KING JAMES I, King of England - 1620

It is naught but peace I desire.

Was it not this “King of Great Britain” who—only months after being crowned—made peace with Spain… after so many years of conflict?

We believe it is our right and duty to bring this realm to its ordained height and position of leadership in the world… for the glory of God… and I shall not allow the Spanish, Dutch—or any other foreign power—to surpass us in the old world… or the new. To that end, I granted a charter to The Virginia Company… to settle and civilize that land… seek a new northerly sea passage… and commodities and riches for our benefit (and their investors). The Spanish flag shall not be planted to grow like a weed in the New World.

I signed a second charter for the Virginia Company to bring more order and discipline. Now new instructions have been writ… to administer the unruly place, and James Cittie is the cornerstone for a far greater endeavor. At last there is strong, virtuous leadership in this Virginia. The natives are more peaceful, as the word of our true Christian God is given to them. It is pleasing to be the source of their salvation.

That said… in our relations with them, shall we abase ourselves so far as to imitate these Indians? Why do we not as well imitate them in walking naked as they do… in preferring glasses, feathers, and such toys, to gold and precious stones, as they do? Tobacco is a custom loathesome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmful to the brain.

We have success in Jamestown, but the riches gained cannot depend on the vile tobacco. Our countrymen now know they must work as diligently to promote the glass and silk and other newfound goods and trades. And we do not forget the most important work… to spread the word of our Lord. Then we might count Virginia as a true success to the glory of God… with no stain of corruption.

If the king want, the state wants… and—therefore—the strengthening of the king is the preservation and the standing of the state… and woe be to him that divides the will of the king from the will of the kingdom. Some may think the king too strict in his devotion to God… but it has been said that others call the king “wise”—another Solomon of the Bible. It pleases him to be so known… with more than a little respect.

Be assured… it is naught but peace I desire.
KING JAMES I – Related Facts

- James was born in 1566, the son of Mary, Queen of Scots and Lord Darnley.

- He was King of Scotland (as James VI) for 36 years before becoming King of England in 1603—and the first in the British royal line of Stuarts.

- He considered his rule to be by the “Divine Right of Kings” (under which he was considered appointed by God and not answerable to men), but all members of Parliament did not accept this belief. By governing for much of the time without Parliament—relying instead on a select group of “favourites” for advice—he diluted the legacy of strong government established by Elizabeth I.

- There were multiple conspiracies and efforts to depose James during the early years of his reign in England; and, in 1605, the “Gunpowder Plot” was an alleged attempt by Guy Fawkes and other English Catholics to destroy both King and Parliament.

- He signed the first of three charters in 1606, granting The Virginia Company the right to control an area extending 50 miles north, 50 miles south, and 100 miles west of the settlement on the east coast of America. The second charter in 1609 granted the Virginia Company an “able and absolute governor.” In 1612 a third charter incorporated Bermuda and established lotteries for the purpose of raising funds. The “Great Charter” of 1618 was a set of instructions written by the Virginia Company (not granted by King James), which made Virginia's assembly the colony's legislature.

- Only John Rolfe's successful experiment with tobacco as a cash crop provided a way to recoup financially. James hated everything about tobacco and opposed it as the main cash crop of Virginia—writing a Counterblaste to Tobacco, a strong anti-tobacco treatise. He did support other endeavors—especially silk production, which was never successful.

- Five years before his death, the Pilgrims sailed to America (New England) on the Mayflower.

- King James I died in 1625, at age 58.

- In addition to expanding lands overseas and Britain’s influence in the world, his achievements included:
  - Peace with Spain after decades of fighting;
  - A new translation of the Bible published in 1611;
  - A new Banqueting House in Whitehall Palace, designed by Inigo Jones;
  - 9 children by his wife, Anne of Denmark—including his second son, the next King of England, Charles I.