

Where is the Lost Colony? a six-chapter serial story by Sandy Semans

Sandy Semans provides the following background information for each of six-chapters of her serial story.

Chapter 1

Who was Sir Walter Raleigh or was it Raleigh?

In the 1500's it was not unusual to find a single word or name spelled multiple ways, and so it was with Sir Walter's last name. Raleigh is the spelling he most often used. He was an explorer, writer, poet, soldier, spy and courtier and a favorite of Queen Elizabeth, daughter of King Henry the Eighth.

His 1584 plan was to colonize the "Dominion of Virginia" — today the States of North Carolina and Virginia — eventually led to the 1587 arrival of colonists to Roanoke Island. Those colonists would later be referred to as The Lost Colony after they disappeared.

He lived from 1554 to 1618 when he was executed at the direction of King James I for attacking a Spanish outpost in South America while exploring there for gold.

Chapter 2

Who was Queen Elizabeth?

Queen Elizabeth, daughter of King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, never married and was thus called The Virgin Queen, which was the inspiration for calling the New World "Virginia." She lived from 1533 and died in 1603.

She ruled England for 45 years. During her reign, she held the country together through war and peace and encouraged exploration as a way of enlarging her domain. The Queen felt special affection for Sir Walter but, over the years, they had more than one period of friction.

Chapter 3

Who was John White?

John White was an artist and mapmaker. The maps of the coastline of the New World that he painted were extraordinarily accurate. In recent years, historians discovered the symbol of a fort under a patch on the original map. They theorize that this area between the mouths of the Roanoke and Chowan rivers may have

been explored by White for the possible location of a fort and could have been where the colonists moved.

Appointed governor of the Roanoke Colony, White led the expedition that settled several families on Roanoke Island in 1587. The colony included his own daughter and her husband, Eleanor and Ananias Dare, the parents of Virginia Dare who is believed to be the first English child born in the New World.

White returned to England for more supplies that same year and planned to return the following year. But after he arrived back in England, the Queen ordered all vessels to remain there to defend the country against the Spanish Armada. England claimed victory over the Spanish fleet in 1588, and ships were allowed to sail. But White's return to Roanoke Island was held up for two more years because the captains of the small fleet with which he sailed decided to detour and first search for riches in Cuba. When the vessels arrived at Roanoke Island, the colonists had gone. The threat of a large storm prompted the captains to refuse to take White to look for the colonists. He died just three years later, never having seen his granddaughter again.

Why was the area called Virginia and not North Carolina?

The Dominion of Virginia claimed by England in the mid-1500s included what is now called North Carolina.

In 1712, King Charles II gave a large area of the New World to the Lord Proprietors as a reward for helping him regain the throne in 1660. He named the new province "Carolina" in memory of his father, King Charles I who was executed in 1649 at the end of the English Civil War. The name Charles, in Latin, is Carolus.

The Province of Carolina was split in 1729 into what became North Carolina and South Carolina.

Chapter 4

Who were the Croatoans?

The Croatoans were members of the Croatan tribe who lived on Croatan Island. Both the tribe and the island were later known as Hatteras. Other than what can be gleaned from John White's pictures about the Native Americans, little is known about them or the many other small tribes who lived in the region. The English brought many diseases that the Indians had no immunity to, and thus many died of typhoid, measles and other contagious diseases. The tribes were part of the Algonquin Nation.

Chapter 5

Who was Manteo?

Manteo was the chief of the Croatan tribe and friend of the English explorers who landed at Roanoke Island in 1584. He visited England in 1584 and 1585 and returned to the New World in 1587 along with Governor John White and the colonists who eventually became known as The Lost Colony. On Aug. 13, 1587, Manteo was christened on Roanoke Island, making him the first Indian to be baptized into the Church of England. He was granted the title of baron, the Lord of Roanoke and Dasamongueponke (Native American tribe and village) and served as a guide and translator for the English. There is no known record of him after 1587, and no one knows whether he left Roanoke Island with the colonists when they abandoned the site.

Who was Thomas Hariot?

Thomas Hariot (also spelled Harriott and Harriot) lived from about 1560 to 1621. He was an explorer, scientist, and author who compiled and published information about the New World. He was part of the second expedition to the area in 1585 and may have participated in early visits. During the 1585 expedition, he and John White worked together to produce maps, drawings and scientific notes about the New World. Unfortunately much of their work was lost when they retreated from the area and endured a sudden hurricane.

After arriving back in England in 1585, Hariot worked to learn the Algonquin language from Manteo who had gone to England with the expedition. When he was finished, Hariot had created a written phonetic version of the language that allowed others to learn it. Manteo also learned English, which allowed him to act as a translator for the Indians and the English upon his return to Roanoke Island.

Chapter 6

What is *The Lost Colony* outdoor symphonic drama?

First produced by the Roanoke Island Historical Association on July 4, 1937, *The Lost Colony* was part of the celebration of the 350th anniversary of the arrival of the first English settlers in the New World in 2012. Pulitzer Prize-winning author Paul Green took on the job of writing the new play, which he envisioned as combining drama, music, dance and pageantry, all in a sweeping outdoor setting. He called his creation *The Lost Colony: A Symphonic Drama of American History*.

In the midst of the Great Depression, local residents and several state and federal agencies had to combine efforts and resources to provide what the drama needed. Civilian Conservation Corps workers built the open-air Waterside Theatre where the play was performed, and the Rockefeller Foundation gave an organ to provide musical accompaniment. The Playmakers of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill provided lighting and other technical assistance and also supplied the director, Samuel Selden. Actors came from the Federal Theatre Project and the local population.

Getting to Roanoke Island in 1937 involved a ferry ride, several miles on a "floating road" over a swamp, and travel the rest of the way on packed-sand roads. The easier route from the west consisted of miles of graded-dirt roads and two ferry trips. But about 2,500 attended the first performance. By the end of the summer, attendance stood at about 50,000, including President Franklin Roosevelt. Originally, the play was expected to run just that summer, but it proved to be so popular and such a boon to the local economy that it returned in 1938. The next season 100,000 people attended the performance. Except during World War II, *The Lost Colony* has played every summer. It has been a training ground for young actors and theater technicians. Alumni include Andy Griffith, Chris Elliot, Eileen Fulton, Carl Kasell, William Ivey Long and Joe Layton.

Written by Sandy Semans, editor, Outer Banks Sentinel, to supplement the six-chapter serial story, *Where is The Lost Colony?*