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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Museum Program Assistants

**FROM:** Anne Price-Hardister

**DATE:** April 16, 2007

**RE: TEACHING ABOUT ENGLISH MOTIVATIONS FOR SETTLEMENT IN VIRGINIA**

A review of on-site education training materials, including the guided tour outline, noted currently materials and practice tend to emphasize the Virginia Company's profit motive, and yet two additional motivations are set forth prominently in the Virginia Company documents. In order to present a more comprehensive picture, I ask that you include all three major motivations for settlement in your tour and program presentations, from now on.

The following information will provide you with some additional background for your discussion of the three major motivations. Quotations are included from two primary sources, the original charter granted by King James to the Virginia Company on April 10, 1606, and the London Council of the Virginia Company's *Instructions given by way of Advice*, dated between November 20 and December 19, 1606. Until permanent changes can be made to the guided tour outline and other training materials, please refer to the points below as the correct information to include in your discussions of motivations for settlement.

1. The first motivation mentioned in the 1606 charter is to spread the Christian religion. The statement below is made by or on behalf of King James to the major investors in the Virginia Company.

*Wee, greatly commending and graciously accepting of their desires to the furtherance of soe noble a worke which may, by the providence of Almightye God, hereafter tende to the glorie of His Divine Maiestie in propogating of Christian religion to suche people as yet live in darkness and miserable ignorance of the true knoweledge and worshippe of God and may in tyme bring the infidels and salvages living in those parts to humane civilitie and to a settled and quiet governmente...*

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## Teaching About English Motivations for Settlement in Virginia

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The English strongly believed it was their duty to spread the gospel and convert the indigenous people they encountered to the Christian faith, specifically the Church of England. In addition, King James recognized the importance of establishing English colonies, as a counter to the energetic colonizing efforts of the Spanish, their long-time rivals. As the Spanish established colonies in the Americas, they zealously converted the native people of those regions to Roman Catholicism. King James, as the head of the Church of England, wished to establish a foothold for Protestantism in the New World, for both spiritual and political reasons.

2. The Virginia Company was a joint stockholding company, formed for the purpose of making a profit from the many raw materials they hoped to find in Virginia, and send back to sell in England. A large part of the 1606 charter is devoted to the rights of the investors to discover and profit from *“all the landes, woodes, soile, groundes, havens, portes, rivers, mines, minerals, marrishes, waters, fishinges, commodities and hereditamentes whatsoever”* in Virginia. They were given instructions to *“dig, myne, and searche for all manner of Mynes of Goulde Silver and Copper aswell within anie parte of their saide severall Colonies.”*

3. In the *“Instructions given by way of Advice”* there are instructions to search for a river route through the continent of North America to the Pacific Ocean or “Other Sea”. This was the Northwest Passage which Europeans long believed would provide faster access to the East Indies and the highly desirable and expensive silks and spices found there.

*...if you happen to Discover Divers portable Rivers, and amongst them any one that hath two main branches, if the Difference be not Great, make Choise of that which bendeth most towards the Northwest, for that way shall You soonest find the Other Sea.*

When the second charter was written in 1609, instruction was given to seek survivors of the 1580's settlement of Roanoke, the “Lost Colony” near present-day Manteo, North Carolina. King James had been advised by explorers that there were yet four Englishmen alive in that region. The Jamestown settlers were never able to find the reported survivors. This information, though it is not one of the major motivations for settlement, may be added into the discussion, since it links the Jamestown story to earlier explorers and attempts at colonization.

Many of you have been presenting programs here for several years or more, and it can be a challenge to adjust information that has become a routine part of your program. Please make a concerted effort to become comfortable with the changes, and begin including them immediately. We can always improve the scope and accuracy of our presentations, and in this case the changes achieve both these goals. Please contact me or your supervisor if you have any questions or concerns regarding this matter.

Thank you.