

## “Virginia (Jamestown)”

*We was beggin' on the streets of London when the joint-stock company  
Told us of a new world in an English colony.  
Told us it was paradise with rivers full of gold,  
So we went, like the Spanish did, more than, a hundred years ago.*

*Aboard the Susan Constant, we was four months at sea,  
And the land we saw was beautiful, named for the great virgin queen.*

*(Chorus)*

*Oh, Oh, Sweet Virginia; land like a dream.  
Oh, Oh, Sweet Virginia, it's the sweetest land, that any man, ever seen.*

*We built a town on a river, named them both for the king,  
But there was no gold and the winter cold destroyed everything.  
And more than half of us died, and the Algonquin tribes  
Was threatening to drive us back into the sea.*

*(Chorus)*

*We were runnin' out of hope, and then John Rolfe  
Grew a strain of tobacco and shipped it on back home.  
And those sweet Virginia leaves grew like weeds;  
We supplied the European addiction to nicotine.  
Three million tons a year, we shipped over there;  
There's no place like Virginia anywhere.*

*(Chorus)*

### **Historical Background:**

Jamestown, Virginia was the first permanent English colony in North America. It was established in 1607, 120 years after the first Spanish settlement. Jamestown was primarily an economic venture; they hoped to find gold and silver as the Spanish did in South America. There was no gold in the swampy Chesapeake region, and most settlers died of disease or starvation. There were two major wars between the English settlers and the Algonquin Indians, but as in all parts of the Americas, European diseases decimated the Indians much more than warfare. John Rolfe, the famed husband of Pocahontas, discovered that tobacco grew incredibly well in the marshy Chesapeake soil. He introduced a new variety of tobacco seed from the West Indies, and developed new curing methods, which made Virginia tobacco less pungent and sweeter than any tobacco in the world. Millions of tons of tobacco were exported from Virginia each year, and the colony survived and flourished.

