer’s first expedition he saw and killed “a rattle-snake of extraordinary length and thickness;” upon cutting the creature open, an astonished Lederer recorded being in “double wonder” when he discovered it to have a whole squirrel in its belly.<sup>164</sup> The very next day he witnessed “a Doe seized by a wild Cat.” As the doe thrashed under the “burden and cruelty of her rider” one of Lederer’s Indian guides shot the cat; abandoning the deer to turn on the men, the cat soon ran away into the woods because of its injuries.<sup>165</sup> Wolves also numbered among the predators of the Virginia forests: Lederer commented that “the Wolves in these parts are so ravenous, that I often in the night feared my horse would be devoured by them.”<sup>166</sup> At night Lederer and his companions kept a fire burning at their campsite to keep the wolves away. Wolves were a serious threat in the Virginia colony as well as in the mountains: by the provisions of a 1656 Virginia statute English colonists were rewarded with one hundred pounds of tobacco for every wolf they killed. Because of the wolves, sheep, a staple on traditional English farms, were not raised in any significant numbers in even the longest-settled parts of the colony until the last quarter of the seventeenth century, when most predators in those areas had been killed or driven off.<sup>167</sup> Such experiences do not reflect John Farrer’s assurances that the

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163. Lederer, in Cumming, *Discoveries*, 36.

164. *Ibid.*, 15.

165. *Ibid.*, 16.

166. *Ibid.*, 18.

167. Virginia DeJohn Anderson, “Animals into the Wilderness: The Development of Livestock Husbandry in the Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Series, vol. 59, no. 2 (2002): 377, 384. The Indians received a different reward by the stipulations of the 1656 statute: according to Anderson, “for every eight wolves’ heads brought to the county commissioner, the native hunters’ ‘King or Great Man’ would be presented with a cow” which the Virginia burgesses hoped would help to civilize the Indians, and help make them Christians. (Anderson, 377.)

wolves in Virginia posed so little of a threat that the colonists' dogs did not even bother to bark at them.<sup>168</sup>

Besides containing treacherous terrain and dangerous animals, the Virginia wilderness was also home to many Indian nations who at times welcomed the Europeans as allies or potential trading partners, and at others threatened the strangers passing through their lands. The various nations themselves had long histories of friendship and enmity, and occasionally the explorers found themselves caught up in dangerous rivalries. On their expeditions, the European explorers were constantly in the presence of Indians: they relied on the natives to guide them through the wilderness and along Indian paths, hired the Indians to hunt for them and carry their packs, and often stopped in Indian villages to obtain a meal or a place to spend the night. Fallam described the Indians of the west as hospitable and few in number, writing that at a Saponi town the explorers "were very joyfully and kindly received," and later they "were exceedingly civilly entertain'd" by the Toteras.<sup>169</sup> When the Fallam's companion Thomas Wood fell "dangerously sick of the Flux," the explorers left him to be cared for by the Toteras as they pressed deeper into the mountains, and expressed no fears for his safety there.<sup>170</sup> The explorers relied heavily upon their native guides; when Fallam's party ran out of provisions in the mountains, they ate only what the Indians were able to gather or kill.

No explorer was more dependant upon the Indians than Gabriel Arthur, who lived with the Tomahitan for ten months after James Needham left him there to learn the language and never returned to retrieve his countryman. The chief of the Tomahitan Indians protected Arthur from the machinations of the Occaneechee and their allies after Needham's murder, and eventually helped him get safely back to Fort Henry. The Tomahitan aided Arthur

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168. Farrer, 17.

169. Fallam, in Alvord and Bidgood, 185, 187.

170. *Ibid.*, 185.

because they were interested in trading with the English, and so wanted to remain in the colonists' good graces; before Needham had left, the Tomahitan chief had promised him "that he would never doe violence a gainst any English."<sup>171</sup> The Tomahitan were not the only Indians interested in trade. Arthur participated in a Tomahitan raid "to give a clap to some... great nation" and was wounded and captured, but when his captors discovered that he was white "they made very much of him" and admired the weapons he carried. Arthur gave them his knife and hatchet "for they had not any manner of iron instrument," told them that the English would trade them knives for furs, and said that if they let him go, he would come back with more knives to trade with them.<sup>172</sup>

Yet not all Indians were so accommodating. Although Bland recorded that at Meherrin the village residents entertained his party two nights in a row with "divers Ceremonies" and "much Dancing," on the whole the Indian reactions to his party were negative, ranging from fearful to hostile, and quickly became threatening.<sup>173</sup> During Bland's expedition, the Indians the explorers encountered all murmured about the treachery of other nations and repeatedly warned them to turn back towards the colony. The Englishmen became increasingly nervous after learning that the Indians had been lying to them about the identity of their leaders and that the Indian runners they had employed had subverted their messages by not taking them to the correct towns. The fearful explorers decided to return to Fort Henry for their own safety, and their suspicions were confirmed when their Appomattox guide, Pyancha, informed them that if they returned by the same way that they had come, "some plots might be acted against" them.<sup>174</sup> Bland and his companions were fortunate to

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171. Wood, in Alvord and Bidgood, 220.

172. *Ibid.*, 222.

173. Bland, in Alvord and Bidgood, 119-20.

174. *Ibid.*, 128-29.

have such a loyal guide; Needham's native guide killed the explorer as they were making their way south for the second time.

Lederer also had several terrifying experiences in the Indian villages he visited to the southwest of the English colony. One night at a dance in the town of Akenatzy, without warning the inhabitants "barbarously murdered" an ambassador from another nation along with his retinue. Later, at Watary, Lederer witnessed several youths sent out by their king return to the "with skins torn off the heads and faces of three young girls" from an enemy nation.<sup>175</sup> In both instances, a horrified Lederer and his Susquehanna guide "slunk" away from the village as quickly and quietly as possible.<sup>176</sup> Another potential danger for Lederer was the presence of the Spanish. The English knew that the Spaniards were established in Florida, and when Lederer learned from the Indians that he was only two and a half days away from "a powerful Nation of Bearded men," he decided to turn back north towards the English colony.<sup>177</sup> Unsurprisingly, after such encounters Lederer was "not a little overjoyed to see Christian faces again" upon his return to Virginia.<sup>178</sup>

The presence of so many potential threats in the unsettled parts of Virginia caused the Englishmen to fear becoming lost in the wilderness. Lederer recorded this fear in his account of his second journey, when he and his party encountered an Indian who drew them a map on the ground, showing two passes through the mountains. While Lederer was ready to follow the Indian's advice, his "English Companions slighting the Indians direction...obstinately pursu[ed] a due West course," afraid that otherwise they would be unable to retrace their steps back to the colony.<sup>179</sup> Evidently Lederer did not share their fears of becoming lost, for after he parted ways with the Englishmen, he traveled very willingly

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175. Lederer, in Cumming, *Discoveries*, 28.

176. *Ibid.*, 26.

177. *Ibid.*, 31. Lederer assumed these to be the Spanish.

178. *Ibid.*, 33.

179. *Ibid.*, 20.

“by the Indians instruction” and followed the paths which the natives showed him.<sup>180</sup> In one of the essays included with his account, “Instructions to such as shall march up on Discoveries into the North-American Continent,” Lederer spoke directly to the English fear of getting lost, and advised his readers that they “must not forget to notch the trees as you go along... that in your return you may know when you fall into the same way which you went. By this means you... may govern your course homeward.”<sup>181</sup>

While the wilderness the explorers described was undeniably a hazardous place, home to hostile Indians and threatening beasts, it held potential profit for the bold and enterprising adventurer. In the absence of precious metals and easy access to the South Sea, during the decades following the Virginia expeditions many European fur traders followed in the explorers’ footsteps and traveled the Indian paths, seeking potential trading partners and their fortunes, in a similar, if smaller, manner as the explorers searching for the South Sea. Lederer’s second expedition had opened his eyes to the possibilities of trading and he remarked that had he only known what “advantages” awaited him in the wilderness, he would have “gone better provided.”<sup>182</sup> The advice and information in his enticing account of what lay to the southwest of the English colony was rapidly embraced by colonial promoters and mapmakers who used it to advance their own interests.

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180. *Ibid.*, 24.

181. *Ibid.*, 31. A brief examination of Lederer’s map reveals that pursuing a due west course was the standard contemporary English approach to wilderness exploration: on both his first and third expeditions Lederer and his party marched straight to the mountains.

182. *Ibid.*, 42. Lederer’s interest in trading did not end when he left Virginia; in March of 1671 he received a patent to trade with the Indians from Governor Charles Calvert of Maryland.

**Virginia's Changing Geography and Lederer's Map: "They are certainly in a great error, who imagine that the Continent of North-America is but eight or ten days journey over from the Atlantick to the Indian Ocean"**

While they were commissioned to pursue specific discoveries, such as a path through the mountains or a tidal river leading to the South Sea, the primary task of the explorers was to collect geographical information about the lands through which they traveled. There had been no significant exploratory expeditions in Virginia since the first decade of the seventeenth century, and since the English lacked accurate knowledge of what lay beyond the fall line, they continued to believe in a narrow North American continent. Though those in the colony who supported exploration hoped the South Sea was within reach, some expressed doubt that the route to that other sea would be as simple as the promoters had claimed: in a 1669 letter to Lord Arlington describing a proposed expedition which included a map, now lost, Governor Berkeley commented that "By this Mappe it should seeme that this Expedition is supposed more jaule [jolly] and easy than I beleeeve we shal find it."<sup>183</sup> The explorers of the early 1670s found Berkeley's ominous speculation to indeed be true, and the knowledge about the geography of eastern North America with which they provided the English altered the contemporary perception and depiction of Virginia from a land whose western shores were washed by the waters of the South Sea to a colony bounded by the mountains.

Although Robert Fallam recorded the immense width of the Appalachian Mountains and Gabriel Arthur reported the vast size of the southeast, the discoveries of John Lederer had the largest contemporary geographic and cartographic impact. Largely thanks to William

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183. Letter from Sir William Berkeley to Lord Arlington, 27 May 1669, in Alvord and Bidgood, 177. Had Berkeley's map survived, it would have been interesting to see whether any connection existed between it and the map that Virginia Ferrar sent Lady Berkeley in 1650. In any case, it is noteworthy that maps were part of the dialogue going on between British subjects on either side of the Atlantic.

Talbot's publication of Lederer's writings and especially of his map, knowledge of the lands that Lederer traversed spread to England and then to continental Europe, passed along by mapmakers and colonial promoters who eagerly incorporated Lederer's information into their own works. Not the least of these were the Lords Proprietors of Carolina, who wanted to spread information about the land they acquired from King Charles II in 1663 to prospective colonists.<sup>184</sup> Talbot was clearly aware of their interest, for he dedicated his translation of Lederer's account to Lord Ashley, one of the Carolina Proprietors.

Lederer is unique among the Virginia explorers of 1650-74 in that he recorded both written and visual accounts of his travels. His two works were clearly meant to be read together: the subtitle of *The Discoveries of John Lederer* concludes by drawing to the reader's attention that the tract was published "Together with A General Map of the whole Territory which he traversed."<sup>185</sup> Both Lederer's written account and map present the image of a Virginia hemmed in by mountains to the west, where the opportunities for profit lay to the southwest. The first time he climbed the Appalachian Mountains Lederer recorded that "to the North and West, my sight was suddenly bounded by Mountains higher than I stood upon;" accordingly, the land on his map ends abruptly at the mountains.<sup>186</sup> Such a depiction is a sharp contrast to the representation of Virginia favored by the promoters and illustrated by John Ferrar, in which the west was the land of great potential and an easy route across low, narrow mountains to the South Sea was assured.

The content of *A Map of the Whole Territory Traversed by John Lederer in His Three Marches*, as its name suggests, is restricted to the area through which the explorer traveled. The map shows the various landscapes Lederer described in his tract and marks the routes of his three expeditions with dotted lines, illustrating the route to the various Indian

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184. Cumming, *Southeast in Early Maps*, 17.

185. Lederer, in Cumming, *Discoveries*, title page.

186. *Ibid.*, 19.

towns of the southwest and the valuable fur trade. The presence of Indian peoples is far more pronounced on Lederer's map than it was on Farrer's: Lederer notes the locations of villages and nations, and even uses the Indian, rather than the English, names for the rivers of Virginia. Although the English presence on Lederer's map is noticeably small, his depiction of Virginia is bounded to the east by the homes of the Englishmen Thomas Stegge and Robert Talifer, and to the west by two large mountains which Lederer and his companions named for Governor William Berkeley and King Charles II on his third expedition west. These cartographic markers imply that the English had claimed all the land in between for themselves.<sup>187</sup>

Lederer's image is somewhat atypical for maps of the period, which normally portray the land within a specific British colony or colonies, and are named after their subject. The map is unusually cropped to depict only the interior region through which Lederer traveled: it begins at the fall line in Virginia instead of at the Atlantic Coast and terminates along the crest of the Appalachian Mountains. The depiction of the mountains is perhaps the most striking attribute of the map. At the mountains the perspective of the map begins to change, and the mountains appear to rise up, off the page, and block the view to the west; they are a visual barrier on the map just as they were a physical barrier for Lederer. The space to the west of the range is devoid of any topographical features, and filled instead with a large compass rose and some notes about Lederer's expeditions.

*A Map of the Whole Territory Traversed by John Lederer in his Three Marches* significantly altered the cartographic representation of the area to the south of the settled parts of Virginia. Until the record of Lederer's expeditions was publicized in 1672, English and continental European mapmakers had relied upon Jodocus Hondius' map *Virginiae Item*

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187. Additionally, in light of the graphic encounters with wild beasts detailed in Lederer's account, it is notable that he did not include visual representations of any animals on his map.

*et Floridae America*, first published in his 1606 edition of Gerardus Mercator's *Atlas*, to depict the lands to the south of the James River; Lederer's map quickly replaced the Mercator-Hondius image as the standard depiction of the region.<sup>188</sup> However, because of the unusual bounds and perspective of Lederer's map, later cartographers did not copy his image in its entirety, but rather took from the map several specific topographic features and occasionally even the lines indicating the routes Lederer traveled. According to the prominent cartographic historian William P. Cumming, "the marks of Lederer's influence are always clear and are usually the same: the long narrow savanna in the piedmont region, the great lake, and the long narrow Arenosa desert."<sup>189</sup> Additionally, while the Mercator-Hondius map and those modeled on it were oriented towards the north, Lederer's map was oriented towards the west, after the manner of John Smith's *Virginia*, and the maps that utilized Lederer's geographic information often copied his map's orientation as well.

The first map to make use of Lederer's information was *A New Description of Carolina by Order of the Lords Proprietors*; engraved by James Moxon around 1672 and published in *America*, a popular atlas by John Ogilby, *A New Description of Carolina* was responsible for the rapid dissemination of Lederer's image immediately following its publication.<sup>190</sup> A map practically identical in name and content to the Ogilby-Moxon map appeared in the 1676 reprint of John Speed's *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain... together with A Prospect of the most Famous Parts of the World*. Two of the only differences between the 1676 map, *A New Description of Carolina*, and its predecessor were

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188. Hondius himself had relied on Theodore de Bry's 1591 engravings of Thomas White's and Jacques LeMoyne's maps of Virginia and Florida, respectively.

189. William P. Cumming, "Geographical Misconceptions of the Southeast in the Cartography of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *The Journal of Southern History*, vol. 4, no. 4, (1938): 483.

190. Ogilby's *America* was a translation of Arnoldus Montanus' 1671 *Die nieuwe en onbekende Weereld*, to which Ogilby added new information about the English colonies. In the Ogilby-Moxon map, Lederer's Lake Ushery was changed to Lake Ashley to honor one of the Lords Proprietors of Carolina by that name.

that the newer map included the route of Lederer's expedition into Carolina and was published along with an explanatory description of Lederer's travels. Cumming believed that "this widely circulated map must have done much to spread the knowledge of Lederer's explorations further than his own pamphlet would have done."<sup>191</sup> However, because the maps which were copied from Lederer's primarily focused on the Carolina region, the significance of his depiction of Virginia as bounded by the mountains to the west has been more easily overlooked. The geographic information provided by Lederer remained the standard image of the area to the southwest of Virginia used by English and continental European cartographers for the next several decades. By the 1730s, however, traces of Lederer's information had largely faded from English maps, as new explorers traveled through the North American wilderness and brought back reports of the landscape they encountered.<sup>192</sup>

Just as Lederer's map influenced later cartographers, Lederer himself came to Virginia with preconceived ideas about the geography of North America garnered from older maps and books about the New World. He was far from alone in this: Robert Fallam, Abraham Wood, Sir William Berkeley, and many of the other Englishmen in the colony had been influenced by the image of Virginia presented in both maps and the writings of the promoters, which had convinced them of the proximity of the South Sea to Virginia and provided the impetus for the explorations of 1650-74. Contemporary ideas about the geography of Virginia created expectations among the explorers about what they would find

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191. See Cumming, *Southeast in Early Maps*, 163-67 and Cumming, *Discoveries*, 92-95. Lederer's pamphlet was never as popular as his map, and was only reprinted once, in 1705, before it became a subject of scholarly study in the mid-1800s. A complete list of all the derivations of Lederer's map can be found in the appendix of Cumming's article, "Geographical Misconceptions of the Southeast in the Cartography of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries."

192. Elements of Lederer's map lingered a bit longer in the maps of continental Europe. Lederer's written account did not have nearly as productive a life as his map: it went through one poor-quality reprint in 1705, and after that was forgotten until the mid-nineteenth century. Cunz, 181.

in the wilderness and influenced how they interpreted the lands they encountered. When Lederer observed the Appalachian Mountains to decrease in height at the Indian town of Sara, he assumed that they “change[d] their course” to “run due West” and rose “higher and higher Westward,” as they did in a map used as an illustration in the work of the Spanish Jesuit priest José de Acosta whom Lederer references. Lederer also noted that these westward-running mountains “receive from the Spaniards the name of Suala.”<sup>193</sup> Such ideas, which Farrer tried to refute in his *mapp of Virginia discourd to ye Hills*, had originated in a mid-sixteenth century map drawn from information provided by survivors of Hernando de Soto’s expedition to Florida and were spread by subsequent Spanish maps, like Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas’s 1622 *Descripción de las Yndias Occidentales*.

Perhaps the most controversial feature of Lederer’s map and written account is his description of the large lake at Ushery. There is no lake “ten leagues broad” currently in the Carolinas, and since the mid-nineteenth century scholars have argued about what exactly Lederer saw, where he went, and whether or not the veracity of his account can be believed. Of the historians who have attempted to explain Lederer’s Ushery Lake, some have said that once Lederer parted with the Englishmen on his second expedition his account cannot be trusted; others have posited that Lederer saw a flooded floodplain, and Briceland suggested that there was a lake in the 1600s that no longer exists. Cumming provided an alternate, cartographic explanation: he argued that the presence of a large lake on the widespread Mercator-Hondius image had prepared Lederer to find such a body of water, citing the similarity between Lederer’s description of the lake’s invisible western shore and the Latin phrase “Ad eo magnus est hic lacus ut ex una ripa conspici altera non possit” frequently

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193. Lederer, in Cumming, *Discoveries*, 11, 28. Cumming, *Southeast in Early Maps*, 16. José de Acosta was the author of the widely-read *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias*, originally published in Seville in 1590. Lederer would have had plenty of opportunities to access de Acosta’s work, as by 1604 it had been translated into French, Dutch, German, Latin, and English.

found beside the large lake on maps. While Cumming suggested that Lederer “substantiat[ed] the myth of the great lake” to convince others, and especially those who financed him, that his journey had been worthwhile, it also served to perpetuate the image of such a lake on maps of the region.<sup>194</sup>

Both Lederer and Fallam ventured into the Virginia interior believing that the South Sea and a reliable route to it could be found; this idea, established in their minds by the works of European promoters, geographers, and cartographers, was reinforced by their commissions for exploration. Fallam, commissioned “for the finding out the ebbing and flowing of the Waters on the other side of the Mountaines in order of the discovery of the South Sea,” wrote repeatedly about “the great River which we hope is nigh at hand.” Upon finding a wide river flowing northwest Fallam and his fellow Englishman Thomas Batts checked to see if the river gave any indication of the sea beyond it; noticing a damp area above the water level of the river, they “imagined by the Water marks that it flows [rises and falls] here about three feat.” The explorers did not have much time to confirm their discovery, as their Indian guides urged them to turn back because of bad weather and the lack of provisions in the area.<sup>195</sup> Batts and Fallam knew that on the eastern side of the mountains the effects of the tide were apparent almost one hundred miles up the James River, and so they reasonably assumed that the same occurrence was taking place to the west.<sup>196</sup> As they began their trip back to the colony, Batts and Fallam turned for a last

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194. Cumming, “Geographical Misconceptions of the Southeast in the Cartography of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,” 483. Cumming, *Southeast in Early Maps*, 17. For a detailed historiography of the works on and theories about Lederer’s expeditions, see Briceland, *Westward*, 102ff.

195. Fallam, in Alvord and Bidgood, 184, 190, 192.

196. Briceland, *Westward*, 145-46.

westward look and saw “over a certain delightful hill a fog arise and a glimmering light as from water;” more evidence, they believed, of the existence of the South Sea.<sup>197</sup>

The explorers’ preconceived expectations influenced not only how they interpreted the lands through which they passed, but also how they interpreted the information they received from the Indians they encountered; for example, Lederer’s belief in the South Sea led him to often misconstrue geographical knowledge presented to him by the Indians in order to make their information fit into his predetermined theories about the geography of North America.<sup>198</sup> At Akenatzy Lederer questioned four strange, brightly painted Indians about their origins, and determined “by some discourse and some signes” that they had come from “some great Island” a two-month journey to the northwest by land and water; Lederer assumed their home to be California. Lederer also recorded that he had “heard several Indians testifie, that the Nation of Rickohockans, who dwell not far to the Westward of the Apalataean Mountains, are seated upon a Land, as they term it, of great Waves; by which I suppose they mean the Sea-shore.”<sup>199</sup> In this particular instance, Lederer’s misinterpretation can be explained by Fallam, who expressively described the mountains “like waves raised by a gentle breese of wind rising one upon the other.”<sup>200</sup>

However, Lederer’s own failed attempts to cross the mountains had taught him that to travel from one coast to the other would be neither an easy nor a quick journey, and influenced his cartographic depiction of Virginia as a land bounded by mountains which obstructed the western part of the continent from view. Lederer relied on both his expeditions in Virginia and his knowledge of world geography to form his own “Conjectures of the Land beyond the Apalataean Mountains;” he argued that large navigable rivers would

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197. Fallam, in Alvord and Bidgood, 192.

198. See Louis De Vorsey, Jr.’s essay “American Indians and the Early Mapping of the Southeast,” in Cumming’s *The Southeast in Early Maps*, pp.65-98.

199. Lederer, in Cumming, *Discoveries*, 26.

200. Fallam, in Alvord and Bidgood, 189.

not be found on the western side of the Appalachians, as many supposed, citing “the knowledge and experience we already have of South-America, whose Andes send the greatest Rivers in the world... into the Atlantick, but none at all into the Pacificque Sea.” Lederer, however, had not given up all hope of finding the South Sea. He wrote that he had become convinced “that the Indian Ocean does stretch an Arm or Bay from California into the Continent as far as the Apalataean Mountains.”<sup>201</sup> Additionally Lederer recorded that the Indians had informed him of two places where there were openings to “a passage into the Western parts of the Continent;” the northern passage was “at a place called Zynodoa” and the southern one near the Indian town of Sara.<sup>202</sup>

Although at times the explorers’ pre-existing beliefs affected their perception of geographical information, their experiences and observations of what lay to the west and south of the English colony challenged some of the popular contemporary beliefs about the geography of North America and contributed to the redefinition of the geographic image of Virginia. Lederer thought that those who believed “that the Continent of North-America is but eight or ten days journey over from the Atlantick to the Indian Ocean” were in “great error.” The experiences of Batts, Fallam, Needham, and Arthur over the next several years corroborated Lederer’s assessment. The explorers’ findings helped to transform the English conception of Virginia, and the colony which was before described as extending “from sea to sea” was now more commonly seen to encompass the land between the mountains and the sea.<sup>203</sup> With the mountains reckoned a formidable barrier, Virginians interested in the frontier turned their attentions to the fur trade in the piedmont and Carolina regions.

However, as Lederer’s own beliefs about “an Arm or Bay” of the “Indian Ocean” arching in

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201. Lederer, in Cumming, *Discoveries*, 37-8.

202. *Ibid.*, 38. This is likely the first recorded mention of the Shenandoah.

203. This conception did not hold sway permanently: during the eighteenth century, for example, English mapmakers depicted the Virginia colony as extending from sea to sea in order to counteract French claims to the interior of the continent.

towards the Appalachian Mountains reveals, hope of finding the South Sea, which the English had dreamt of for so long, did not disappear completely.

#### IV. Conclusion

The promoters had described Virginia as a warm, fertile, helpful garden where the industrious could reap the benefits of both the soil and the colony's close proximity to the South Sea. Because of these convictions, they encouraged the colonists to pursue agricultural and economic diversification as well as exploration. When explorers finally traveled to the unsettled parts of Virginia, what they found was not a garden but a wilderness. While at times this wilderness appeared to hold exciting potential, it was almost always dangerous; their experiences with wild beasts, hostile Indians, and threatening terrain led the explorers to reevaluate the image of Virginia presented by the promoters. Additionally, the explorers found the mountains to be high, large, and difficult to cross, and discovered that the South Sea was likely much farther away than had been expected; thus, they reported that trading with the Indians for furs would be a more profitable enterprise than locating the South Sea. These findings, recorded in the explorers' written accounts and illustrated in John Lederer's 1672 map, reworked the English conception of Virginia.

In the years following the explorers' expeditions, the image of a bounded Virginia, instead of one that stretched from sea to sea as in the maps of John Farrer, appeared in both maps and written works. The same 1676 reprint of John Speed's *Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain* that contained *A New Description of Carolina* also included *A Map of Virginia and Maryland*; the depiction of the mountains in this latter map is striking, especially when compared to the low, narrow mountain range on Ferrar's maps. While the mountains diminish somewhat in size and density to the south in Carolina, the mountains of Virginia on the 1676 map are imposing: tall, wide, and tightly packed, they are all but impenetrable. However, at the western reaches of the James River, the mountains open up, displaying the

tantalizing possibility of a route through the range, like the two Lederer mentioned in his account; presumably such a passage would lead to the South Sea.<sup>204</sup>

A similar geographic image of Virginia is depicted in Thomas Glover's "Account of Virginia, its Scituation, Temperature, Productions, Inhabitants and their manner of planting and ordering Tobacco etc." Glover, "an ingenious Chirurgion that hath lived for some years" in Virginia, sent an account of the colony to England in 1676, where it was published in the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* for that year.<sup>205</sup> In his account, Glover mentions both Lederer and Colonel Catlet, an Englishman who accompanied Lederer on his third expedition, and relates some of their adventures in the wilderness. Glover details Lederer's discovery of the Lake of Ushery, his encounters with Indian "cruelty," and his report that the Spanish "are seated near up on the back of the Mountains."<sup>206</sup> Although it is not made clear in the text whether he had personally spoken with either of these men, it is certain that the wilderness encounters of the explorers helped shape Glover's conception of Virginia. When describing the geography of Virginia, Glover repeated the portrayal established by the explorers, writing that the colony "is bounded on the East with the main Ocean, [and] on the West with the Appal-lean Mountains."<sup>207</sup>

Thomas Glover's 1676 account combined his own observations with the experiences of the explorers and the rhetoric of the promoters. The Virginia he saw and described was a land teeming with natural resources, and his delight with the benefits that it had to offer was

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204. Since the publishers of the 1676 reprint of *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain*, Thomas Basset and Richard Chiswell, included information from Lederer's map and tract on *A New Description of Carolina*, it can be assumed that they also had access to his information (i.e. the mention of the two passages through the mountains) when composing their map of Virginia. *A Map of Virginia and Maryland* is also derived in part from John Smith's 1612 *Virginia*, and Augustine Herrman's 1673 *Virginia and Maryland As it is Planted and Inhabited this present Year 1670*.

205. Thomas Glover, "Account of Virginia, its Scituation, Temperature, Productions, Inhabitants and their manner of planting and ordering Tobacco etc.," in the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, 1676*, (reprint, Cambridge, MA: Oxford University Press, 1904), title page.

206. *Ibid.*, 10.

207. *Ibid.*, 3.

at times reminiscent of the promoters' enthusiasm for the colony. In addition to cataloging the variety of plants and "infinite plenty of wood" nurtured by Virginia's fertile soil, Glover recorded seeing several "hard & transparent" stones in the colony which could "cut glass as well as any Diamond," and declared that "generally all the high Lands under the mould are a meer Rock of Iron." However, he complained that the colonists, despite having such valuable resources at their disposal, were "so intent on their *Tobacco-Plantations* that they neglect[ed] all other more Noble and advantageous improvements whereof the Countrey is capable, which without doubt are many."<sup>208</sup> Thus the evaluation of Virginia presented in Glover's account acknowledges both the land's bounty and the recent revisions to the English understanding of the colony's geography.

The image of Virginia at the end of the period 1649-1676 no longer rested solely on the visions of the promoters; it now accommodated the explorers' ventures into the unsettled regions to the west and south of the colony. The hopes of the promoters persisted to a degree in those dedicated to the further progress and expansion of Virginia. However, the new depiction of Virginia did not allow for every anticipated element of the promoters' conception to endure; namely, the lack of dangers in the wilderness, the presence of low, narrow mountains, and easy access to the South Sea.

In cataloging the trees of Virginia, Thomas Glover included the mulberry tree, planted in the colony at the suggestion of the promoters in the hope of cultivating "a new China and Persia" in the New World.<sup>209</sup> He revealingly remarked, "I had almost forgot to mention their *Mulberry-Trees*, whereof they have a good store about their Houses; these were planted a first to feed Silkworms, but that design failing, they are now of little use

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208. *Ibid.*, 11-12.

209. Williams, (the second) 39.

amongst them.”<sup>210</sup> By 1676 many of the promoters’ beliefs about what would be found in the unsettled parts of Virginia had become like these mulberry trees: tacit reminders of old expectations which had never been brought to fruition.

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210. Glover, 15.

V. Maps Appendix



Figure 1. John Ferrar, "Ould Virginia 1584, now Carolana 1650 New Virginia 1606 New England 1606," 1650MS.

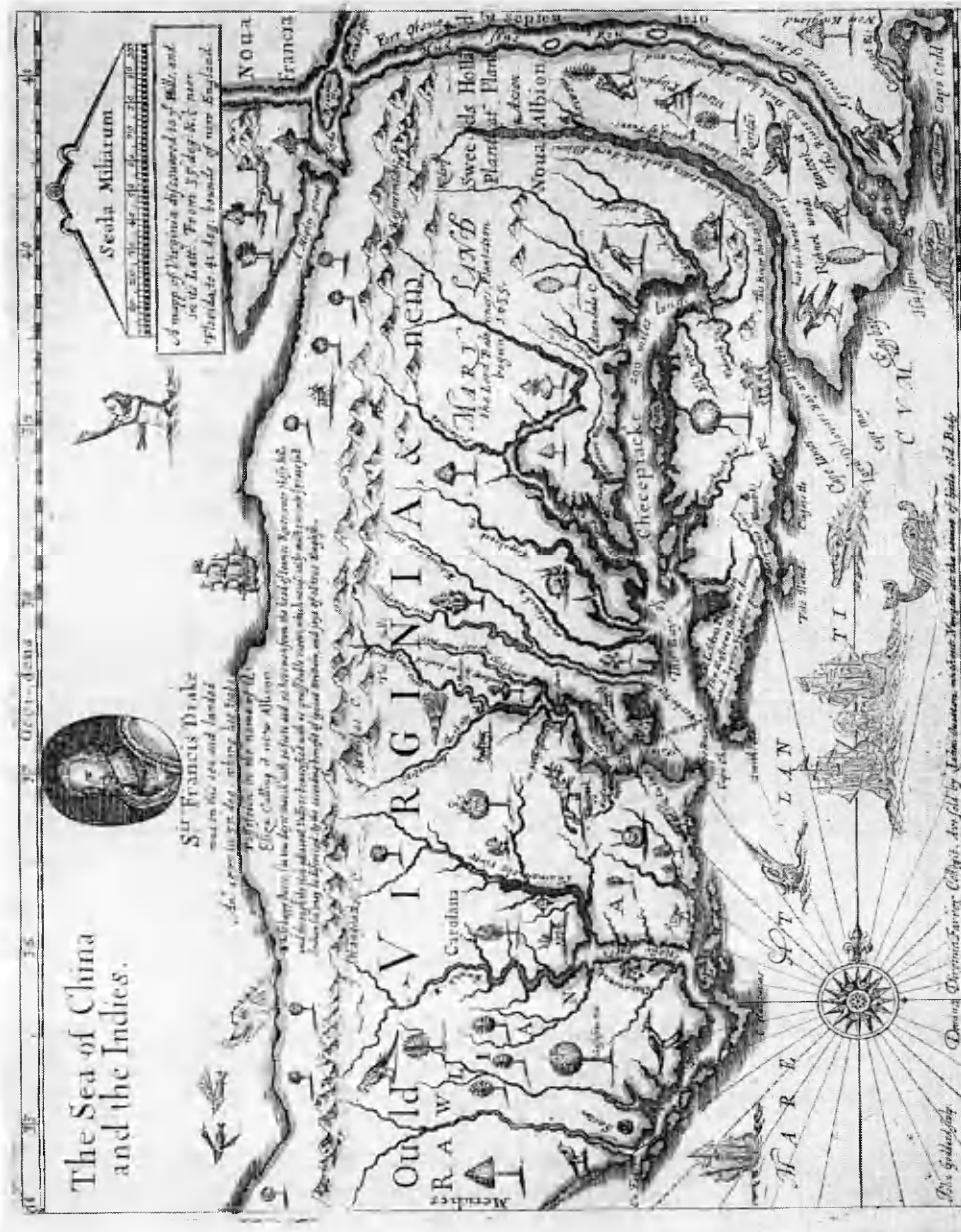


Figure 2. John Ferrar, A mapp of Virginia discovered to ye Falls, and in it's Latt: From 35. deg: & 1/2 neer Florida to .41.deg: bounds of new England, London, 1651.

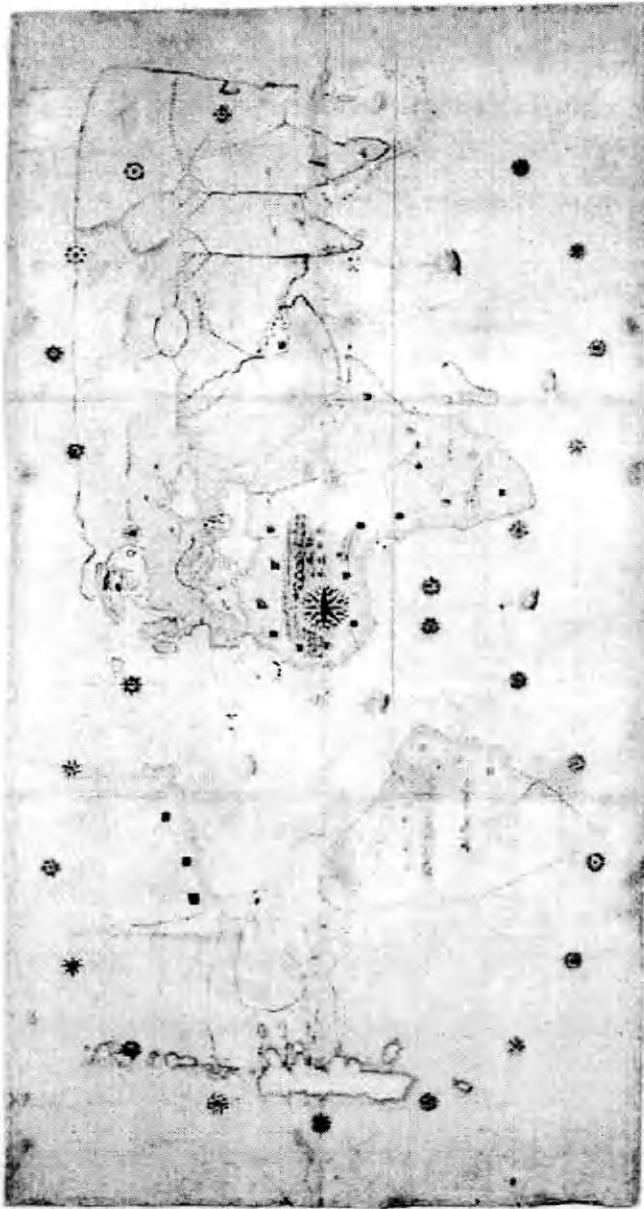


Figure 3. Gerolamo da Verrazano, 1529MS.

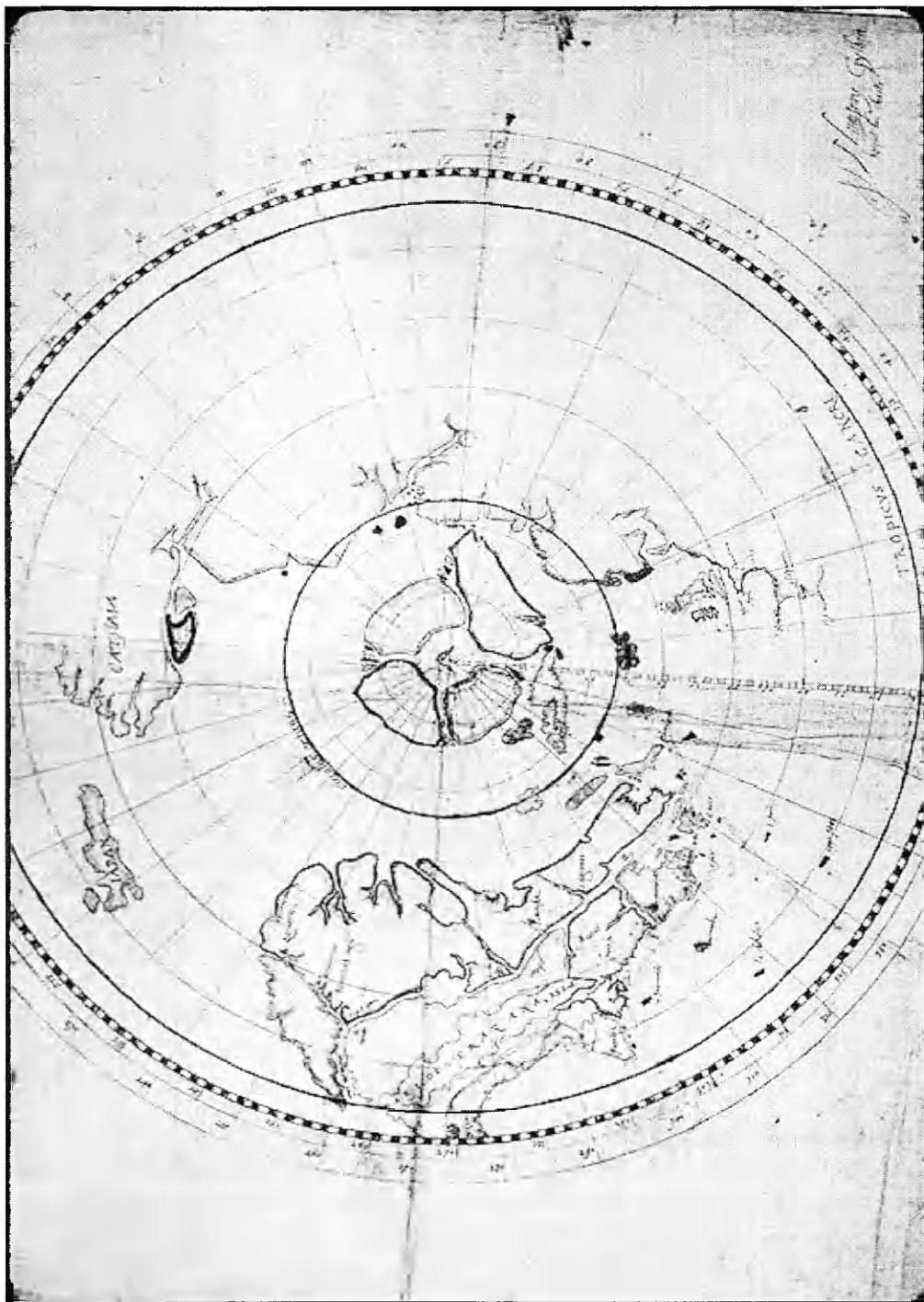


Figure 4. John Dec, 1582MS.

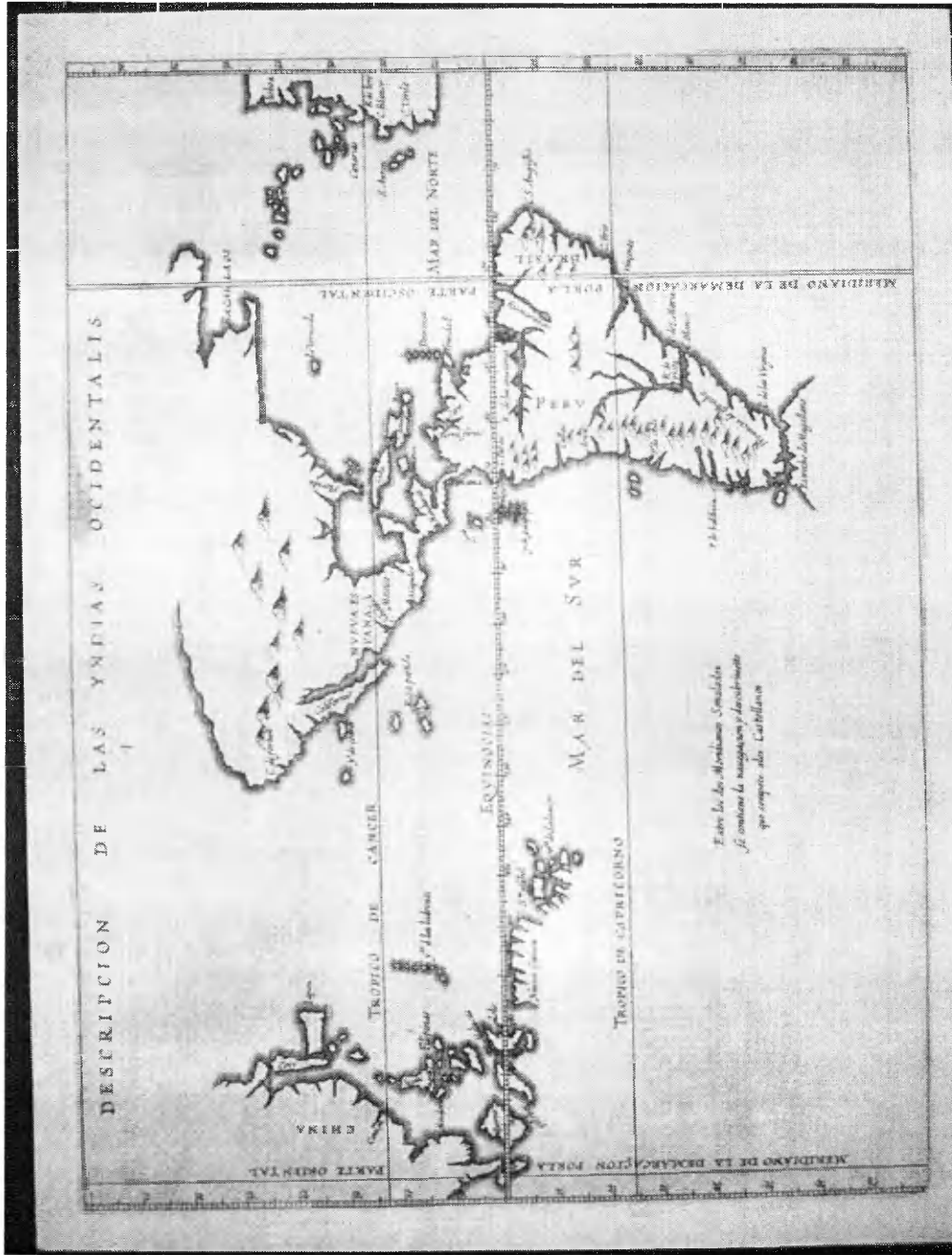


Figure 5. Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, *Description de las Yndias Occidentales*, Amsterdam, 1622.



Figure 6. John Smith, *Virginia*, in John Smith, *A Map of Virginia with a Description of the Country, the Commodities, People, Government and Religion*, Oxford, 1612.

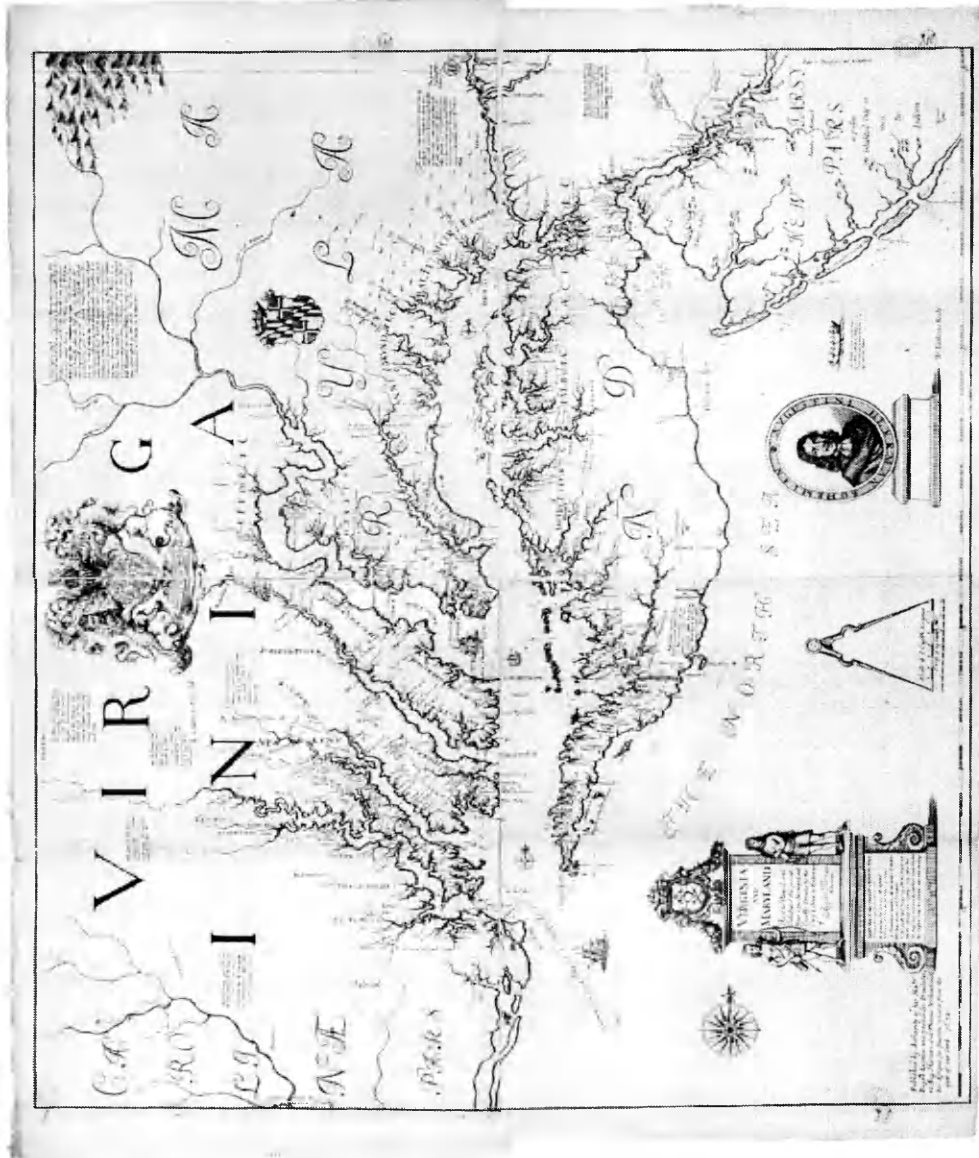


Figure 7. Augustine Herrman, *Virginia and Maryland*, London, 1673.

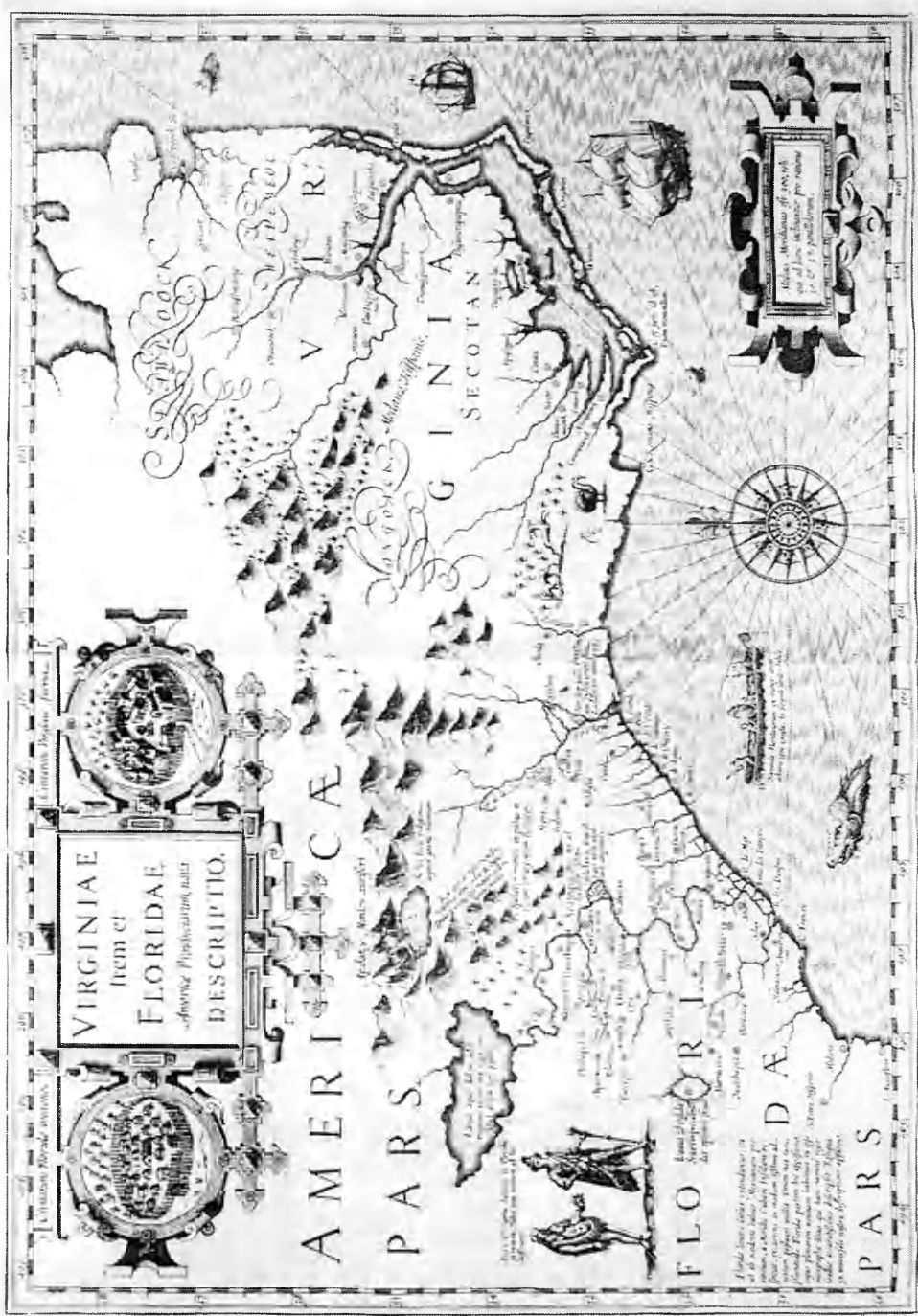


Figure 8. Jodocus Hondius, *Virginiae Item et Floridae America Provinciarum, nova Descriptio*, in Jodocus Hondius, *Atlas Novus, sive Description geographica Totius Orbis Terrarum*, Amsterdam, 1619.



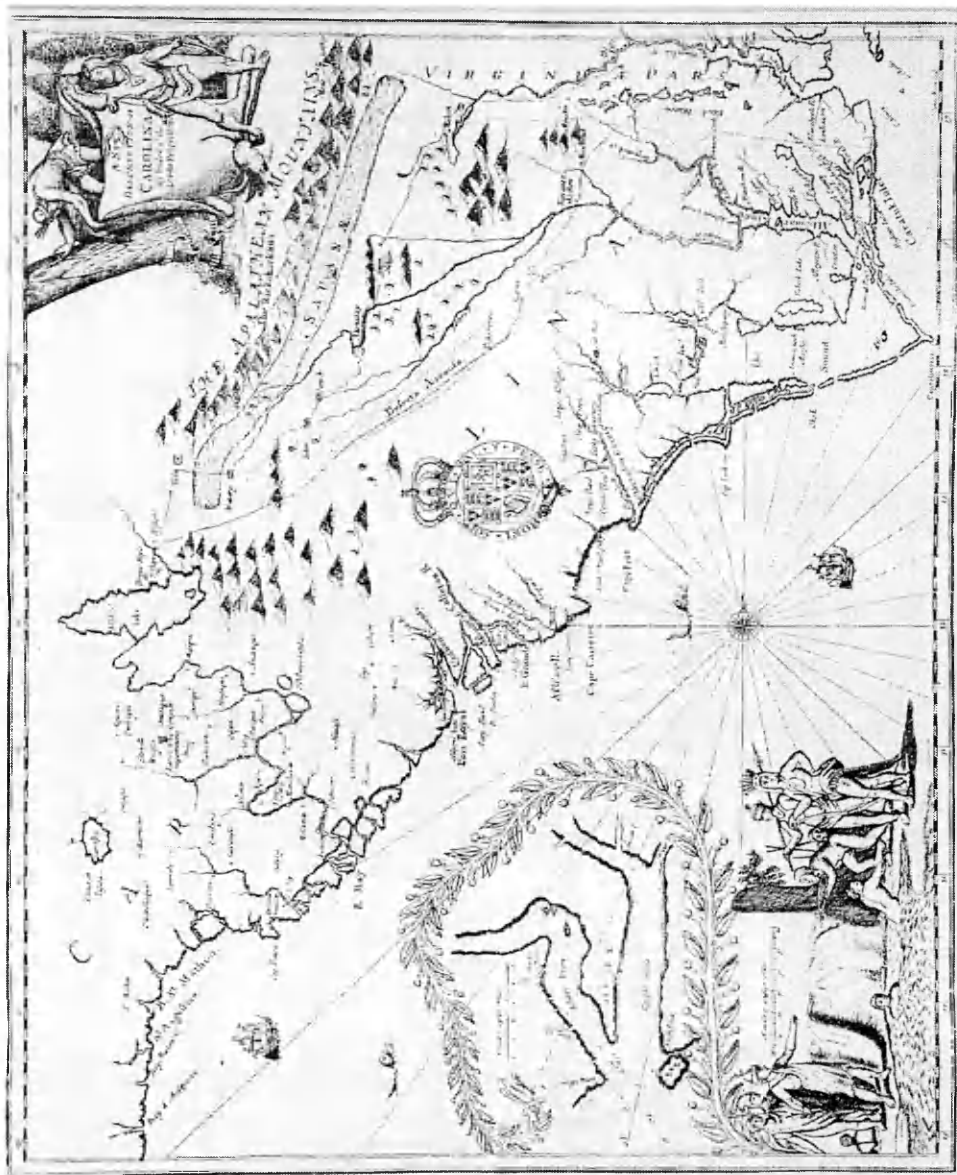


Figure 10. John Ogilby-James Moxon, *A New Description of Carolina By Order of the Lords Proprietors*, London, ca. 1672.



Figure 11. John Speed, *A New Description of Carolina*, in John Speed, *The theatre of the Empire of Great-Britain, presenting an exact geography of the Kingdom of England, Scotland, Ireland and the Isles adjoining. Together with a prospect of the most famous parts of the world, viz. Asia, Africa, Europe, America*, London, 1676.

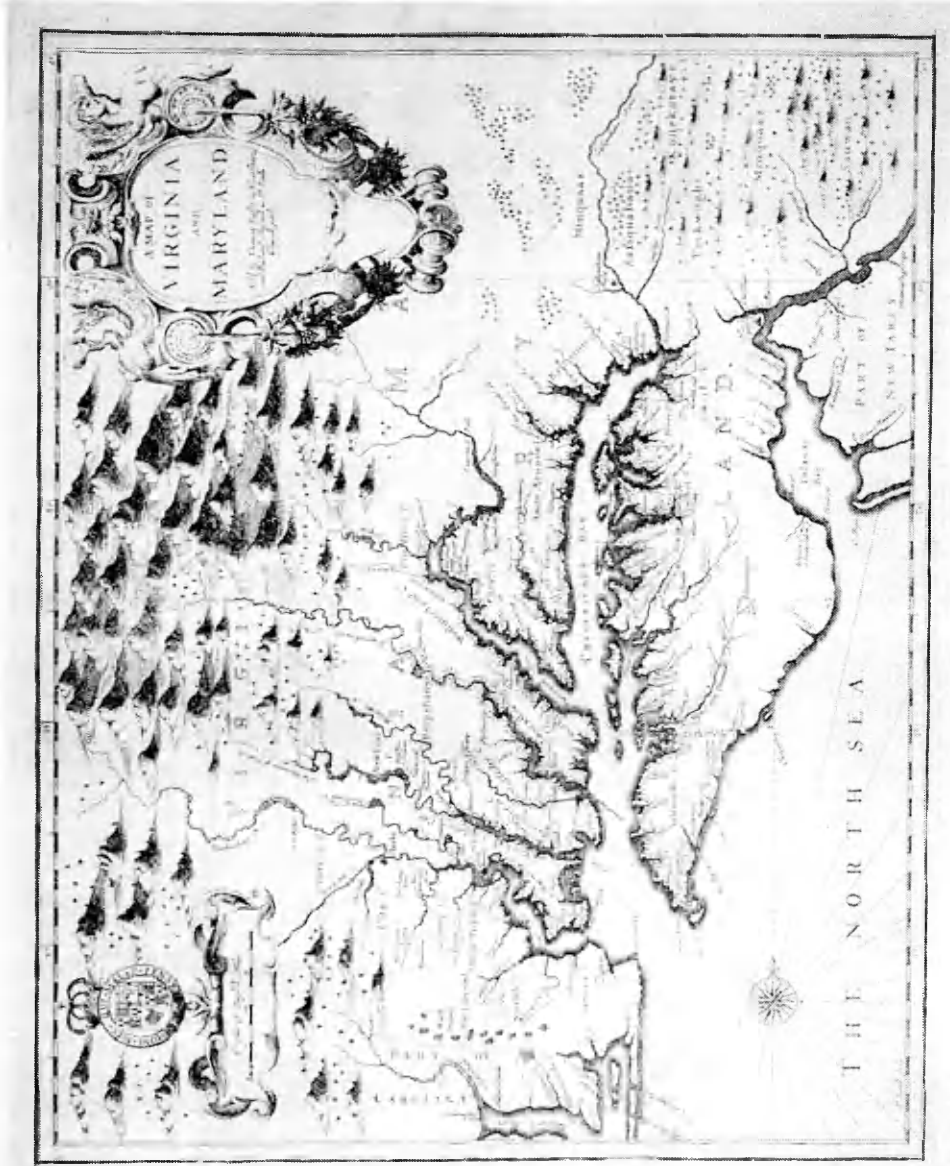


Figure 12. John Speed, *A Map of Virginia and Maryland*, in John Speed, *The theatre of the Empire of Great-Britain, presenting an exact geography of the Kingdom of England, Scotland, Ireland and the Isles adjoining. Together with a prospect of the most famous parts of the world, viz. Asia, Africa, Europe, America*, London, 1676.

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