

## ANN BURRAS - 1619

Times was hard in England. I had little future but with Mistress Forest.

I were 14 years... and knew naught of this place, but the husband of my mistress did business with the London Company... and he would go to Virginia for his investment.

'Twere a fearsome voyage. Sickness and misery for days on that wretched ship. I could barely stand when, at last, my feet was set upon dry land, for I felt the rolling still.

What I saw then made me want to get back on that vile ship...

A sorry group, they was... living in things that could barely be called houses... looking as if to fall down at the merest breath of wind.

But they was glad of our arrival. And we carried on as best we could.

James Fort... had but one storehouse for goods... not much to it. There were a church, but it looked more like a barn for the animals than a place of worship. To give thanks for our safe passage, I did go there to pray with my mistress. The men and boys was all well mannered with us—some a-feared to meet our eyes, not seeing an English woman for such a time. One... a man... John Laydon... spoke to me right kindly.

John and I was the first to marry in that place. 'Twere a happy day...

We was wed but a year, when came the winter we call the "Starving Time." There were trouble with the Indians... when supplies was gone, those at the fort feared to leave and et roots, acorns, horses . . . even rats.

When the Starving Time were done, there was more dead than alive... and those alive was like skeletons. I heard talk of some who dug up a dead savage and et him. There were a man, killed his own wife and had et part of her before he was discovered.

By a miracle of God, my family survived... and more men and women came with Lord De La Warr. There's a deal more in the storehouse than they was when I arrived! To be sure, me chances here's better than where I came from, and we have a nice little home of our own with a cupboard what's often full.



