



# **The Shipwreck That Saved Jamestown: The Sea Venture Castaways and the Fate of America (John MacRae Books)**

*Lorri Glover, Daniel Blake Smith*

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A freshly researched account of the dramatic rescue of the Jamestown settlers

The English had long dreamed of colonizing America, especially after Sir Francis Drake brought home Spanish treasure and dramatic tales from his raids in the Caribbean. Ambitions of finding gold and planting a New World colony seemed within reach when in 1606 Thomas Smythe extended overseas trade with the launch of the Virginia Company. But from the beginning the American enterprise was a disaster. Within two years warfare with Indians and dissent among the settlers threatened to destroy Smythe's Jamestown just as it had Raleigh's Roanoke a generation earlier.

To rescue the doomed colonists and restore order, the company chose a new leader, Thomas Gates. Nine ships left Plymouth in the summer of 1609—the largest fleet England had ever assembled—and sailed into the teeth of a storm so violent that “it beat all light from Heaven.” The inspiration for Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, the hurricane separated the flagship from the fleet, driving it onto reefs off the coast of Bermuda—a lucky shipwreck (all hands survived) which proved the turning point in the colony's fortune.

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