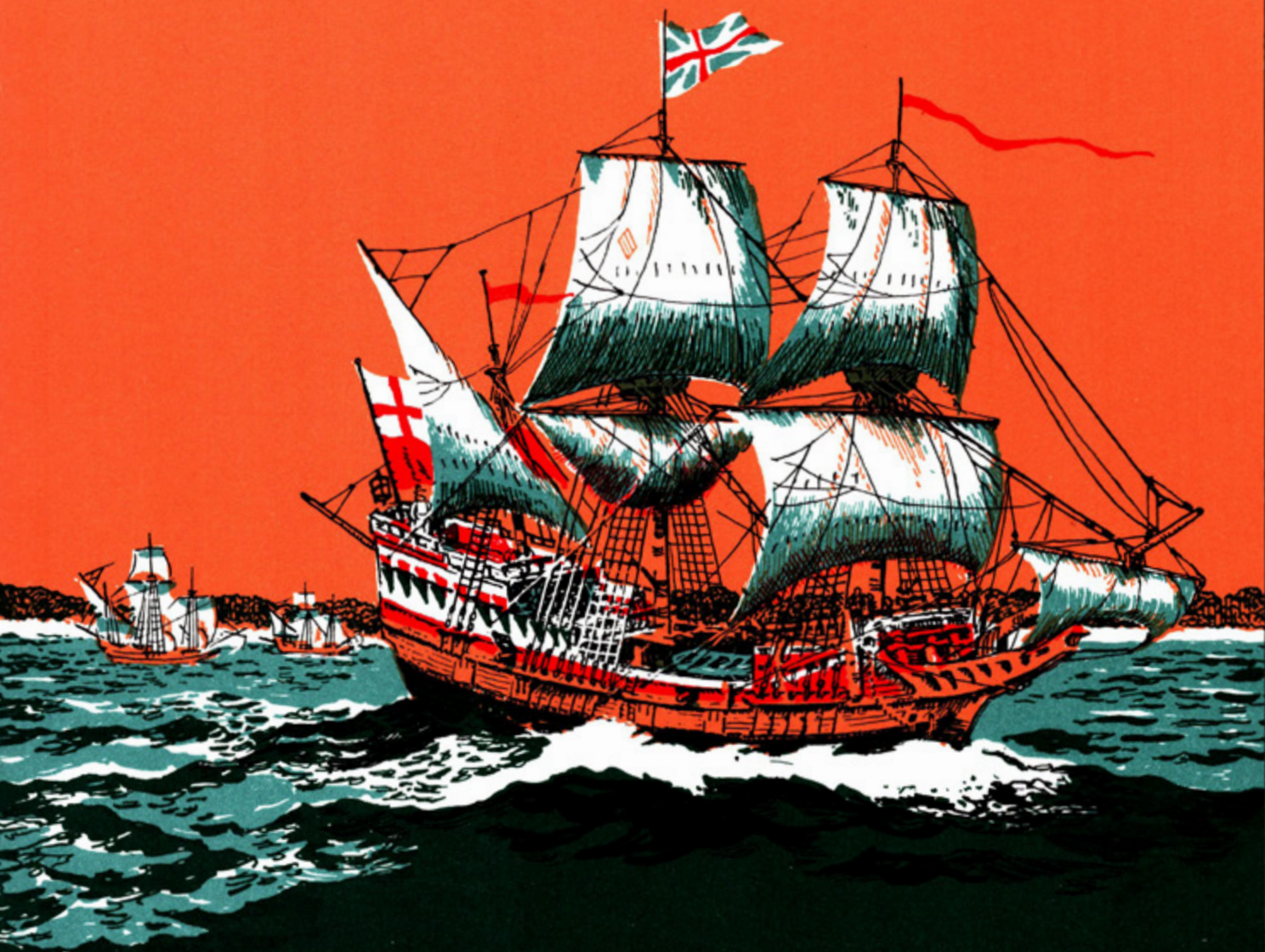


Three Ships Come Sailing



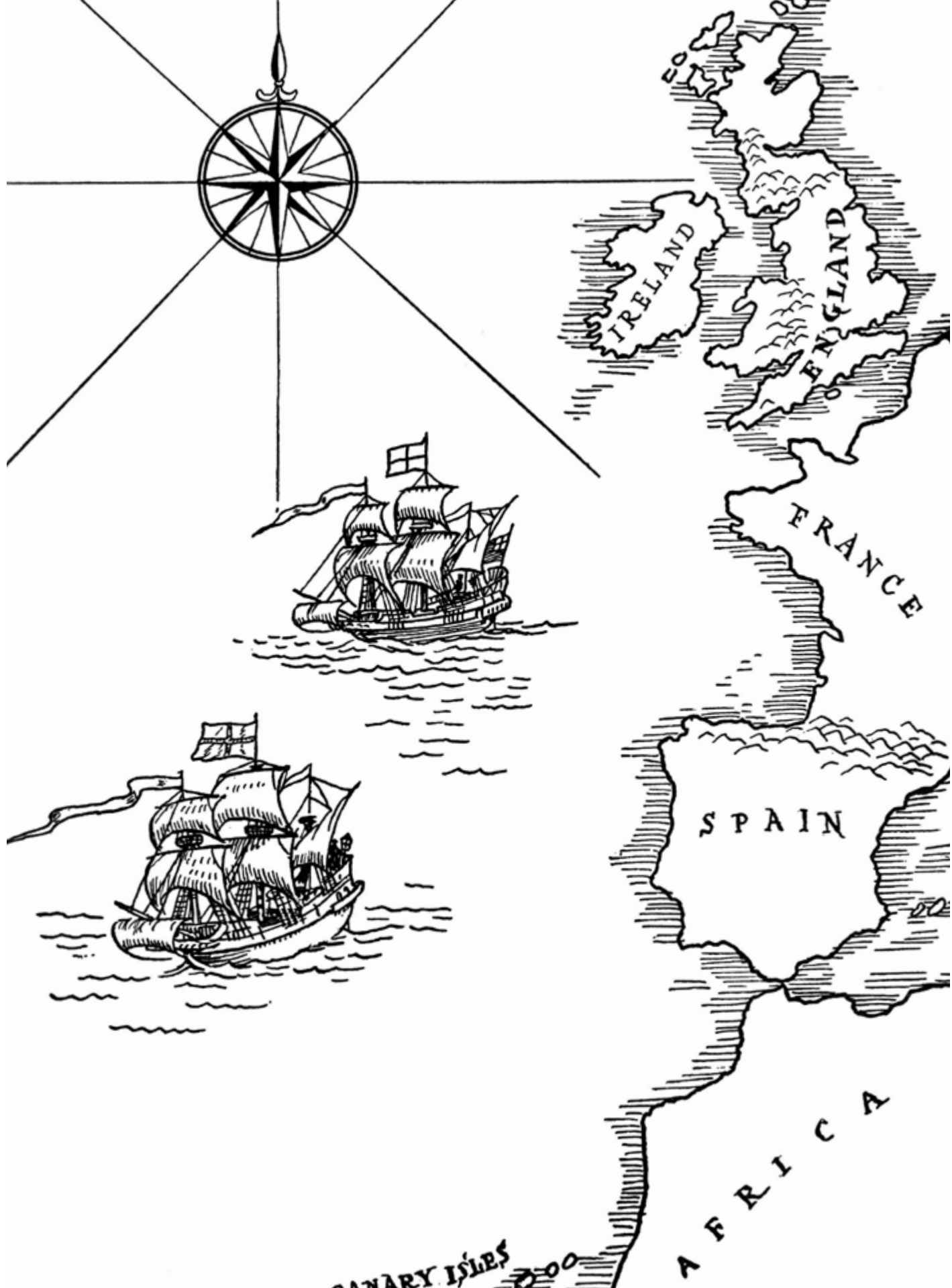
A Child's Story of Our
Country's Birthplace
Jamestown in Virginia

By *Gilchrist Waring*

PICTURES BY ELMO JONES







THREE SHIPS COME SAILING



A Child's Story of Our
Country's Birthplace
JAMESTOWN IN VIRGINIA

By GILCHRIST WARING

Pictures by ELMO JONES

THE DIETZ PRESS, RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

COPYRIGHT, 1948
BY
GILCHRIST WARING

•

Reprinted 2016

Printed in the United States of America

With deep appreciation to the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities—that group of patriotic women who have labored so long and so faithfully to preserve for us our country's birthplace.



To Our Young Readers:

COUNTRIES, like persons, have birthdays and birthplaces. The thirteenth of May is our country's birthday, and Jamestown, on the north bank of the James River in Virginia, is her birthplace. This little story is about Jamestown—and we hope you will love it as much as we have loved preparing it.

THE AUTHOR AND THE ARTIST.



ONE cold December day, nearly three hundred and fifty years ago, three ships sailed out from the port of Blackwall, England. They were the Discovery, the Godspeed, and the Susan Constant, and aboard were about one hundred Englishmen and three or four English boys. These men and boys were bold adventurers who were sailing to the new country of Virginia in North America to start an English colony.

The people in England had heard many strange stories about the faraway country of Virginia. It was a land rich in gold and precious stones, the home of red-skinned

Indians, and a vast wilderness where savage beasts roamed through the forests.

Aboard the ships the Englishmen talked amongst themselves about the adventures that lay ahead. Some boasted of how they would gain fortunes and return home to live like princes. Others spoke of their hopes to Christianize the Indians. Then, there were those who talked only of their eagerness to start the new colony. Little did they dream that before them lay untold hardships, disappointments, and suffering. Still less did any of them dream that they were sailing to the new world to begin what would one day be a mighty nation—our United States of America!

In those days ships were small and frail, and the voyage was long and dangerous. Storms arose and tossed the vessels about on the mountainous waves. Some of the men, becoming seasick and frightened, wished to turn back. But others held fast to their courage and the three little ships sailed on.

In the following month of May, the adventurers entered a wide Virginia river which they named James in honor of their king. How good it felt to see the land again! They soon forgot the long, fearful voyage, and their hearts grew light as they sailed up the river searching

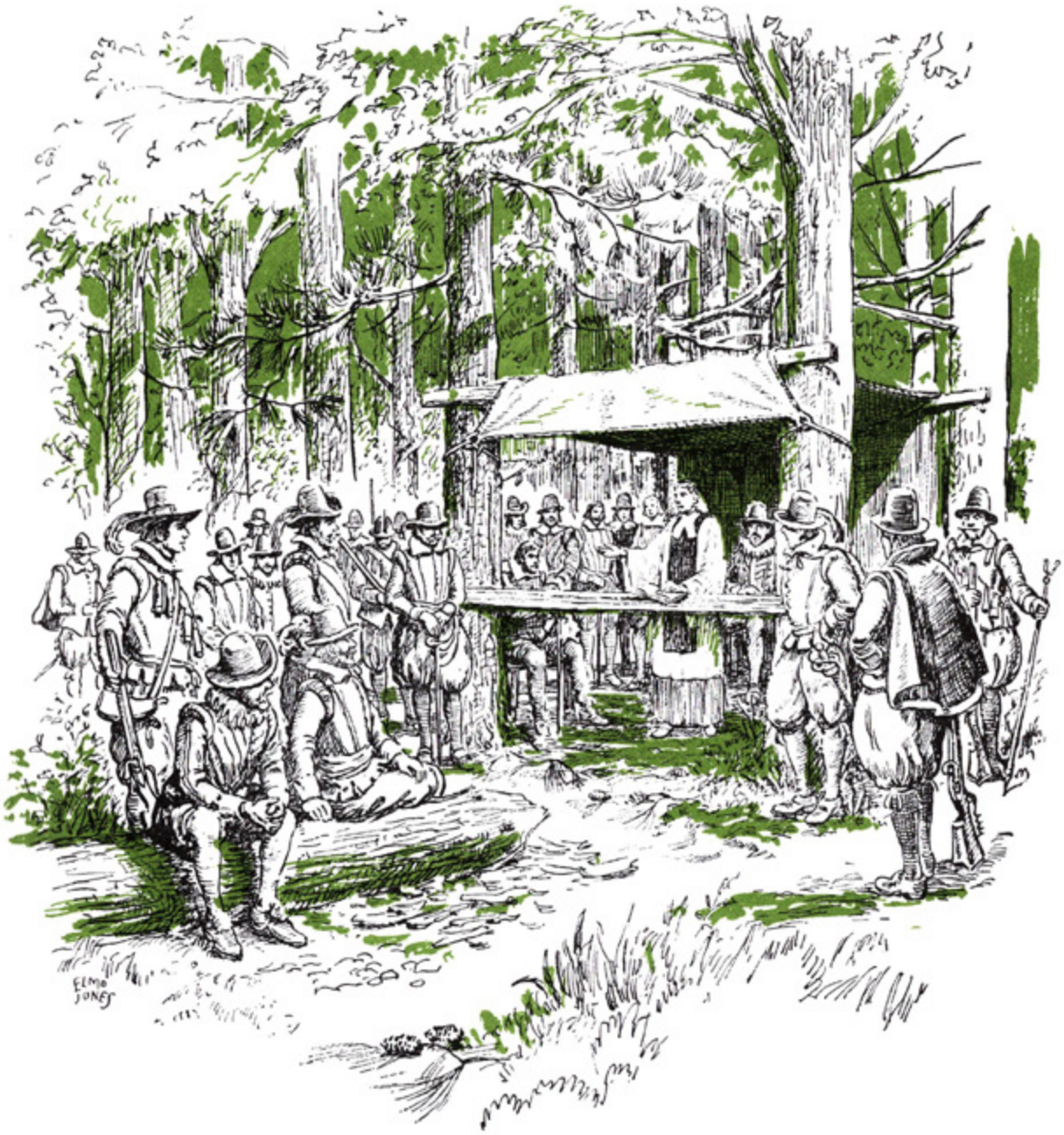
for a landing place. About forty miles from the river's mouth they found a small peninsula where the water near the shore was deep enough to moor their ships. This spot they chose for their landing and named it Jamestown.

The *Discovery*, the *Godspeed*, and the *Susan Constant* were moored. Then the following morning, while trumpets blared, the excited colonists climbed ashore. It was springtime. Virginia was at her loveliest. The men were happy, indeed, and their minister, Mr. Robert Hunt, knelt and gave thanks to God for their safety.

Later, the settlers stretched and nailed to some trees a piece of old rotten tent under which Mr. Hunt held his services. They used logs and planks for seats and a bar of wood for the pulpit. This, it is said, was the first English church in the big Virginia wilderness.

At first the colonists camped in tents or under the trees. Within a few weeks, however, they had built some crude huts, a fort of boughs, a storehouse, and a chapel. Near the fort they had planted corn which was now growing tall and green under the Virginia sun. And this, in the summer of 1607, was the beginning of Jamestown—England's first permanent settlement in North America.

Each day curious Indians came to watch the building





of the fort and the village. The Indians, dressed in animal skins and decorated with shells, beads, and feathers, must have looked strange, indeed, to the Englishmen. But our adventurers must also have appeared strange to the Indians. The Englishmen had short hair and long unshaven beards. They wore knee breeches, Irish stockings, ruffs of plaited linen about their necks, and tight-fitting doublets.

At first the Indians were friendly. Soon, however, they began to suspect that the white men had come to drive them from their forests, and the thought of losing their homes filled them with hatred and anger. One day a band of painted warriors, seeing a group of unarmed colonists at work, attacked them with bows and arrows.

And before the surprised colonists had time to arm and defend themselves, the Indians had killed a boy and wounded several men. After this the adventurers protected their village with mounted cannon and strong palisades, or tall fence of pointed logs. They were careful, too, about going outside the fort without the protection of firearms.

During the summer Captain Christopher Newport, who was in charge of the little fleet, sailed for England with the Godspeed and the Susan Constant. He went to take news of the colony and to bring back provisions.

When Newport left all was well with the men at Jamestown. But another hardship, worse than Indian warfare, was coming to plague them. The land around Jamestown was marshy, low, and unhealthful. And when the weather grew warm the adventurers, unused to the climate, became ill with a fever. There were no doctors in the settlement. Had there been, the doctors in those days knew little about diseases and medicine. As the hot weeks dragged by, most of the men became too ill to work. They could no longer hunt and fish. Their food supply ran low. And before cold weather came to stop the fever, nearly fifty of our one hundred colonists had died.

The voices about the fort were no longer cheerful.



Many of the men had become homesick, discouraged, and lonely. Virginia was not the land of romance they had expected. Instead of gold and precious stones, they had found only the dreaded fever and the deadly Indian arrow.

Some of the adventurers, however, refused to lose hope. They still believed that, in spite of hardships, they could start an English colony. One of these was a young man called Captain John Smith. Smith was brave, wise, and fearless. During the summer he had worked hard to help those who were hungry and sick. And in December of that first difficult year, he set out through the wintry Virginia wilds to try to get food from the unfriendly Indians.



ISBN 0-87517-013-7



9 780875 170138 >