

## George Percy Quotation on the “Starving Time”

Now all of us at James Town, beginning to feel that sharp prick of hunger, which no man [can] truly describe but he which hath tasted the bitterness thereof. A world of miseries ensued . . . [and] some, to satisfy their hunger, have robbed the store, for the which I caused them to be executed. Then having fed upon horses and other beasts as long as they lasted, we were glad to make shift with vermin, as dogs, cats, rats, and mice. All was fish that came to net to satisfy cruel hunger, as to eat boots, shoes, or any other leather some could come by. And those being spent and devoured, some were enforced to search the woods and to feed upon serpents and snakes and to dig the earth for wild and unknown roots, where many of our men were cut off and slain by the [Indians]. And now famine beginning to look ghastly and pale in every face that nothing was spared to maintain life and to do those things which seem incredible . . .”

**Source:** George Percy, “A True Relation of the Proceedings and Occurrents of Moment which Have Hap’ned in Virginia . . .,” as quoted in Edward Wright Haile, ed., *Jamestown Narratives: Eyewitness Accounts of the Virginia Colony, the First Decade, 1607–1617* (Champlain, Va.: Round House, 1998), p. 505.