

## Colonial Virginia Module

### English Hopes and Expectations

Mostly it's an effort to get information across to the investors in the Virginia Company, who are funding his explorations. The investors did give instructions to the first group of settlers and explorers, saying: set up your town and then travel out from there and find out everything. He's particularly interested in showing this as a good investment.

He shows the Indian groups that are settled in different areas in order to convince them that there are people there to trade with, people there who can live off of this land. It's a good land; it sustains life. He's trying to give them information, but he's also trying to encourage them to invest more, to have faith in this colony, to support him and the other adventurers.

He is trying to be accurate. It's one of the things you always want to know. How much is this person trying to tell accurate information to the audience. Or are they trying to give a very rosy or maybe a very negative view?

Archeological work confirms that he's pretty accurate. There seem to be villages where he indicates villages.

Maps certainly have to do with laying claim to the territory. Among European powers, the country that has drawn a map of an area does that as part of saying "this is ours." Smith isn't entirely claiming this area. The English have already claimed it, although the Spanish had claimed it earlier.

And as you can see from all the different groups, lots of people claimed it earlier. All these native groups, this is their land. Smith isn't really contesting at this point whether it's the Indians' land or not. Knowledge of where the people are is important in order to understand how much trade can take place in this area.

Why would Smith want to tell people in England about all these different Indian groups and their names? Aren't these Indian groups taking up all the land that the English might take up when they come over? And the answer is, initially, that's not the way the English are looking at it. They're looking at it as, "these are people whose wealth we can gain, we can get their crops, the animals they hunt." And that's shown up in the map.

In the upper right hand corner, there's part of the legend describing what's on the map. King's houses are a certain size and ordinary houses are another size. Smith is showing there're all these chiefs and that means this an important political unit. There must be some wealth here. And that's why this is a good place to settle.

One other aspect of the map that Smith spends a lot of time on is the rivers, showing you the bends and the ups and downs; where it's wide, where it's narrow. And that really shows us how he expects the Europeans to enter into the country. They enter in on ships. This is also how they will be transporting the trade goods that they're getting from these different Indian groups.

It's very important to the English to think about how they will get wealth back to England. They're not yet seeing America as, "here's a place where we're going to go and settle and stay." Instead, it's a place we're going to go, find riches, and return those riches back to England. Some of us may live there on these little outposts such as Jamestown, but most of us will not. And certainly the investors who're trying to make money, most of them will not actually travel. The closest they get to adventure is reading about it and looking at Smith's map.