

[Indorsed:] From S<sup>r</sup> Edwin at Northborn June 12. 1620 to John Ferrar  
S Sithes Lane

[Addressed:] To my very woorthie frend, M<sup>r</sup> John Ferrar, at his House in  
S<sup>t</sup> Sithes Lane in London.

CXVIII. "HIS MAIESTIES COUNSEIL FOR VIRGINIA." "A DECLARA-  
TION OF THE STATE \* \* \* IN VIRGINIA."

JUNE 22, 1620

Printed. Copies in British Museum, Bodleian Library, Cambridge University,  
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List of Records No. 183

A Declaration of the State of the Colony and Affaires in Virginia. With  
the Names of the Adventurors, and Summes aduentured in that  
Action. By his Maiesties Counseil for Virginia. 22. Iunij 1620.  
London: Printed by Thomas Suodham 1620.

By his Maiesties Counseil for Virginia

After the many disasters, wherewith it pleased Almighty God to suffer  
the great Enemy of all good Actions and his Instruments, to encounter  
and interrupt, to oppresse and keepe weake, this noble Action for the  
planting of *Virginia*, with Christian Religion, and English people: It  
hauing pleased him now contrarily of his especiall great grace, so to  
blesse and prosper our late carefull endeouours, as well for the repairing of  
all former breaches, as for supplying of the present defects, wherewith the  
Colony was kept downe, that it hath as it were on a sodaine growne to  
double that height, strength, plenty, and prosperity, which it had in  
former times attained: We haue thought it now the peculiar duety of our  
place, accordingly as it hath beene also ordered by a generall Court, to  
Summon as it were by a kinde of louing inuitement, the whole Body of  
the Noble and other worthy Aduenturors, as well to the conseruing and  
perfecting of this happy worke, as to the reaping of the fruit of their great  
expences and trauailes.

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<sup>1</sup> See vol. I., pp. 89, 90. The text is taken from the copy in the Library of Congress.

And first to remoue that vnworthy aspersion, where[2]with ill disposed mindes, guiding their Actions by corrupt ends, haue both by Letters from thence, and by rumours here at home, sought vniustly to staine and blemish that Countrey, as being barren and vnprofitable; Wee haue thought it necessary for the full satisfaction of all, to make it publikely known, that by diligent examination we haue assuredly found, those Letters and Rumours to haue been false and malicious; procured by practise, and suborned to euill purposes: and contrarily disaduowed by the testimony vpon Oath of the chiefe Inhabitants of all the Colony; by whom we are ascertained, that the Countrey is rich, spacious and well watered; temperate as for the Climate; very healthfull after men are a little accustomed to it; abounding with all Gods naturall blessings: The Land replenished with the goodliest Woods in the world, and those full of *Deere*, and other Beasts for sustenance: The Seas and Riuers (whereof many are exceeding faire and nauigable,) full of excellent Fish, and of all sorts desireable; both Water and Land yeelding Fowle in very great store and variety: In Summe, a Countrey, too good for ill people; and wee hope reserued by the prouidence of God, for such as shall apply themselues faithfully to his seruice, and be a strength and honour to our King and Nation. But touching those Commodities for which that Countrey is proper, and which haue beene lately set vp for the Aduenturors benefit: we referre you to a true note of them, lately deliuered in a great and generall Court, and hereunto annexed for your better information. By which and other approued informations brought vnto vs, We rest in great assurance, that this Countrey, as it is seated neere the midst of the world, betweene the extremities of heate and cold; So it also par[3]ticipateth of the benefits of bothe, and is capable (being assisted with skill and industry) of the richest commodities of most parts of the Earth. The rich Furres, Cauiary, and Cordage, which we draw from *Russia* with so great difficulty, are to be had in *Virginia*, and the parts adioyning, with ease and plenty. The Masts, Planckes, and Boords, the Pitch and Tarre, the Pot-ashes and Sope-ashes, the Hempe and Flaxe, (being the materials of Linnen,) which now we fetch from *Norway*, *Denmarke*, *Poland*, and *Germany*, are there to be had in abundance and great perfection. The *Iron*, which hath so wasted our *English* Woods, that it selfe in short time must decay together with them, is to be had in *Virginia*, (where wasting of Woods is a benefit)

for all good conditions answerable to the best in the world. The Wines, Fruite, and Salt of *France* and *Spaine*; The Silkes of *Persia* and *Italie*, will be found also in *Virginia*, and in no kinde of worth inferiour. We omit here a multitude of other naturall Commodities, dispersed vp and downe the diuers parts of the world: of Woods, Rootes, and Berries, for excellent Dyes: of Plants and other Drugges, for Physicall seruice: of sweet Woods, Oyles, and Gummes, for pleasure and other vse: of Cotten-wooll, and Suger Canes: all which may there also be had in abundance, with an infinity of other more: And will conclude with these three, Corne, Cattle and Fish, which are the substance of the foode of man. The Graines of our Countrey doe prosper there very well: Of Wheate they haue great plenty: But their *Maze*, being the naturall Graine of that Countrey, doth farre exceede in pleasantnesse, strength, and fertility. The Cattle which we haue transported thither, (being now growne neere to fiew hundred) become much bigger of Body, then the [4] breed from which they came: The Horses also more beautifull, and fuller of courage. And such is the extraordinary fertility of that *Soyle*, that the *Does* of their *Deere* yeelde two Fawnes at a birth, and sometimes three. The Fishings at *Cape Codd*, being within those Limits, will in plenty of Fish be equall to those of *New-found-Land*, and in goodnesse and greatnesse much superiour. To conclude, it is a Countrey, which nothing but ignorance can thinke ill of, and which no man but of a corrupt minde and ill purpose can defame.

Now touching the present estate of our Colony in that Country, We haue thought it not vnfit thus much briefly to declare. There haue bin sent thither this last yeere, and are now presently in going, twelue hundred persons and vpward, as particularly appeareth in the note aboue specified: and there are neere one thousand more remaining of those that were gone before. The men lately sent, haue bin most of them choise men, borne and bred vp to labour and industry. Out of *Deuonshire*, about an hundred men, brought vp to Husbandry. Out of *Warwickshire* and *Staffordshire*, about one hundred and ten; and out of *Sussex*, about forty; all framed to *Iron-workes*: the rest dispersedly out of diuers Shires of the Realme. There haue beene also sundry persons of good quality, much commended for sufficiency, industry and honesty, prouided and sent to take charge and gouernment of those people. The care likewise that hath beene taken by directions, Instructions, Charters, and Commissions to reduce the

people and affaires in *Virginia* into a regular course, hath bin such and so great, that the Colony beginneth now to haue the face and fashion of an orderly State, and such as is likely to grow and prosper. The people are all diuided [5] into seuerall Burroughs; each man hauing the shares of Land due to him set out, to hold and enioy to him and his Heires. The publike Lands for the Company here, for the Gouvernour there, for the Colledge, and for each particular Burrough, for the Ministers also, and for diuers other necessary Officers, are likewise laid out by order, and bounded. The particular Plantations for diuers priuate Societies, are settled in their Seates, being allotted to their content, and each in conuenient distance. The rigour of Martiall Law, wherewith before they were gouerned, is reduced within the limits prescribed by his Maiestie: and the laudable forme of Iustice and gouernment vsed in this Realme, established, and followed as neere as may be. The Gouvernour is so restrained to a Counseil ioyned with him, that hee can doe wrong to no man, who may not haue speedy remedy. Each Burrough, and each particular Plantation, partly hath, partly is bound to haue in short time a sufficient Minister: for whom maintenance is ordained, to each of two hundred pounds a yeere value. Which orderly proceeding there, by direction from hence, hath caused the Colony now at length to settle themselues in a firme resolution to perpetuate the Plantation. They fall to building of Houses, each for his owne priuate; and the Generalitie to the rearing of publike Guest-houses, for entertaining of new men vpon their first arriual. They fall to set vp their Ploughes; to the planting of *Vineyards*; to the pursuing of the Staple Commodities furnished and commended from hence. In summe, they are now so full of alacritie and cheerefulnesse, that in a late generall Assembly, they haue in the name of the Colony presented their greatest possible thanks to the Company, for the care that hath beene taken for the set[6]ling of the Plantation. Neither is it to be omitted, the care which hath beene had here lately at home, for the reducing of all the proceedings and affaires of the Company, to an orderly course of good gouernment and Iustice. Wherein to begin with the fountaine thereof, his Maiesties authoritie and pleasure, there hath beene a collection made of all the branches of the same, dispersed in his *Letters Patents*, now three times renewed: as also out of other Instructions proceeding from his Maiestie. Out of both which, together with such other Orders as (authorized by his Maiestie)

the Company themselues haue thought necessary to make, hath beene compiled a booke of standing Orders and Constitutions, approued by the generall consent of all the Company: whereby both the company here, and the Colony in *Virginia*, haue their businesse carried regularly, industriously, and iustly, euery man knowing both his right and duty, to their generall great content, and the great aduancement of the Action. And whereas the Colony likewise haue beene often Sutors in effect, to reduce into a compendious and orderly forme in writing, the Lawes of *England* proper for the vse of that Plantation, with addition of such other, as the nature of the place, the nouitie of the Colony, and other important circumstances should necessarily require: a course is likewise taken for the effecting of this worke; yet so as to submit it first to his Maiesties view and approbation; it being not fit that his Maiesties Subiects should be gouerned by any other Lawes, then such as receiue the influence of their life from him.

And now to come to that which concerneth the Aduenturers in particular, by whose charges, care, and labour (next vnto his Maiesties especiall grace) this famous Plan[7]tation hath not onely beene vndertaken, but through so many difficulties vpheld and continued: we should be very greatly iniurious to them, if we should not acquaint them with this seasonable time, for the reaping of that benefit and reward which is due vnto them. We therefore let them know, that in this last yeare now ended, there haue beene granted by the Company vnder their legall Seale, eleuen seuerall Patents for particular Plantations; and more are in hand to be passed this next Quarter-Court. It is not vnprobable that vpon each of these Patents, diuers hundreds of persons will soone Plant in *Virginia*: there haue beene already transported vpon the first, aboue three hundred men. These and other like Planters, hauing priority of time, will haue priority also in choise of the Seat of their Plantations. Seeing therefore the onely matter of retribution to the Aduenturers, is by a faire proportion of Land to them and their heires; namely of one hundred acres for euery share of twelue pounds & ten shillings, vpon a first diuision; & as much more vpon a second, the first being peopled; with fiftie acres for euery person, (to be doubled in like manner) which at their own charges they shall transport to inhabit in *Virginia* before the 24. day of *Iune* 1625. if he continue there three yeeres, either at one or seuerall times, or die after he is shipped for that voyage: It standeth them vpon, who are not willing

to be the least in the benefit to be partaked, not to be the last in setting foorth to the choise and peopling of their Land. Wherein what fauour or assistance may by vs be giuen them, they shall be well assured of it, in equall proportion with our selues, as their charges and long expectance haue well deserued. And to the end that not onely the Aduenturors now liuing, but the Heires also of the de[8]ceased, may take certaine notice of the seuerall proportions of Land, which ratably to their Aduentures in mony are due and belonging to them: And likewise that posteritie may truely know, by whose charges this Plantation (next vnder his Maiestie) hath beene happily founded, maintained, and continued: We haue here, according to an Order of Court, set downe in an *Alphabeticall* Table the names of all the Aduenturors, with all their seuerall summes aduentured. Wherein if by error, or other mis-accident, there haue wrong be done to any man; if within one twelue moneth after the date hereof, he giue notice and make prooffe thereof to the Companies Auditors, he shall be set right, and the Table reformed: there being not any thing more deere vnto vs, then to doe right vnto them, with all Iustifiable curtesie, who haue beene beginners and continuers of this glorious worke, tending so much to the propagating of the true seruice of Almighty God, to the adding of greatnesse and honour to our King, and to the benefit of our whole Nation in disburdening their multitude. 22. *Iunij.* 1620.<sup>1</sup>

[15] A Declaration of the Supplies intended to be sent to *Virginia*, in this yeare 1620. *By his Maiesties Counseil for Virginia.* 18. *Iulij* 1620. Whereas the Right Honourable, *Henry Earle* of Southampton, with the aduise and consent of the *Counseil* and *Company* for *Virginia*, hath resolved and concluded to imploy all good meanes in this present yeare, 1620. not onely for the aduancing of the *Plantation* in strength and multitude of good people, but also for the enriching thereof with store of cattell of diuers sorts, and by setting vp or encreasing such *Staple Commodities*, as being proper for that Countrey, may be also of most necessary vse for this Realme, and redound in fine to the greatest benefit of both *Aduenturors* and *Planters*, and lastly [16] for the establishing there of such good *Gouernment* (originally deriued from the Kings most excellent Maieftie, the first and chiefe Founder of this glorious worke) as whereby the people

<sup>1</sup> Next follows, in the Library of Congress copy of the book, "A Note of the Shipping," etc., printed in this volume as Document No. XLIX (List of Records No. 92).