

More Voyages of Samuel Argall

Samuel Argall is said to have achieved lasting fame as one of the maritime pioneers of England because he established a shorter route to Virginia from England in 1609 irrespective of the fact that Bartholomew Gosnold took that route in 1602 and Martin Pring did so in 1603.

The usual course led by way of the Canaries to the Island of Puerto Rico in the West Indies, the route of Columbus, a long, circuitous pathway exposed to pirates and interference from Spain.

Argall made the round trip by the shorter route in five months. However, the shorter route did not supplant entirely the longer southern route for several decades. Argall accompanied Lord De La Warr to Virginia in 1610, to point out the northern route. While in Virginia, he was sent with Sir George Somers to Bermuda with two pinnaces to get a supply of hogs and other provisions for the colony.

In a storm, Argall lost sight of Sir George's pinnace and failed to locate Bermuda; so he changed his course toward the north and went to Sagadahoc and Cape Cod where he procured a large cargo of fish, which he brought to Jamestown. Sir George Somers reached Bermuda, but died there on November 9, 1610. Argall was then sent by Lord De La Warr to the river Patowomeke to trade with the Indians for corn, where he rescued the English boy, Henry Spelman, who had been living with the Indians.

Through Spelman's influence, the Indians "fraughted his ship with corn." Soon after June 28, 1613, Argall sailed from Virginia on his "fishing voyage" in a well-armoured English man-of-war. His object was the French colony of Jesuits at Mt. Desert, now in Maine, but at that time within the bounds of Virginia. He attacked the buildings and returned with the priests late in July. He was sent back by Gates to destroy the buildings and fortifications there and at St. Croix and Port Royal. This was done and he arrived back at

Jamestown, about the first of December.

On this voyage, he stopped at New Netherlands, on the Hudson, and forced the colonists there to submit to the crown of England. Some Notes On Shipbuilding and

Source: Shipping In Colonial Virginia by Cerinda W. Evans