



## Overview of Smith's Second Chesapeake Bay Voyage

For his second voyage, Smith reduced the number of men from fourteen to twelve, keeping most of the same crew but replacing a few of them who were needed at Jamestown. He took five gentlemen instead of six, retaining James Bourne, Richard Featherstone, Thomas Momford, and Michael Sicklemore, adding Nathaniel Powell, and dropping William Cantrill and Ralph Morton. Anthony Bagnall replaced Walter Russell as physician. Edward Pising took Robert Small's place as carpenter, William Ward replaced John Powell as tailor, and blacksmith James Read remained behind. Fisherman Jonas Profit, fish merchant Richard Keale, and soldiers James Watkins and Anas Todkill, all members of the first expedition, also joined the second.

The first voyage had taught Smith that the Northwest Passage probably could not be found by sailing up the rivers that flowed into the Bay. He knew that the navigability of the James, the Potomac, and several other rivers terminated in rocky falls, and none of the Native people he interviewed thought that a great sea was accessible by sailing farther west. On his second voyage, Smith would test the head of the Bay and the Rappahannock River, but he probably knew that any such passage lay elsewhere, if it existed.

Smith and his crew left Jamestown on July 24 and stopped that night at Kecoughtan, where the winds then shifted and delayed them for the next couple of days. The Kecoughtan people, convinced that Smith was on his way north to thrash the Massawomeck again, hosted him and his men. On July 27, the wind turned favorable, and the expedition sailed into the Bay, headed north, and made Stingray Point that evening—a distance of about forty-five miles. The next day, the wind may have carried Smith and his men past the mouth of the Potomac River to Cove Point.

On July 29, the shallop sailed all the way to the mouth of the Patapsco River. A problem had developed, however. Half of the men, mostly those who had arrived in the “first supply” in January and were not yet “seasoned” by surviving a full year in the colony, had become very ill. Only six, including Smith, remained physically fit, which meant that rowing the heavy boat was virtually impossible and the smaller tributaries would have to remain unexplored. Under sail, the next day the vessel reached Turkey Point, where Smith saw that the Bay divided itself into four main rivers: the Susquehanna, the North East, the Elk, and the Tockwoh or Sassafras. He sailed the shallop into the North East River and anchored for the night.

### Exploring the Head of the Bay

Several crewmen walked six miles up Little North East Creek along the bank the next day, July 31, and placed a cross where the stream divided to claim the head of the Bay for England. They then returned to the shallop and sailed out into the Bay and west to the Susquehanna River. Contrary winds and the river current kept them from entering the mouth that day, so they sailed instead back across the Bay to the Sassafras River. As they approached the mouth, they saw seven or eight birch-bark canoes coming out, loaded with Massawomeck men. Smith hid his sick men—half the crew—under a tarpaulin, placed sticks with their hats along the gunwales with two muskets between each hat, and hoped that the warriors would think he had more armed men than he actually had. The ruse seemed to work. The Massawomeck turned and landed on one riverbank while Smith anchored opposite them, and both sides

stared at each other for a while. Finally, two canoeloads of Massawomeck ventured out, and Smith gave them metal bells that broke the tension. Everyone soon got down to business, and Smith traded into the evening for venison, bear meat, bearskins, fish, weapons, and shields. The Massawomeck told him that they had just come from a fight with the Tockwogh and showed him their wounds. The next morning, the Englishmen awoke to find them gone (across the Bay and up the Bush River, as Smith later learned).

On August 1, Smith slowly explored up the Sassafra River. Word of the strange craft quickly spread, and soon Tockwogh men arrived in canoes to surround and attack the Englishmen. Smith tried to persuade them of his friendly intentions in the Powhatan language but the Tockwogh spoke a different Algonquian language. Fortunately, one of them proved bilingual and he conveyed Smith's words to the others. When the Tockwogh spotted the Massawomeck weapons and shields, they (like the Kecoughtan) assumed that Smith had taken them by force. Smith said nothing to disabuse them of the notion. They escorted the Englishmen seven miles upriver to their palisaded town, where Smith noticed that they had tools of iron and brass and asked where they had come from. Told they were from the Susquehannock, who lived two days' journey above the falls of the Susquehanna River, Smith asked the bilingual Tockwogh to take another Tockwogh who spoke Susquehannock and invite representatives to a meeting at the town for trade.

The next day, the Englishmen and the Tockwogh men sailed across the Bay to the mouth of the Susquehanna River, then up to the falls. The Native men departed, telling Smith that they would need three days to reach Susquesahanough, the principal town (located in present-day Pennsylvania near Washington Boro, southeast of Lancaster), and return—roughly forty miles each way from the river's mouth. After they left, Smith had his men plant a cross, and then they sailed back down the river and explored islands along the way, spending the night in the Susquehanna Flats just outside the river's mouth. The Tockwogh men got into Pennsylvania before bivouacking.

On August 3, Smith sailed east across the Bay and spent the night at the mouth of the Elk River. The Tockwogh men reached Susquesahanough, where they rested for a day and answered questions about the Englishmen. The able-bodied from among Smith's crewmen, meanwhile, explored about eight miles up Big Elk Creek. At the stream's fork, they climbed a hill from which they may have been able to see Delaware Bay to the east, and planted another cross to claim the river for England. They then returned to the shallow for the night. On August 5, the Englishmen sailed back across the Bay and up the Susquehanna to the falls to wait for the Tockwogh men. At Susquesahanough, the Susquehannock leaders agreed to meet with Smith, organized a trading party, packed trade goods into canoes, and got ready for the quick half-day trip downstream.

The next day, the canoe fleet arrived at the falls with about sixty men and many gifts and trade goods. While most of the canoes remained in the river because of wind and chop on the Bay, intending to follow after the weather calmed, Smith took the five Susquehannock leaders and two interpreters aboard the shallow and sailed across to the Sassafra River and Tockwogh. Dancing and feasting took place there during the night. In the morning, Smith conducted an Anglican prayer service, which included a chanted psalm. The Susquehannock leaders reciprocated with a song, then embraced Smith and gave him a large number of presents. The Susquehannock may have intended the exchange to mark an alliance with the English, as they like the Tockwogh believed that Smith had defeated their mutual enemy, the Massawomeck. The remaining Susquehannock men probably arrived soon thereafter, and more feasting and trading followed.

On August 8, Smith departed Tockwogh, heading south to explore other rivers including the Rappahannock on the way back to Jamestown. He and the native people probably saw this week of close contact as mutually beneficial: the Susquehannock and Tockwogh had a new trading partner and ally against the Massawomeck, while Smith had learned of other tribes with whom the Susquehannock traded—a network that reached into Canada. He had also learned, from the local inhabitants as well as from his own observations, that the head of the Chesapeake Bay did not lead to the Northwest Passage. It was not what he had hoped to find, but it was useful information nonetheless. His men, by this time, probably were feeling better, too. Before the end of the day, driven by good winds, the shallop got at least as far as Rock Hall on the Eastern Shore, and perhaps all the way to Sandy Point at the mouth of the Chester River.

### **More River Explorations**

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Smith sailed south and west across the Bay to the Patuxent River on August 9, and the next day sailed and rowed upstream past two towns on the eastern bank to the principal town of Pawtuxunt on Battle Creek. After a night of rest and feasting there, Smith and his men, probably accompanied by a Pawtuxunt guide, sailed upriver and noted two more towns on the eastern side. They then entered a hunting area between the Pawtuxunt and the upriver tribes, whose leader resided at Mattpanient. Smith probably stopped there for a courtesy call, and reached the vicinity of today's Merkle Wildlife Management Area. On August 11, Smith halted downstream at Acquintanacsuck town for another courtesy call and a bit of trading. He and his men then continued to the town of Opanient near the mouth of the river, to drop off their guide and spend the night.

On August 13, the expedition sailed and rowed south toward the Rappahannock River, probably stopping for the night at Saint Jerome Creek. Smith reached the mouth of the Rappahannock the next day and then sailed upstream to Moraughtacund town on Lancaster Creek, where he had a reunion with Mosco. The bearded Wicocomoco man had heard his friends were exploring up the river, so he trekked to Moraughtacund to join them. The leader there treated the Englishmen well, and they rested and feasted for a day or two.

Mosco guided Smith and his men upriver into the territory of the Rappahannock people on August 17, but with a warning. Because the Moraughtacund leader had recently appropriated three of the Rappahannock leader's wives, and because Smith had accepted Moraughtacund hospitality, the Rappahannock would consider him their enemy. Smith thought the Moraughtacund simply wanted all the trade for themselves, so he pressed on upstream and eventually approached the north bank, probably opposite Piscataway Creek just below present-day Tappahannock. There he saw a dozen Rappahannock men beckoning to him and displaying baskets of goods. Hostages were exchanged for good behavior, but suddenly the Rappahannock attacked. Smith and his men fought back with musket fire, set shields on their arms and rescued English hostage Anas Todkill, looted the Rappahannock dead (the survivors had fled), and departed in the shallop with Rappahannock canoes in tow. These Smith gave to Mosco, and then the party returned to Moraughtacund for feasting and celebration.

The next morning, Smith, his men, and Mosco departed upstream again, this time sailing past the Rappahannock towns and keeping close to the south bank. They had reached a point where the river narrows and turns left, not far from present-day Leedstown, when Rappahannock men hiding in the bushes let fly a volley of arrows. Smith replied with musket fire and passed safely out of range. When they were half a mile upriver, Smith looked back and saw the Rappahannock dancing and singing in derision. After another five miles, the party reached Pissaseck town, where the leader welcomed the Englishmen and they spent the night.

On August 19, Smith continued his expedition up the meandering Rappahannock and stopped at Nandtaughtacund at Portobago Bay to trade and spend the night. The next day the Englishmen arrived at Cuttatawomen town at Skinkers Neck, where amid the feasting they were concerned about Richard Featherstone, one of the gentlemen among the crew, who had grown seriously ill, possibly with heatstroke. On August 21, near Moss Neck, Featherstone died and was buried. The rest of the group probably spent the night nearby.

The next day, Smith and his men rowed to the vicinity of present-day Fredericksburg, just below the fall line. They went ashore, “digging in the earth, looking of stones, herbs, and springs.” Suddenly, after an hour, a group of warriors attacked; Smith and his crew fired back, and Mosco fought with them. When the attackers withdrew, leaving behind their dead, the Englishmen found one of them unconscious and carried him to the shallop, where Mosco questioned him for Smith after he regained consciousness. The man’s name was Amoroleck, and he was from a Mannahoac town, Hassinunga, on the upper Rappahannock River. The Mannahoac, like the Monacan, were Siouan speakers who lived outside the Powhatan polity. Amoroleck knew that there were mountains west of his town, but nothing about what lay beyond them. He also said that his companions would return for their dead. Smith and his men, with Mosco and Amoroleck, boarded the shallop, arranged their shield collection on the appropriate side of the vessel to help protect them, and anchored in mid-river. After dark, the Mannahoac returned with reinforcements and attacked, but their arrows fell short. Their war cries were so loud that Amoroleck’s cease-fire shouts could not be heard. Smith raised anchor and the boat drifted downstream, the Mannahoac following and shouting taunts, for about nine miles to Hollywood Bar.

On August 23, the next day, Smith and his crew had breakfast and took down the shields so that the Mannahoac men could see Amoroleck safe and sound. He told his compatriots that the Englishmen were friends, and soon they were convinced. Some trading took place, Smith probably made further inquiries about what lay over the mountains (the Hassinunga leaders did not know), and the explorers finally got underway, heading back downstream to Cuttatawomen. Smith had succeeded in establishing peaceful trading relations with the Mannahoac, Powhatan’s enemies of interior Virginia.

The next day, Smith continued downriver. So that his great “victory” over the Mannahoac could be celebrated, he probably stopped at several towns including Pissaseck. There the leaders of that town and Nandtaughtacund convinced Smith to make peace with the Rappahannock. Smith struck a hard bargain, however, since the Rappahannock had attacked him twice: they would have to come to the meeting unarmed, make peace with the Moraughtacund, present Smith with their leader’s bow and arrows, and send the leader’s son as a hostage in advance of the meeting. The Rappahannock, when they received the terms, agreed to all but one. The meeting took place on August 25 at Piscataway Creek, where the first ambush had occurred. The Rappahannock leader, three of whose wives had earlier been appropriated by the Moraughtacund leader, asked to make a present of his claim to them to Smith in lieu of his son, with whom he could not bear to part. Smith agreed, although he had no intention of keeping the women. Over the next three days, Smith got the Moraughtacund leader to surrender the women to him in the interest of peace.

On August 29, after the Native men had scoured the woods for deer, a huge feast was laid on at Moraughtacund. Smith sealed his friendship with the leaders by distributing the women among them. First he gave each of the women beads, next he had the Rappahannock choose his favorite wife, then he had the Moraughtacund make his selection, and finally he gave the third woman to Mosco. The guide’s importance and wealth had grown considerably not only because of his role in the expedition but also because of the booty he had received after the battles. Now he changed his name to Uttasantascough—meaning stranger or Englishman—in honor of Smith and his crew. By the time Smith left, he later wrote, the people of the Rappahannock had promised to plant extra corn for the English the next year.

Beside trading peacefully with the Mannahoac, Smith had also brokered a peace between adversaries within Powhatan's polity, breaking yet another rule.

## **Return to Jamestown**

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The Englishmen bade farewell to their guide and new friends and departed about the last day of August, while the feasting continued. Smith had to return to Jamestown by September 10, when he was due to assume the presidency of the colony legitimately. He also had another river to explore, and at this time of year the winds were uncertain. By the evening of August 31, the shallop was anchored at the mouth of the Piankatank River. Over the next three days, Smith explored up and down the river, mapping it and visiting the Piankatank town, which like other towns along the river was virtually empty as the men were away hunting. As in other towns Smith had visited, he got those who remained in Piankatank town to promise him a share of the corn crop.

On the morning of September 3, a windless day, the crew began rowing down the Bay toward the James River. They made the mouth of the Poquoson River by dusk, but then a violent thunderstorm struck and they had to bail to keep from foundering. Smith hoisted sail in the dark to take advantage of the wind and steered the shallop to Old Point Comfort, its way illuminated by the lightning, and took shelter there. The next day was spent resting and drying clothes. On September 5, the group began sailing up the James River and explored the Elizabeth and Nansemond Rivers. Smith later wrote an account that claimed he had a running battle with the Nansemond, but this is questionable. On September 7, laden with notes, maps, war booty, gifts, and trade goods, the shallop docked at Jamestown.

## **End of the Chesapeake Voyages**

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John Smith's explorations of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries had ended. He had failed to find gold, silver, or the Northwest Passage. But he had accomplished a great deal, for good and ill. He saw more with his own eyes (and wrote more about it) than any other Englishman then in Virginia. He gathered data for a map that would guide English explorers and settlers for decades to come. He journeyed a great distance for the time, in an open boat with crews that were often ill, and lost only one man. He faced storms and combat and brought his men and his vessel safely home. He formed alliances with a vast number of American Indian tribes, using courage and bluster and deception in the process, but he also violated the agreement with Powhatan and unwittingly endangered both Jamestown and the great chief. Smith's voyages brought out his best qualities— personal bravery, coolness in times of stress, canny negotiating skills, and a knack for leadership. They also illustrated his worst—deceit, manipulation, and the ability to wreak havoc among the Native peoples through ignorance and stereotypical English arrogance. Regardless of the outcomes, however, Smith and his companions had survived a grand adventure, and the voyages were a great accomplishment.