

COLONIAL AND REVOLUTIONARY

LITERATURE

1. Travellers and Explorers, 1583–1763
2. The Historians, 1607–1783
3. The Puritan Divines, 1620–1720 Edwards
4. Philosophers and Divines, 1720–1789
Franklin
5. Colonial Newspapers and Magazines,
1704–1775
6. American Political Writing, 1760–1789
7. The Beginnings of Verse, 1610–1808

1. Travellers and Explorers, 1583–1763

§ 1. The Earliest Adventures.

- THE ENGLISH folk who became Americans during the early years of the seventeenth century kept the language of the relatives and friends whom they left, and with it their share in the literary heritage of the race. They owed much to the influences surrounding them in their new homes, but such skill in writing as they possessed came with them from the other side of the Atlantic.

§ 2. Captain John Smith.

- a Virginia folk hero and his writing:
- “And this is as much as my memory can call to mind worthie of note; which I have purposely collected, to satisfie my friends of the true worth and qualitie of Virginia.” –1612 “Description”

- Yet some bad natures will not sticke to slander the Countrey, that will slovenly spit at all things, especially in company where they can find none to contradict them. Who though they were scarce ever 10 miles from *James Town*, or at the most but at the falles; yet holding it a great disgrace that amongst so much action, their actions were nothing, exclaime of all things, though they never adventured to knowe any thing; nor ever did any thing but devoure the fruits of other mens labours. Being for most part of such tender educations and small experience in martiall accidents, because they found not English cities, nor such faire houses, nor at their owne wishes any of their accustomed dainties, with feather beds and downe pillowes, Taverness and alehouses in every breathing place, neither such plenty of gold and silver and dissolute liberty as they expected, [they] had little or no care of any thing, but to pamper their bellies, to fly away with our Pinnaces, or procure their means to returne for England. For the Countrey was to them a miserie, a ruine, a death, a hell, and their reports here, and their owne actions there according.

§ 3. Newfoundland.

- Straightforwardness of narrative was characteristic of the period.
- trying to start or to accelerate the stream which was to transform the Western hemisphere into a part of the European world.

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