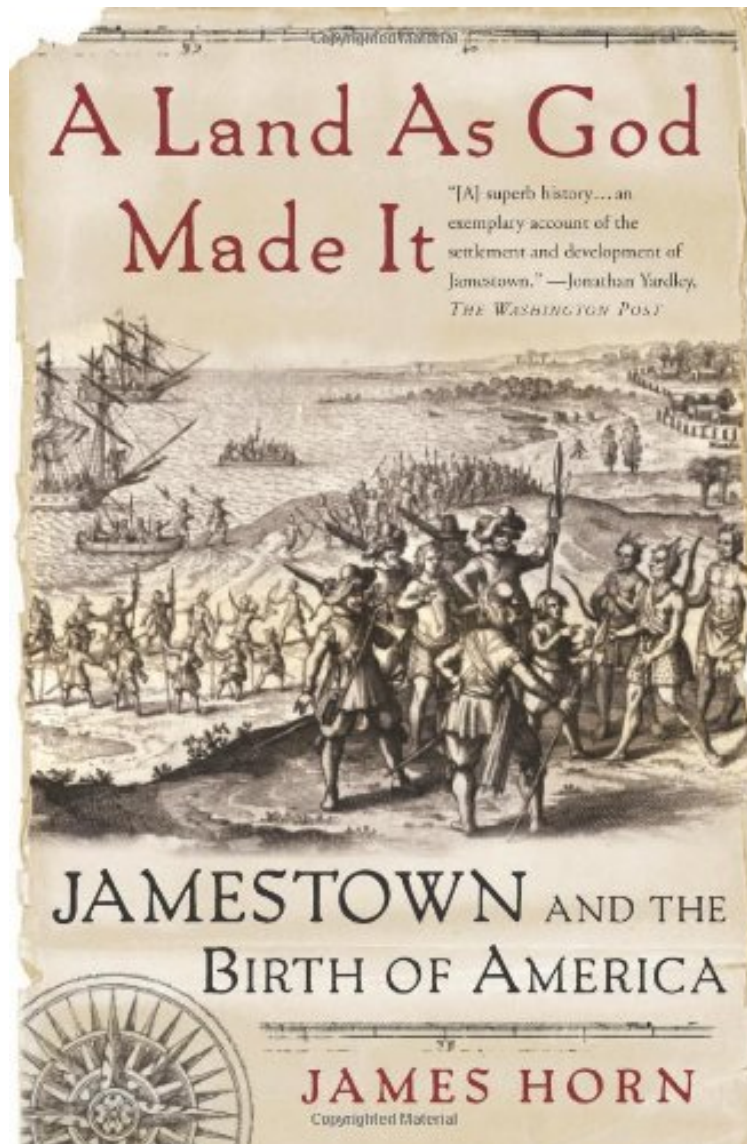


## A Land As God Made It: Jamestown and the Birth of America

James Horn

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**James Horn : A Land As God Made It: Jamestown and the Birth of America** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Land As God Made It: Jamestown and the Birth of America:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Treatment of the Subject Matter By Royal James Outstanding summary of the first two decades of the Jamestown Colony and the missteps and misunderstanding

that occurred while the colony was under the control of the Virginia Company. The author has an engaging writing style and in the hardcover edition, the type font is easy to read and the paper has a nice feel. The author attempts to give a balanced view of what was going on from both the British colonist and the native population perspective during the early years of the colony and he does not shy away from detailing the sheer incompetence demonstrated by the Virginia Company in the formation and administration of the colony though he does not do this in a preachy manner. He provides a chronological summary of the facts and lets the reader draw their own conclusions. Highly recommend this book to anyone interested in a more detailed treatment of the early history of the Jamestown Colony. It is far more informative than the sanitized versions of the period's history one normally encounters in general history texts, the popular media, or at the site itself.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A Well-balanced History By Keith C. Horn has written a good, succinct narrative of the Jamestown story going beyond the familiar characters of John Smith and Pocahontas to include the larger picture of Spanish and English competition in the New World and the expansion of English settlement in the Chesapeake. A perfect balance between more limited volumes and longer histories that lose focus following too many threads and overuse of long quotation of primary source accounts.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Jamestown, the Colony that Made it. By E. Joseph Anna A Land as God Made It Jamestown and the Birth of America by James Horn is a chronicle of the English to establish a permanent colony in North America in the early 17th Century. Bringing Protestantism to the Indians to counter balance the Catholicism of the Spanish was one goal. But larger was the prospect of bringing home riches such as the gold and silver flowing into Spain. A private enterprise, the Virginia Company, was formed by share holders to explore and exploit the Chesapeake Bay area. Familiar individuals appear, if not under familiar circumstances, such as Captain John Smith and Pocahontas. The tenuous relationship of the colonists with the Native Americans is examined in some detail. There are many quotes from letters and journals of the day, lending to the authority of the narrative. The unconventional spelling of the day is both distracting and fascinating.

Although it was the first permanent English settlement in North America, Jamestown is too often overlooked in the writing of American history. Founded thirteen years before the Mayflower sailed, Jamestown's courageous settlers have been overshadowed ever since by the pilgrims of Plymouth. But as historian James Horn demonstrates in this vivid and meticulously researched account, Jamestown-not Plymouth-was the true crucible of American history. Jamestown introduced slavery into English-speaking North America; it became the first of England's colonies to adopt a representative government; and it was the site of the first white-Indian clashes over territorial expansion. As we approach the four-hundredth anniversary of Jamestown in 2007, *A Land As God Made It* offers the definitive account of the colony that give rise to America.

From Publishers Weekly Horn, who heads the library at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, offers a history that will put Plymouth in its place. Not only was Jamestown settled before Plymouth, in 1607, but, says Horn, it was the seedbed of many themes, both glorious (representative government) and tragic (imperialism), that run through American history. In this detailed narrative of Jamestown's first 18 years, Horn focuses primarily on the relationship between the English settlers and the Native Americans. (He gives disappointingly scant attention to the first Africans' arrival in 1619.) Jamestown was the first English colony in North America to succeed; that success was "disastrous" for the Indians. The town leader John Smith figures prominently in Horn's tale. Smith's own written recollection of his captivity by Indians is the source for the well-known story that a young Pocahontas saved his life; Horn dismisses Smith's account as implausibly exaggerated. In Horn's view, a pivotal point in Indian-Anglo relations was the Powhatan uprising of 1622. Any hope that the English might partner with the Indians against Spain and treat them with kindness or justice was killed thereafter, the settlers were determined to exclude the Indians from their new commonwealth. 12 bw illus., 6 maps. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From Booklist A meticulous history of Jamestown, covering its start in 1607 to the final, failed Indian effort to destroy it in 1622, Horn's cautious work tends to be averse to drawing conclusions. Readers seeking inspiration or indignation, as the case may be, from this origin story of America are apt to be stymied by Horn's pursuit of objectivity. He adheres to an event-by-event reconstruction built from contemporary sources (such as John Smith's accounts), which is certainly a justifiable approach. Only faintly present, however, are the abstract motivations of the colonizing project, such as religion. Horn mentions this but is focused, as Smith was, on the immediate, not the millenarian. This often meant obtaining food from the local paramount chief, Wahunsonacock, and Horn's conceptions about the chief's strategies for ridding his lands of the intruding English strengthen this presentation. Popular myths about Pocahontas, the chief's daughter, saving Smith's life fall before Horn's analysis, as does Smith's stature as the colony's dominant leader. Possessing Jamestown's inherent drama, this is a solid rendition of the saga. Gilbert Taylor Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved A superb history . . . an exemplary account of the settlement and development of Jamestown. Jonathan Yardley --The Washington Post (added by author)