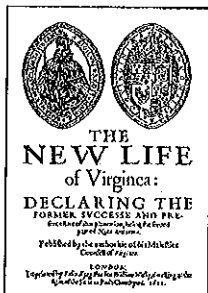


# 37 Lost: A Colony



**Companies put out fliers like this to attract settlers to the New World.**

Sir Walter Raleigh dreamed of an English nation in America. As you know, the queen gave him a grant to try to start one.

In books to come, you will read more about rulers giving grants to America. A *grant* is a “deed of land.” Kings and queens were giving away America. What made them think they had a right to that land?

Unfortunately, it had something to do with European arrogance. *Arrogance* is a strong word. The dictionary says that someone who is arrogant overestimates his importance. An arrogant person is stuck-up. An arrogant nation is likely to go to war or push other nations and peoples around. The Aztecs were arrogant when they conquered neighboring peoples and sacrificed the captives to their gods. It is too bad to have to describe Europe as arrogant. It just happens to be true.

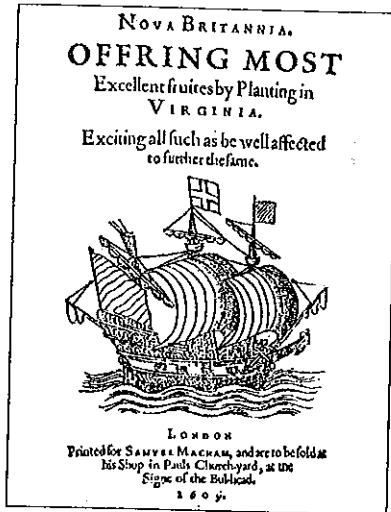
Many Europeans in the 16th and 17th centuries saw themselves as civilized and important. They saw the Indians as savage and unimportant. To the Europeans, America was empty. It was as if the Indians didn’t exist. Since the country was empty—in their eyes—it was available to anyone who could grab it. And so they raced for it; Spain, England, France, Portugal, the Netherlands, and Sweden all claimed parts of the land. Sometimes they fought with each other over those claims.

Although England was a latecomer, in 1587 it looked as if she might get going. Sir Walter Raleigh was trying again. This time he sent families to found a colony. He finally realized that you can’t have a real colony without women and children.

But the settlers didn’t know how to survive in the wilderness.

**Samuel de Champlain** arrived in New France in 1603. Do you remember when Quebec was founded?

**The first three permanent colonies in the lands that would become the United States and Canada were St. Augustine (founded in 1565), Quebec (founded in 1608), and Santa Fe (founded in 1610).**



We've seen "New Spain" and "New France." Can you guess what "Nova Britannia" means?

They spent too much time thinking about Spaniards and not enough time looking for food or building shelters. Some of them hoped to turn their settlement into a base for raiding Spanish ships. Most hoped to find gold. They built a fort to protect themselves from Spanish attack.

The colonists landed on Roanoke Island late in the spring of 1587—too late to plant crops. The artist John White was back, this time as leader of the group. He brought his sketch pad and paints. White's daughter, Eleanor Dare, came with him. White soon realized they would need more food; he decided to go back to England for supplies. Just before he left, Eleanor Dare gave birth to a baby. The baby, John White's granddaughter, was named Virginia. Virginia Dare was the first English baby born in the New World.

When White returned to England, he found the country was fighting Spain. The queen would not give him a ship to go to America because she needed all her ships in England. One thing after another happened, and it took three years before John White was

### Guns vs. Arrows

**W**hen the Native Americans first met the European invaders, it was arrows against guns. Of course you know which was the superior weapon. Or do you?

One weapon had a big advantage psychologically (sy-kuh-LODGE-ick-al-lee), which means "in people's minds." It was the weapon that made a big noise. If you heard a huge bang, saw smoke, and watched as someone dropped down, you'd probably do what the natives did—run.

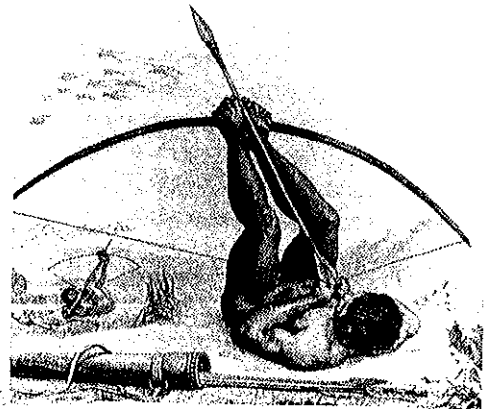
But the Indians actually had the better weapon. Their arrows were deadly, traveled farther, and were easier to control than the bullets of that time.

A skilled bowman could shoot six arrows in the time it

took to shoot one bullet. Reloading a musket was a slow process.

Muskets were not very accurate. But they did make noise. And they were complicated. The bow and arrow was simple and silent. Everyone—on both sides—thought guns the superior weapon. Naturally, the Indians had to have guns.

Soon they did. In order to shoot their guns, they had to have ammunition. That made them dependent on the white men. Some Indians would do almost anything to get guns and ammunition. That meant that white men could make



These archers shot at migrating birds. A big bow needed the strength of legs as well as arms.

deals with different tribes and set one tribe against another. And all for muskets that were not as accurate as the bows and arrows the Indians could make easily.

What can be learned from this?

## THE FIRST AMERICANS



able to return to Roanoke Island. When he got there, the colonists had vanished. The letters "C R O" were carved on a tree. John White knew that Croatan was the name of a nearby island (and also the name of an Indian tribe). Had the colonists gone to Croatan Island? Had Indians attacked?

White was desperate. He wanted to find his daughter, his granddaughter, and the other colonists. But a treacherous storm was on the horizon. The captain and crew decided to sail away. (For John White's own words telling exactly what happened, turn to page 161.) Naturally, John White was very, very upset. So were other people in England. They began talking of the "Lost Colony."

In 1603 an English ship with a cargo of valuable hardwood stopped at Roanoke Island before heading back to England. Six men rowed ashore to explore and see if they could find the lost colonists. They didn't notice the Indian warriors hiding behind the trees. The Indians killed five of the men; one survived and wrote their story.

Many ships were wrecked off the long, skinny islands shown here (the Outer Banks). Behind the Outer Banks is Roanoke Island. Can you see the barricaded village and the fish trap in the water?

**Treacherous** (TRETCH-ur-uss) means "very dangerous."

The **horizon** (hur-IZE-un) is the farthest point of the earth that a person can see. On the ocean, it is the line where the sea and the sky seem to meet.

**In 1992**, archaeologists digging on Roanoke discovered something momentous: a 16th-century metallurgical laboratory. Bits of Bohemian glass, a ceramic heating pot, and pieces of copper—found in an earthen fort—were clues that led them to conclude that this was where Joachim Ganz conducted experiments.

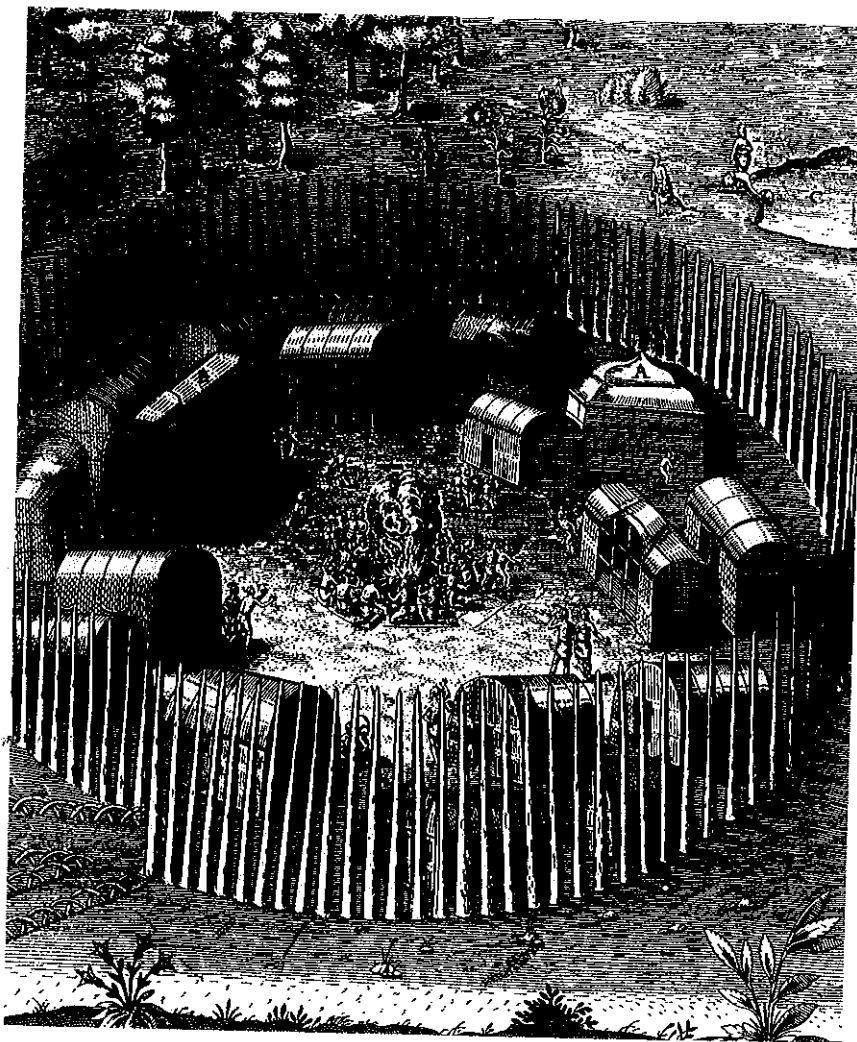
**And, in 1998**, climatologists studying ancient tree rings found that the settlers on Roanoke Island had terrible luck. They arrived during the worst drought that part of the country had seen in 800 years. Even Native Americans must have seen their crops shrivel and their livestock die. The newcomers hardly had a chance to survive.

This was the fortified long-house village of Pomeiock in Virginia. Do you see the giant sunflowers growing on the far side of the palisade?

No one has ever solved the mystery of the Lost Colony. Some Indians in North Carolina say they are descended from people with gray eyes. Indians usually have brown eyes. Could Virginia Dare have become a gray-eyed Indian?

A few years later England tried another settlement, this time at a place we know as Maine. But freezing weather got to the settlers (as well as a lack of supplies), so they sailed back to England.

If it wasn't poor planning, then it was the weather or the Spanish or the Indians. England just couldn't seem to get herself planted in American soil.



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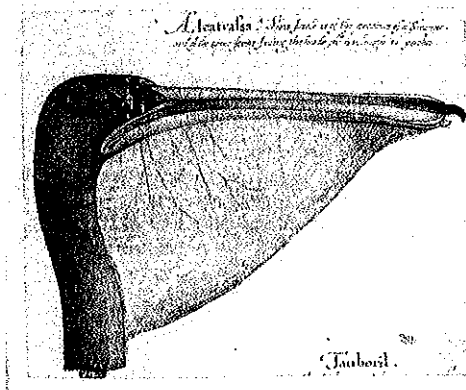
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## From John White's Log

**I**f John White was to get back to Roanoke Island, he had to hitch a ride. And that is just what he did. On March 20, 1590, he climbed aboard the Hopewell, one of three ships on their way to the Americas to do some privateering. The ships headed for the Canary Islands, where they got fresh water and found favorable winds. By April 30 they were in the Caribbean Sea. They soon captured a 10-ton frigate "coming from Guatemala with a cargo of hides and ginger." It wasn't the only plunder they took.

In mid-August they were ready to

head home. They planned to stop at Roanoke Island before heading east across the Atlantic. Roanoke is inside the string of islands—called the Outer Banks—that elbow out off the coast of today's North Carolina. To reach Roanoke, the ships' captains needed to get through a breach—a gap—between the outer islands. They were in a hurry. A bad storm—a northeaster, as they are still called—was creating mountainlike waves. Here are John White's own words (words written more than 400 years ago) about what happened next:



Head of a Brown Pelican,  
drawn by John White

**W**e nearly sank while getting through, for a great sea broke into the boat and filled us half-full of water, though by the will of God and the careful steering of Captain Cooke we got safely ashore. But much of our equipment, food, matches, and powder was wet and spoiled.

[Another boat was not as lucky.] The wind was blowing a great gale from the northeast into the harbor. The breakers [waves] were very high...and the tide pulled strongly....The rash steering of Ralph Skinner,

the master's mate, let a huge sea break into the boat and capsize [overturn] it. The men stayed with the boat, some in it, others clinging to it....the waves beat against it so that some of the men were forced to let go their hold and try to wade ashore. The sea beat them down again and again. They could neither stand nor swim, and the boat turned keel upward two or three times. [The keel is the spine of the boat, running along its bottom.]

Captain Spicer and Skinner hung on until they sank and were seen no more....Four of the men who could swim...were saved by Captain Cooke. He took off his clothes and, with four others who could swim very well, rowed out as fast as possible and saved the four of them. There had been eleven men in the boat, and seven of the best were drowned....

The accident so upset the sailors that they were all of one mind not to go any farther to search for the planters. But later, they got ready the boats....

**A**t daybreak we landed [at Roanoke], and we...proceeded to walk along the shore, rounding the northern part of the island, until we came to the place where we left our [first] colony in the year 1586....As we went inshore up the sandy bank we saw a tree on the brow of a cliff curiously carved with the clear Roman letters C R O.

We knew at once that these letters indicated the place to which the planters had gone. Before I left them we had agreed on a secret token. They were to write or carve on trees or doorposts the name of the place where they had settled....

The weather grew fouler and fouler. Our food supply was diminishing, and we had lost our cask of fresh water. We therefore decided to go...we hoped to...visit our countrymen in Virginia on the return trip.

*John White was never again able to get back to Virginia.*