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Special Resource Study

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Roanoke Island, 1865 to 1940

Special History Study

2005

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Foreword

We are pleased to make available this special history study of Roanoke Island in the period following the Civil War. This study was undertaken to help Fort Raleigh National Historic Site interpret the histories of all the people of Roanoke Island through more than 400 years. We wish to extend thanks to Cape Hatteras Group Superintendent Larry Belli and his staff, particularly Doug Stover and Steve Harrison, who were of great assistance to the author and editor of this study. James Womack III prepared the map and designed the cover for the study. We hope it will prove useful to managers and interpreters at Fort Raleigh National Historic Site.

Dan Scheidt
Chief, Cultural Resources Division
Southeast Regional Office
January 2005

Chapter One: Introduction

This study will focus on the history of Roanoke Island from the period of the Civil War until the Second World War. During this time frame, there were significant changes to the island's life. However, an understanding of the physical setting of Roanoke Island itself combined with some aspects of its social, political, and economic development prior to the 1860s is an essential prerequisite to understanding the island's later history. The first two chapters will lay the necessary foundation, making it easier for readers to understand the primary thrust of this report.

The unique physical setting of Roanoke Island, sheltered by the barrier islands of North Carolina, has had a profound influence on its history and development. A series of barrier islands run in an arc from the Virginia/North Carolina border south some 250 miles to Cape Lookout. In back of the barrier islands are large shallow sounds, fed by the Chowan, Pamlico, and Neuse Rivers. South of Cape Lookout, the barrier islands are much closer to the shore, forming much narrower sounds. Just south of Wilmington, the coastline alters from a north/south to an east/west orientation at Cape Fear. This foreboding name was given by early explorers in tribute to the fierce storms, treacherous currents, and dangerous shoals of this region.

The barrier islands along the northern part of the coast are known as the Outer Banks. They include, from north to south, Bodie Island, Pea Island, Hatteras Island, and Ocracoke Island. These Outer Bank islands are separated by narrow, shallow inlets. The locations of the inlets do not stay fixed; hurricanes and severe storms move the sand around, obliterating inlets and creating new ones. Because of the constant action of wind and water, the configuration of the islands and sounds are different than they were in the colonial period. The waters off the Outer Banks have long been known as the "Graveyard of the Atlantic," in tribute to the many ships that have gone down there.

Roanoke Island lies west of Bodie Island, between the Outer Banks and the mainland. Albemarle Sound is north of Roanoke Island, with Pamlico Sound to the south. The waters between Roanoke Island and the Outer Banks are known as Roanoke Sound; Croatan Sound separates the island from the mainland. Roanoke Island is 12 miles long and 3 miles wide at its widest point

Its soil is sandy and is generally only one or two feet above sea level. Numerous parts of Roanoke Island are swampy. Temperatures average around 60½-63½ Farenheit and an average growing season is in the range of 220 days.[1] These physical attributes, combined with the fact that over the years, fishing has been a major part of the lives of the island's inhabitants, are, in a large measure, the *raison d'être* for the insular qualities of the islanders. For years they did not partake in mainstream America and neither did they have a meaningful position in contemporary North Carolina society. There is, remarkably, very little written concerning the Outer Banks until the Civil War. Although the infamous "Graveyard of the Atlantic" was well- known, early histories of North Carolina virtually exclude any mention of the region. The isolation and limited population were certainly factors in this omission. These geographical features also prevented the development of a major port city, such as Charleston, that thrived on trade. The topography of North Carolina provides one of America's best examples of how geography plays a role in economic development.[2] Living on an island not only separates one physically but also psychologically.

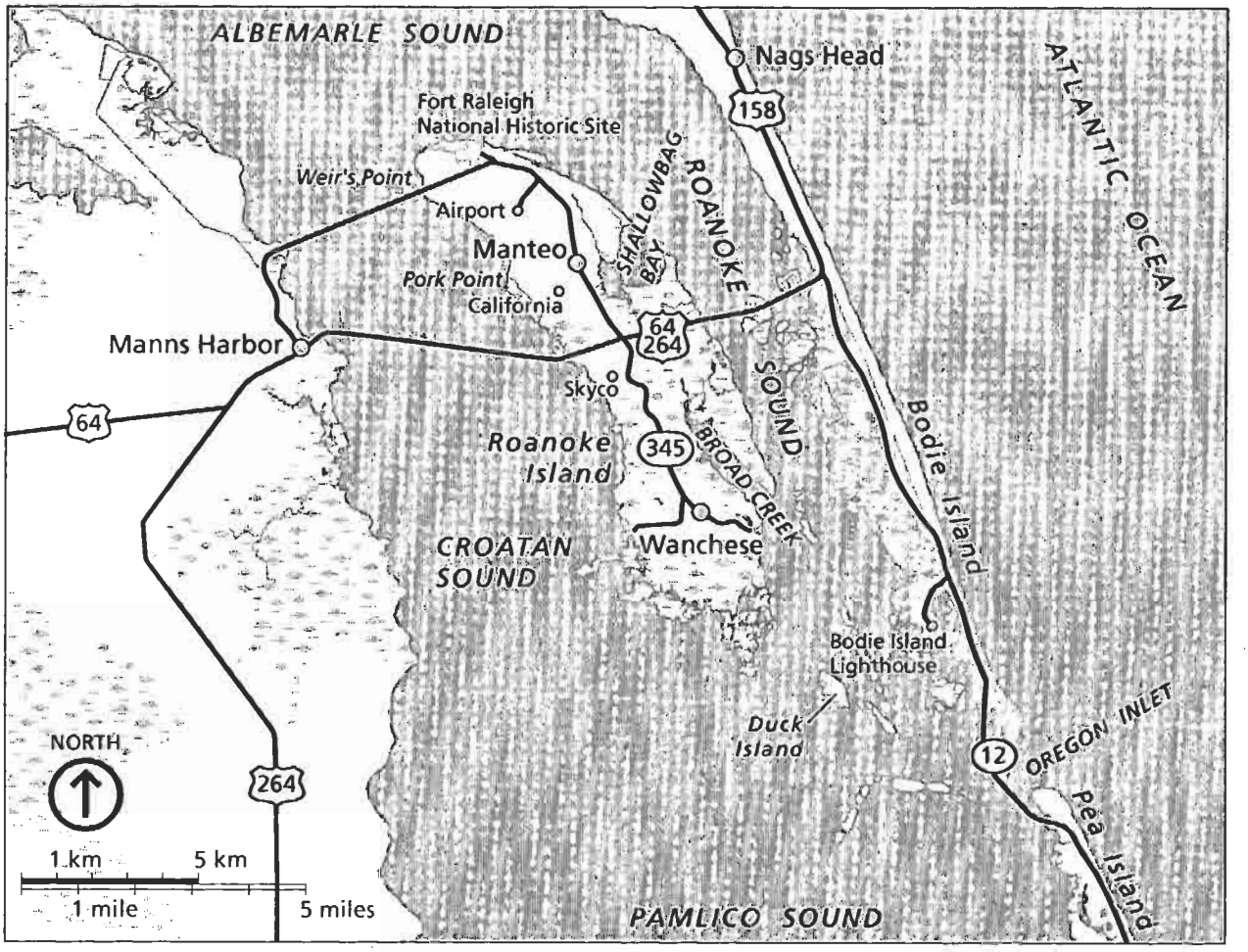

FIGURE 1. Roanoke Island, NC, and vicinity.

Roanoke Island derives its name from the shell beads the Indians called *roanoke*, also known by many as wampum.[3] This name also describes the Native American inhabitants known as the Roanoke Indians. Early settlers described the soil on Roanoke Island as fertile but, over the years, its quality declined markedly.[4] The Roanoke Indians, who initially inhabited the island, were able to fertilize the soil by burying alewives in it.[5] By the time of the Civil War, the soil quality became so depleted that it was able to provide only subsistence level farming for the island's inhabitants.

The English were late entrants into the scramble to explore and obtain colonies throughout the world during the sixteenth century. The Portuguese, under the direction of Prince Henry the Navigator, led the way in both exploration and improved technology in areas, such as cartography, that greatly facilitated what now is known as the "Age of Exploration." Portuguese efforts in West Africa eventually led to the colonization of Brazil.[6] King Ferdinand of Spain and his queen, Isabella, were the patrons of Christopher Columbus, who attempted to discover a new route to the Indies and wound up "discovering" what became known as the "New World" in 1492. Although the English, along with the Spanish, French, and Portuguese, were sending numerous vessels to fish off the Grand Banks by

1. Alton Emmett Baum, *Dare County: Economic and Social*, Unpublished college paper 1939, 5-6 located in the Outer Banks History Center, Manteo, North Carolina OBHC 33 MSS-0-44.
2. John Hope Franklin, *The Free Negro in North Carolina, 1790-1860* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1943), 5.
3. April Lee Hatfield, "Spanish Colonization Literature, Powhattan Geographies, and English Perceptions of Tsenacommacah," *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 69, No. 2 (May 2003): 252.
4. David Beers Quinn, *Set Fair for Roanoke: Voyages and Colonies, 1584-1606* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 216.
5. Alewives are a fish from the herring family that American Indians all along the East Coast used to fertilize the soil.
6. In 1494, Pope Alexander VI divided up the New World with the Treaty of Tordesillas between Portugal and Spain and excluding Protestant European nations such as the English and the Dutch.

1500, they made no attempt to establish any permanent settlements. They contented themselves with temporary fishing camps established and inhabited only during the summer months to smoke and salt the cod caught and shipped back to England. However, despite its belated start, England would eventually become a major player in New World colonization and exploration.

Tudor England, especially during the sixteenth century, was religiously and politically unstable. The Reformation in England led Henry VIII to establish the Church of England. However, unlike on the Continent, the driving force behind the Reformation in England was more secular. Henry desperately needed a male heir to maintain the House of Tudor on the English throne and to stave off a dynastic struggle similar to the War of the Roses between the Houses of York and Lancaster that devastated the kingdom from 1455 until 1487. This conflict was still fresh in the minds of many older Englishmen. There had been much bloodletting until Elizabeth ascended the throne and was crowned on January 15, 1559. It required several years for Elizabeth to secure her position against both internal and external threats. Parliament constantly challenged monarchical power and there was the incipient class conflict brought about by the emerging middle class who sought respectability and power in addition to wealth.[7] In order to achieve stability within the realm, Elizabeth pursued a conciliatory tone towards the Catholics in her nation, although hard liners in Parliament forced her to take a stronger stance than she desired. This is now known as the Elizabethan Settlement.[8] She also had to be wary of Philip II and Catholic Spain since Henry VIII's first wife was Catherine of Aragon, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, and his divorce from her greatly embarrassed the Spanish throne. Philip was determined to place England back in the Catholic fold. The execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, a Catholic, on February 8, 1587, provided Philip the necessary pretext for launching his Armada against England in 1588, an event that would have a major impact upon the fledgling colony at Roanoke.

The riches that Spain harvested from her colonies in the New World made the rest of Europe, especially the English, quite envious. Gold and silver flowed into the coffers of the Spanish treasury, making Spain the most powerful country in the world. English ships had a nasty habit of intercepting Spanish treasure ships at sea and plundering them. Some of these ill- gotten proceeds ended up in Elizabeth's treasury, causing the government to overlook these transgressions. Although Elizabeth was not in a financial position to completely underwrite the exploration of the Americas, she could promote the effort when the major portion of the costs of such exploration was borne by private business ventures. The first Englishman to underwrite such an exploration was Sir Humphrey Gilbert. Gilbert was convinced that he could locate the fabled Northwest Passage to China and reap a fortune in the process. He received a charter from Queen Elizabeth on June 11, 1578, to colonize lands not belonging to any Christians. Gilbert set sail a few months later with seven ships, one of which was under the command of his half- brother, Sir Walter Raleigh. Simon Fernandes, a Portuguese in the service of England, piloted one of the vessels. He would also pilot expeditions to Roanoke Island in 1584, 1585, and 1587 and would play a role in the demise of the ill- fated colony at Roanoke Island. A battle at sea with Spanish vessels near the Cape Verde Islands forced Gilbert's expedition to return to Plymouth, and it was five years before he obtained sufficient capital to once again venture forth across the Atlantic. On his second expedition, Gilbert reached what is now St. John's, Newfoundland, which he proceeded to claim for England on August 3, 1583.[9] However, on the return voyage, his ship, the *Squirrel*, sank in a storm on August 29, drowning Gilbert along with one hundred other sailors.

On March 25, 1584, Walter Raleigh renewed Gilbert's charter. Raleigh dispatched Captains Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlowe on April 27, 1584, and by taking a southerly route through the Indies, they reached the coast of what is now North Carolina on July 4, 1584. They initially set foot on Ocracoke Island, and several days later, Barlowe and eight of his sailors reached Roanoke Island and

7. David Beers Quinn, *Raleigh and the British Empire* (New York: Macmillan, 1949), 4.
8. Elizabeth instituted financial penalties for those who refused to participate in the Church of England. Although some were expensive, it was far more mild than the previous alternative—death.
9. Quinn, *Raleigh and the British Empire*, 45.

commenced to reconnoiter and explore their surroundings. The Roanoke voyages constituted the first serious attempt by the English to explore and settle the mainland of North America. While Barlowe and his men were exploring the surrounding area, a silver cup was stolen and the Indians were blamed. Amadas and Barlowe demanded the return of the cup, and when it was not forthcoming, had their men burn the Indians' corn and homes in the village of Aquascogoc.[10] This was the beginning of a pattern that would affect relations with the Native Americans and would result in tragic consequences for later colonists.

Upon returning to England, Amadas and Barlowe proceeded to describe, in radiant detail, the great bounty of the new land. Although they failed to discover gold, other riches, or the fabled Northwest Passage, they reported that there were numerous vines filled with grapes, plenty of lumber, and vast quantities of fish in the waters surrounding the island. However, Amadas and Barlowe failed to take into account that their visit was made in summer when game and flora were plentiful. They failed to make adequate allowances for the winter months when this would not be the case. They noted how friendly the natives were. This misleading report, which ignored the consequences of burning the Indian village, would adversely affect later voyages. They also brought two natives with them, Manteo and Wanchese, after whom were named the two major towns on Roanoke Island.[11] The attempts of these early chroniclers to make Roanoke appear to be a veritable paradise ended up backfiring. Colonists who returned to the mother country related stories of deprivation that surely must have discouraged many future colonists. Later, those seeking to encourage colonization would realize that a realistic and accurate portrayal of the conditions facing colonists was a far better course of action.

Buttressed by the overly positive reports provided by Captains Amadas and Barlowe, Raleigh dispatched the men that would comprise the first English colony in the New World. A group of 108 men set sail on April 9, 1585, from Plymouth destined to become the first English colonists in America. Most of these individuals were veterans of numerous European wars and could be counted upon to defend the colony against any depredations of either the Spanish or natives. The little fleet consisted of seven vessels commanded by Sir Richard Grenville. Among those who set sail were two individuals who would provide a detailed visual and written record of what they observed when they reached the newly discovered land: the scientist Thomas Hariot and the artist John White. Also aboard was Ralph Lane, who was to be the colony's lieutenant governor, and Philip Amadas, now an admiral.[12]

Despite the glowing reports concerning the flora and fauna of Roanoke Island, the Chesapeake Bay region was far better suited for colonization. However, the Spanish had already explored the Chesapeake area and this augured against its selection as a site for the colony. One of the principal reasons that the English wished to establish a colony in America was to have a base from which privateers could operate. English ships had been attacking treasure- laden Spanish galleons for years as they returned from the New World. The proximity of Roanoke Island to the West Indies and Spanish sailing routes made it an ideal location from which to prey upon unsuspecting Spanish treasure ships, although it was not realized, at that time, that the surrounding waters were too shallow to allow larger vessels into the sounds. The Outer Banks also provided both cover and camouflage for the English activities on Roanoke Island.[13]

A secondary reason for colonization was to discover what Richard Hakluyt identified in his *Discourse Concerning Western Planting*, written in 1584, as "merchantable commodities." These were natural items that were abundant in the New World and marketable in Europe. Over time, fish, timber, furs, and other items would constitute the basic commodities for export back to Europe. These items were relatively scarce in Europe and were in enough demand to make them profitable.[14]

Lane's group arrived at the Outer Banks on June 26, 1585. Although the English vessels were quite small

10. Ibid., 70.
11. William S. Powell, *Paradise Preserved* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1965), 3-5.
12. Ibid., 5.
13. Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Roanoke: The Abandoned Colony* (Savage, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1984), 13, 15. See also Quinn *Set Fair for Roanoke:* 53.
14. William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill & Wang), 20.

by today's standards, they were forced to lay off shore several miles because they drew too much water for the shallow sounds surrounding Roanoke Island. This left the ships exposed to the vicious storms that frequent the region—something that the English were initially unaware of. In fact, one of Grenville's ships, the *Tiger,* ran aground in one such storm and a large amount of stores needed by the colonists were lost.

Despite this setback, the colonists immediately set about constructing a fort and housing, since it was late in the season. Their one- month sojourn in the West Indies to construct a new pinnace and gather additional water and supplies loomed large as a result. Their late arrival in the autumn hampered efforts to gather edibles for the winter and made the construction of shelter an immediate and imperative requirement. How the settlement actually looked still remains largely a matter of conjecture. The archeological remains of an earthwork have survived and may still be seen in the Fort Raleigh National Historic Site. However, current thinking is that this surviving earthwork is not the original fort because it is so small. Regardless, it is known that the houses were constructed outside the original fort, because surviving written accounts concerning the fort describe it as being too small to have held more than one building.

The original buildings were made of wood, although the colonists set about building a facility to make bricks. However, it took between six months and a year to fabricate bricks suitable for construction purposes. Grenville left Lane and his fellow colonists in August and sailed back to England, leaving the first English settlement in America to survive its first winter. The loss of the supplies was a serious blow to the colonists and they would be forced to rely upon the magnanimity of the Indians to help them make it through that difficult winter. It was believed that by the following spring, Lane would find a better location for the colony and it would have a better and safer anchorage for ships.[15]

It has been suggested that the demands of the new colonists, combined with a possible drought during this period, placed the Indians in a rather tenuous position. The Indians barely had enough grain for their own needs, let alone the additional burden placed on their meager reserves by the colonists. This was bound to create friction and it eventually did. Lane was a military man and not a diplomat. All Europeans were prone to taking what they needed from the indigenous peoples they encountered. In their desperate situation, the colonists no doubt acted in accordance with the social mores of the era.[16]

Another source of irritation between the native inhabitants and the English colonists was the land itself. The two different social systems were incompatible. The Indians viewed the land as community property and understood that others might have hunting rights or permission to plant edibles. Conversely, the English saw any negotiations as the transfer of the land itself for personal use by individual colonists. Clearly, what the Indians were selling to the English was not what the colonists thought they were acquiring.[17]

Aside from constructing the fortification and homes in which to live, Lane and his men explored the region. Numerous explorations were conducted of the area adjacent to Roanoke Island. One foray followed the Roanoke River as far as present Northhampton County, which is about 130 miles distant from Roanoke Island. This provided the colonists with at least a modicum of knowledge concerning their physical environment along with information concerning the flora, fauna, and Indians.

Grenville departed for England on August 25, 1585, leaving a pinnace and a few small ships with Lane and his men so they could explore the surrounding region. Grenville just missed a Spanish treasure *flota* that had departed Cuba in July but managed to overtake a straggler, the *Santa Maria de San Vincente,* carrying a cargo valued at over 120,000 ducats. He reached Plymouth on September 18. The cargo and ship were disposed of and this created a profit for Grenville. Queen Elizabeth is said to have

15. Kupperman, *Roanoke: The Abandoned Colony,* 21-27.
16. The paucity of Indian supplies was documented during White's expedition and was likely the same situation during the one commanded by Lane. See Kupperman, *Roanoke: The Abandoned Colony,* 115. Recent scholarship suggests that the Roanoke Colony was established during the worst drought in several hundred years. This was accomplished by examining the annual rings of trees from the period.
17. Cronon, *Changes in the Land,* 70.

received an entire cabinet of pearls as her share of the expedition's profits.[18]

After Grenville's departure, Lane ruled the colony with a firm hand with advice from an informal council established from the gentlemen who were members of the expedition. However, the two most important individuals of the mission, from a historical perspective, were Thomas Hariot and John White. Hariot was a mathematician and the scientific expert among the colonists. His observations concerning the vegetation, minerals, fauna, and Indians have proven to be an invaluable source of information over the years. Hariot's treatise, the *Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*, first published in February 1588, was the standard for information concerning the New World for years. Thomas White, on the other hand, was an artist. His drawings have left posterity with a clear and vivid impression of what the land and people were like at the time of the initial English arrival on the North American mainland. White also compiled several maps of the region to include the entrance to the Chesapeake Bay.

The early colonists were not particularly adept at fending for themselves. They had trouble constructing weirs for catching fish as the Indians did. While they hunted and gathered edibles from their surroundings, they were dependent upon the Indians for maize, squash, and other foodstuffs. They bartered goods with the Indians in exchange for food. Over time, it became apparent to Lane that the colony would be unable to be self-supporting. However, Hariot disagreed with that supposition and believed that by transplanting some flora and fauna from Europe, the colony would be a viable proposition.[19] Here was the Colombian Exchange at work.[20] The introduction of exotic flora and fauna into North America fundamentally changed the ecosystem of the continent.[21] Domesticated European animals displaced species native to North America and the grasses upon which these animals subsisted displaced native flora.

During the first year that Lane and his fellow colonists struggled to survive, the friendly Roanoke chief Granganimeo died from a disease transmitted by the colonists, and his brother Wingina replaced him. Later, Wingina changed his name to Pemisapan when he began to plot to eliminate the colonists from Indian lands. He began depriving them of food in the hope they would depart the Indian lands. In the confrontations that followed, several Indians were killed, including Pemisapan, who died at the hands of a colonist named Edward Nugent.[22]

In spring 1586, Raleigh sent a second expedition with supplies for the colonists on Roanoke Island. Unfortunately, before the relief arrived, Lane and the colonists had already departed with Sir Francis Drake. Drake had attacked both Spanish colonies and ships in the Caribbean. Initially, Drake had put into Roanoke Island to replenish water and drop off needed supplies for the colony. Drake also intended to leave one of his ships, the *Francis*, for the colonists to use. However, on June 13, one of the frequent storms that hit the region changed everything. Lane and his fellow colonists held an impromptu meeting and decided to abandon Roanoke Island and sail back to England with Drake. The colonists were so eager to leave that two men, who were off exploring, were left behind. By the time the relief ship sent by Raleigh arrived, the colonists had already departed Roanoke Island.[23]

On the heels of the ship dispatched by Raleigh, a second ship arrived, commanded by Grenville. For two weeks he searched in vain for the colonists. Grenville did, however, locate and capture three Indians, of which two escaped. A third was baptized, took the name Raleigh, and died in England in 1589.[24] Grenville did not want to lose

18. Quinn, *Raleigh and the British Empire*, 73-74. See also David Beers Quinn, *England and the Discovery of America, 1481-1620* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974), 295-296.
19. Quinn, *Raleigh and British Colonization*, 82-84.
20. The Colombian Exchange was the introduction of such items as tobacco, potatoes, corn, and tomatoes to be cultivated in Europe along with some types of animals. The Europeans brought horses, cows, pigs, and sheep to the Americas. Not all facets of this exchange were mutually beneficial. The Europeans also brought diseases such as smallpox, which decimated native populations while it is believed that the natives transmitted syphilis to the Europeans. For a detailed narrative of the Colombian Exchange, see Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1972).
21. Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians*, vii.
22. Quinn, *Raleigh and the British Empire*, 91-96.
23. Ibid., 100-102.

England's only toehold in the New World and settled on a half-measure in an attempt to maintain the colony's viability. Grenville left 15 men behind, along with provisions to last them two years, which was more than sufficient to carry them over until the next expedition was expected to arrive.

One might ask what could possibly induce people to cross the vast expanse of the Atlantic and face the unpredictable perils of the New World. A number of factors provided that impetus. England was undergoing a population explosion. During the 1570s, London's population quadrupled, creating job and housing shortages. Complicating the situation was a famine that broke out in 1586 combined with the bottom falling out of the market in wool. Religious strife among the various Protestant factions in England was another factor.[25] Such an economic climate proved to be more than a sufficient inducement for many to seek an opportunity to escape economic hard times and start a new life across the ocean.

In 1587, the 117 members of the famous and ill-fated "Lost Colony" departed England for the New World. The artist John White was now the governor and Simon Fernandes was once again the pilot. There was considerable rancor between White and Fernandes. Fernandes was more interested in plunder than colonization, while White's primary concern was the safety of the women and children who were part of the expedition. Fernandes was also instructed to pick up the 15 men previously left behind by Grenville and bring them to back to England on the return voyage. After the usual route and accompanying delays through the West Indies, they made land on July 16 off the coast of what is now North Carolina somewhere south of Roanoke Island, probably at Hatorask (present day Hatteras).

After more problems with Fernandes, White and the colonists were put ashore on Roanoke Island. They then proceeded to makes repairs to the fort, which was in sad shape, although the previously constructed houses were still somewhat inhabitable. Additional housing was built for the numerous new inhabitants of the colony. However, no trace was discovered of the 15 sailors previously left behind by Grenville.

Manteo, the Indian who accompanied the colonists back to his homeland, reestablished contact with his fellow Indians. It was at this time the colonists learned of the deaths of two of the sailors in fighting with the Indians and that survivors of that engagement had taken their boat to another small island on the Outer Banks, never to be heard from again. The colonists also discovered the bones of an individual that they presumed to be one of the missing men. While activity was in progress for refurbishing the colony, a group of Indians came over from the mainland and killed an unarmed colonist named George Howe while he was crabbing. Later, it was confirmed that one of the group that killed Howe was Wanchese, who had decided that the English did not have the best interests of the Indians high on their list of priorities.[26]

At this point, the English committed another major *faux pas*. White led two dozen men on a raid to the mainland to retaliate for the death of Howe. Led by Manteo, they launched a surprise attack against the Roanoke village of Dasemunkepeuc. They killed one Indian before it was realized that this was not the band that had killed Howe. Not only had they made new enemies, but they also had failed to punish the perpetrators that had murdered one of their number. One question that remains unresolved is why Manteo did not realize they were not the group responsible for Howe's demise.

However, by August, the colony was reestablished, there were some cannon in the fort, and the ships had been re-caulked and made ready for sea again. Manteo was baptized on August 13 and was made "Lord of Roanoke and Dasemunkepeuc." Five days later, Eleanor Dare, White's daughter and wife of Ananias Dare, gave birth to a daughter, Virginia. Still, there were serious deficiencies in stores and there was no livestock on Roanoke Island. White was persuaded to return to England and procure the items needed to sustain the colony. White was extremely reluctant to leave since his daughter and newly born granddaughter, Virginia Dare, the first

24. Ivor Noël Hume, *The Virginia Adventure: Roanoke to James Towne, An Archeological and Historical Odyssey* (New York: Knopf, 1998), 55-56.
25. Lee Miller, *Roanoke: Solving the Mystery of the Lost Colony* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2000), 40-41, 44-45.
26. Kupperman, *Roanoke: The Abandoned Colony*, 115.

English child born in America, would have to remain behind. Additionally, he was worried about accusations that might arise in England about his leaving the colonists. At length, White acceded to the wishes of the majority. White left behind several chests that contained his personal belongings, which indicates he expected to return immediately after obtaining the necessary supplies for the colony. The Indians, Manteo and Towaye, also remained with the colonists. It was understood that should the colonists encounter any trouble they were to carve the word "Croatoan" on a tree with a Maltese cross and depart for that island. It was the intention of the colonists to eventually relocate the colony to a better site, possibly in the Chesapeake Bay area. Because of unforeseen events taking place in Europe, it would be several years before John White would be able return to Roanoke Island. During White's absence of three years, the colonists disappeared and were never seen again.

Upon White's arrival back in England in November 1587, despite numerous tribulations, he feverishly made preparations to return with the urgently needed supplies and reunite with his family. However, a combination of bad luck and international events intervened and kept him from achieving his desired goal. By the time the preparations were completed for a relief expedition, the Privy Council issued an edict on March 31, 1588, preventing any vessels from leaving port in anticipation of the attack by Spain's Armada.

In April, White was able to secure permission for two small pinnaces, the *Roe* and the *Brave*, to sail to succor the stranded colonists. The *Roe*, on which White was travelling, was bested by a French vessel and forced to return to England shortly afterward and White and the crew were lucky to arrive with the clothes on their backs.

Finally, in 1590 White was able to return to the Roanoke Colony. He sailed aboard the *Hopewell*, the flagship of a privateering squadron commanded by John Watts. In August of that year, the *Hopewell* accompanied by another ship, the *Moonlight*, made land off Roanoke Island. As it was late, they waited until the next day to land. A fire they observed on the island buoyed their spirits and they sang songs to announce their presence. However, upon coming ashore they found the settlement deserted. The colonists had left behind some cannon and heavy metal bars, but little else. Later, they discovered what was left of White's personal belongings. The colonists had apparently buried them prior to their departure but the chests had been dug up by the Indians and the contents strewn about and the weather had ruined what they had left behind. White was disappointed but not at this point overly concerned about the plight of the colonists. He observed the "CRO" for Croatoan carved on a tree but without the prearranged signal of distress, the Maltese cross. White initially assumed that the colonists had moved as had been part of the previous plans. He wanted to continue the search but once again, it was late in the season and the crew desired to return to England. A fierce storm forced the *Hopewell* to cut three of her four anchors, settling the issue of any attempt to travel to Croatoan.[27] From this point, the English investors slowly lost interest in the colony, although White continued for years to hold out hope against all odds for the safety of his daughter and granddaughter. In February 1593, White sent a letter to Richard Halkyut postmarked from Ireland. He recounts the chain of events leading to the Roanoke colonists' disappearance and commends them to God. After this missive, John White, like the lost colonists, disappears from history.[28]

A recently published book makes the case that the demise of the Roanoke Colony was not merely a comedy of errors but a deliberate plot. Sir Francis Walsingham was Queen Elizabeth's Principal Secretary and Secretary of State. He was a man who rose from fairly humble beginnings. He believed that the end justified the means and was the principal agent responsible for the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots. Lee Miller speculates that Walsingham rescued Simon Fernandes from the gibbet and that Walsingham was responsible for Fernandes being the pilot on the expeditions to Roanoke.[29] It was all a Machiavellian plot to eliminate Raleigh from the position of power

27. Miller, *Roanoke: Solving the Mystery of the Lost Colony*, 17.
28. Ibid., 204.
29. The noted author on the early English exploration and the Roanoke Colony David Beers Quinn also writes about how Walsingham saved Fernandes from execution as a pirate and the dependence that Fernandes had upon Walsingham. See Quinn, *Set Fair for Roanoke*, 22.

because Elizabeth presented Raleigh with the estates of Anthony Babington who was executed as a traitor for being in league with Mary, Queen of Scots. Walsingham controlled a vast spy network throughout Europe and had counted on Babington's estate to maintain this extensive and expensive network while increasing his own wealth. Unknown to Raleigh, he became the target of Walsingham's wrath. If Walsingham could discredit Raleigh, not only might he obtain the coveted estates but also obtain the Queen's patent held by Raleigh for the colonization of North America. To achieve this end, the colonists at Roanoke had to be sacrificed.[30]

When the English first arrived in North America, various Amer- Indian groups inhabited it. Indians of the Algonquian language group were preeminent in what is now North Carolina. The Roanoke Indians belonged to this group. One individual who stands out is Manteo, who was a member of a ruling family of the Roanoke Indians. He adapted rapidly to the ways of the English, learned their language, traveled to England, and eventually was rewarded with a title for his efforts on their behalf.[31] Today, the major town on the island of Roanoke bears his name. However, noted Outer Banks historian David Stick believes that Wanchese should be remembered as a hero for resisting English efforts to take Native-American land. He further postulates that Manteo was a traitor for his collaboration with the English.

The Europeans also introduced various diseases to the indigenous populations of North America. Like the Spanish, the English brought with them smallpox, measles, and influenza. Indians had not developed resistance to these specific pathogens and their numbers were drastically reduced by them.

After the failure of the Lost Colony, English colonization efforts became focused on the Jamestown settlement in Virginia. Jamestown, in 1607, became the first permanent English settlement in North America and is far more recognized than the Roanoke Colony. Although interest in the lost colonists had waned, Raleigh did send an expedition commanded by Samuel Mace in 1602. He previously traveled twice to the Virginia area, and in March of that year, reached the Outer Banks. However, once again, weather curtailed efforts and no trace was discovered of the missing colonists. After Jamestown became established, Captain John Smith sent a small expedition led by Michael Sicklemore in 1608. But Sicklemore failed also in his quest to learn of the colonists' fate. Throughout the years, rumors persisted that some of the colonists had survived a massacre by the Indian chief Powhattan and that the survivors had intermarried with the Indians.[32] However, this story, intriguing as it is, has never been verified.

In 1649, William Bullock wrote about Roanoke in glowing terms, leaving out any details of its storied past. In 1653, an expedition of fur traders went to Roanoke Island. The local Indians showed them the ruins of the old fort and the visitors supposedly convinced the Indians to relinquish the island to them. Samuel Stephens of Virginia was the earliest recorded owner of Roanoke Island and was authorized to appoint a sheriff for the island on October 9, 1662. This indicates at least some degree of inhabitation at this time. There is no evidence that Stephens was one of the inhabitants. Stephens became Governor of Virginia on October 8, 1667, and died in office on March 7, 1670. His widow, Frances Culpepper Stephens, then married William Berkeley in June 1670 and he came into possession of Roanoke Island by marriage. On April 17, 1676, Sir William Berkeley, the Royal Governor of Virginia, sold half of his half of Roanoke Island to Joshua Lamb of Massachusetts for £100 sterling. Joshua Lamb, obviously the proverbial Yankee businessman, then sold half of Roanoke Island to Nicholas Paige of Boston on September 19, 1677, for £150 sterling and made himself a handsome profit on his initial investment.[33]

In 1663, what is present- day Collington Island was deeded to Sir John Colleton. The Outer Banks area was suitable for grazing domesticated animals. On Roanoke Island and the Barrier Islands, fences were not necessary, and hogs, cattle, sheep, and horses were left alone to graze without the worry of their wandering off. Other than animal grazing, the Outer Banks area appeared initially suitable only for pirates such as Blackbeard. Indeed Bankers gained an unsavory reputation because of their nefarious

30. Ibid., 168-84.
31. Quinn, *Set Fair for Roanoke*, 232.
32. Powell, *Paradise Preserved*, 13-14.
33. Ibid., 16-18.

activities.[34] In 1696, the *H.M.S. Hady*, a frigate belonging to the Royal Navy, became grounded between Roanoke and Currituck Inlets. The local denizens then proceeded to abscond with everything they could get their hands upon.

When not stealing, the Bankers would take what the sea willingly offered. Whales and flotsam from shipwrecks provided many individuals with a means to make money. The term progging, meaning picking up on the beach whatever jetsam might be washed upon it, came into colloquial use.

Before Lamb died in 1690, he sold half of his remaining half of Roanoke Island to another Bostonian, George Pordage. Heirs of Pordage and Lamb still maintained domiciles on the island as late as 1729. However, in 1723, the Lords Proprietors of Virginia gave title of Roanoke Island to John Lovick. Details become a little murky at this point concerning land ownership. It was proposed to establish a town in the middle of the island where the Sanderson family retained the title. By the late 1600s, land covering the northern island was parceled out among a number of individuals, many of whom clearly had no title to their property. The absence of land deeds for Currituck County from before 1700 and for almost half of the eighteenth century compound the problems of the historian.[35]

The Outer Banks and Roanoke Island became important to both the British and the colonists who were seeking their independence. The Royal Navy commanded the Atlantic and it was relatively easy to keep the approaches to ports such as Boston, Providence, New York, Baltimore, and Charleston, under its domination and control. However, the Outer Banks off the North Carolina coast presented a formidable obstacle to the British blockade. The shallow depth of the surrounding water and frequent storms made the blockade dangerous and problematical, at best. Urgently needed supplies flowed through this porous region to the Continental armies of Washington and his generals. While wintering at Valley Forge, most of Washington's supplies came to him by way of the Outer Banks. The British were as vigilant as possible and inhabitants of Roanoke Island were among those who petitioned the North Carolina Council to exempt Bankers from serving outside their region in the Patriot forces. The British sent raiding parties ashore to destroy the cattle and homes of the individuals that they considered rebels. Within a span of a few years following the war, there was little evidence of conflict except for the bleached bones of dead animals and the wrecked hulks of vessels destroyed during the war.[36]

After the Revolution, wrecks continued to claim unwary vessels along the coast. There were so many wrecks that the coast was divided into districts and a "vendue master" was appointed to dispose of any wreckage that came ashore at public auction. However, it was not unusual for the Bankers to reach the wreck site before the vendue master was even aware of the tragedy and abscond with anything of value prior to his arrival. It then became virtually impossible to determine who had taken what.[37] Progging, as it was known, occasionally indeed could be profitable.

Lighthouses were authorized by the Federal government in 1794, but lack of funding prevented their construction for several years. None was ever constructed on Roanoke Island. However, plans were developed in 1837 for a lighthouse on Pea Island, but because of local agitation over the location, one was built at Bodie Island further north in 1838. Later that year, a lighthouse was constructed at Pea Island because of a major storm that created Oregon Inlet. Pea Island would become a major factor in how the history of Roanoke Island developed over the next century.[38]

Little is recorded concerning the history of Roanoke Island in the decades following the Revolution. It must be presumed that progging, subsistence farming, fishing, and the grazing of domestic animals constituted the principal activities of the inhabitants. Since the literacy rate was undoubtedly low and these activities were considered rather mundane, virtually no one provided much in the way of written accounts of the island's daily activities

34. Banker is a generic term used by the inhabitants of Roanoke Island and the other Outer Banks Islands to identify themselves.
35. Powell, *Paradise Preserved*, 18-23.
36. David Stick, *The Outer Banks of North Carolina, 1584-1958* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1958), 44-71.
37. Ibid., 76.
38. Ibid., 77, 89.

Chapter Two: The Nineteenth Century, Antebellum Outer Banks, the Civil War, and Reconstruction

As during the Revolution, the Outer Banks once again provided a haven for privateers and provided protection against British raids on the mainland of North Carolina during the War of 1812, but Roanoke Island itself did not specifically figure in this conflict. There is a gap of several years following that conflict before any significant recorded event. In 1819, President James Monroe became the first president to visit Roanoke Island while touring the Southern part of the nation, identifying locations for possible internal improvements to the region's infrastructure and inspecting the defenses of North Carolina. He traveled aboard the steamboat *Albemarle,* along with some of the area's more prominent citizens, to check into the possibility of opening a new inlet so that large vessels might have access to the port of Edenton and other cities along the North Carolina coast. During the evening of April 6, the *Albemarle* anchored off the northern tip of Roanoke Island. Early the next morning, President Monroe visited the site where the ruins of the old fort were still distinctly visible.[39]

In 1820, an engineer named Hamilton Fulton mapped the Croatoan and Roanoke Sounds. His map displays the names of a number of the island's more prominent residents, such as Baum, Dough, and Etheridge. These names have been and still remain dominant names on the island to this day. Additionally, the U.S. Census taken in 1790 indicated these names and also the Midgetts, although Midgett has various ways of being spelled. The claims to the land during this period were as muddled as they had been in the previous centuries.[40]

North Carolina's Outer Banks were not suited for plantation agriculture, and as a result, the "peculiar institution" of slavery evolved in a manner quite dissimilar from areas of the South dominated by plantations. Slaves became adept fishermen in the Outer Banks region, greatly increasing their value to their masters while at the same time providing them with a degree of freedom not enjoyed by their counterparts working on plantations. As a result, social interactions between the races evolved quite differently than on the North Carolina mainland.

Although not specifically written by slaves living on or about Roanoke Island, *A Brief History of the Slave Life of London R. Ferebee* (1882), *Narrative of the Life of Moses Grandy, Late a Slave in the United States of America* (1842), and *The Experiences of Thomas H. Jones, Who was a Slave for Forty- Three Years* (1854) present the reader with what can be presumed to be an accurate description of the life and tribulations of slaves living along the North Carolina coast. Many of the slaves initially taken from Africa came from areas geographically similar to that of the Tidewater region of North Carolina. After the Tuscarora War (1711- 1713), a society emerged on the coast that was composed of blacks, whites, and Indians that was surprisingly homogenous. The commonality of their poor economic state and intermarriage broke down many of the social mores established throughout the rest of the country.

39. William S. Powell, *Paradise Preserved* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1965), 23. Present scholarship questions what the president and his party actually saw although it was definitely part of the settlement.
40. Ibid., 25.

However, after 1725, many marginal whites began to view blacks as a threat to their maritime jobs, but more important, the possibility of a slave insurrection loomed large in the minds of many affluent whites.[41]

Slaves, because of their skill and ability to work successfully in the tidewater environment, were often hired out by their owners to other whites to perform specific functions, providing cash income to their owners. Slaves working on the water could also earn additional income that slaves working on plantations did not have the opportunity to obtain. Some slaves, such as Moses Grandy, were able to earn a sufficient amount of money to enable them to eventually purchase their freedom, although this was not the norm. As a result of the greater degree of latitude given these individuals, there was a large degree of inter- racial mixing and racial boundaries were somewhat confused in the Outer Banks region compared to other parts of North Carolina and the South in general.[42]

The most detailed narrative of the life of a slave working the estuaries and sounds of North Carolina comes from Moses Grandy who plied those waters from approximately 1790 until 1830. He depicts a complex interaction of black watermen and the dynamics of slavery versus freedom from the perspective a black slave. Grandy elucidated that, although Camden, located on the southern part of the North Carolina coast, was indeed a small port, it had important connections to the West Indies and this was reflected in the lilting speech and music of the slaves. He also wrote of the deep- rooted fear that whites had as a result of the successful Haitian slave rebellion of 1791- 1803, specifically that it would inspire American slaves to revolt.

During the antebellum period, there was no major commercial fishing in the Outer Banks region, although the confluence of the many rivers and the ocean made it the most prolific fishing ground of the United States other than of the waters off Louisiana. Most of the fishing accomplished by both blacks and whites was performed at a subsistence level. The excess catch was usually bartered off because there was little specie circulating in the region. Plantations located close to the water would often designate one slave to fish, providing additional nourishment to the owner's other slaves as well as the master himself. However, there were some slave owners who frowned upon this practice because occasionally enterprising slaves sold terrapins and other turtles on the sly and this provided them with income that empowered them to some degree. Slaves also learned many things about nature and the sea from their activities. The major threat posed by slaves engaging in fishing was that the owners lost the degree of control that they exercised over slaves working on the plantation.[43] This would later prove beneficial to the Union forces once they commenced to regain the territory of the Outer Banks and Roanoke Island from the Confederacy. Black watermen also formed a part of the Underground Railroad that assisted slaves escaping to the North. At the Fort Raleigh National Historic Site there stands a monument to those who took part in this collective effort to effect freedom for blacks escaping the tyranny of slavery.

In the antebellum period, various types of turtles became a major source of income for many individuals. Loggerhead turtles, which averaged around 50 pounds, were caught by individuals who dove into the water and forced the hapless creatures to the surface. If they were too large and strong, the swimmer was forced to let the animal go. Loggerhead turtles went for about fifty cents each. Smaller green turtles, captured in the same manner, went for about fifteen cents each. However, the most sought after turtle was the diamondback terrapin which many individuals considered a delicacy. The brackish water around the Outer Banks was an ideal breeding ground for them. Initially, fishermen viewed them as a nuisance because they continuously fouled their fishing nets. However, in 1845, William Midgett of Roanoke Island developed the 'terrapin drag" which was able to capture the terrapins during the winter when they were lying dormant in the mud. In February 1849, John B. Etheridge, keeper of the Bodie Island Lighthouse, fabricated a copy and captured approximately 2,150 terrapins and he sold most of them in Norfolk for $400. Etheridge then proceeded to capture close to another 2,000, which

41. David Cecelski, *The Waterman's Song: Slavery and Freedom in Maritime North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 5, 8-14.
42. Ibid., 38, 50.
43. Ibid., 58-81.

he disposed of in Baltimore for $350. This huge profit soon led to the depletion and almost extinction of the terrapins in the Outer Banks region.[44]

Also influencing the development of Roanoke Island were the canals built from the 1790s until just prior to the Civil War. The Dismal Swamp Canal was chartered in 1787, work commenced in 1793, and was completed in 1805 to connect the Albemarle Sound with Norfolk on the Chesapeake Bay.[45] Begun in 1855, the Albemarle and Chesapeake Canal opened in 1859 and used the south branch of the Elizabeth River to connect Albemarle Sound and the Chesapeake. By 1861, over 2,500 vessels traversed this canal in a single year. Construction of both canals involved vast numbers of blacks, both free and slave.[46]

The U.S. Census, between 1790 and 1840, was conducted in a manner that makes it impossible to determine with any degree of certainty the exact composition of the population of Roanoke Island. However, in 1850, the format of the census changed. The United States Census of 1850 breaks the population of Roanoke Island down as follows: 442 residents and 168 slaves for a total of 610 living on the island. This was the lowest free- to- slave ratio on the entire Outer Banks as there were only a total of 503 slaves in the entire Outer Banks region.[47] This figure may mislead some to think that there was considerable affluence among the island's residents. However, a relatively few families owned most of the slaves while the rest of the island's inhabitants were subsistence fishermen.

The Civil War resulted in a number of radical changes throughout the United States. Not only was the countryside of the South in ruins, but so was its economic infrastructure. The primary means of production, the slave, was no longer property. The destiny of the freed slaves became the most hotly debated issue of the era. Although Reconstruction would end in 1877, it would not be until the Spanish-American War in 1898 that Americans would once again believe themselves to be truly a nation. The gains black people made in the South during Reconstruction were gradually eroded in the last two decades of the nineteenth century by Jim Crow laws. It would require a new movement for civil rights following World War II to begin placing the races on any sort of level resembling parity.

The outbreak of the Civil War did not initially affect the Bankers living on Roanoke Island. Isolated physically by water from the mainland, and psychologically away from the mainstream of Southern society, the Bankers continued on with their lives in a large measure oblivious to what was tearing apart the vitals of the rest of the country. However, the Union's blockade of the South, which was in effect a variation of Gen. Winfield Scott's "Anaconda Plan," would see its formative stages implemented on the North Carolina coastal region, bringing this sense of unawareness to an abrupt halt.[48]

One of the initial issues facing the Union forces during the war was the disposition of escaped slaves. There was no uniform Federal policy towards slaves who absconded from their previous owners in the seceded states. Early in the war, Union Gen. Don Carlos Buell in Kentucky returned escaped slaves in Union territory to their owners. President Lincoln vacillated on what course of action to pursue regarding the matter and was severely castigated by many abolitionists. As a result of this lack of official policy emanating from Washington early on in the war on the treatment of escaped slaves, the disposition of escaped slaves varied from command to command.

On May 13, 1862, the United States Congress in Washington finally approved a new Article of War prohibiting Union military personnel from returning escaped slaves to Confederate control and subjecting such individuals to court- martial for violating this order. This was the first legal step on the road to the eradication of slavery. It was viewed

44. David Stick, *The History of the Outer Banks* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1958), 221-23.
45. Gary S. Dunbar, *Historical Geography of the North Carolina Outer Banks* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1955), 25.
46. Fred M. Mallison, *The Civil War on the Outer Banks: A History of the Late Rebellion Along the Coast of North Carolina from Carteret to Currituck, with Comments on Prewar Conditions and an Account of the Postwar Recovery* (London: McFarland & Company, 1998), 16.
47. David Stick, *The Outer Banks of North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1958), 89.
48. The Anaconda Plan called for the slow strangulation of the Confederacy's trade by a blockade of its ports. It was initially unpopular because virtually everyone believed the war would be over within three months. Only after the Union's initial reverses did its leaders understand the plan's merits and recognize that the struggle would be a prolonged one.

with great approbation by abolitionists throughout the Union.[49]

Both the Union Navy and the forces of the Confederacy realized that the Outer Banks and Roanoke Island were not only the key to any initial penetration of the Southern defenses in North Carolina but also the back door to the strategic naval base at Norfolk, Virginia.[50] Additionally, Roanoke was at the epicenter of the Pamlico and Albemarle Sounds and a key to the inland waterway traffic. Initially, the Confederacy was able to have a number of its warships, blockade- runners, and privateers sally forth from the Outer Banks area. Vitally needed goods flowed into the Confederacy through the porous North Carolina coastline. Confederate forces also managed to capture several Union prizes before the superior strength of the Union Navy was brought to bear. Consequently, the Confederacy massed men and equipment to defend the Outer Banks and Roanoke Island while Union forces concentrated for their first major naval offensive of the war.

North Carolina Gov. John W. Ellis and his successor, Henry T. Clark, renovated and established a number of coastal fortifications, including some on Roanoke Island, and increased the Confederate military presence in the area. On Roanoke Island itself there were three turf and sand forts: Forts Huger, Blanchard, and Bartow, mounting a total of 25 guns.[51] However, Confederate Gen. Henry A. Wise understood that his forces were totally inadequate for the task before them. They were ill- equipped, poorly trained, and in insufficient numbers to repel the anticipated Union assault. The capture of Hatteras by Union forces in August 1861 increased the importance of Roanoke Island to the Confederacy.[52] Still, the Confederates, with their meager resources, could only marshal a limited amount of men and materiel for the defense of Roanoke Island.

Initially, the commander of Confederate forces in the Roanoke area was Brig. Gen. R.C. Gatlin, who was responsible for the Department of Norfolk. Shortly afterward, he was replaced by Brig. Gen. D. H. Hill, from Virginia, who immediately began reorganizing the defenses of Roanoke Island. Initially, the Confederates positioned soldiers from the North Carolina 17th Regiment, who had escaped the Hatteras debacle, on Roanoke Island, but later added men from Virginia and Georgia to supplement them. Hill concluded that Roanoke Island and Fort Macon, located approximately 35 miles southeast of New Bern, were the two weakest points in the district and that they were the key to almost one- third of the state of North Carolina. He had earthworks constructed across the narrow of Roanoke Island and requested that an additional four regiments be sent to Roanoke before Gen. Joseph E. Johnston recalled him to Virginia. Only one additional regiment was sent to Roanoke Island, the North Carolina 8th Regiment, which was under the command of Col. Henry M. Shaw who, himself, was a transplanted New Englander.[53]

While many individuals throughout North Carolina actively supported the Confederate cause, this was not necessarily the case in the Outer Banks, especially on Roanoke Island. The people of Roanoke Island were described as "rather indifferent" concerning the war.[54] They wished to be merely left alone, even though some owned a considerable number of slaves. This may, to some degree, explain the written accounts of how they treated the invading Union soldiers in 1862.

The Union forces first had to secure a base on the Outer Banks prior to commencing their assault upon Roanoke Island. Hatteras was one of North Carolina's busiest seaports; it conducted more trade than Beaufort, and was almost equal to Wilmington in 1861.[55] This, combined with the Confederate privateers operating out of the area, made Hatteras an important objective that the forces of the Union needed to either neutralize or control. On August 28- 29, 1861, Maj. Gen. Benjamin F. Butler attacked Forts Clark and Hatteras in the first major amphibious assault ever launched by the U.S.

49. Ibid., 172.
50. J. Thomas Scharf, *History of the Confederate States Navy* (New York: Rogers & Sherwood, 1887), 370.
51. John G. Barrett, *The Civil War in North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1963), 73.
52. Patricia C. Click, *Time Full of Trial: The Roanoke Island Freedmen's Colony, 1862-1867* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 20-21.
53. Mallison, *The Civil War on the Outer Banks*, 51.
54. Kenneth E. Burke, *The History of Portsmouth, North Carolina*, Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Richmond, 1974, 63.
55. John Barrett, *The Civil War in North Carolina*, 33.

Army.[56] Neither was an extensive military fortification and they were located close to the beach. Fort Clark was an approximately two- acre enclosure made of sand that was held in place by wood and covered with turf. Fort Clark mounted five 32- pound artillery pieces and two smaller ones. Fort Hatteras was the principal fortification and was situated inland approximately one- eighth mile from the Hatteras Inlet set back a distance behind the beach. Fort Hatteras was approximately 250 feet across and constructed similarly to Fort Clark. The primary armament of Fort Hatteras was 12 32-pound artillery pieces.[57]

The Union Naval squadron, commanded by Flag Officer Silas H. Stringham, bombarded these forts on August 28, and the next day, a landing force of 2,000 men from the New York 9th and 20th Volunteer Regiments launched their amphibious assault. Fort Clark, commanded by Col. J.C. Lamb, expended all its artillery ammunition by midday. Lamb then proceeded to spike his guns as best he could and then retreated with his men to Fort Hatteras. The Confederates attempted to use vessels from their Mosquito Fleet to interdict the Federal assault but were repulsed.[58] The Confederate forces at Hatteras proposed surrender terms but were notified that only their unconditional surrender would be accepted. The Confederate forces, consisting of approximately 700 men, commanded by Col. William F. Martin, were forced to accept the terms. They were then placed aboard Union vessels and transported to New York. The entire operation cost the Union forces only 3 casualties. The Union now had a secure base of operations from which to attack Roanoke Island, interdict blockade runners, and prepare for an assault upon the mainland of North Carolina and the Confederacy.[59]

There were severe recriminations throughout the South for failing to prevent the Union forces from taking Forts Hatteras and Clark. Variously, the engineers were blamed for the poor state of the fortifications, the ordnance officials for lack of suitable artillery to beat off the Union assault, and last, the defenders themselves for drunkenness, inability, and even cowardice in the face of the enemy. The very faith of the South in itself was shaken while, conversely, the Union forces gained a monumental boost in morale. As a result of the loss at Hatteras, the Confederates abandoned Forts Oregon and Ocracoke without firing a shot, deeming them untenable. With the inlets to both Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds under Union control, the entire seaboard of North Carolina was exposed to a Union attack that the Confederacy knew would be inevitable once the Union forces had regrouped and consolidated their hold on the Outer Banks.

With the fall of Hatteras, all eyes now focused on Roanoke Island. The Confederacy rushed to fortify Roanoke Island with the meager resources at its disposal, while the Union proceeded to marshal enough men and equipment to launch an assault and wrest control of it. During the interim, both sides sought to contain and exploit the other's possible weaknesses. The Union forces were convinced that the Confederates on Roanoke were fortifying the island as a prelude to offensive operations in the area. Consequently, on September 18, 1861, Lt. James G. Maxwell of the United States Navy led a raid upon the abandoned Confederate position at Fort Ocracoke. He discovered 18 large-caliber cannon with only their wooden carriages burned. Maxwell, realizing that it would take only a little effort to make them once more operational, then proceeded to spike the cannon and retired. The Confederacy could have used these guns for the defense of Roanoke Island, but their hasty retreat without a fight precluded taking these pieces with them. This was one of a number of missteps committed by the Confederate forces defending North Carolina during this campaign.[60]

On the Confederate side, Roanoke Island's senior Confederate officer, Col. A.R. Wright, contemplated the capture of a Union vessel in order to gain vitally needed intelligence.[61] The senior Confederate naval

56. Ibid., 67.
57. Ibid., 39.
58. This is a derogatory term to describe an inadequate naval force only capable of "stinging" the opposing force and otherwise being merely an annoyance.
59. Ibid., 40-45. See *The New York Times*, September 2, 1862 for a complete description of the engagement.
60. Ibid., 48-49.
61. It was these preparations that Union officers mistakenly viewed as a prelude for an assault on the Outer Banks. See Barrett, *The Civil War in North Carolina*, 49.

officer, Commodore W. F. Lynch, a former officer in the United States Navy, caused the Union vessel *Fanny* to be intercepted and captured off Chicamicomico on October 1, 1861. The ship, along with its valuable cargo, which included a large amount of water, fell to the Confederacy but little in the manner of critical intelligence was obtained.[62] There was severe consternation and recriminations among the Union forces because the capture of the *Fanny* could have been averted. It was waiting off Chicamicomico for hours to be unloaded when captured. Had the *Fanny* been promptly unloaded, at least its supplies and the precious water it carried would not have fallen into Confederate hands.

Another incident that transpired during October became known as the "Chicamicomico Races." The Union forces were concerned about a possible Confederate attack emanating from Roanoke Island. The Union toehold on the Outer Banks was precarious and maintained by only 900 men of the 9th and 20th New York Volunteers. Later, 600 additional men of the 20th Indiana Volunteers, who were supported by a battery of the 1st U.S. Artillery, reinforced them. To forestall such an assault, Col. Rush Hawkins, commander of the 9th New York Volunteers, ordered Col. W.L. Brown and his 20th Indiana to occupy Chicamicomico (presently known as Rodanthe). The Mosquito Fleet transported soldiers from the 3rd Georgia, causing the Union forces to panic and run as they viewed their impending debarkation. However, a number of the Confederate vessels became grounded on the sandbar while attempting to land the troops. At this point, the 9th New York became engaged in the fracas and began pursuing the Confederates that landed, forcing them to beat a hasty retreat back to Roanoke Island while the Union soldiers eventually make a likewise move back to Hatteras. Hence, the derisive term, "Chicamicomico Races," evolved with each side unable to stake a claim to victory while mocking the fighting abilities of all the participants that had been engaged.

After an interlude of several months, the Union forces felt sufficiently prepared to launch an assault upon Roanoke Island. They were also fortunate enough to obtain invaluable information about the island from slaves who had escaped to the Union lines at Hatteras. On November 7, 1861, a black man named Ben who fled Roanoke Island provided information to General Burnside concerning the disposition of the Confederate forces, their morale, and most important, their defenses. Later, on February 1, 1862, a 16- year old slave, Thomas Robinson, also from Roanoke, not only identified Ashby's Harbor as the best location to effect an amphibious landing, but also transported a Union topographical engineer officer there to survey the site.[63]

Governor Clark of North Carolina had his hands tied when it came to the coastal defense of North Carolina. The Confederate government at Richmond had responsibility for its defense. Additionally, most of the available manpower from the eastern counties in North Carolina was already tied up in the war effort in Virginia. Compounding the problem was that the forts on Roanoke Island were both poorly located and incomplete. Although pilings were driven into the sound and ships sunk to block the channel in order to deny access to the Union attackers, these measures would prove ineffective. What was known as the Roanoke Marsh, a chain of low islands in the Croatoan Sound, made navigation treacherous, but time has washed this obstacle away.[64] Three obsolete cannon that had the wrong type of ammunition comprised the Confederate artillery position on the island's main road. Fewer than 2,500 men were available for the island's defense and these were both poorly trained and equipped.[65] The numerous requisitions placed by Colonel Shaw for men,

62. All the Union's water had to be transported by boat since there were no wells on the Barrier Islands. Lack of water became a critical issue at this time for the Union army. The *Fanny* was estimated to be worth $150,000. Items included a vast amount of artillery ammunition and thousands of uniforms, shoes, and overcoats needed by Union soldiers ashore. See Stick, *The Outer Banks of North Carolina*, 131.
63. Cecelski, *The Waterman's Song*, 157. See also Stephen Edward Reilly, "Reconstruction Through Regeneration: Horace James' Work with the Blacks for Social Reform in North Carolina, 1862-1867," Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Duke University, 1983, 32.
64. Stick, *The Outer Banks of North Carolina*, 136.
65. At the beginning of the secession, 37,000 stands of arms were taken from the Federal arsenal located in Fayetteville. Unfortunately, most of them were obsolete flintlocks dating back to the Revolution. Only slowly could these weapons be modernized. Undoubtedly, many of the Confederate soldiers stationed at Roanoke were armed with these flintlocks. See Barrett, *The Civil War in North Carolina*, 26.

ammunition, and equipment failed to arrive.[66] His soldiers were expected to repel a vastly larger Federal force that was well equipped, better trained, and highly motivated. The prospects for a successful Confederate defense of Roanoke Island were bleak indeed.

The New York Times reported that a number of contrabands had escaped Roanoke Island in December and that the Confederates had heavily entrenched the island. While attempting their escape, the contrabands had been fired upon by Confederate soldiers. The newspaper also stated that the contrabands indicated there was considerable hardship and privation amongst the inhabitants. *The Times* also stated that Union soldiers had commenced educating the poor unfortunates and that a Patrick Kelly of the United States Artillery was supervising their education.[67]

On January 11, 1862, after innumerable delays, the Union flotilla, transporting more than 10,000 soldiers, departed Fortress Monroe in Virginia en route to the Outer Banks. One can rest assured that the Confederates knew that the Union fleet had departed and what its ultimate destination was. However, there was precious little more the Confederates could do to prepare because of their precarious logistical situation. On the way, a storm scattered the Union ships en route to the anticipated invasion of Roanoke Island, but by February 4, all the ships had rendezvoused off Cape Hatteras. When the time came, the soldiers aboard the ships were more than eager to disembark and get their feet on dry land. The Union warships commenced shelling Roanoke Island on February 7 and later that day began putting soldiers ashore at Ashby's Harbor.[68] The Mosquito Fleet was unable to prevent the Union advance and lost several ships in the process of preventing that landing.

The Times reported the movement of Burnside's expedition during the first week of February. Warships were congregating at Hatteras Inlet for the expected invasion of Roanoke Island and one vessel, the steamer *Ericsson,* had been halted by being unable to cross the sandbar. Several Union ships were lost at sea awaiting the assault of Roanoke Island. The Union forces were unable to convince local sailors to pilot their vessels over the treacherous shoals also colloquially known as the "Swash."[69] Consequently, the *City of New York* was a total loss with her cargo of ordnance and supplies, the gunboat *Zouave* was lost, and the *Pocahontas* sank with most of the horses she was transporting. However, there was reportedly panic in both Richmond and Norfolk because of Burnside's expected invasion of Roanoke Island. Two days later, *The New York Times* reported a heavy volume of artillery fire in the direction of Roanoke Island that was presumed to be a prelude to any expected Union assault.[70] *The Times,* albeit somewhat tardy, was absolutely correct in its assessment of the military situation.

Upon reaching land at Ashby's Harbor, the Union soldiers proceeded to fan out across the island and engage the Confederates defending the island. The next morning, the Federal troops came upon the Confederate strongpoint on the corduroy road that went down the middle of the island. The position, known as Suple's Hill, was flanked by what many believed an impassable swamp.[71] The Union army brought up its own artillery and began to lay an artillery barrage on the Confederate position while the infantry slogged trough the marsh. The 9th New York finally charged the Confederate position with fixed bayonets and the survivors fled for their lives. This action essentially broke the will to resist of the rest of the island's defenders. Colonel Shaw had no viable option left other than unconditional surrender. Shaw later was severely castigated by his peers for the poor performance of his troops in the defense of Roanoke Island. Knowledge of his Northern roots no doubt factored into the criticism.

Roanoke Island was captured by Burnside at a very modest cost in casualties to his men. Official Union losses were given as 37 killed, 214 wounded, and 13 missing. Confederate losses were only 22 killed and 58 wounded. However, 2,500 Confederate soldiers surrendered, which indicates they did not put up a

66. Mallison, *The Civil War on the Outer Banks*, 63.
67. *New York Times*, January 12, 1862.
68. "And Three Rousing Cheers for the Privates: A Dairy of the 1862 Roanoke Island Expedition." Mary Seaton Dix, ed. *North Carolina Historical Review* Vol. 71 No.1 (January 1994): 62-63.
69. William Marvel, *Burnside* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 45.
70. *New York Times*, February 2, 4, 1862.
71. Marvel, *Burnside*, 57. See also Mallison, *The Civil War on the Outer Banks*, 70-71.

particularly determined or obstinate struggle contrary to all the posturing most armies perform prior to an actual battle to inspire their soldiers to perform great feats of valor. [72]

After Burnside's victory, he appointed Vincent Colyer as Superintendent of the Poor in the Department of North Carolina on March 30, 1862. Colyer was initially an agent of the New York Christian Commission and possessed previous experience in the distribution of supplies to the sick and wounded. It was incumbent upon Colyer to organize and find employment for the contrabands by initially having them construct earthworks on Roanoke Island, New Bern, and Washington. Docks were also constructed on Roanoke Island to receive the large volume of supplies than the Union Navy ferried in for both soldiers and contrabands. Like many other Northerners, Colyer was not an ardent abolitionist but pragmatic and did not believe in the South's "peculiar institution" of slavery.[73] When first assuming his position, Colyer gave up his own tent to house a number of contraband women and children who were cold and wet. In July of that year, when Colyer relinquished his position, there were over 1,000 contrabands on Roanoke Island, the majority of whom were women and children incapable of providing for themselves. One interesting observation was made by Colyer before departing. He noticed that the 7,500 freedmen under his care required less than 1/16 the rations he supplied to the poor whites he administered to. The freedmen also earned only $8.00 per month wages compared to the $12.00 paid white laborers and were reasonably content to receive this amount despite occasional grumbling.

The Reverend James Means succeeded Vincent Colyer during the summer of 1862. Means was an army chaplain from Massachusetts. Means had a new title to go along with his position—"Superintendent of Blacks in North Carolina." His office was located in New Bern, and Union army officers supervised the daily activities of Roanoke Island's freedmen. Means also had a friend and assistant named Horace James who would eventually replace him.[74] Many former slaves wished to have stability in their lives and expressed the desire to get formally married in a ceremony. Beginning in the end of summer 1862, T.W. Conway, another Union army chaplain, began to perform a number of marriage ceremonies. Unfortunately, Means did not last very long in his position. He died on April 6, 1863, succumbing to complications that arose after contracting typhoid fever.[75]

At this juncture, another chapter of Roanoke Island's storied past unfolds. Runaway slaves or contrabands began gravitating toward areas that were occupied by Union forces. Being separated physically from the mainland of North Carolina, Roanoke Island provided contrabands with some sense of security. In many parts of the South, abolitionist ministers who had often been the chaplains of their Union units were given positions to look after the welfare of the freedmen, as they came to be known. One such individual was Horace James, an evangelical Congregationalist minister from Massachusetts. Although James tended to flocks at Beaufort, New Bern, Plymouth, and Washington, historian Patricia Click writes that the Freedmen's Colony at Roanoke Island was his favorite and that his greatest efforts were dedicated to the freedmen living there. However, it should be noted that being an abolitionist and against slavery did not mean abolitionists believed in social equality. Many abolitionists believed in political equality but not equality in the social sense. Individuals such as James believed that the "natural" social position for the black man was a few steps below that of the white man. James stated that "I am not personally a believer in negro [*sic*] equality with the white race" and "the part the negro [*sic*] is to play in the grand future must be the subordinate part . . . ."[76] While this may appear incongruous today and smack of racism, one must understand that even political equality was considered very progressive in the nineteenth- century context.[77] The British Empire had only outlawed slavery in 1833 and many claimed that former slaves were in the same plight as they were previously. The Civil War began with its initial goal being the preservation

72. Mallison, *The Civil War on the Outer Banks*, 78. When one considers the ratio of casualties to actual combatants at such battles as Antietam, the battle for Roanoke Island was nothing more than a mere skirmish.
73. Dunbar, *Historical Geography of the North Carolina Outer Banks*, 42. See Also Click, *Time Full of Trial*, 35, 38.
74. Reilly, "Reconstruction Through Regeneration," 36.
75. Click, *Time Full of Trial*, 335-40.
76. Reilly, "Reconstruction Through Regeneration," 45.
77. Click, *Time Full of Trial*, 10.

of the Union and evolved into a moral crusade to free the slaves. It will be noted later that such lofty goals were not ingrained in all Union soldiers and many of them stole from or physically abused the freedmen.

James, like many others, initially believed that the war was for the restoration of the Union. However, by July 1862, his position had shifted and he called for the eradication of slavery in the South. James envisioned what he termed a "new social order." The nation was to be purged from the evil of slavery, although elimination of slavery, as stated previously, did not mean social equality—only equality under the law. James never elucidated the exact nature of the "new social order" in a written context.[78]

Lack of guidance from Washington was always a problem when dealing with freedmen. Obtaining land to give to the freedmen presented another quandary. This problem was exacerbated on Roanoke Island by the limited amount of land available and questions concerning what would be the rights of former owners to the property on Roanoke Island. However, James received orders from Maj. Gen. J.G. Foster, at the time commanding the Department of North Carolina, to establish a colony for freedmen on Roanoke Island. James was expected to have the people under his responsibility learn agriculture, receive an education, and train to defend themselves against possible attack.[79]

On July 16, 1863, the call came from the Federal Government to enlist black men in the Union army. Gen. Edward A. Wild was tasked with recruiting black men on Roanoke Island who answered the call to the colors. This had the effect of severely reducing the manpower pool of those needed to work the land. It made the colony merely a haven for the soldiers' children along with the old and infirm.[80] During that summer, James traveled to New England where he managed to raise almost $9,000 for the Freedmen's Colony. A large portion of these funds was raised through the efforts of the American Missionary Association (AMA). James also proceeded to construct a town on the northern end of the island.[81]

This was to be the centerpiece of the "new social order" envisioned by James. Each family was to be provided with an acre of land. It was to be a home for freedmen but agriculture would not be its primary means of viability because of the limited availability of arable land. The "new social order" envisioned by James would follow a middle corridor between the old republican concept of the yeoman farmer and the newer ideas of a technologically based society.[82] Unfortunately, as stated previously, James never completely explained his ideas on paper. Regrettably, in the end, James' concept would prove to be not sustainable. While initially sheltered in the former Confederate barracks, the freedmen began construction of their own homes. The colony had broad avenues that were placed 1,200 feet apart. These avenues had names such as Lincoln Avenue, Roanoke Avenue, and Burnside Avenue. The intersecting streets were at right angles and in one direction called First Street, Second Street, etc., while others going on the opposite direction were named A Street, B Street, etc. Interestingly, the town is not laid out on a north-south axis but along a northeast- southwest one according to a map that James provided to the Freedmen's Inquiry Commission in Washington, D.C.[83] James was assisted in his task by Sgt. James O. Sanderson, who previously served with the 43rd Massachusetts Volunteers.

James noted, with delight, the efforts of the freedmen to construct their homes. The individuals went about their tasks zealously. Materiel was procured from the surrounding towns. However, James was concerned that the freedmen population would have an insufficient number of jobs available to keep them gainfully employed. Some women were able to cook and do laundry for the soldiers for the present, but as the war wound down, so would the need for their services.

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78. Ibid., 60-61.
79. Horace James, *Annual Report of the Superintendent of Negro Affairs in North Carolina, 1864* (Boston: W. F. Brown, 1865), 21.
80. Ibid., 22.
81. Ibid., 21-25.
82. Patricia Click, "In Search of the Middle Landscape: Missionaries' Dreams and the Freedmen's Colony on Roanoke Island, 1862-1867," in *Tamkang Journal of American Studies* Vol. 4, No. 4 (Summer 1988):10.
83. James to Freedmen's Inquiry Commission Dated: 4 June 1864, Record Group 105, Freedmen's Bureau, Roanoke Island, N.C. Letters and Orders Received, Reports and Supply Requests, October 1865-February 1868, Entry 2821, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. For brevity, these records will be cited henceforth as RG-105.

James wrote that the combined steam engine and saw mill that he obtained from New England possessed 70- horsepower and was not only capable of operating several circular saws but also a grist mill. James had a grandiose vision of the future for the Freedmen's Colony. Some individuals could be employed in domestic manufacturing. Others could earn a living as coopers fabricating barrels for the turpentine trade, which was a major industry in North Carolina. Fishing could be a gainful occupation for a large number of others. The women could earn money by spinning and weaving.[84] Unfortunately, James' vision of the future of the Freedmen's Colony on Roanoke Island was merely a chimera. There were an insufficient number of trees on the island to make economical use of the mill. Later, there also would be additional problems when the former owners of the land returned and found their property denuded of timber.

An important facet of what James accomplished during his tenure on Roanoke Island was education. James believed that education was the key to uplifting the former slaves and improving their lot in life. Accordingly, he worked, hand in glove, primarily with the AMA to educate the freedmen on Roanoke Island, although other groups and individuals such as the National Freedmen's Relief Association contributed to the collective effort. Much information about the accomplishments made on Roanoke Island during this time is the result of correspondence maintained by missionaries who taught on the island.

The vast majority of the missionaries who came to Roanoke Island were women, including Elizabeth James who was the cousin of Horace James. Their average pay was about $15 dollars a month or about half of what their male counterparts might be expected to earn. Their ages ran the gamut from twenty- one to seventy. To state that these individuals were dedicated to the task would be an understatement. Aside from their teaching responsibilities they also acted as counselors, medical caregivers, and dispensed food and other supplies.[85]

The students of these missionaries varied greatly in age and innumerable other factors. The influx of new arrivals would disrupt the program. Obtaining suitable buildings from the army could prove challenging. Classrooms were located at several locations throughout the island. The vast majority of the students proved to be thirsting for knowledge. The missionaries used their experience in New England as their blueprint for organizing their activities, focusing on the three "R"s—reading writing, and arithmetic. Discipline was generally not a problem. Of course, religion was a basic theme intertwined with education. One criticism leveled against them was that they continued to perpetrate a white form of dominance over the freedmen.[86]

It appears that many of the Union soldiers often mistreated the freedmen just as their former masters had done despite orders from their officers to refrain from doing so. In spring 1862, soldiers from the 9th New York Zouaves, Col. Rush Hawkins' men, cut the hair of several former slaves for a minstrel show. Many officers absconded with the freedmen's wages when they were reassigned. Supplies that were intended for distribution to the freedmen were either used for other purposes or sold rather than given to them. It makes one wonder why the freedmen fought for the Union at all. There were also concerns voiced that children were being taken from their parents to work in slave- like conditions in other parts of the country. In fact, Holland Streeter, James' assistant, was convicted of corruption and sentenced to three months confinement and a $500 fine.[87]

A prelude to the problems that the future would bring when it came to both land and trees can be seen in a letter dating from August 1864. In a letter to Capt. R.C. Webster of the office of the Chief of the Virginia and North Carolina District, a 1st Lt. Stuart Barnes presented his side of the story with respect to a complaint made by one W.H. Sutton. Barnes stated that no timber had been cut either from enclosed fields or from land belonging to any Union citizen. There was one instance where some trees had been taken down on the property of a Captain Hays, but once the error was discovered, the work was ceased immediately. Barnes further stated that in May, Sutton had come to his office and sought information on how to seek compensation

84. James, *Annual Report*, 26-27.
85. Click, *Time Full of Trial*, 80-82.
86. Ibid., 105-124.
87. Ibid., 125-147.

for timber removed from his property. At that time, he failed to indicate any timber had already been removed.[88] Later, many others would make similar claims concerning their property. One should not forget that the mill that James constructed needed to get its timber from someplace relatively nearby.

The return of land to its former owners began as a trickle and became a veritable torrent by 1865. The "Ironclad Oath" made it reasonably easy for any former Confederate to swear allegiance to the United States and regain ownership of his confiscated property. On December 16, 1866, Walter Dough regained possession of 60 acres, George Wescott, 25 acres, and Jessie Dough, 11 acres. On January 14, 1867, Sarah Dough managed to reclaim 190 acres, John Etheridge Jr. got 50 acres back on January 24, Tart Etheridge regained possession of another 50 acres on March 12, and 85 acres reverted to Thomas Dough.[89] A great deal of land went to a few people on this small island. It should also be remembered that going back some years prior, proof of land ownership was a rather tenuous thing to say the least. One must wonder how these individuals managed to prove the land was in fact theirs.

Patricia Click, author of *Time Full of Trial*, places a great deal of emphasis upon the interaction of James with the American Missionary Association. James was a Congregationalist, like the majority of AMA members. They also provided James with funds to purchase the steam engine along with a great deal of clothing for his wards. However, there is no mention of either James or Roanoke Island in a history of the AMA from 1861 until 1890.[90] Prior to the Civil War, the AMA was active in North Carolina, but once again, there was no mention of either Roanoke Island or the Outer Banks from 1846- 1861.[91]

In November 1863, Gen. Benjamin Butler took command of the Department of Virginia and North Carolina. He took an intense interest concerning the welfare of the families of his black soldiers. Butler also sought to have the black colonists eventually receive permanent title to the land on Roanoke Island. Butler was aligned with the Radical Republicans, which would later place him at odds with both the newly created Freedmen's Bureau and President Andrew Johnson.[92]

With the assassination of Abraham Lincoln in Ford's Theater on April 14, 1865, Andrew Johnson assumed the mantle of the presidency. It would be an understatement to write that this was a period of extreme uncertainty throughout the United States. Not only were there many unanswered questions concerning Lincoln's assassination, but many individuals in government also harbored doubts about Andrew Johnson's true loyalties, especially since he was a Southerner. The confluence of his own personality and the ideas of the Radical Republicans in Congress created a tumultuous period in the history of the United States. It was this conflict between Johnson and Congress that to a large degree shaped how Reconstruction progressed in its early years. Johnson's inability to compromise, intolerance, and obduracy at a time when discretion and flexibility should have been paramount made conflict with the Radical Republicans in Congress inevitable.[93]

Johnson's early life shaped his outlook throughout all his years and especially his presidency. His parents were illiterate poor whites from North Carolina. Johnson's father died when he was young and his mother was forced to apprentice him out to a tailor in order to make ends meet. After awhile, Johnson ran away because the man mistreated him and his brother. He made his way to Tennessee and later went back to get his mother and stepfather upon learning they were destitute.[94] It was in Tennessee that Andrew Johnson, literally, developed into manhood.

When Johnson and his family arrived in Tennessee, he met his future wife, Eliza McCardle. It was she who helped his family get a cabin and later it was she who taught her husband to read and write. How-

88. RG-105, Barnes to Webster, Dated: August 1, 1861.
89. RG-105.
90. See Joe M. Richardson, *Christian Reconstruction: The American Missionary Association and Southern Blacks, 1861-1890* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1986).
91. Clifton Herman Johnson, "The American Missionary Association, 1846-1861: A Study of Christian Abolitionism," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1958.
92. Reilly, "Reconstruction Through Regeneration," 50-51.;
93. Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: American's Unfinished Revolution, 1862-1877* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989), 177.
94. Lately Thomas, *The First President Johnson: The Three Lives of the Seventeenth President of the United States* (New York: William Morrow & Co, 1968), 8-9, 19.

ever, despite his wife's ministrations, Johnson was orthographically challenged like many otherwise educated men of the era. Johnson worked as a tailor to support his growing family. His natural skills at tailoring and work ethic made him prosper and over time he had his own assistants for an increasing workload.

Later, Johnson went on to attend Greeneville College where he studied under Sam Milligan, who would play a important role in forming his political views and became a lifelong confidant. Johnson would develop republican concepts that would question why wealth alone, and not ability, should shape a man's destiny. These beliefs, combined with his abject poverty in childhood, made Johnson mistrustful of the motives of others to the point of paranoia.[95]

It was Johnson's desire for recognition that motivated him to enter the political arena. Initially an alderman, Johnson had a brusque oratorical style that appealed to Tennessee frontier types who harbored a mistrust of mainstream American politics. Johnson's exclusion from the inner sanctum of his party's political decision- making made him a palatable alternative choice to these individuals. By 1843, Johnson was a Congressman but still an outsider and next became governor of the state of Tennessee. The deepening chasm between the North and the South over both states' rights and the divisive issue of slavery would eventually propel Johnson onto the national political stage in a manner which few individuals could imagine.

Johnson ran for and won a Senate seat in 1857, at a time when the nation was perilously close to fracturing.[96] However, like his idol Andrew Jackson, Johnson was a staunch pro- Unionist in a state destined to join the Confederacy. John Brown's attack on the Federal arsenal at Harper's Ferry in 1859 brought the nation to the point of fissure. Johnson believed that slavery was legal and he personally owned some slaves, but he wanted the nation to remain whole—not a popular sentiment in Tennessee on the verge of a fratricidal civil war.

Once the war was in progress, Johnson gave up the safety of Washington, D.C., and became military governor of Tennessee. This position placed him in personal danger, as many individuals in his state considered him a traitor to the Confederacy.[97] In part, as a reward for his successful performance in Tennessee and partly because Hannibal Hamlin was too intense of a Radical Republican, clashing with Lincoln's moderate views, Johnson became Lincoln's running mate in 1864. Hence, as a result of that fateful evening at Ford's Theater, Andrew Johnson, a Southern Democrat, became president during the beginning of the period known as Reconstruction amid a Congress filled with Radical Republicans from the North. Johnson, like Lincoln, wished for a policy of reconciliation—not retribution. However, the office of the presidency did not have the stature it possesses today, although certain individuals, such as Washington and Lincoln, rose to the occasion and wielded exceptional power.

Despite presidential limitations, Johnson was able to impact the Radical Republican agenda negatively in North Carolina. Brig. Gen. Joseph R. Hawley was an abolitionist who commanded Union troops in Wilmington, North Carolina. Hawley had the church of an unrepentant Southern minister converted to a military hospital because of his activities. In June 1865, Johnson replaced Hawley with an officer more palatable to the unremorseful former rebels. A bedrock of both support and influence was taken from James at a critical time.[98] This would be one of the many actions committed by Johnson for which the Radical Republicans would effect their retribution.

Responsibility for James revolved around different sections of the War Department until May 12, 1865, when Maj. Gen. Oliver Otis Howard was assigned as Commissioner of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (commonly known as the Freedmen's Bureau). Like James, Howard was also both a Congregationalist and an abolitionist. It was Howard's view that the Freedmen's Bureau was neither an enormous employment or relocation agency.[99] In June, James managed to obtain an interview with President

95. Ibid., 27-28.
96. Although Johnson disdained mainstream politics, it should be remembered that popular election of U.S. Senators was not accomplished until the twentieth century by the 17th amendment in 1913.
97. Eric L. McKitrick, *Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960), 90.
98. Reilly, "Reconstruction Through Regeneration," 84-85.

Johnson to explain his views. What transpired during this presentation has been lost to posterity.[100] However, Johnson's restoration of former rebel property eliminated the Freedmen's Bureau's income. In August 1865, Johnson overruled Gen. O.O. Howard, head of the Freedmen's Bureau, and ordered restoration of property and land to Southerners whom he had pardoned.[101] It is obvious that the entreaties made by James had less than no impact on Johnson's policies to the former Confederate states. Last, while James was in Washington, he met with Howard, who attempted to persuade him to take charge of the Bureau's affairs for the entire state of North Carolina. Howard was not able to convince James to accept the position.[102]

Although Howard was unable to prevail with James, he did manage to find a suitable alternate to handle North Carolina's freedmen's affairs. Like James, Col. Eliphalet Whittlesey was a New Englander and a Congregationalist minister. Before the war, he taught at Bowdoin College, and after the war broke out, was the chaplain of the 19th Maine Volunteers. Initially, Assistant Commissioner Whittlesey leaned upon James for guidance until he grew accustomed to his new position.[103] It was Whittlesey who accepted James' resignation from the Freedman's Bureau on December 4, 1865, although James remained affiliated with the bureau in an unpaid civilian status.[104]

However, even Whittlesey was unable to stem the eventual decline of the Freedmen's Colony on Roanoke Island. He even expressed concern that some individuals capable of working were receiving support from the Federal government. A contract system was established in an attempt to initiate a free labor system in the state. Unfortunately, neither the freedmen nor the whites felt at ease with the new system.[105]

The first admission by James that his concept about the Freedmen's Colony was impractical was made in a letter he forwarded to *The Congregationalist* on December 18, 1865. Part of the problem was the mistaken impression among the freedmen that the government had promised them each a 40- acre tract of land. This, combined with misconceptions held by both blacks and whites concerning free labor, presented an insurmountable obstacle. James ended up managing two plantations, Avon and Yankee Hall on the North Carolina mainland, to try and prove how well free labor could work in the South.[106] This would eventually lead to his undoing. The result would be a court- martial for Whittesley and James in September 1866 in connection with the shooting death of a black that was an accused felon. James and Whittesley were both ultimately exonerated by court martial.

Although the Republicans were initially able to dominate North Carolina politics in the aftermath of the Civil War, their control was extremely short-lived. By 1870, the Republicans lost control of both houses of the North Carolina state legislature.[107] It was in 1870 that Manteo became the county seat of the newly formed Dare County, and three years later, in 1873, a post office and a courthouse opened their doors in the town for business. Recovery proceeded slowly after the Civil War in the Southern states because the economic infrastructure of the former Confederacy was in shambles and Northerners were wary of investing in the region. The West, with vast areas of land for the taking and where railroads attracted investors and speculators, was where intelligent investors placed their capital. The Outer Banks and Roanoke Island would revert to a sleepy backwater and take decades to become productive.[108]

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99. William Cohen, "Black Immobility and Free Labor: The Freedmen's Bureau and the Relocation of Black Labor, 1865-1868," in Donald G. Nieman, ed., *African American Life in the Post-Emancipation South, 1861-1900: A Twelve-Volume Anthology of Scholarly Articles* (New York; Garland, 1994), 2:94.
100. Reilly, "Reconstruction Through Regeneration," 89-91. See also Oliver Otis Howard, *Autobiography of Oliver Otis Howard: Major General, United States Army* (New York: Baker & Taylor, 1907), 2:208-209.
101. Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989), 190.
102. Reilly, "Reconstruction Through Regeneration," 91.
103. Ibid., 92-94.
104. Ibid., 123-124
105. Ibid., 108-109.
106. Ibid., 116-117.
107. Frenise A. Logan, *The Negro in North Carolina, 1876-1894* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1964), 8.
108. Mallison, *The Civil War in the Outer Banks*, 177.

Chapter Three: Post-Reconstruction and the U.S. Lifesaving Service

In the aftermath of the Civil War and Reconstruction, the Outer Banks way of life underwent a radical transformation. By 1871, the Freedmen's Colony, with its 3,000 inhabitants, was gone, leaving approximately 950 individuals of all races on Roanoke Island. The area surrounding Shallowbag Bay was fairly well populated with an influx of new inhabitants, and Manteo would soon be the seat of the newly formed Dare County, named in honor of the first English child born in America. However, the same source also claims that by the early 1870s, Roanoke Island had a population of 500 people while the rest of the Outer Banks had an additional 500. It is quite apparent that the Outer Banks and Roanoke Island were in a state of flux with precise population figures hard to determine.[109]

It was during the 1870s that native Roanoke Island shipwright George Washington Creef perfected what became known as Creef or shad boats. Shipbuilding had always been an important facet of life on the Outer Banks. Initially, "kunners" or split- log canoes were predominant. Later, the periauger, which was similar in many ways to the "kunner" but larger, possibly decked, and double-masted, dominated the fishing industry. The shad boat built by Creef possessed a round bottom, wide midsection, tapered bow, and was made originally of natural juniper. Creef had shipbuilding facilities in both Manteo and Wanchese. His descendants continued to construct boats into the 1930s. Today, the facility in Manteo has been converted into a museum. Creef's design was so popular that other shipwrights all along the North Carolina coast soon began to imitate it.[110] It appears that imitation is indeed the sincerest form of flattery. In 1978, the shad boat was designated as the official boat of North Carolina.

Shad had already begun to disappear from the local waters by the late 1870s. Although the local fishermen had commenced their work for the 1877 fishing season, the shad were not cooperating.[111] This could have a severe economic impact on the inhabitants if the fish failed to appear. Such were the vagaries of life on the Outer Banks.

One individual who learned about how tough life was on the Outer Banks was Capt. I. Kain of Roanoke Island. In 1879, he became convinced that he could establish a profitable menhaden processing plant on Roanoke Island. His venture failed because, unfortunately for him, the menhaden failed to run that year through Oregon Inlet. He attempted one more time the next year but failed once again.[112]

109. David Wright and David Zoby, *Fire on the Beach: Recovering the Lost Story of Richard Etheridge and the Pea Island Lifesavers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000),121, 123, 126. These figures have some apparent conflict in them. A photostatic copy of the 1870 Census maintained in the North Carolina Archives indicates 1,000 individuals living in all of Dare County.
110. Rodney Barfield, *Seasoned By Salt: A Historical Album of the Outer Banks* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 164-182.
111. *Elizabeth City Economist*, February 14, 1877.
112. Harden F. Taylor, *Survey of the Fisheries of North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1951), 187.

Manteo was becoming a minor commercial metropolis. Capt. J.W. Etheridge completed a model of a new steamer that he intended to construct at Manteo. A new building was under construction and this was intended to house another grocery and liquor store. Despite the lack of specie, there was an apparent demand for spirits in excess of the availability on the small island. Although blue fish were running, there was no market for them.[113]

Being out of the mainstream of North Carolina society had its decided disadvantages. There was no local newspaper and during this period, the news emanated from *The Economist*, which was published in Elizabeth City on the mainland. Dare County usually received a few lines, at most, covering anything considered newsworthy. For example, on June 6, 1878, the *Elizabeth City Economist* reported that the body of a Miss Smith washed ashore at Hatteras Light House with her neck broken and a hole in her side. No additional information was provided. It was also reported that "Etheridge Daniel, a respected citizen of Roanoke Island, has been dangerously ill, for some time." Last, there was a meeting of the people of Dare County held at Manteo for the purpose of working closer with the Democratic Party.[114] The Republicans were already losing their hold in the South.

One of the greatest impacts on life on the Outer Banks and Roanoke Island in the nineteenth century was the establishment of the U.S. Lifesaving Service Stations. Although the Federal government made its initial efforts to protect ships and sailors plying the American coastline in 1848 with an appropriation of $10,000 for lifesaving equipment on the New Jersey coast between Sandy Hook and Egg Harbor, the scope of its activities was extremely limited. This money was appropriated through a rider to the lighthouse appropriation bill. This legislation tasked the U.S. Revenue Marine to provide overall supervision for the construction of lifesaving stations.[115] In 1870, the Federal government established the U.S. Lifesaving Service in response to the disasters then occurring with greater frequency along the shores of the United States. In 1871, Sumner Increase Kimball, a veteran Treasury Department employee, was named to head the newly created U.S. Lifesaving Service. In a large measure it was due to Kimball's singular efforts that the U.S. Lifesaving Service became a first- rate organization dedicated to saving lives at sea.[116] Initially established in New England, the Life Saving Service began to expand down the Eastern Seaboard. Prior to Kimball taking the reins of the organization, volunteers manned the scattered stations of the Lifesaving Service. Kimball would transform this ragtag organization into one of the most respected appendages of the United States government. The two most immediately daunting tasks facing Kimball were to convince Congress that the United States needed a professional lifesaving service and that he was the individual best capable of accomplishing that mission.

In 1874, the Lifesaving Service expanded northward to Maine and south to include the Outer Banks of North Carolina. However, a number of disasters pointed out the glaring deficiencies in a system that was rife with political patronage. An internal inspection conducted by Capt. John Faunce of the United States Revenue Marine noted evident deficiencies in both facilities and equipment. Stations were located too far apart to accomplish their mission and their physical condition was deplorable. Many individuals, who largely owed their positions to patronage, were either incompetent or too old for the physical demands and rigors of the job. In part because of Faunce's report, Kimball was able to wrangle a Congressional appropriation of $200,000 on April 20, 1871, to overhaul the system. Kimball's task received an additional impetus as a result of the *Huron* and *Metropolis* disasters, which will be covered later.

Kimball was an astute Washington political insider. He was probably the driving force behind Secretary of the Treasury John Sherman's letter to the Senate on February 18, 1878, although it was nominally a reply to a resolution dated February 6, right on the heels of the *Metropolis* disaster. In his missive, Sherman complimented the Lifesaving Service Stations on the North Carolina coast for their devotion to duty and efficiency. However, he

113. *Elizabeth City Economist*, June 6, 1877.
114. *Elizabeth City Economist*, May 28, 1878.
115. Dennis L. Noble, *That Others Might Live: The U.S. Life-Saving Service, 1878-1915* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1994), 21.
116. Dennis L. Noble, *That Others Might Live*, 155.

decried the distance between the lifesaving stations because this compromised the safety of those who used the waterways. Sherman specifically requested, among other things, that the number of lifesaving stations on the North Carolina coast be increased, their crews enlarged from six to eight, and that the stations be manned from September 1 until May 1 of each season.[117]

President Rutherford B. Hayes signed legislation on June 18, 1878, making the Lifesaving Service a separate agency within the Treasury Department and providing Kimball with an increased measure of autonomy to take steps necessary for improvements in the service.[118] Some of the more immediate improvements made by Kimball were the creation of a dual chain of command, the formalization of regulations governing professional conduct, adding a seventh man to the crew, the establishment of 37 new stations, and lengthening the working season for surfmen, as they were known, from September 1 until May 1.[119] North Carolina was extremely fortunate when it came to the establishment of new stations. Out of the 37 new stations authorized, 13 were located on the shores of North Carolina.

The 6th District Superintendent, Julius J. Guthrie, was clearly unhappy with conditions at the Nags Head Lifesaving Station and made it apparent in a letter he wrote to the keeper, Benjamin Franklin Meekins, on February 3, 1876. He reminded him that it was his duty to preserve life and property on the coast around his station. Guthrie instructed the individual to establish "a more definite and uniform system than I found practiced on my last visit." Guthrie then provided Meekins detailed instructions on what he expected. He wanted the patrols recorded, and specified how they were to be conducted. Patrolling surfmen were to meet and acknowledge each other in order to prove they made and completed their appointed rounds.[120]

Improvements were made throughout the Lifesaving Service system in North Carolina. During the 1877- 1878 season, the War Department constructed a telegraph line that spanned from Cape Henry to Cape Hatteras. There was also a telephone line established connecting Cape Henry and Kitty Hawk. Lifeboat construction became standardized. One of the most important and long-lasting changes was the adoption of the Lyle gun developed by Lt. David A. Lyle. In essence, this was a mortar capable of firing a projectile several hundred yards to the rigging of a vessel in danger. Then, a breeches buoy could be connected and those individuals on the vessel could make their way to land.[121] This was done when it was deemed too dangerous to attempt a rescue in a lifeboat.

Although the Lyle gun and the breeches buoy, along with the McClellan wagon and the lifeboat in which the surfmen rode out to save lives of shipwreck victims, there is one other item that needs mention. The Coston maritime signal flare, also known as the Coston light, was an invaluable tool in locating and assisting vessels in distress. Martha Coston developed this flare based on a pattern designed by her late husband. She also developed a system of colors that stood for specific meanings that made both ship- to- ship and ship- to- shore communication possible. She sold her invention to the United States Navy prior to the Civil War and it was later adapted by such nations as France, Italy, and the Netherlands.

The U.S. Army and Navy developed a pistol to fire these flares. Later, surfmen would carry these "Coston lights" on their person while making their appointed rounds. Upon locating a ship in distress they would fire the flare, thereby notifying the rest of the crew to prepare for a rescue mission. The Coston light remained part of the equipment of surfmen well into the twentieth century.[122]

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117. 45th Congress, 2nd Session, Executive Document No. 31, Dated: February 18, 1878.
118. Ibid., 26-32.
119. Robert F. Bennett, *Sand Pounders: An Interpretation of the History of the U.S. Life-Saving Service, Based on Its Annual Reports for the Years 1870 through 1914* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Coast Guard, 1998), 7.
120. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard. Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Nags Head, Box 1, Guthrie to Meekins, Dated: February 3, 1876, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, GA.
121. A breeches buoy derived its name because it resembled a pair of breeches. An individual would put his legs into them and be hauled back to the safety of land.
122. Denise E. Pilato, "Martha Coston: A Woman, a War, and a Signal to the World," *International Journal of Naval History* (2001).

A method was devised to determine whether a surfman was making his rounds. A time detector was placed at intervals along the beach that required a surfman to turn a key to prove he had done his job. Surfmen from two different stations would meet at the same point using their respective keys. Should a corresponding surfman fail to make his appointed rounds, his counterpart would report this to his own Lifesaving Station upon his return. Aside from possible misbehavior, it could also indicate a surfman was in some sort of trouble or danger.[123]

The 1877- 1878 season was marked by tragedy, especially along the North Carolina coast, where two major disasters occurred within approximately two months of each other and only a short distance apart. On November 24, 1877, the *U.S.S. Huron* sank with the accompanying loss of 98 lives. The *Huron* was out of New York and on its way to the Caribbean on a survey mission. It was a modern metal- hulled warship. The *Huron* had stopped at Norfolk to take on coal. She sailed despite storm warnings, but she was a modern U.S. Navy warship with an experienced captain and crew aboard. Curiously, the *Huron's* executive officer, Lt. Arthur H. Fletcher, had a premonition of disaster and refused to sail aboard her and Lt. S.A. Simmons, who died in the disaster, eagerly took his place. While off the Bodie Island Lighthouse, the vessel ran aground because the ship's watch had failed to take into account a bend in the coast between Duck and Kitty Hawk and this ruined their nautical calculations. The crew of the stricken ship launched rockets, but to no avail. Finally, local inhabitants from Nags Head arrived at the beach to survey the disaster scene. Compounding the problems of the hapless sailors aboard the *Huron* was the fact that the Nags Head Lifesaving Station was inactive and its keeper, Benjamin Franklin Meekins, was at his home on Roanoke Island.[124] The local inhabitants were afraid to break into the station for fear of criminal prosecution and, even if they had, nobody knew how to operate the equipment.[125]

Ens. Lucian Young, who had already won a medal for lifesaving in the Mediterranean, managed to get ashore and organize a rescue attempt for the survivors. A message was transmitted from Kitty Hawk, and rescue vessels were dispatched from Norfolk. In the failed attempts to locate survivors, five more men were added to the death toll, among them J.J. Guthrie, the newly appointed superintendent of the Sixth Lifesaving District.[126] The one positive thing that came about as a result of the disaster was that Ens. Young and Smn. Antonio Williams received Gold Lifesaving Medals for their efforts.[127]

On December 3, 1877, the schooner *Franklin Jameson Rockland* was found drifting off Nags Head. Meekins launched a boat but failed to locate anybody aboard the hapless vessel. He determined the ship to be a total wreck and returned to the station. Meekins duly noted in his report what actions he had taken.[128]

The second major tragedy occurred on January 31, 1878, when the steamer *Metropolis*, bound for Brazil with approximately 250 mostly Irish souls aboard, fell victim to the "Graveyard of the Atlantic." In addition to its passengers, the *Metropolis* carried 500 tons of iron rails and another 500 tons of additional cargo. Few individuals were aware that the *Metropolis* was the former *Stars and Stripes* that had, coincidentally, seen service in the Battle of Roanoke Island during the Civil War. In fact, her papers had been altered to indicate she was not even built until six years after that war had ended. The previous

123. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Bodie Island, Box 4, O.E.. Imhauser New 1875-76-77-77-80-81-82 Watchman's Improved Time Detector.
124. This indicated the difficulty of determining the importance of the Lifesaving Service to Roanoke Island. Many of the keepers and surfmen from surrounding stations lived in either Manteo or other parts of the island. Additionally, depending on the individual gathering Census information and when they obtained it would determine what answer they received. If questioned during off-season, a surfman might declare himself a fisherman. Being an insular community they might also give a false answer and the Census enumerator might not question the information.
125. For an official report on the tragedy, see Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Nags Head, Box 1, Dated: November 29, 1877. However, the wreck occurred on November 24, 1877.
126. Guthrie's widow was provided a pension equal to that of a widow of a U.S. Navy captain by a special act of Congress. See Bennett, *Sand Pounders*, 96.
127. David Stick, *Graveyard of the Atlantic: Shipwrecks of the North Carolina Coast* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1952), 73-85.
128. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Life Saving Station Log Books, Nags Head, Book 1, Dated: December 3, 1877.

month, the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad had chartered her but immediately cancelled the charter when the *Metropolis* had to be towed into port by a U.S. Navy vessel. Surviving information also indicates that the ship's engines provided insufficient power for a vessel of that size. This would be of paramount importance during the rough seas the *Metropolis* would later encounter.

The *Metropolis* departed Philadelphia in late January and initially encountered good steaming weather. However, by the third day at sea, the weather had soured and the sea became rough, causing the improperly loaded iron rails to shift, damaging the hull and causing water to pour in through the seams. The excessively laden vessel placed an extreme burden upon the inadequate engines. The pumps were unable to keep water from building up in the ship's hold and finally the fires in the engine room were doused by a giant wave. The *Metropolis* was at the mercy of an unforgiving sea and struck a sandbar approximately a hundred yards from shore with only one lifeboat intact and a severely inadequate number of life preservers for the crew and passengers.

The crews of Lifesaving Stations Four and Five began gathering to save what hapless individuals they could from the fury of the sea. They fired the Lyle gun but the crew of the *Metropolis* was unfamiliar with the breeches buoy apparatus.[129] Several more shots from the Lyle gun proved ineffective and the lifesavers ran out of shot. Those still left aboard the *Metropolis* lost all hope. What followed bordered on the macabre.

All told, 85 lives were lost in the calamity. Many of the lifeless bodies that washed ashore were robbed of whatever valuables they had on their persons. Even nine of the ten bags of the U.S. Mail aboard the stricken vessel were pillaged. In modern vernacular, the Bankers took progging to an entirely new level. Both the national press and the survivors lambasted the Lifesaving Service and the residents of Currituck County for both their actions and inaction. The captain of the *Metropolis* survived and castigated the Lifesaving Service for ineptness. The twin tragedies of the *Metropolis* and the *U.S.S. Huron* provided sufficient impetus for the Federal government to revitalize and make the necessary improvements in the U.S. Lifesaving Service that would save many lives in the future. The only coverage in the local news that has survived came in April of the following year when it was reported that the salvagers of the *Metropolis* had a rendezvous at Oregon Inlet.[130]

Daily life usually was monotonous for the surfmen. Constant drills, interspersed with the occasional rescue of a vessel in distress, were the norm. Entries record that occasionally a surfman was replaced by another because of an illness in the family. As the standards began to evolve, proving the physical ability to perform the arduous tasks became an important issue. J.H. Dough reported to the Nags Head station with a medical certificate signed by a Surgeon J.E. Wood of the Maritime Hospital Service that found him "physically sound."[131]

The major item of news that survives for the year 1878 was the Christmas party held at the Manteo Courthouse. The Reverend W. Askew presided over the event which was attended by a large number of people—by the standards of Roanoke Island. Music was provided by a number of individuals. Additionally, it was announced at the party that soon a publication of the best sermons preached at the various houses of worship on the island would be in publication and available for purchase.[132]

The "hot topic" of local news in Manteo in 1879 concerned a new preacher. The Reverend Mr. Payne, according to the paper, was "the right man in the right place." He was also young and good-looking. The caveat was that the individual reporting this information was a young lady whose judgment might have been biased. Additionally, "our thriving merchant, J.W. Evans" was reported to have returned from the mainland with a large amount of merchandise. He proposed that he

129. The Lyle gun was a mortar-like device used to fire a ball-like projectile into the rigging of a ship in distress. This was developed by Lt. David A. Lyle of the U.S. Army. The Lyle gun was used by the U.S. Coast Guard until the 1960s. See Noble, *That Others Might Live*, 107-111.
130. *Elizabeth City Economist*, April 23, 1878. The surviving issues of the *Economist* at the Outer Banks History Center are sporadic at best. More issues are missing than are actually in the collection.
131. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Log Books, Nags Head, Book 2, Dated: February 13, 1883.
132. *Elizabeth City Economist*, January 7, 1879.

would duplicate the prices of other markets.[133] Where these other markets were located was not indicated.

A body washed ashore on December 16, 1879, inside New Inlet. The man was approximately 5' 10" but his face was "all gon" and his badly decomposed hands indicated that he had been in the water for some time. A cursory examination of his clothes revealed a $10 bill, a pistol, a pocketknife, among other things. On his right arm there was a tattoo with the letters "SAVS" and on his left arm was "SAS." Oddly, despite being in the water for so long, the name Silas Sevarn was still legible on an envelope found on the body. Keeper L.B. Midgett "berried the Body as good as it could be done in his condition." [134] Apparently, that ended the matter.

It appears more than a coincidence that a second body washed ashore approximately two weeks later. Surfman William Paine discovered the body five miles north of the Chicamicomico Lifesaving Station. Like the previous body, this man's face was also missing but it was noted that he had black hair. Although fish go for the softest part of a body, it does not seem to be a coincidence that neither body could be identified. This individual has "one 2 cent Peace of money" a pencil, a whetstone, and "1 Live Oak acorn." Midgett and his men once again "berried the body."[135] No mention was made of contacting law enforcement nor was the second body connected to the first found earlier. More important, there was no mention of any wrecks occurring at the time.

A central figure that emerged concerning the United States Lifesaving Service in the Outer Banks at this time was Richard Etheridge, the man who became the first black keeper of a Lifesaving Station. Etheridge's ancestry is uncertain and some individuals have speculated that his father was John B. Etheridge, an individual with a large measure of wealth and respect in the region. Richard was not only a natural leader but literate, an unusual quality for blacks on the Outer Banks in the 1870s.

During the Civil War, Richard Etheridge served in the 36th Regiment of the United States Colored Troops as a sergeant. Later, he became the regimental commissary sergeant as a result of the combination of his leadership, organizational, and record- keeping abilities. At the war's end, Etheridge returned home to Roanoke Island.[136]

Etheridge was industrious and prospered in the postwar years. In 1873, he had accumulated enough capital to purchase two plots of land on Roanoke Island in the vicinity of the California area. One section consisted of 50 acres while the second was 66 acres. Etheridge became an individual of some stature within the island's black community. He would assist his fellow African- American citizens but did not believe in charity.[137]

In 1879, fate and fortune would once more smile upon Richard Etheridge. That year, the Lifesaving Service in North Carolina was reorganized. Revenue Service Officers Lt. Charles Shoemaker and 2d Lt. Frank Newcomb, Northerners insulated from local politics, identified the problems that faced the Lifesaving Service in North Carolina. Keepers in the 6th District had abused their positions and one, George C. Daniels, was largely responsible for the tragedy that befell the *M & E Henderson* in November. Daniels had abandoned his post during the season to make extra income by fishing on the side. Later, he lied under oath to cover up his misdeeds. Shoemaker and Newcomb visited Chicamicomico Station on Christmas Eve in 1879 while investigating the loss of the *Henderson* while in the process of firing Keeper Daniels and Surfman Dailey O'Neal.[138] Shoemaker and Newcomb proposed that an all black crew and black keeper man the Number 17 Station at Pea Island. The man they believed most qualified for the position was, Richard Etheridge. Although U.S. Lifesaving Service Director Increase Kimball vacillated a bit at

133. *Elizabeth City Economist*, May 20, 1879.
134. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Chicamicomico, Box 1, Dated: December 16, 1879, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, GA.
135. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Chicamicomico, Box 1, Dated: December 29, 1879, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, GA.
136. Ibid., 119-125.
137. Ibid., 126-27.
138. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Chicamicomico Box 1, Dated: 31 December , 1879, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, GA.

the last minute, Etheridge became the first black man in the nation to be a keeper of a U. S. Lifesaving Station. The Pea Island Lifesaving Station remained manned by an all black crew from 1880 until it closed in 1947.[139]

The appointment of Richard Etheridge as keeper was without precedent and was especially unusual for the South. Although it was Newcomb's idea, Shoemaker concurred because not only was he was exceptionally impressed by Etheridge's bearing but also by his ability to both read and write, which were, aside from political considerations, the two most important requirements of the position. The recommendation was forwarded to Kimball, who unexpectedly approved it. However, he waffled over making the final decision. When Kimball finally acceded, Etheridge became the keeper of Lifesaving Station Number 17 at Pea Island on February 1, 1880.[140]

As might be expected, the appointment of Richard Etheridge as keeper at Pea Island created resentment among the white surfmen assigned there, especially Jesse Etheridge, who as number one surfman would, under normal circumstances, have become the keeper. Exacerbating the situation was that Jesse's family had formerly owned Richard Etheridge. If possible, even more animosity was directed against Newcomb, who as a Northerner, was held responsible for upsetting the "natural order" of things.[141]

The extent of discontent over the appointment of Richard Etheridge was manifested in a fire of suspicious origins that broke out in the Pea Island Lifesaving Station on the night of May 29, 1880. The fire burned the facility to the ground, leaving only a charred chimney and some other non- flammables in its wake. Richard went through the remnants of the station and secured the few salvageable items that survived. Joseph Etheridge, the 6th District superintendent, communicated to his superiors in Washington that he believed the fire was the result of arson. Etheridge had gleaned information from some local inhabitants that arson was the cause, although he was initially disinclined to believe it. Initially, the superintendent could not believe that any individual would commit such an atrocious act. However, after an investigation, the superintendent was forced to admit that arson was the only possibility.

Personnel actions were quite often punitive in the Lifesaving Service. On November 29, 1880, Superintendent J.W. Etheridge of the 6th Lifesaving District instructed Keeper Richard Etheridge to terminate Surfman Dailey O'Neal for failing to keep his appointed rounds on the night of October 2 and never to employ him again. The keeper in each station in the district was to read this judgment to the assembled crew. It was further directed that any surfman remiss in his responsibilities would be summarily discharged from the Lifesaving Service.[142] A new and much greater degree of professionalism was emerging throughout the service.

The exploits of the U.S. Lifesaving Service Station 17 located on Pea Island have been well- documented by David Wright and David Zoby in their book *Fire on the Beach*. However, there were numerous other lifesaving stations located in the vicinity of Roanoke Island. Many members of lifesaving crews lived on Roanoke Island at different times during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It has been documented that the entire Pea Island Crew lived on Roanoke Island for decades. It should also be kept in mind that during the era the majority of the individuals living in the Outer Banks lived on the west side of Roanoke Island, because it provided the greatest amount of protection from the elements. Rather than parse who lived where and when, for the purpose of this study, the activities of the various lifesaving stations adjacent to Roanoke Island will be covered in varying degrees of detail. Drawing firm conclusions from data is made more difficult because most families were interrelated. The preponderance of names such as Etheridge, Midgett, Pugh, Dough, and Tillet indicates the difficulties. Additionally, the records of the Lifesaving Stations are often the only records of life on Roanoke Island and the Outer Banks that have withstood the ravages of time. However, this study

139. Noble, *That Others Might Live*, 51.
140. Ibid., 166, 168-69.
141. Ibid., 169-170.
142. Pea Island Lifesaving Correspondence, 1880-1883, Uncataloged Pea Island LSS Correspondence (Incl. Forms and Circulars) Box 1 of 2, J.W. Etheridge to Richard Etheridge, Dated: November 29, 1880, Fort Raleigh National Historic Site, Manteo, North Carolina.

should in no manner be construed as a history of the Lifesaving Service, but merely an attempt to reconstruct life during the period.

The surviving newspaper item of local interest for 1880 was the marriage of L.C. Hassell and Amelia Lane. They were joined in matrimony at the home of the bride's father. A number of people attended the ceremony and reception that followed. The amount of food served was copious and enjoyed by all.[143]

Superintendent J.W. Etheridge of the 6th District in Manteo put out a circular on August 31, 1880, concerning the lights carried by surfmen. It seems that some ships at sea were mistaking them for the lighthouses in the area, creating a dangerous situation. Etheridge instructed the keepers to have the surfmen discontinue carrying lights except at night or during stormy weather. Additionally, he saw no use for the lights on clear or moonlit nights.[144]

In November 1882, a ship's boat was discovered drifting about five miles north of Oregon Inlet. "Sitizen" Jacob O'Neal described the boat as about 24' 9" in length and her stern plate inscribed with "Rotterdam." It had life tanks and its color was white. According to O'Neal, the boat had been in the water several days. As a native Banker, O'Neal would have known how to describe boats. Such discoveries appear to be common on the Outer Banks as no further search for this vessel was recorded in the station's logbook.[145]

In December 1882, Pea Island Lifesaving Station was authorized the use of a horse to be kept on hand from December 1, 1882, until April 1, 1883, using a rental rate of $5.00 per month. The horse's use was dictated as "on occasions where it may be advantageous."[146] This horse must have been a welcome addition for the surfmen who previously had to manhandle the McClellan wagon to the edge of the water, an exhausting task, before a drill or actual rescue commenced. It is interesting to note that the authorization is dated three weeks after the effective date.

The Lifesaving Station at Chicamicomico took part in a rescue that was recorded in exacting detail by Keeper L.B. Midgett. At approximately 0830 on October 22, 1881, Substitute Surfman B.W. O' Neal observed that the *Thomas B. Lancaster* had run aground. The crew then proceeded to hitch the horses to the cart and raced to the beach near the wreck site. The horses were exhausted by this effort. The crew fired the Lyle gun into the rigging and on the fourth attempt caught the jib boom area. They crew also launched the surfboat to reach the passengers. Despite being warned, two crewman jumped to reach the surfboat and were drowned. The Chicamicomico crew was assisted by Richard Etheridge and his crew from Pea Island. When the surfmen reached the wreck, they managed to pull off five individuals, including one child. Upon reaching land, the victims were provided brandy and wine. Unfortunately, the master and his child died shortly afterward. Two other of his children had been swept off the wreck in addition to the two crewmen who attempted to reach the surfboat.[147]

Apart from employment on lifesaving crews, mullet fishing was the predominant form of employment for Bankers from Roanoke and other parts of the Outer Banks. The price of mullet fluctuated between $2.75 and $3.50 a barrel. Once again, lack of specie made an impact on the Banks. The barter system had an unusual variant that evolved throughout the region. Schooner captains plying the waters between the Banks and the mainland would load fish before departing the Banks and trade it for corn from farmers on the mainland. Although there were market fluctuations, a barrel of fish generally was exchanged for five bushels of corn and the schooner captain received one- fifth of the corn as his commission. [148]

143. *Elizabeth City Economist*, February 24, 1880.
144. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C. Lifesaving Station Log Books, Bodie Island , Box 2, Dated: August 31, 1880, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, GA.
145. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Oregon Inlet, Box 2, Dated: November 8, 1882, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, GA.,
146. Pea Island Lifesaving Correspondence 1800-1883, Uncataloged Pea Island LSS Correspondence (Incl. Forms and Circulars) Box 1 of 2, J.W. Etheridge to Richard Etheridge, Dated: December 22, 1882, Fort Raleigh National Historic Site, Manteo, North Carolina.
147. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Chicamicomico, Book 3, Dated: October 22, 1881, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, Georgia.
148. Stick, *The Outer Banks of North Carolina*, 218-19.

As with all government agencies of the era, the Lifesaving Service thrived upon paperwork and accountability. In a form letter signed by Sumner Increase Kimball himself, Richard Etheridge was notified of some documents shipped to him from the headquarters of the Lifesaving Service in Washington, D.C. Etheridge was provided with 13 copies of the Report of the Smithsonian Institution along with one copy of the Report of the Commissioner of Fish and Fisheries. He was instructed to "acknowledge the receipt of the books, enter them upon the inventory of your station, and care for them as public property." [149]

Keeper Van Buren Etheridge received from Lt. E.C. Clayton, the assistant inspector of the 6th District, a box furnished by the Women's National Relief Association. It was made up of items that shipwrecked individuals could use after surviving a wreck. Etheridge acknowledged its receipt and that it was "in good condition."[150]

It would appear that one bane in the isolated existence of a surfman was alcohol. On December 23, 1885, Keeper J.B. Etheridge wrote that Surfman A. H. Etheridge returned to the station "under the influence of whiskey." Adding insult to injury, Etheridge then proceeded to set the privy on fire.[151] Maintaining discipline, especially around the holiday season, must have been difficult.

The sea held danger even for experienced surfmen. On September 8, 1885, the Chicamicomico crew of Keeper L.B. Midgett received severe damage to their surfboat during a drill. The keel was broken about halfway through the boat causing the vessel to leak badly. Practice was terminated after only fifteen minutes and the crew performed other training on the shore.[152]

Inside the logs were some clippings of an advertisement for *Hostettler's Stomach Bitters*. This provides some insight into the backward state of medicine during this period. An Article on malaria blamed the malady on miasmas.[153] The state of the medical profession had made few advances since the end of the Civil War.

According to the logs, the worst storm in fifteen years hit the Outer Banks and Roanoke Island on Christmas 1885. Surfman G.B. Midgett, of New Inlet, was unable to make contact with his counterpart from Pea Island because of the rough surf. The flagpole at New Inlet was knocked down by the intense wind and one surfman's home was washed away. Additionally, numerous items belonging to the station were also washed away. The lack of surviving newspaper accounts indicates the importance of these logbooks to the history of Roanoke Island and the Outer Banks.[154]

In January 1889, Keeper L.B. Midgett made a somewhat confusing entry in his logbook. He stated that crew drill had been suspended because of the wet weather. He also stated that he left the station for part of the day to assist two children that "got burned to death" by kerosene. He then wrote he took a quart of linseed oil to place on their burns and that the lady of the house was "burned very badly." Additional excitement was generated that day when Surfman G.L. Midgett got involved in a "bitter dispute" with the cook. Midgett called the cook a liar and then struck him. Surfman Midgett then proceeded to perform his lookout duties and patrol the beach.[155]

The sea washed many things up upon the shore. At times, bodies washed up. On April 16, 1886, Surfman Elisha Twine noticed the body of a "white boy," approximately fifteen years of age, a half- mile south

149. Pea Island LSS Correspondence, 1883-1884, Kimball to Etheridge, Dated: March 21, 1884, Box 1 of 2, Fort Raleigh National Historic Site, Manteo, North Carolina.
150. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Log Books, Nags Head, Box 2, Dated: March 25, 1885, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, GA.
151. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Log Books, Bodie Island, Box 3, Dated: December 23, 1885, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, GA
152. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C. Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Chicamicomico Book 3, Dated: September 8, 1885, National Archives and records Administration, Atlanta, Georgia.
153. Miasmas were odors emanating from places such as a swamp. People attributed the foul smell to causing disease. The reasoning was that the bad smell of the swamp swamp was unhealthy. People of the age did not yet comprehend the connection between mosquitoes and malaria.
154. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, New Inlet, Box 2, Dated: December 25, 1885, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, GA.
155. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C.; Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Chicamicomico, Box 2, Dated: January 28, 1886, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, GA.

of the Nags Head station. He had no identification papers in his clothes and it could not be determined where he came from. The surfmen buried him on the beach where they found him.[156]

An indication of the development and maturation of the Lifesaving Service can be found in a missive from the Maritime Association of the Port of New York addressed to all the keepers from Portland, Maine, to Cape Hatteras. It informed the keepers that Sumner Kimball had implemented the following procedures to be implemented upon the discovery of a vessel in distress. Immediately after obtaining knowledge of a ship in distress the information was to be transmitted by telegraph, if possible, to the New York Maritime Exchange with particulars such as the vessel's nationality, the nature of its cargo, and whether the crew and passengers had been rescued. If all the information was not available, what was known was to be sent and then additional follow- up reports filed as needed. Most important from the government's perspective, the Exchange would pay the telegraph fees.[157]

The endless tedium and monotony of daily drills and maintenance were broken up by a minor drama that began unfolding off Nags Head Life Saving Station on January 2, 1887. Surfman S. T. Fosbee, while making his rounds on the beach, observed a schooner flying the American flag upside down at half- mast on the mizzenmast at approximately 4 P.M. The vessel "wich proved to be the *Joseph Barymore*" was bound from Charleston, South Carolina, to Philadelphia with a cargo of lumber. By use of signal flags, the ship's captain conveyed to the surfman that his vessel was taking on water and was in need of assistance. The ship's captain feared that if he stayed too far out at sea this would cause his ship to "sink and role over," placing his crew and himself in grave jeopardy. The roughness of the surf prevented the launching of the surfboat.

Over the next few days the sea conditions prevented the safe launching of the surfboat to assist the *Joseph Barymore*. However, on January 4, a telegram was sent to the Maritime Exchange in New York City apprising that institution of the situation. On January 5, conditions eased up sufficiently to enable launching of the surfboat, but it was unable to make its way past the sandbar. Finally, on January 6, the schooner hoisted a signal stating "Send for Cutter" and the station relayed this message to Kitty Hawk.

The next morning at about 7:00 A.M., a flag was noticed flying from the mizzenmast with the word "MUTINY." Once more, an attempt was made to launch the surfboat to ascertain the situation aboard the schooner, and once more the attempt ended in failure. At 11:00 A.M., the signal was observed being taken down and the schooner's sails being hoisted. The vessel slipped her chains at noon, leaving her anchor, and then proceeded in the direction of Hatteras. A message was then sent to the telegraph office conveying what had just transpired.[158] No further action was noted.

During April 1887, a modern technical advance made itself felt in the Lifesaving Service on the Outer Banks. The Pea Island crew had been engaged in the construction of a telephone line under the guidance of Sgt. W.M. Balton of the U.S. Signal Service. On April 21, 1887, telephone service was established, greatly facilitating the mission of the Lifesaving Service. Additionally that day, two horses were "exchanged by order of the inspector."[159]

On June 10, 1887, Keeper Van Buren Etheridge recorded that Col. B.S. Pardee, a correspondent for the *New Haven Palladi*, the *Baltimore Manufacturer's Record*, the *New York Commercial Advertiser*, and "other newspapers," paid a visit to the Nags Head station. His purpose was to write an article about the Lifesaving Service and specifically conditions at the Nags Head Station. He hoped to "influence public opinion" enough to have the Congressional appropriation for the service

156. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Nags Head, Box 3, Dated: April 16, 1886, National Archives and records Administration, Atlanta, Georgia.
157. Pea Island LSS Correspondence "re-Reporting Wrecks," 1883-1887, 1889-1891, 1893-1894, 1896, 1899, Maritime Association of the Port of New York to Keepers of LSS, Dated: December 6, 1884, Fort Raleigh National Historic Site, Manteo, North Carolina.
158. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Nags Head, Box 3, Dated January 2-7, 1887, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, Georgia.
159. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Pea Island, Box 2, Dated: April 21, 1887, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, GA.

increased.[160] No doubt, Pardee was received enthusiastically.

Even on dry land, the life of a surfman held inherent dangers. Surfman J.W. Dough was transporting a stove on a horse- drawn carriage when something startled the horse. Dough was thrown from the cart and run over by the wheels. He suffered numerous facial contusions along with two broken ribs. These injuries resulted in his being replaced by Mathias Toler until he could return to duty.[161]

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw renewed interest in the English colony. The early attempts to obtain local recognition of the historical significance of the Fort Raleigh site were begun initially by Sallie Southall Cotten, a North Carolina writer and amateur historian. Cotten's most lasting work was *The White Doe, The Fate of Virginia Dare, An Indian Legend,* published in 1902. Cotten became interested in history sometime in the 1880s and began to take a serious interest in the story of Virginia Dare during the 1890s. The Virginia Dare Columbia Memorial Association, incorporated on August 18, 1892, was largely the result of her efforts. To further interest in Virginia Dare, Cotten and her associates published a number of pamphlets emphasizing the role of the Roanoke Colony in the early history of the United States along with what they planted. Later, Cotten was aided in her efforts by the Roanoke Colony Historical Association, which received its charter in 1894.[162]

North Carolina published its second annual report concerning labor statistics in 1888. Included was a fair amount of information concerning Dare County. At that time, the only way to gain access to Roanoke Island was by boat. Mail and commercial goods all went by water to reach Roanoke Island. Regular steamboat service was needed to help the region develop. Unfortunately, there was little work available for a mechanic. Despite the primitive state of steam propulsion, a mechanic found it difficult to obtain full- time employment. This being said, the only opportunities for gainful employment, other than in the Lifesaving Service, were either in fishing or farming.

What the county needed were skilled individuals, such as brick masons. Skilled and enterprising men were in demand, and there was sufficient room for such men on the island. An influx of capital certainly would have improved the overall economic situation.

Apprenticeship was considered as a way to assist in the economic development of the region, a practice that had grown largely into disfavor in much of the United States. J.W. Evans, clerk of the Superior Court in Manteo, expressed his views. He stated that 90 percent of apprentices absconded before their term of obligation had expired, whether their treatment had been good or bad. Evans believed that a law that would govern apprentices would be a positive move. Evans also expressed racial views, stating that only five percent of colored individuals would be efficient masters for apprentices and that most blacks would see being apprenticed to a white man as a form of slavery or involuntary servitude. Indicating the technically backward nature of Dare County, Evans also stated that nobody had ever apprenticed for a mechanical pursuit.

The report on labor statistics contained some interesting observations on the state of the county's roads. According to G.W. Owens, "the present system of working the public roads in our county has given perfect satisfaction." The satisfaction apparently stemmed from the lack of property and poll taxes on Dare County citizens. However, assessments on labor were proposed.[163] By the 1920s, attitudes toward roads and their funding would change radically.

Returning to the Lifesaving Service, in an 1889 circular entitled "Regulations Relative to Uniform to Employees of the Life- Saving Service," the Treasury Department prescribed the uniform for both keepers and surfmen. Coats, trousers, and other items were standardized. The government also

160. Record Group, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Nags Head, Box 3, Dated: June 10, 1887, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, Georgia.
161. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Nags Head, Box 3, Dated: September 22, 1887, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, Georgia.
162. Christine Trebellas and William Chapman, *Fort Raleigh National Historic Site Historic Resource Study* (Atlanta: National Park Service, 1999), 64-65.
163. W.N. Jones, *Second Annual Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the State of North Carolina for the Year 1888* (Raleigh: Josephus Daniels, 1888), 79-80, 219-220, 304.

determined the cost of each item. However, uniforms were to be procured at individual expense.[164] The uniforms were an additional effort to instill a sense of pride in the service.

It was minor calamities, rather than major shipwrecks, like the *Huron* or the *Metropolis*, that occupied the majority of the Life Saving Service's time. On October 24, 1889, the schooner *Lizzie B. Haynes* was drifting toward the beach in Oregon Inlet. Keeper S.I. Poyner of the Oregon Inlet Station telephoned Keeper Etheridge of Pea Island in order to launch a coordinated rescue attempt. The Lyle gun was fired into the rigging but the ship's masts were carried away, killing three of the crew. An attempt to recover the dead crewmen's bodies took several hours, but was to no avail. Further attempts the next day also met with negative results. In all, five lives were lost in this tragedy.[165]

In December 1889, Richard Etheridge received a communication from the Uniforming and Control Department of Wanamaker and Brinn of Philadelphia. Etheridge was informed that the company had shipped some uniforms but without the "knitted Guernsey's," as they had none available in stock. However, Wanamaker informed Etheridge that he could wait and sign for the entire order once it was complete.[166] One wonders whether the other Lifesaving Stations encountered this problem or if it was restricted to the personnel serving on Pea Island.

The argument that the Pea Island Station had exceptional discipline is given credence by an entry made on the first day of the season at the Oregon Inlet Station. Surfman J.M. Wise was not being taken back as a result of his disciplinary problems. These included "willful neglect of duty" as well as intoxication and indecent acts with a lady. Wise was apparently awaiting some judicial charges as a result of his actions.[167]

Even experienced sailors ran afoul of the treacherous waters off the Outer Banks. One could never let down one's guard and take anything for granted among the shifting sandbars. On the evening of March 14, 1891, the U.S. Mail Boat was traveling from Chicamicomico to Manteo when it became stuck on a sandbar about two and- a- half miles from Oregon Inlet. Two surfmen from Pea Island went to the boat's assistance and rescued the captain and a small boy. They also had the presence of mind to take the mailbag with them to Roanoke Island. The surfmen then returned to the mail boat and floated her off the sand.[168] All in a day's work of an Outer Banks surfman.

Discipline problems continued to plague the New Inlet Lifesaving Station. Keeper L.S. Payne discharged Surfman C.G. Daniels. Daniels previously had caused disturbances and had not properly performed his patrolling duties. Payne informed Daniels that he was being discharged and that E.R. Burgess was being hired as his replacement.[169] It appears that the Pea Island crew had higher turn- over among its personnel than any other LSS in the area.

On June 11, 1891, the body of a "colored" boy, identified as Herman Maleas, washed ashore in the vicinity of Oregon Inlet. The assistance of Pea Island was requested, perhaps because it had a black crew. As typical with bodies that washed ashore, Maleas was buried "in the best place could be found."[170]

In 1890, the *North Carolina Business Directory* published some interesting details concerning Dare County and Roanoke Island. The 270- square- mile

164. 1889 Department No. 80 Dated: August 5, 1889, Circulars, Life Saving Service from the Treasury Department, 1883-1896, Pea Island Box 1 of 2, Fort Raleigh National Historic Site, Manteo, North Carolina.
165. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Oregon Inlet, Box 3, Dated: October 24-35 1889, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, GA.
166. Pea Island LSS Correspondence, 1887-1890, C.E. Corey to Richard Etheridge, Dated: December 28, 1889, Box 1 of 2, Fort Raleigh National Historic Site, Manteo, N.C.
167. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Records, Oregon Inlet, Box 4, Dated: May 1, 1890, National Archives and Records Administration , Atlanta, GA.
168. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Oregon Inlet, Box 4, Dated: March 15, 1891, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta Georgia.
169. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, New Inlet, Box 4, Dated: April 1, 1891, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, Georgia.
170. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Service Logbooks, Oregon Inlet, Box 4, Dated: June 11, 1981, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, GA.

entity had a population of 3,245, of which 367 were "colored." Roanoke Island accounted for less than 30 square miles of the county. Manteo had only 175 inhabitants at this time, while the number of individuals living in Wanchese was unlisted. There were six general stores to serve the town and the surrounding population. The primary occupation of the islanders was fishing providing $200,000 in income to the island's inhabitants. The firm of Rodgers & Etheridge alone accounted for $75,000 of that amount. There were also three boat builders located in Manteo and one boarding house. Fifteen individuals were listed as farmers. Basically, one can conclude that Manteo was a sleepy little hamlet on a small island that was rarely noticed by the United States.[171]

Some background on the Lifesaving Service appears in a lecture delivered by the Assistant General Superintendent of the Lifesaving Service, Horace L. Pipes, before a group in Philadelphia. He covered the service's history since its inception in 1848. Pipes explained how the service had gained stature under the able leadership of Sumner Kimball and how district superintendents were selected. He further noted that there were now 240 Lifesaving Stations throughout the country, but not all were, as of yet, fully manned.

Pipes explained the equipment used by the surfmen such as the boat, breeches buoy, Lyle gun, and life-car. He declared that only one life had been lost when an individual had been placed in a breeches buoy. Pipes also mentioned the importance of the telephone. He indicated that it provided a tremendous morale boost for surfmen in isolated outposts by enabling them to maintain contact with their families. (He was apparently unaware of the regulation in the Norfolk District forbidding personal use of the telephone.) Although this was a minor speech to a small audience, the message was the importance of the Lifesaving Service to the nation.[172] The Lifesaving Service did not miss any opportunity that might place it in a favorable light in the public eye and possibly increase its funding. The speech was reprinted at a later date and distributed throughout the service.

On January 14, 1896, the Superintendent of the 6th District must have been embarrassed, to say the least. While he was traveling on the revenue cutter *Alert*, the vessel managed to lose its rudder in Pamlico Sound. The keeper from Pea Island and his crew went to the stricken vessel's assistance. Nothing could be done to fix the *Alert* until the next morning. The trip was not a total loss for the surfmen. Not only did they accomplish a rescue drill but they also received their pay for the previous quarter.[173]

The Superintendent of the 6th District cited a memorandum about telephone use dated December 1894. Keepers and surfmen were to use the telephone only for official functions. However, they were also authorized to use the telephone when relatives were "receiving medical aid in case of emergencies."[174] There must have been some abuse concerning the telephone that came to the superintendent's attention and he must have felt the need to clarify the policy.

A fierce storm caused a major loss of life in the early hours of March 24, 1891, approximately one and- a-quarter miles south of Chicamicomico. A British schooner, the *Strethainly*, was bound from Santiago, Cuba, to Baltimore. The sea was exceptionally rough and a Nor'easter was blowing. Crews from Chicamicomico, Gull Shoal, and New Inlet responded along with the revenue cutter *Alert*. Despite the large number of would- be rescuers, conditions made it impossible to launch the surfboats. By the time the sea had died down, the surfmen were able to rescue only seven of the 26 crewmen.[175]

An indication of how important the region had become to both America's and international commerce can be gleaned from a message sent from the Superintendent of the 6th District, now located in Shawsboro, North Carolina, to all his keepers. He reminded them of Department Circular No. 134-

171. Levi Branson, *Branson's North Carolina Business Directory, 1890* (Raleigh: Levi Branson, 1889), 237-39.
172. Horace L. Pipes, *The United States Life Saving Service* (Philadelphia: Franklin Institute, 1892).
173. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Oregon Islet, Box 6, Dated: January 14, 1896, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, GA.
174. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast, District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Oregon Inlet, Box 6, Dated: February 20, 1897, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, GA.
175. Bennett, *Sand Pounders*, 108-09.

1893, referencing "Articles washed ashore from vessels sailing from infected ports, with infectious diseases. The Superintended stated that such vessels should not be directed to Elizabeth City, as usual, but rather to the nearest quarantine station." There was a particular concern about the spread of yellow fever, a disease prevalent in the Caribbean. This is exceptionally interesting because in less than six months, the United States would be engaged in a war with Spain, with the major theater of operations being Cuba, where there was a high incidence of yellow fever.[176]

Despite being very near to each other, it could be exceptionally difficult for a surfman to makes his appointed rounds, as Surfman E.F. Gray learned in October 1897. He was unable to return to New Inlet because the surf was pounding the beach so hard. He attempted to travel to Chicamicomico Station but was only able to proceed a short distance. Conditions were so dangerous that the 3:00 A.M. patrol was cancelled at New Inlet and there was three feet of water in that station.[177]

Several differences are apparent between the 1890 and 1897 issues of the *North Carolina Business Directory.* Branson now listed Dare County as only encompassing 160 square miles. Manteo, while still listed as having 175 souls, now had 500 individuals within the borders of its Post Office, and the Wanchese Post Office served an additional 500 people. The information concerning fishing did not change one iota and was printed exactly as it had been seven years earlier. There were three churches in Manteo, and two had "colored" congregations. The denominations were Baptist, Disciples, Episcopal, and Methodist, and these were served by a number of ministers. With more congregations than churches there must have been some shared use of facilities. At this time, the Tranquil House was the only place that visitors traveling to the island could stay overnight. Manteo even had a lawyer residing within its limits, one R.L. Blount, who undoubtedly found being in the county seat an immeasurable advantage for his business.

Boat building underwent a geometric expansion in the number of firms. There were eight individuals listed in that profession in Manteo alone. Three of them were Creefs: George Washington Sr., George Washington, and B.H. Creef. There was also a Daniels and Daugh listed. Strangely, there was no boat construction in Wanchese in 1887 (there had been in 1880). This might be related to a dramatic plunge in the fishing yields the following year.

There appears to have been increased competition for the limited number of customers on Roanoke Island. Manteo had four general stores while Wanchese and Skyco each had one. Four of the six had a Daniels or Evans listed as either the sole owner or co- owners. The 500- odd person increase in population triggered an increase in both business and services available to the inhabitants of Roanoke Island.

The number of individuals who described themselves as farmers skyrocketed to 47, up from 15, seven years prior. Only one of these was described as "colored." Incidentally, there was now one colored school in addition to four more white schools.[178]

The landmass of Dare County seems to have been transformed again in 1906, with its area now being described as 975 square miles. Additionally, by 1906, the *Raleigh News and Observer* was publishing the *North Carolina Yearbook.*[179] Now, the yearbook contained more precise information concerning Dare County, which provided additional insight into both Manteo and other parts of Roanoke Island. The majority of the county officers lived in either Manteo or Wanchese, with the rest spread out throughout the county. There were now three post offices on the island located at Manteo, Wanchese, and Skyco with 60 miles of public roads connecting the various parts of the county.

Manteo's population at this time was made up of 812 whites and African- Americans. The town now had a high school, with the great majority of teachers on

176. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C,. Lifesaving Log Books, Oregon Inlet, Box 6, Dated: October 23, 1897, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, GA.
177. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk, District, N.C., New Inlet, Box 5, Dated: October 25, 1897, National Archives and Records Administration, Atlanta, GA.
178. *Branson's North Carolina Business Directory, 1897,* 224-227.
179. There are, as with many other publications in North Carolina, only a limited number editions that have survived over the years. Some publications were found in East Carolina University while others were located in the State Archives in Raleigh.

the island living within the town's limits. The number of merchants had increased exponentially over the past few years. There are listings for blacksmiths, carriage- makers, shoe stores, a confectionery, millinery and fancy goods, and even a plumber. However, only 141 individuals were registered voters in Manteo and none was black, while in the county overall there were 1,001 registered white voters and 576 black voters.[180]

Consistent with the increase in the county's area, there was an increase in population. The population was now 7,550, broken down as follows: white males, 4,000; white females, 3,000: Negro males 300; Negro females, 250; and "foreign born" accounting for a mere 100. The value of real estate was given as $459,183 and that of personal property $220,000. However, there is an unequal distribution of the property. The value of the land owned by whites was $652,100 as compared to $16,932 by blacks.

There were numerous other changes on Roanoke Island, especially with reference to the business community. The surge in population necessitated a greater infrastructure to provide for the needs of these "genteel" people. Manteo was a bustling and thriving community with a population of 850. There was now the Hotel Roanoke in addition to the Tranquil House, providing shelter to the additional influx of visitors. The Bank of Manteo, four doctors, three department stores, insurance agents, real estate agents, and even an undertaker, now served the people of Manteo.[181] Still, there appears to be a firmly entrenched "color line." Wealth, schools, and neighborhoods were still segregated as in the whole South, with the majority of black citizens on Roanoke Island congregating in a section that came to be known as "California."[182]

180. *North Carolina Yearbook and Business Directory, 1906 (Raleigh News and Observer)*, 209-210.
181. *North Carolina Business Directory, 1909*, 171-173.
182. Nobody is really sure how this name was arrived at. Some ascribe it to the fact that California was a "free" state, while others believe that it was the sunny weather of California that provided the inspiration for the name.

Chapter Four: The Dawn of the Twentieth Century and a Changing Roanoke Island Prior to the Great Depression

Roanoke Island began its slow transformation at the beginning of the twentieth century from a sleepy little backwater- fishing hamlet to part of mainstream America. To be sure, the path was blocked with numerous obstacles. However, Reginald Fessenden and his wireless work made many Americans aware of Roanoke Island for the first time. Additionally, affluent Northerners began to come to the region as a summer getaway and also during the cooler months to hunt waterfowl. Later, investors, realizing it was one of the few undeveloped areas on the East Coast, began to acquire real estate and lobby for improved infrastructure, such as bridges and roads, to increase the appeal of the island to prospective homeowners, despite the opposition from many long- standing and established families set in their ways and vociferously opposed to any "invasion" by outsiders.

In the last decade of the nineteenth century, another U.S. president visited Roanoke Island after a hiatus of over 70 years. On March 1, 1894, President Grover Cleveland and his party spent the day on Roanoke Island. The vessel on which he traveled, the Violet, anchored in Croatan Sound. In what would appear to be amazing today, the exact whereabouts of the president of the United States were unknown. However, *The New York Times* reported that the president had shot and killed a bear in the Dismal Swamp and that the bearskin would make a handsome rug in the White House. Additionally, *The Times* speculated that Cleveland might travel to the Bodie Island Lighthouse.[183] Cleveland must have enjoyed his stay, because in late autumn of the next year, *The Times* reported that he once again spent time hunting and seeing the sights in the area.[184]

In 1894, another important event occurred on Roanoke Island. The Roanoke Colony Memorial Association erected a monument commemorating the first English colony in America. The memorial was sited on the outlines of the earthworks, presumed at that time to be the fort. The tablet was inscribed, "On this site, in August 1585, the colonists sent from England by Sir Walter Raleigh built the fort called New Fort in Virginia." What stands out is the reminder that Roanoke Island was once part of Virginia and the spelling of Raleigh is in the modern vernacular. There was a religious convocation followed by an address given by Graham Davis who was then president of the association.[185] This was the first time a group showed any interest in the Lost Colony, and over time, this would eventually evolve into something more than anyone present possibly could envision.

In fact, the very next year, the Roanoke Colony Memorial Association began to reconstruct the

183. *New York Times*, March 2-3, 1894.
184. *New York Times*, December 9, 1895.
185. *New York Times*, November 28, 1894.

ruins of the old fort. *The New York Times* cited the location as "one of the most historic spots in the United States." The article went on to say that the original fort had been "carefully surveyed" and "laid off by skilled engineers."[186] This was a rather startling statement, as the early records made no mention of any engineers among the colonists.

As sturdy as the patrol clocks were that monitored the coming and going of the surfmen, there were occasional malfunctions. On October 2, 1894, Surfman E.L. Gray reported to the keeper at New Inlet Station that the clock was not operating correctly. As soon as there was enough light, Keeper Westcott went to ascertain the situation. He opened the clock and removed the sand that had built up inside which caused the mechanism to cease working. When he placed the clock back together, it began to work in the proper manner.[187]

The next month Keeper Westcott noted in his logbook a situation that had developed at New Inlet. The entry demonstrated the "peculiar" nature of some Bankers. It seemed that Joseph and S.P. Midgett had placed a "no trespassing" sign on the land surrounding the Lifesaving Service Station, probably in an attempt to obtain money for the surfmen. Westcott informed these individuals that this was government property and they should cease and desist their actions. They in turn told Westcott that they would not.[188]

Even in the late- nineteenth century, the waters surrounding Roanoke Island could be hazardous to sailors despite the relative shelter provided by the Outer Banks. In February 1895, a steamer out of Baltimore was caught in a storm and sank. The passengers and crew took to the lifeboats and made it to Roanoke Island. *The Times* speculated that the Secretary of the Navy would be requested to provide a revenue cutter to succor those stranded individuals to return them to Baltimore.[189]

At the dawn of the twentieth century, "Jim Crow" laws were still the norm throughout the South. This puts the following in perspective. In an editorial on May 21, 1897, *The Economist* bemoaned that Dare County officials had the audacity to postpone an educational celebration for white children to make way for a "negro minstrel show." The editorial went on to question how this remnant of Republican repression could take place at this time. It also questioned the judgment of the officials who allowed such a travesty to occur. Clearly, the black individuals in Dare County were relegated to the status of second- class citizens.

In 1899, Manteo became the county seat of Dare County when the North Carolina General Assembly ratified its charter on February 16. However, according to Manteo's historian, April Khoury, Manteo was chosen as a matter of expediency rather than because it was a population center or had any political influence. Manteo was basically the geographical center of the Outer Banks along with the important consideration of having the fine harbor of Shallowbag Bay.[190]

An era came to an end on May 8, 1900. Keeper Richard Etheridge of Pea Island passed away. His demise was recorded rather succinctly in the Pea Island Logbook with the notation, "Keeper Richard Etheridge dide [*sic*] at this station at 20 minutes to 7 A.M. today." He obviously had been sick for some time because surfman B.J. Bowser had been signing the log as acting keeper since January.[191]

After the death of Keeper Richard Etheridge, Benjamin J. Bowser, his number one surfman for fourteen years, moved into the keeper's position. On June 27, 1900, Theo Meekins, Clerk of the Dare County Superior Court, administered Bowser the oath of office. Unfortunately, Bowser would not hold the position he undoubtedly desired in his heart so very long. In a little over two months after assuming the duties of keeper, he died of illness. As with his predecessor, his demise was duly and

186. *New York Times*, November 13, 1895.
187. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District N.V., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, New Inlet, Box 4, Dated: October 2, 1894, NARA, Atlanta, GA.
188. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, New Inlet, Box 4, Dated: November 19, 1894, NARA, Atlanta, GA.
189. *New York Times*, February 16, 1895.
190. Angel Ellis Khoury, *Manteo: A Roanoke Island Town* (Virginia Beach, VA: Donning Publishers, 1999), 21-22.
191. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Box 7, Pea Island, Dated: May 8, 1900, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Atlanta, GA.

briefly noted in the station logbook on September 2, 1900.[192]

A publication in Elizabeth City, the *Fisherman and Farmer*, reported that some individual had started a fire "among the colored last week." The "fiend" was not apprehended and the case was presented to the mayor who, in turn, sent the case to the fall court session. In the same issue, the paper stated that Mr. M. K. King of the Norfolk and Southern Railroad visited Manteo to inquire about the possibility of establishing a daily boat service between Manteo and Elizabeth City. There was also speculation that the N&SRR would lay track between Manteo and Skyco. However, this must have been merely a pipe dream since the cost of laying track certainly would have been prohibitive.[193]

In a fall issue of that same year, the *Fisherman and Farmer* reported that land and boundary lines were a "hot button" topic. It was especially intense since it involved both whites and blacks. It appeared that some blacks had settled on land not knowing the property boundary line. There apparently was going to be a legal struggle over the issue.

The same issue also noted that a Mr. Eugene Rhodes of New York, and his son, stopped at the Tranquil House. The owner then took them to Oregon Inlet where they each caught so many fish that they shipped them to Washington, D.C., to A. Frank Evans, who received a good price for them. This runs contrary to reports that all the fishing had been dying out in the region, unless it meant only commercial fishing and not sport.[194]

In July 1903, Keeper Lewis S. Westcott made the following notations in the logbook. All surfmen were to live at the station as prescribed by LSS regulations. Additionally, all surfmen were to be in proper uniform with all buttons buttoned while on duty. No surfman "will be a loud" to rise above the No. 3 position without being able to read and write. Last, the keeper was to be held accountable for the actions of his crew.[195]

Early in the new century, a new courthouse was constructed to replace the one dating from the early 1870s. The growth of Dare County mandated a larger facility to conduct the legal affairs of the county. In 1903, planning commenced for a new structure, along with a fireproof vault to store property deeds and court records. The modest $3,000 appropriation skyrocketed to $16,500 when it was decided to erect a new courthouse in addition to a storage facility. On December 9, 1903, the Dare County commissioners awarded a contract to the B. F. Smith Fire Proof Co., based in the nation's capital, Washington, D.C. However, the new facility did not meet expectations. The roof leaked and legal action forced the Smith Company to make the necessary repairs. Still, that was not the end of the tribulations for the new facility. There were additional problems discovered but these did not prevent the new facility from being occupied and used.[196]

At the turn of the century, sleepy little Roanoke Island was transformed once again and was thrust into the national limelight. Roanoke Island became the headquarters of the Canadian- born inventor Reginald Fessenden. Fessenden was given the moniker "Cosmic Inventor" by his biographer, Frederick Seitz. However, few individuals outside the communications community are aware of his major contributions such as AM radio. Moreover, Fessenden was the first individual to transmit both voice and music over the airwaves. Fessenden was on intimate terms with such historically prominent individuals as Thomas Alva Edison, who provided him with his first job, and the Wright Brothers, who made their epic flight from Kill Devil Hills on December 17, 1903. Unfortunately, a number of factors have relegated both Fessenden and his seminal contributions in the field of communications to relative obscurity to the vast majority of Americans. He has been portrayed as vain, combative, and arrogant, to name a few descriptions of him.[197] However, most men of genius are not nearly as pliable as the average, common man.

192. Zoby and Wright, *Fire on the Beach*, 259, 297. See Also Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Pea Island, Box 7, Dated: June 27, 1900, NARA, Atlanta, GA.
193. *Elizabeth City Fisherman and Farmer*, July 20, 1900.
194. *Elizabeth City Fisherman and Farmer*, October 25, 1900.
195. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Pea Island, Box 9, Dated: July 18, 1903, NARA, Atlanta, GA.
196. Khoury, *Manteo*, 28-32.

Reginald Aubrey Fessenden was born in 1866 in East Bolton, Canada, near the Vermont border. Fessenden was an excellent student but left college in 1884, just a few credits shy of degree completion. After a short tenure as a headmaster of a school in Bermuda, he sought employment in New York City with Thomas Edison. Over time, he developed a close and intimate relationship with the "Wizard of Menlo Park." Edison took a liking to the young man, referring to him as "Fezzy." In 1890, Fessenden began the groundwork for wireless communications—five years before the Italian Gugliemo Marconi riveted the world's attention with his own contributions to wireless communications.[198]

In 1892, Fessenden received an appointment to a professorship in electrical engineering at Purdue University in Indiana. Two years later, in 1894, Fessenden moved to Pittsburgh to become Chairman of the Electrical Engineering Department at the Western University of Pennsylvania (now known as the University of Pittsburgh). He remained in that position until 1900.[199] At this time, Fessenden commenced his affiliation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Weather Bureau. This would eventually prove to be a major crossroads in his mercurial career. Later, he would regret having left Pittsburgh prior to completing his experiments.

The Weather Bureau became interested in Fessenden in late 1899. The Bureau Chief, Willis Moore, instructed Professor Cleveland Abbe to determine the feasibility of Fessenden's work.[200] The Bureau's existing extensive network of weather stations would provide an excellent platform to support Fessenden's experiments. The Weather Bureau, in return, expected to make use of Fessenden's work without charge should his concepts prove viable. In January 1900, Moore contacted Fessenden and proposed that Fessenden work for the Weather Bureau. Moore stipulated that Fessenden would have complete freedom to conduct his experiments without interference from the Weather Bureau. The Weather Bureau would not only provide Fessenden with a staff but also funds and supplies necessary to conduct his experiments.[201] On the surface, it appeared to be a very generous offer. However, the Bureau's interest was not philanthropic. Should Fessenden succeed, the Weather Bureau would be able to provide the nation with timely weather forecasts that would not be dependent upon wires that could be interrupted by storms, shifting sands, and other adverse conditions. Moore and the Weather Bureau would receive much positive publicity, increased stature, and undoubtedly an increase in Federal funding for its annual budget.

It is interesting to note that Moore had misgivings about obtaining any "pecuniary interest" in Fessenden's experiments by July 1900. Moore made this perfectly clear in correspondence with Fessenden. It is obvious why Fessenden believed that later, Moore was trying to dupe him by claiming a half interest in his patents.[202] From the perspective of this writer, Fessenden appears to have had a legitimate grievance against Moore.

There also seems to have been a bit of pressure on Moore from the Secretary of Agriculture, his immediate superior. Secretary James Wilson was aware that the Marconi system was at that time not capable of achieving the range required by the Weather Bureau. Should Fessenden's system prove viable, there would be tremendous commercial advantages. Ships at sea could avoid storms, and millions of dollars, along with untold lives, could be saved. Wilson reasoned that the Weather Service expended vast sums of money yearly for telegraph

197. Hugh G. J. Aitken, *The Continuous Wave: Technology and American Radio, 1900-1932* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 40.
198. Frederick Seitz, *The Cosmic Inventor: Reginald Aubrey Fessenden (1866-1932)* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1999), 110-11.
199. Michael Lewis Everette, "Reginald Aubrey Fessenden: American Communications Pioneer," unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of North Carolina at Raleigh, 1972, 6.
200. Abbe was the Bureau's Editor of Review. He was also a celebrated astronomer and known as the "Father of the Weather Bureau."
201. Record Group 27, Records of the Weather Bureau, General Correspondence of the Weather Bureau, 1894-1942, Letters Received, 1894-1911, Box 1417, Entry 47, Moore to Abbe, Dated: December 19, 1899. NARA, College Park, MD.
202. North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina, Manuscript Collection, Fessenden Material Prior to 1905, MARS 167.1, Moore to Fessenden, Dated: July 30, 1900. Moore apparently also informed Fessenden that he had to pay for his own patents since the Weather Bureau could not legally pay for them, and as a result, they were to be his property. See Everette, *Reginald Aubrey Fessenden,* 16. Unfortunately, this missive is not to be found in any Fessenden Papers.

messages and the monetary savings could be enormous. However, Wilson expected results and not excuses for such a major expenditure of public funds for Fessenden's experiments.[203]

This became quite apparent when Moore corresponded with Fessenden in December 1900. He informed Fessenden that he would soon appear before the Agricultural Committee in Congress to justify his agency's monetary needs. Moore wanted to know the status of Fessenden's experiments and if he would present this information before the committee to assist in making his case for additional appropriations. He asked that Fessenden come to Washington at the earliest possible moment to discuss the matter with him in detail.[204]

Initially, Fessenden termed his work with wireless "Surface- wave Telegraphy." However, Willis Moore, Chief of the Weather Bureau, preferred the term "Wireless Telegraphy." Fessenden acceded to Moore's desires.[205] One may conjecture that Fessenden might later have viewed this as a minor skirmish in the battle of wills that would erupt between Moore and himself.

The selection of a location for the proposed wireless stations was by no means a haphazard affair. It was believed that the region around Cape Hatteras would be the most conducive to Fessenden's experiments. Lighthouses at Currituck, Kitty Hawk, and Hatteras not only were over 150 feet tall, making the construction of special towers unnecessary, but also had the additional advantage of being located in close proximity to Weather Bureau Stations. The Observer and Chief Operator of the Cape Henry Station of the Weather Bureau also pointed out that it was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain land lines in the area because of the adverse weather conditions.[206] However, the initial experiments were conducted on Cobb Island, Maryland, in the vicinity of Washington, D.C. Fessenden was able to transmit signals from Cobb Island to Arlington, Virginia, a distance of over 50 miles, without wires.

When the time came to transfer operations from Cobb Island to Roanoke Island, Fessenden traveled along with the equipment. The weather was inclement throughout the entire voyage. The weather became so bad upon entering Albemarle Sound that the captain of the vessel transporting the equipment wanted to jettison the two 50- foot telegraphic masts they were transporting to Roanoke Island. Fessenden would have none of it. The captain and Fessenden almost came to blows and only the propitious change in weather ended the incident without a serious physical confrontation erupting between them.[207]

Although life was rustic by most standards, the Fessendens lived in veritable grandeur compared to most of the local inhabitants of Roanoke Island. They occupied a wing on the second floor of the larger of the island's two hotels, the Hotel Roanoke. Fessenden had approximately ten rooms that served as a combination of both living accommodations and offices. However, water had to be carried from a well located in the courtyard, and mosquitoes, other insects, and vermin, along with the smell of decaying fish, marred an otherwise idyllic existence.[208] Still, despite these minor drawbacks, Fessenden and his wife Helen enjoyed the historical ambience of the island.

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203. Record Group 27, Records of the Weather Bureau, General Correspondence of the Weather Bureau, 1894-1942, Letters Received, 1894-1911, Special File on Fessenden, Box 1418, Entry 47, Wilson to Moore, Dated: December 20, 1899. NARA, College Park, MD.
204. Record Group 27, Records of the Weather Bureau, General Correspondence of the Weather Bureau, Letters Received by R.A. Fessenden, 1901-1903, Weather Bureau and Individuals, Box 2, Entry 51, Moore to Fessenden, Dated: December 5, 1900. NARA, College Park, MD.
205. Record Group 27, Records of the Weather Bureau, General Correspondence of the Weather Bureau, 1894-1942, Letters Received, 1894-1911, Box 1417, Entry 47. Fessenden to Moore, Dated: January 29, 1900 and Fessenden to Williams, Dated: February 6, 1900. NARA, College Park, MD.
206. Record Group 27, Records of the Weather Bureau, General Correspondence of the Weather Bureau, 1894-1942, Letters Received, 1894-1911, Special File on Fessenden, Box 1418, Entry 47, Cronk to Moore, Dated: March 13, 1900. NARA, College Park, MD.
207. Helen M. Fessenden, *Fessenden: Builder of Tomorrows* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1940), 86. For Fessenden's account of what actually transpired, see Record Group 27, Records of the Weather Bureau, General Correspondence of the Weather Bureau, Letters Received by R.A. Fessenden, 1901-1903, Weather Bureau and Individuals, Box 3, Entry 51, Fessenden to Moore, Dated: January 29, 1901. NARA, College Park, MD.
208. Fessenden, *Fessenden*, 87-88.

The mosquitoes must have been especially bothersome. Cleveland Abbe was making preparations for a visit to Roanoke Island and informed Fessenden of what he intended to bring with him. He mentioned various foodstuffs and that he was bringing "a generous supply of quinine." Malaria was a disease endemic to the region and Abbe was taking the proper precautions to protect himself and his family. Abbe also was going to transport "that other thing which goes so nicely with mint"—an obvious reference to alcoholic beverages which apparently both he and Fessenden at least occasionally enjoyed imbibing in.[209]

The actual facility where Fessenden conducted his experiments was located on the western portion of the island known as Weir's Point, where the present U.S. Highway 64 intersects with the bridge connecting the mainland. Today, the greater portion of that site is under water. It was leased from Charles P. Meekins for $50 for a period of 15 months, with the government having an option, upon its expiration, to renew the lease at original terms.[210] Early each morning, Fessenden would depart the hotel with some sandwiches for lunch, make the four- mile trek by foot or carriage, and return that evening. He then would spend several hours during the evening catching up on his correspondence. Fessenden more than earned the $3,000 per year that the Weather Bureau paid for his services, which was a tidy sum of money for the time. However, financial remuneration was not the only criteria for job satisfaction. Unfortunately, over time, irritants and issues continued to arise and this began to adversely affect Fessenden and his attitude toward the Weather Bureau and especially its Chief, Willis Moore.

There was at least one inhabitant other than the owner of the Hotel Roanoke who benefited from the largesse of Fessenden and his associates. Fessenden was able to contract for a carriage to transport himself, Mr. Thiessen, and Mr. Hesse to work each morning and to pick them up at the end of their workday. This would cost $1.50 a day.[211] Considering the depressed economic state of the island at this time, whoever obtained this employment must have considered it a godsend.

The New York Times first took notice of what was transpiring on Roanoke Island on March 13, 1901. In a small article, *The Times* reported that the Secretary of Agriculture James Wilson was involved in wireless telegraphy being conducted under the supervision of Willis L. Moore, the Chief of the Weather Bureau. The article briefly described the project but made no mention of Fessenden.[212]

Washington monitored the progress made by Fessenden while he worked at Manteo on Roanoke Island. Moore sent C.F. Marvin, Professor in Charge of the Instrument Division, to personally report on Fessenden's activities. Marvin was impressed by the progress being made by Fessenden but commented that employing a professional instrument maker to fabricate components would undoubtedly result in much better transmission and reception quality of the radio signals. However, Marvin was unable to recommend any individual who might possess the ability to perform such technically exacting work. Marvin praised Fessenden for the purely scientific aspects of his work. He understood the complexity and the challenging nature of this largely uncharted field of science. Marvin also stated that Fessenden's approach of using careful investigation was superior to that of others working in the field.[213] This was an obvious jab at Marconi who was making spectacular newspaper headlines but little actual progress in wireless communications. Marconi used improvisation and expediency and not scientific analysis to arrive at his conclusions. When something worked, Marconi really did not

209. North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina, Manuscript Division, Fessenden Material Prior to 1905, MARS 167.1, Abbe to Fessenden, Dated: May 18, 1900.
210. Record Group 27, Records of the Weather Bureau, General Correspondence of the Weather Bureau, Letters Received R.A. Fessenden, 1901-1903, Weather Bureau and Individuals, Box 3, Entry 51, Fessenden to Moore, Dated: January 23, 1901. NARA, College Park, MD.
211. Record Group 27, Records of the Weather Bureau, General Correspondence of the Weather Bureau, Letters Received R.A. Fessenden, 1901-1903, Weather Bureau and Other Individuals, Box 3, Entry 51, Fessenden to Moore, Dated: January 29, 1901. NARA, College Park, MD.
212. *New York Times,* March 13, 1901.
213. Record Group 27, Records of the Weather Bureau, General Correspondence of the Weather Bureau, 1894-1942, Letters Received, 1894-1911, Special File on Fessenden, Box 1418, Entry 47, Marvin to Moore, Dated: October 11, 1901. NARA, College Park, MD.

understand why and merely accepted the results as fact.[214]

This feeling concerning Marconi was mirrored and somewhat amplified by Cleveland Abbe in a letter to Fessenden written in early 1901. Abbe also stated that Marconi had raised the expectations of many without any tangible results being offered to the public. He believed that Marconi's circle of backers was deliberately doing this in order to shore up the faltering confidence of both European and American investors who were voicing concerns about the progress Marconi was, or more aptly, was not making.[215] One can detect an undercurrent of intense international competition at this time with the ultimate prize being what would prove to be a fabulously lucrative number of contracts from around the world once wireless communications had been perfected.

The Weather Bureau was not the only branch of the Federal government interested in wireless telegraphy. The Secretary of the Navy, John D. Long, wanted information concerning Fessenden's activities. Once a warship left port, no communication was possible until it either made port or ran into another vessel on the high seas. Being able to communicate with a warship once it departed would be a decided military advantage to any nation able to produce or obtain such technology. Secretary Wilson from the Department of Agriculture informed Long that the experiments conducted at Cobb Island had been reasonably successful to a distance of 50 miles and that the operations had been transferred to the coast of North Carolina for further evaluation. Wilson indicated that he would be happy to let the Navy send some representatives to view the progress being made.[216]

Moore and his superiors must have been impressed very favorably with Fessenden's progress and the possibilities it opened because less than two months later, the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture contacted the Secretary of the Treasury. The Agriculture Secretary informed his counterpart in the Treasury that both Point Reyes and the Farallone Islands, located near San Francisco, were ideally suited for experiments in wireless telegraphy. He also requested permission to erect a 150- foot high mast and an instrument shed, which he stated would not interfere with normal operations at those lighthouses.[217]

Fessenden's experiments slowly began to gather a national audience by the summer of 1901. Ray Stannard Baker, the editor of *McClure's Magazine*, a popular weekly of the period, expressed a desire to glean information about Fessenden's work in wireless telegraphy. Later, Baker himself would gain national prominence as a member of Woodrow Wilson's Cabinet and after that, as a historian. Baker pointed out that *McClure's* was the first to print an account of Marconi's work, which may be viewed as an attempt to goad Fessenden into providing his magazine some information.[218]

Events would soon overtake the actual progress being made at Roanoke Island. Moore wrote Fessenden, in January 1902, that the Navy had recently created a wireless telegraphy board. The Navy intended to construct wireless stations in both Annapolis and Washington, D.C., to test various wireless communications systems. Moore wished to invite the Navy to monitor the progress being made at Roanoke Island and get a leg up on the competition.[219] He also expressed concern that it might be already too late to obtain Congressional funding for extending the work being conducted by Fessenden at Roanoke Island past its initial one-year authorization.[220]

It was April 1902 before *The New York Times* would once again take notice of the activities taking place

214. Aitken, *The Continuous Wave*, 35.
215. North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina, Manuscript Collection, Fessenden Material Prior to 1905, MARS 167.1, Abbe to Fessenden, Dated: January 9, 1901.
216. Record Group 27, Records of the Weather Bureau, General Correspondence of the Weather Bureau, Letters Received by R.A. Fessenden, 1901-1903, Letters Sent, 1900-1903, Box 5, Entry 51, Dated: April 19, 1901. NARA, College Park, MD.
217. Record Group 27, Records of the Weather Bureau, General Correspondence of the Weather Bureau, Letters Received by R.A. Fessenden, 1901-1903, Box 5, Entry 51, Secretary of Agriculture to Secretary of the Treasury, Dated: December 2, 1901. NARA, College Park, MD.
218. North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina, Manuscript Collection, Fessenden Material Prior to 1905, MARS 167.1, Baker to Fessenden, Dated: July 11, 1901.
219. The U.S. Navy never did adopt the Fessenden system and later contracted with a German firm for its wireless equipment. See Everett, *Fessenden*, 41.

on Roanoke Island. Over a six- day period, *The Times* printed four articles. *The Times* first noted that Gen. Adolphus W. Greeley, Chief of the United States Signal Service, had traveled to Roanoke to observe Fessenden's system personally. Greeley believed it to not only operate in a satisfactory manner but also that this system was clearly superior to the one being developed by Marconi. The next day, *The Times* announced that the U.S. Navy found the Fessenden system to be superior to any other in the world and would recommended its adoption by that service. The last article stated that Professor Fessenden had declared that his system was an unqualified success.[221]

General Greeley must have been impressed exceptionally by what he observed in Manteo. In May, he wrote Moore that the Board of Signal Corps Officers had recommended that Fessenden's system be placed into operation in Alaska.[222] Greeley also wanted to clarify that he was in no way displeased with the treatment the Signal Officers received while at Manteo despite some talk to the contrary. Greeley also indicated that he might possibly send other Signal Officers to observe wireless operations at a future date.[223]

By summer 1902, Fessenden was attempting to market his inventions and leave Moore out of the picture. Diplomacy was not exactly Fessenden's forte in life, as mentioned previously, and his actions, no doubt, greatly antagonized Moore, who saw the possibility of obtaining a fortune slipping through his hands. Compounding Fessenden's problems was that Moore was made the Acting Secretary of Agriculture. However, Fessenden was not an individual who was either easily discouraged nor to be trifled with when he believed he was right. When Secretary of Agriculture Wilson advised Fessenden to press on with his work and leave well enough alone with Moore, he felt that Wilson was merely trying to avoid a messy situation. As a result, Fessenden took his case directly to the President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt. Fessenden claimed that Chief Moore did not fulfill the promises he made on behalf of the Weather Bureau. He related how Moore tried to have his name added to his patents in violation of their initial agreements. Fessenden also informed President Roosevelt that Moore had taken away his assistants without consulting with him.[224] Roosevelt wisely decided to remain above the fray on this issue, in part, because he must have believed that no matter what, there would be no clear winner and that the adverse publicity would be detrimental to all parties involved.

Fessenden's affiliation with the Weather Bureau came to an abrupt end in 1902. Moore notified Fessenden in July that he was recommending that he be dismissed from government service for various infractions including insubordination, failure to follow orders, and making false statements. Fessenden countered that Moore attempted to obtain a half- share of his patents while having contributed nothing to their creation. Not waiting to be discharged formally from his position as Special Agent, Fessenden resigned effective September 1 and never regretted his decision.[225]

Moore probably believed he had the last word when in late December 1902, he sent a message to Alfred Thiessen, the local Weather Service officer in Manteo. He ordered Thiessen to close the station and sell at public auction any and all property "in your opinion" that was not worth shipping back to Washington. Moore even authorized Theissen to hire temporary assistants to accomplish the task in a timely manner.[226]

Thiessen must have been an invaluable assistant to Fessenden because in June 1903, Thiessen received

220. Record Group 27, Records of the Weather Bureau, General Correspondence of the Weather Bureau, Letters Received by R.A. Fessenden, 1901-1903, Weather Bureau and Individuals, Box 2, Entry 51, Moore to Fessenden, Dated: January 6, 1902. NARA, College Park, MD.
221. *New York Times*, April 23, 26-28, 1902.
222. Greeley was a lieutenant in charge of an ill-fated expedition stranded without communication in Alaska. All but seven individual died before they were eventually rescued in 1884 by a relief expedition commanded by Winfield Scott Schley who later became involved in a major controversy with William Sampson during the Spanish-American War.
223. Record Group 27, Records of the Weather Bureau, General Correspondence of the Weather Bureau, 1894-1942, Letters Received, 1894-1911, Special File on Fessenden, Box 1418, Entry 47, Greeley to Moore, Dated: May 14, 1902. NARA, College Park, MD.
224. North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina, Manuscript Collection, Fessenden Material Prior to 1905, MARS 167.1, Fessenden to Roosevelt, Dated: June 16, 1902.
225. Aitken, *The Continuous Wave*, 70.

an offer of employment from Fessenden. Thiessen must have been the ultimate civil servant because he immediately reported Fessenden's offer to Moore in Washington. He explained to Moore that in no manner did he solicit this correspondence from Fessenden. Thiessen not only declined Fessenden's offer but also sent a copy of his declination to Moore as proof that he was not involved in any duplicity.[227]

Fessenden undoubtedly felt some degree of vindication a few years later. On Christmas Eve, 1906, from Brant Rock, Massachusetts, Fessenden was responsible for the first direct transmission broadcast over the water of both voice and a Christmas concert that was received both by U.S. Navy ships and commercial vessels plying the Atlantic. Some argue whether this was the first "true" broadcast, but none can make a defendable argument that this event did not signal the dawn of a new age in communications.[228]

In 1906, the state of North Carolina noticed a "remarkable decrease" in the amount of shad caught in the state's off- shore waters. Since many individuals made their livelihood by shad fishing, this was a cause of concern to the state. Although the catch gradually increased from 1880 until 1897, it plummeted after that point. In 1896, the total pounds of fish caught in seine fisheries was 2,131,864, but by 1904, the amount was down to only 345,046 pounds. By using pound- nets in 1897 the catch was 1,647,897 pounds, while by 1904, this quantity had decreased dramatically.[229] State officials were in a quandary to explain this phenomenon

In December 1910, the crew of the Pea Island LSS sent an interesting missive to the President of the Mutual Benefit Association located in Bayshore, Long Island. They stated that they had been prevented from obtaining membership because of their race. However, they wished to join and wanted it understood that there was "no desire on our part to participate in the management of the affairs of the association other than share its benefits."[230] This clearly indicated that blacks were still second- class citizens but still held the hope that they could also participate in the American Dream.

In 1911, there was still concern about the depletion of fish in the waters off North Carolina. One individual claimed that the use of seines was the primary cause of the lack of fish available for fishermen. This in turn was leaving the fishermen of the state with smaller incomes. This man flatly stated, "There has been no successful fishing since 1897." There was talk of what to do to reverse the situation, but consensus was difficult to achieve.[231] People of that era did not understand that conservation and ecology were interrelated.

Although the report encompassed all of Dare County and not specifically Roanoke Island, it is difficult to interpret the Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of North Carolina for the Scholastic Years 1912- 1913. However, certain observations are germane to Roanoke Island. According to the report, the illiteracy rate for native whites was 12.3 percent statewide, and that of voting age was even higher, at 14.1 percent.[232] It would be safe to guess that Roanoke Island was at least at that percentage, if not significantly higher, since Dare County spent one of the smallest amounts on education of any county in North Carolina. Some large cities spent more than the entire county.[233]

Also of interest was the attitude concerning the education of blacks. The report stated that the state

226. Record Group 27, Records of the Weather Bureau, General Correspondence of the Weather Bureau, Letters Received by R.A. Fessenden, Weather Bureau and Individuals, Box 2, Entry 51, Moore to Thiessen, Dated: December 29, 1902. NARA, College Park, MD.
227. Record Group 27, Records of the Weather Bureau, General Correspondence of the Weather Bureau, 1894-1942, Letters received, 1894-1911, Special File on Fessenden, Box 1419, Entry 47, Thiessen to Moore and Thiessen to Fessenden, both Dated: June 19, 1903. NARA, College Park, MD.
228. Aitkens, *The Continuous Wave*, 74.
229. John N. Cobb, *Investigations Relative to the Shad Fisheries of North Carolina* (Raleigh: E.M. Uzzell & Co., 1906), Introduction.
230. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Stations Logbooks, Pea Island, Box 11, Dated: December 13, 1910, NARA, Atlanta GA.
231. *Report of the Fisheries Convention Held at New Bern, North Carolina, December 13, 1911* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1912), 72-78.
232. *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of North Carolina for the Scholastic Years 1912-1913 and 1913-1914* (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1915), 41.
233. Ibid., 14-15.

of North Carolina was "not giving or seeking to give the negro [*sic*] in the public schools more than instruction in the mere rudiments of learning." It further stated that "the opponents of negro [*sic*] education contend that the sort of education that the negro [*sic*] has been receiving in the public schools has put false notions into his head, has turned him away from work . . . ." [234] While plainly addressing the problem, the author seemed to excuse the situation. Later, the report noted that "it is my conviction, also that the best training and education for the masses of negroes [*sic*] in the *South* [italics added] is agricultural."[235] There was also concern that the best blacks would leave the state and complicate the labor problem and leave behind "only the indolent, worthless, and criminal part of the negro [*sic*] population."[236] These racial attitudes obviously permeated the state and also Dare County and Roanoke Island, regardless of how good many felt the state of race relations might have been at that time.

Although modern technical advances made sailing in the Outer Banks a much safer proposition in the early twentieth century, it still could be fraught with danger for the either unwary or unlucky mariner. On January 20, 1915, the schooner *George H. Reed* was lost in a storm in the vicinity of Pea Island despite efforts of the U.S. Lifesaving Service to save the vessel. On January 25, 1915, less than a week later, the schooner's former master, H.M. Bell, filed papers in the county court in Manteo claiming that the loss was due to nature and not because the ship was poorly maintained or constructed. Bell also stated that the *George H. Reed* met all the requirements for safe operation at sea.[237]

All things must come to an end, and this was the case of the U.S. Lifesaving Service. The Secretary of Commerce and Labor, Charles Nagel, believed that it would be a good idea to combine the Lifesaving Service, Revenue Service, and Lighthouse Service. Although the Secretary of the Treasury, Franklin MacVeagh, initially opposed the concept, he later went along with it. On January 20, 1915, the House of Representatives voted 212 to 79 to create the U.S. Coast Guard.[238]

Even after the U.S. Lifesaving Service ceased to exist, its successor, the U.S. Coast Guard had many traits of its predecessor. In 1915, the Captain Commandant, Ellsworth P. Bertholf, had a circular distributed throughout the command. In it he stated that for many years, the Blue Anchor Society had furnished the numerous stations of the Coast Guard with clothing and other supplies necessary to alleviate the suffering of shipwrecked mariners. When these supplies were distributed, he reminded keepers that they needed to requisition more. They were further reminded to keep sufficient quantities on hand and protect them from any damage.[239]

By 1916, Dare County had a significant drop in its population, based on the 1910 census. There were only 4,841 individuals living in the county, although the population was listed as 7,550 in the North Carolina Yearbook in 1909. This could be the result of faulty recording, or possibly the decline in fishing was having a calamitous effect on the county. However, Manteo's population increased to approximately 1,000 and the town's real estate was valued at $79,280.

On April 19, 1917, the United States was on the verge of entering World War I (WWI). An indication of how the times were becoming unsettled was a phone message sent by the district superintendent to the stations on the North Carolina Coast. Any individual who was not an American citizen and who was born in Austria was to be discharged immediately from the U.S. Coast Guard. Additionally, any serviceman who was a naturalized citizen but whose parents lived in Austria was to be discharged. Paragraph 1F, Article 132, was to be cited and annotated on the discharge certificate: "Not recommended for reenlistment."[240] Mass hysteria was about to sweep the nation.

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234. Ibid., 57.
235. Ibid., 60.
236. Ibid., 61.
237. Protest of H.M Bell, Master, for the Total Loss of the Three Mast Schooner *George H. Reed*, Near Pea Island Life-Saving Station, North Carolina, January 20, 1915, C.R. 031.928.2, Shipping and Fishing Records, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.
238. Noble, *That Others Might Live*, 151-53.
239. Treasury Department, U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters Circular Letter No. 6, Dated: March 6, 1915 in New York Auxiliary Women's National Relief Association, Women's National Relief Association, Blue Anchor Society Correspondence, Pea Island LSS Correspondence 1887-1899, 1915, Box 1 of 2, Fort Raleigh National Historic Site, Manteo, N.C.

The next day, another telephone message emanated from the district superintendent's office. It stated that any individual who desired to should report immediately to the Customs House, after which they would be assigned to a Coast Guard Station. All individuals between 18 and 25 who elected not to volunteer would be drafted into the military[241] For many, service in the Coast Guard would have been infinitely more appealing than serving in the trenches of France, along with the concomitant appalling loss of life of the combatants.

Tragedy struck the nascent Coast Guard in October 1917. Surfman Theo Meekins of Pea Island and Surfman C.C. Miller of a neighboring station were reported overdue from liberty. They were known to have departed from Manteo in a power boat and then disappeared. A search was organized of Oregon Inlet, but it revealed no trace of either the men or the boat. It was assumed that they drowned en route back to the station.[242]

Although the former Lifesaving Service undoubtedly had a drill protocol for years, the United States Coast Guard put the Beach-Apparatus Drill into a manual in 1918. This manual specified that a drill was to be conducted as if the crew was working on an actual wreck. When the season commenced, drills were to be conducted twice weekly for the first month and weekly thereafter. Each member of the crew had to recite his duties as the drill was in progress. There were also specific commands given and to be followed such as, "forward," "halt," and "action."[243]

George E. Pruden, the number one surfman, who would eventually rise to become the keeper at Pea Island, initially had a somewhat checkered career. In August 1919, the keeper, W.H. Irving, recorded the first of what were to be many of Pruden's punishments in the station log. Pruden had been disobedient and used "language not in keeping with the best discipline and integrity of the service." This resulted in loss of liberty for a period of 20 days.[244]

Although the state of medicine had made tremendous advances since the Civil War, this did not necessarily mean it reached the Outer Banks. The LSS might have provided a great deal of medical care, but that did not always translate into the best. Substitute surfman Henry Simmons became ill with "chills and ague." George Pruden recorded that he was treated with six ounces of whiskey, three capsules of quinine, and two barbiturate pills.[245] Pruden obviously did not know that alcohol and barbiturates could be a deadly mixture. However, Simmons lived through the experience and should be considered lucky that he survived his "medical" treatment.

In August 1920, work was proceeding at a rapid pace on the Currituck Sound Bridge. A half- mile of pilings had already been driven and that part of the project was expected to be completed in a few weeks. The project aroused local enthusiasm since there were assurances that there was going to be a hard- surface road all the way to Roanoke Island. Real estate agents were already contemplating developing the area with an eye on making some serious profits.[246]

Once again, in October 1920, Bosun's Mate 1st Class George E. Pruden incurred the wrath of Keeper Irving. Once again, Pruden failed to follow orders and once again paid the price. His punishment was another 20 days deprivation of liberty plus he was required to perform extra duties.[247] Pruden appears to have been lucky to retain his position as number one surfman. In today's military, his career certainly would have been shortened.

240. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C. Lifesaving Saving Station Logbooks, Pea Island, Box 13, Dated April 19, 1917, NARA, Atlanta, GA.
241. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Records of the Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Pea Island, Box 13, Dated: April 20, 1917, NARA, Atlanta, GA.
242. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Pea Island, Box 14, Dated: October 30, 1917 and November 1, 1917, NARA, Atlanta, GA.
243. United States Coast Guard, *Beach Drill Apparatus* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1918).
244. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Pea Island, Box 15, Dated: August 2, 1919, NARA, Atlanta, GA.
245. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Pea Island, Box 15, Dated: February 23, 1920, NARA, Atlanta, GA.
246. *Elizabeth City Independent*, August 30, 1920.
247. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Pea Island, Box 15, Dated: October 21, 1920, NARA, Atlanta, GA.

In February 1922, Pruden managed to overstay his liberty and was let off with a stern warning not to repeat this again.[248] This rebuke might have been tempered because of what was awaiting him the following month.

Pruden must have been a magnet for trouble. In March 1922, Pruden received a Deck Court from the District Superintendent for having left his post without being "properly relieved" on November 15, 1921. Pruden decided to plead guilty to the charges and was fined $15.17 and was to be "confined not to exceed 20 days."[249]

During the early years of the 1920s, aviation was still in its infancy and Lindbergh had not yet made his famous trans- Atlantic flight. In September 1923, a Curtis biplane crashed approximately five miles south of the Pea Island Station. It had been en route from Langley Field in Virginia to Cape Hatteras. The crew's liberty was cancelled for the day and they went to assist in recovery operations. Other than noting that the crew returned at 5:15 P.M., there is no indication as to whether there were any survivors.[250]

In any case, the anticipated rapid development apparently did not take place. It was 1927 before there was any mention of a bridge to connect Roanoke Island with the mainland. The Dare County Commissioners sent the former Clerk of Dare County, Theodore S. Meekins, to meet with the War Department about permission to begin construction on such a bridge. Dare County already had invested $7,000 in the construction of approaches to the proposed bridge. A dredge was digging up the sound and making a roadbed. In the meantime, a ferry was being proposed to serve the citizens of Dare County all the way to Hatteras from Oregon Inlet.[251]

There was apparently no consensus on what should be done with reference to bridge construction. Later that month, *The Independent* reported that Currituck County officials wanted time to consider the economic ramifications of building such a bridge in their county. However, the paper reported that Dare County was going ahead with construction with or without assistance from Currituck County. There was discussion concerning the possibility of floating a bond issue in the amount of $25,000 in order to establish ferry service between Point Harbor and Roanoke Island.[252]

A unique perspective on the proposed bridge comes from the undated papers of W.J. Overman Sr., a Civil Engineer in his Currituck Bridge and Development Co. He believed that such a bridge would provide "an outlet to the outside world"—a rather distinctive way to phrase it. Such a bridge, in his opinion, would accommodate sportsmen and tourists alike who disliked the inconvenience of taking an expensive ferry for several uncomfortable hours. Overman indicated that the U.S. Coastal Geodetic Survey found the depth of Currituck Sound to be no more than seven feet, making the construction challenges negligible and concluded that the "construction of a bridge at this place will be a very simple matter."

Overman also provides the reader a glimpse of what the area was like during the later 1920s and early 1930s. At that time, Nags Head consisted of approximately 100 cottages, and Virginia Dare Shores was under development, with only a few buildings and a dancing pavilion in place. Kitty Hawk had a school with six teachers but the access roads were in terrible shape. However, Overman states that the 12 miles of roads on Roanoke Island itself were in good shape and were a combination of both gravel and blacktop. Overman indicated that the biggest variable would be the tourist industry which would take off after the bridge's completion.[253]

There was at least one respected citizen of Manteo who believed that a bridge would be impracticable.

248. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Pea Island, Box 16, Dated: February 5, 1922, NARA, Atlanta, GA.
249. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Pea Island, Box 16, Dated: March 18, 1922, NARA, Atlanta, GA.
250. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Pea Island, Box 17, Dated: September 4, 1923, NARA, Atlanta, GA.
251. *Elizabeth City Independent*, January 14, 1927.
252. *Elizabeth City Independent*, January 28, 1927.
253. Currituck Bridge and Development Co., from the undated personal papers of W.J. Overman Sr. Elizabeth City, N.C., (1902-1979), Civil Engineer, File 33 BOK-0-8058, Outer Banks History Center, Manteo, N.C.

Capt. E.H. Peel, a retired Coast Guard keeper, believed that a ferry would be a more viable form of transportation. He believed that with an investment of between $15,000 and $20,000, along with "the proper kind of boat," it would be a successful business venture. Peel postulated that those in favor of a bridge had not taken all the facts into consideration. He indicated that construction of a bridge that would withstand both storms and ice would cost in the range of $150,000 to $200,000. Peel felt than interest on bonds combined with maintenance and operation expenses would be approximately $20,000 a year. He believed that supporting the 200 motor vehicles in the county would eat up one- third of Dare County's budget. Combined with Currituck County refusing to underwrite the costs, it appeared to Peel that constructing a bridge was simply not an economically sound proposition.[254]

Despite nagging doubts concerning the viability of the project, the contracts for its construction were finalized in May of that 1927. The costs were also greater than initially anticipated. The W.L. Jones Company of Elizabeth City was awarded an $85,615 contract for the bridge itself. H.C. Lawrence of New Bern was to receive $45,000 for the causeway. Additional expenses were expected to total another $150,000. Dare County was authorized to issue bonds in the amount of $300,000, which was the largest ever floated in the county.

The bridge itself was to be 1,300 feet long and 20 feet wide and constructed on 11- inch thick creosote pilings placed at 15 feet intervals. The causeway was to be 300 feet long, and this included a 100- foot long metal span. The bridge was expected to be completed within four months.[255]

Voices in opposition to the project would not be silenced. W.O. Saunders, editor of *The Independent*, spoke before an audience at the Elizabeth City Chamber of Commerce. He railed about developer Frank Winch and "his gang" as well as their business tactics. Saunders cited what Winch had done in San Francisco concerning horse- drawn carts and flatly stated that this was a shady business deal. Saunders expressed concern that Winch would attempt to pull another questionable business venture in the Outer Banks if he could get away with it.[256]

In November, Saunders once again resumed the written and verbal offensive against both Frank Stick and Frank Winch. By this time, these men had established the Virginia Dare Shores, which was a subsidiary of the Carolina Development Company of Asbury Park, N.J. Saunders went on to state that in the last six months, times had been hard. Stick and Winch had overextended themselves on the hope of making vast profits, now that the bridges were providing access to Roanoke Island. Sales were not progressing at the rate expected and local merchants were slow in being paid for their services. In a small town, this could be calamitous for a businessman.

Saunders went on to state that he believed Stick was "a good fellow, a high type of citizen," but he was a dreamer and not a businessman. In his critique of Winch, Saunders was not quite as complimentary. Saunders claimed Winch was an exploiter. He used the example of Buffalo Bill, remembered today as a famous frontiersman. Winch had made him into a frontier hero, although he slaughtered buffaloes, and was a drunken, womanizing brawler. Saunders believed that both Winch and Stick deluded each other about the prospects of being able to develop the Carolina shore with the implication that the interests of the citizens of the area were not their concern.[257]

Not all that occurred concerning Dare County was contentious, although W.O. Saunders must have somewhat enjoyed running an amusing article in *The Independent* concerning developer Frank Stick on April 16, 1927. Stick and Frank Winch were planning to return from Norfolk to their respective homes. Mr. Stick informed Mr. Winch that he was going to telegram his wife in Asbury Park, N. J., that he was coming home. Mr. Winch asked his friend and partner to send one to his wife in Washington informing her of the same. To his own wife Mr. Stick sent a telegram "Will arrive home Monday morning, Love Frank." Mr. Stick then proceeded to

254. *Elizabeth City Independent*, February 4, 1927.
255. *Elizabeth City Independent*, May 13, 1927.
256. *Elizabeth City Independent*, May 27, 1927. While most Roanoke Island residents favored the bridge because it would facilitate the flow of commercial goods to and from the island, they were concerned about the influx of new residents. Tourists were fine, as long as their visits were temporary.
257. *Elizabeth City Independent*, November 11, 1927.

send one to his friend's wife in Washington stating "Daddy will see baby to- morrow [*sic*] morning. Love and Kisses, Frank." The young lady must have thought that Frank was philandering, totally unaware of the reason that Mr. Stick had sent both messages to two different locations and to two different women![258]

One way of obtaining hard currency in the 1920s was by raising ponies. At that time ponies and other animals ran free after being branded. Only when it was realized the damage these animals did to grasses and shrubs was the practice discontinued. They were hardy animals and generally able to care for themselves. When they were rounded up to be saddle broken, they had to be taught to eat corn. This was generally accomplished by stabling a pony with another used to having corn in its diet. Unfortunately for many Bankers, the increased use of the automobile reduced the demand for ponies. Whereas they used to sell for $100, they were now going for between $40- $50. Inhabitants of Roanoke Island claimed that if the ponies were not penned after they first arrived, then they would attempt to swim the six- odd miles back to their original homes.[259]

By 1926, celebrating the birth of Virginia Dare at Fort Raleigh was already a major event. There were 6,000 visitors projected to arrive on Roanoke Island on August 18. A number of steamers from Elizabeth City, Currituck, and even Norfolk were scheduled to carry the anticipated assemblage of humanity that far exceeded the population of the island. The Coast Guard provided several vessels for the occasion. Also expected to attend were such notables as Congressman Lindsay C. Warren, R-Adm. Robert E. Coontz of the United States Navy, along with former Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels.[260]

The keynote speaker for the occasion was Sir Esme Howard, the British Ambassador to the United States. In his remarks, Howard stressed the commonality of the United States and Great Britain. He was careful to state that he was not proud of all the things the British did to build their empire, but that "the establishment of civilized life as a substitute for uncivilized life was justified."[261]

An indication of the racial attitudes of the era was expressed in an article concerning a Coast Guard demonstration being provided by the members of the Coast Guard Station located on Pea Island. It stated that Pea Island was the "only Negro Coast Guard station in the world" and that "its crew has often been sought out for negro celebrations." Commander Price of the Seventh District stated, "I am right proud of these boys."[262] Price went on to state how good this crew was and that it was "a model of order and cleanliness."

Another article in the same vein was printed in *The Independent* a little over a month later. The article was about how the crab industry in Manteo had been shut down by "colored Baptists" who were attending their annual religious revival. It stated that although most of the crabs were caught by "white men," black women were the primary workers in Manteo's two crab factories and in a smaller third one at Wanchese. The article states how picking the crabmeat was done by "skilled" labor and that their presence at this revival was having an adverse effect upon the industry.[263]

In 1927, some conservation efforts continued in the region. The U.S. Biological Survey wanted to have additional restrictions placed upon the killing of migratory birds. A shorter season was proposed, and attempts were made to limit the number of wild ducks and geese that could be bagged. Congressman Lindsay C. Warren was going to take part in the discussions that were expected to prove rancorous, as many sportsmen's groups had made plans to travel to Washington to protest the proposed changes.[264] Regardless, Congress eventually did pass a Migratory Bird Act in the 1920s which placed severe limits on this activity.

On November 16, 1927, Surfman W.M. Simmons accidentally shot himself in the foot while on liberty. Surfmen Gray and Mackey took him to Dr. W.H.

258. *Elizabeth City Independent*, April 16, 1927.
259. *New York Times*, September 5, 1926.
260. *Elizabeth City Independent*, August 13, 1926.
261. *New York Times*, August 19, 1926.
262. *Elizabeth City Independent*, July 22, 1927.
263. *Elizabeth City Independent*, August 26, 1927.
264. *Elizabeth City Independent*, January 14, 1927.

Johnston in Manteo for treatment. The Coast Guard District Commander, O.A. Littlefield, was notified and he advised that Simmons be taken to the hospital in Norfolk, Virginia, for further treatment. Simmons had his liberty cancelled and he was placed absent on duty.[265]

Two weeks later, an unusual object washed ashore approximately four and- a- half miles north of the Pea Island Station. Bosun W.M. Youmans called that station for assistance when he located a mine that was on the beach. The mine was removed but no mention was made concerning its disposal.[266] This mine must have been left over from WWI when both sides had sown hundreds of thousands of mines in the sea and the ocean currents washed them ashore.

By January 1928, the bridge spanning Roanoke Sound was operational, if a few months behind schedule. The traffic traversing the span was averaging 40 cars a day, which exceeded the original estimates of 25 per day, despite the freezing weather and unfinished approaches. The State Highway Commission was expected to take responsibility soon for its maintenance. W.F. Baum, Chairman of the Dare County Commissioners, hoped that the state would improve the approaches in the coming spring. At the time, it cost 50 cents for a car to use the bridge, along with an additional 10 cents per passenger.[267]

On February 5, 1928, the first recorded death as a result of an automobile accident occurred in Dare County. Carlton Etheridge, a twenty- one year old man, had the dubious distinction of being the first individual to die in an automobile accident on Roanoke Island. He was a passenger in a Ford touring car that was "upset" according to the article. It did not define what upset meant. The driver, W.G.P. Pickett, was injured, incurring facial cuts and bruises, but the other four passengers did not sustain any injuries. Etheridge was buried in the family plot located on the island.[268]

Theodore S. Meekins apparently made a handsome profit on a salvage deal. An oil tanker, the *Paraguay*, ran aground on the previous December 4, off Kitty Hawk. Although the vessel broke in two, the cargo of 800,000 gallons of fuel oil was intact. The value of this oil was estimated to be around $60,000. The word was that Meekins was able to purchase the vessel and its cargo for a mere $100! Captain T.C. Conwell of the Wood Towing Corporation stated that salvage efforts were expected to commence shortly.[269] One of the wealthiest individuals on the island and one of the Dare County Commissioners appeared to have been "lucky" enough to have the right connections to benefit from such a windfall.

A local boy came back to his roots and reminisced about how things had been. After his retirement as the associate editor of *The Independent*, Victor Meekins stated that "Life in Dare County is not what it used to be." Years ago, there were no roads or autos. People only worked two months out of the year when the fish were running and sat around doing very little during the rest of the year. Wants were simple and there was little cash to be had. Now people want cars, radios, and telephones. Here was one man who believed that progress was not making Roanoke Island a better place to live. One would think that a former newspaperman, such as Meekins, would have had a much different perspective of life.[270]

In the summer of 1928, there was talk about constructing a hotel of at least fifty rooms to accommodate the increased tourist trade. People were being turned away due to the lack of rooms. The ferry and new bridge had made Roanoke Island much more accessible than it was previously. Summer fishing parties provided more employment than in the previous five summers. Although the bridge was anticipated to have ten cars traverse it daily, there were actually between fifty and ninety vehicles making the crossing. It was believed that once tourists became aware of first- class accommodations, they would start to flock to the

265. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Pea Island, Box 19, Dated: November 16, 1927, NARA, Atlanta, GA.
266. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, N.C., Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Pea Island, Dated: November 30, 1927, NARA, Atlanta, GA.
267. *Elizabeth City Independent*, January 6, 1928.
268. *Elizabeth City Independent*, February 10, 1928.
269. *Elizabeth City Independent*, February 10, 1928.
270. *Elizabeth City Independent*, April 6, 1928. For additional anecdotes on life throughout the early part of the century on Roanoke Island see, Suzanne Tate's, *Memories of Manteo and Roanoke Island, N.C.* (Nags Head, N.C.: Nags Head Art, 1988).

island. The project was estimated to cost approximately $100,000.[271] In a little over a year, such grandiose plans would come to a screeching halt when the Great Depression would hold the nation in its grip for over a decade.

Concomitant with the idea of building a hotel came renewed interest in making Fort Raleigh a landmark. Dare County not only was connected to the mainland by a bridge but it also had ten miles of highway running through it. Tourism was anticipated to surge and the Fort Raleigh site was viewed as a possible attraction that could draw tourists on a year- round basis. There were questions raised as to why the Wright Brothers were getting a memorial while Virginia Dare was being overlooked. It was suggested that either the state or national government take over the Fort Raleigh site and develop it into a viable project.[272]

Every locale in both America and the world has its story of a supposed miracle, and so does Manteo on Roanoke Island. After 17 weeks, Robert Midgett, the 16- year old son of Number One Surfman George B. Midgett of the Nags Head Station recovered after a major bout with influenza. Physicians who were treating the young man had despaired of his ever coming out of a coma. Day after day, he lay in bed staring into space. His condition was so precarious that one time he was declared dead. However, his mother never believed that he would not recover. She was a deeply religious woman and he was her oldest living son. Each day she visited him and prayed at his bedside. When medical personnel told the mother to pray for his end, she replied that he was going to make a complete recovery. The financially strapped family was finally forced to take Robert home to Manteo from the expensive Norfolk hospital to meet his expected demise. While at home, the boy's Uncle Eber placed a radio in his room as a gesture of kindness. One Sunday, the radio played "The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi," which was Robert's favorite song. He began singing to accompany it and his mother rushed into the room. At this point, Robert made a complete recovery that baffled medical science. Robert later stated "The radio woke me up."[273] There are many things in life for which there is no explanation, and this was one of them.

Roanoke Island was slowly entering the new century with a sense of hope. New bridges and roads provided greater access to the island than ever before. The interest in Fort Raleigh was continuing to grow and concurrently tourism was beginning to fuel the national economy. The island was gradually becoming part of mainstream North Carolina. There was every reason to expect the future to look bright. However, dark clouds were on the horizon that not only cast their shadow over the idyllic Roanoke Island but also spread gloom over the entire United States along with the rest of the world.

271. *Elizabeth City Independent*, July 13, 1928.
272. *Elizabeth City Independent*, July 30, 1928.
273. *Elizabeth City Independent*, June 28, 1929.

Chapter Five: The Modern Era—Expansion, the Great Depression, and *The Lost Colony*

By 1928, people in both Manteo and Roanoke Island began to believe that a transition was in progress. Interest began to increase in the "Birthplace of English Civilization in America." Thousands of individuals began to trek to the island for the annual celebration being held each August while others came to enjoy the beaches or the fishing. Just when the future began to look bright, the Stock Market crashed on October 29, 1929, signaling the commencement of the Great Depression. However, in many ways, this calamity proved to be a blessing in disguise for this sleepy community. Largely as a result of the economic downturn of the nation, Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected the nation's president on the basis of his "New Deal" policies. Organizations, such as the Works Progress Administration, the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Park Service, poured millions of dollars into the island's economy that otherwise might never have been allocated. As a result of this cash infusion for regional improvement, Roanoke Island underwent a radical transformation and began its transition into what it is today: the home of the Waterfront Theater, Fort Raleigh National Historic Site, and an important part of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore.

During July 1930, the Commandant of the Coast Guard, R- Adm. J.C. Billard, inspected the stations in the Norfolk District accompanied by his wife and several other officers. The admiral viewed the crew as they drilled with the beach apparatus. He then departed to inspect other stations farther south. Admiral Billard must have been especially impressed with the Pea Island crew because he made a personal notation in the logbook. In it, the admiral stated, "I have greatly enjoyed my visit to this station to- day. A well kept station, and a fine looking, snappy and alert crew."[274]

An indication of the groundwork being laid by the principal players in Manteo and Roanoke Island might be gleaned from a 1930 *New York Times* article concerning Roanoke Island. The 1930 annual commemoration of the birth of Virginia Dare included a pageant involving several hundred inhabitants of Roanoke Island. The article's author reiterated the story of the "Lost Colony." However, in closing, he postulated that Fort Raleigh would eventually be made into a national monument.[275] It appears there was a carefully orchestrated plan in the works to place Fort Raleigh on the national map of places for tourists to visit, while concomitantly bringing an infusion of money to a cash- strapped region.

A scandal of major proportions erupted during May 1930 on Roanoke Island, riveting the attention of the local populace with its explicit details. Mary Pugh, of Wanchese, accused the scion of a prominent North Carolina family, William Nathaniel Holloway, aged 21, of attempted rape. According to the newspaper, Miss Pugh was "one of the prettiest and most highly respected little girls in that county of fair women." Holloway's wealth initially worked against him in this

274. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Pea Island, Box 21, Dated: July 24, 1930, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Atlanta, GA.
275. *New York Times*, August 17, 1930.

insular island. He was young, good looking, and drove a fast roadster, creating intense popular sentiment against him in a largely economically marginal community. However, Miss Pugh's account of what transpired appeared, at best, inconsistent. According to Miss Pugh, Holloway attempted to make love to her and removed both his and her clothes. He carried her to a bed and she claimed to have fought him off, grabbed a bathrobe, climbed out the window, and ran to a neighbor for assistance. A medical examination concluded that, "her virginity was unimpaired," although there was a bruise on her hip and several scratches on her body, initially lending credence to her story. At the courthouse, Judge W. F. Baum ordered everyone except the principals and their counsel out of the courtroom.

Over the next few days, many people began to believe the girl's story was fabricated. A number of individuals openly expressed the belief that Miss Pugh was a consenting partner of Holloway but at the last minute got "cold feet" before consummating the act. The girl's parents, wishing to avoid any further scandal, decided the best course of action was to end the matter as expeditiously as possible. Holloway pleaded nolo contendere to a charge of simple assault and was free to go after paying court costs.[276]

There was a rumor in September 1930 that the segregated black Coast Guardsmen serving on Pea Island might move to a new location upon completion of the new facilities then under construction. The former U.S. Lifesaving Service Station compiled one of the most enviable records in the history of the Service and there was a genuine local affection for the group. The speculation was that they would be moved to an older facility at Oregon Inlet and that an all white crew from that station would be transferred to the new facilities.[277] This did not sit well with many inhabitants of Roanoke Island. However, all this was merely a rumor and nothing transpired.

In what must strike one as somewhat ironic, the Pea Island Lifesaving Station received three Good Conduct medals. One of these was for Chief Bosuns Mate George E. Pruden. Pruden had not only been promoted and made keeper but now was receiving an award for exemplary conduct as a Coastguardsman. He must have seen the error of his ways or, more likely, Pruden had not recommended himself for any disciplinary action for any infractions that he may have committed while serving as keeper.[278]

Shortly after Christmas 1930, the infrequent body came ashore on the Outer Banks, this time in the marshes approximately a mile southwest of the Pea Island Station. The individual was about 5' 6", with a dark complexion, missing a front tooth, and had a tattoo of a "nacked lady" on his left arm. Unlike during the previous century, the District Commander and the coroner were both notified.[279] Even into the twentieth century, the Outer Banks were still a dangerous stretch of water that would claim the unwary.

By 1935, Dare County was being touted as entering "an opportunity making epoch." A large advertisement in the *Dare County Times* described the business opportunities in the area as "not readily grasped." Not only did the advertisement extol the region's history but also its future. "It has 17 miles of paved ocean front driveway." There were hotels, modern facilities of every sort, along with "increasing commercial interests."[280] It was apparent that a concerted effort was being made to lure investors on both the local and national level to Dare County and Roanoke Island.

A major portion of the modern history of Roanoke Island revolves around the *The Lost Colony* play, which has presented approximately 4,000 performances to date. In a very early template of the concept of "build it, they will come," playwright Paul Green was commissioned to write the script for the production. Green was a native of North Carolina whose roots were in rural Harnett County. In 1927, he won the Pulitzer Prize for his Broadway play, *In Abraham's Bosom*, which was a depiction of black life in the South. Green was also the first playwright

276. *Elizabeth City Independent*, May 9, 23, 30, 1930.
277. *Elizabeth City Independent*, September 19, 1930.
278. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Pea Island, Box 21, Dated: September 30, 1930, NARA, Atlanta, GA.
279. Record Group 26, Records of the U.S. Coast Guard, Norfolk District, Lifesaving Station Logbooks, Pea Island, Box 21, Dated: December 27, 1930, NARA, Atlanta, GA.
280. *Dare County Times*, July 5, 1935.

from the South to receive both national and international recognition for his work. What was seminal about his work was that Green had formulated a new dramatic art form that is now known as symphonic drama, which combined historical circumstances along with music, dance, and dialogue. His works attracted prominent stars of the era, such as Bette Davis and Will Rogers, to perform parts in them. Andy Griffith, star of *Matlock* and the classic *Andy Griffith Show*, both long- running television series, along with the silver screen hit, *No Time for Sergeants* to his credit, played the part of Sir Walter Raleigh for seven seasons during the 1940s and early 1950s, prior to achieving national prominence. It takes relatively little imagination to realize the benefit of involving Green in the contemplated production for the 350th anniversary celebrations—his abilities combined with national recognition made the production a preordained success.

The Lost Colony was initially presented under the joint sponsorship of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Carolina Playmakers of the University of North Carolina. The production was directed by Professor Samuel Selden of the University of North Carolina, while Dr. Frederick H. Koch, director of the Carolina Players, was the supervising director. The principal actors were from the Works Progress Administration Federal Theater.[281]

It was obvious that the date for the grand opening of the *The Lost Colony* in 1937 was not selected at random. The Fourth of July, America's birthday, was the day of the initial performance of a play that is now over sixty- five years old and the longest running outdoor stage show in American history. *New York Times* drama critic Brooks Atkinson attended the show's opening performance and wrote, "Paul Green has written a history with a compassion that turns its characters into unconscious symbols of a brave new world." A review such as that, having a national exposure, could not help but attract an audience far beyond the limited boundaries of Dare County and North Carolina.

The Civilian Conservation Corps, over the years, provided numerous "extras" or supporting actors for the performances. These individuals acted as both Indians and colonists. This not only kept production costs down but also gave the members of the CCC additional insight into colonial American history. Even as late as 1941, the Manteo camp provided 42 individuals to assist in the cast.[282]

The commemoration of the 350th anniversary of the birth of Virginia Dare in 1937 was a significant event whose impact is still being felt today on the island's economy. It was observed, by many at the time, that the 350th year celebration was an unusual time frame to have such an event instead of, say, the 300th or 400th year. However, the 1930s were a very unusual period in American history. The nation was in the throes of a depression, the likes of which the nation had never experienced before. People were grasping at anything that could provide them a ray of hope for a better future. For many people living on the Outer Banks and Roanoke Island, celebrating the birth of Virginia Dare was potentially the magic elixir that would help by not only placing Roanoke Island in the national spotlight, but also by providing desperately needed jobs for a section of North Carolina that had traditionally lagged economically behind other sections of the state.

Initially, the leading citizens of Roanoke Island wanted to have 1934, the 350th anniversary of the landing of Captains Phillip Amadas and Arthur Barlowe, as the year for their projected celebrations and festivities. The Roanoke Island Historical Association planned to have the Sesquitercentennial that year. They formulated a plan that included financing, publicity, and inducing the Federal government to finance a monument and building construction. When these ideas were being conceptualized, these individuals mistakenly believed that financing would be the LEAST of their concerns! They intended to sell souvenirs and have each child bring a dime to school to get the financial campaign started. Moreover, the Association noted that celebrating the Sesquitercentennial was not unusual and that both Philadelphia and St. Louis had already had commemorations for theirs.[283]

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281. *New York Times*, July 11, 1937.
282. Record Group 22, Records of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Entry 192, Box 48, Wilfred J. Gregson, Regional CCC Inspector to Director U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Dated: August 6, 1941, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.
283. RIHA (Roanoke Island Historical Association), General Manager I. Extrinsic Records, Executive Files, Roanoke Island Historical Committee, 1931-1934, Undated, Outer Banks History Center, Manteo, N.C.

W.O. Saunders, the editor of the *Elizabeth City Independent* even traveled to New York City in December 1931 to further the cause. Saunders stated that he expected the Sesquitercentennial to cost $500,000.[284] He informed *The Times* that Josephus Daniels, former Secretary of the Navy and soon to be Ambassador to Mexico under Roosevelt, was among the individuals promoting the event. Saunders further hoped to secure funding from both the state and Federal governments for the venture.[285]

Congress went so far as to establish the Roanoke Colony Commission, which was composed of members of both the House and Senate. Senator Joseph T. Robinson of Arkansas was the chairman, and Congressman Lindsay C. Warren of North Carolina was the vice- chairman. The commission intended to visit Roanoke Island in August and present its report to Congress in December.[286] Two days later, *The Times* erroneously reported that government support for the celebrations "was virtually assured today" because the Congressional Commission was presenting a favorable report.[287]

There seemed to be a behind- the- scenes campaign being waged to increase the awareness of Americans about the significance of Roanoke Island to the history of the United States. There was an interesting article in *The New York Times* during the summer concerning Thomas Hariot and rare books. Hariot's, "A briefe and true report of the new found land of Virginia," was the first detailed information conveyed back to England concerning the colony of Virginia. Unfortunately, this was only an extract and the entire chronicle was never published. The article went on to describe in detail the importance of Hariot's treatise. Hariot was a distinguished scholar in both mathematics and philosophy. Although not a large book, *The Times* described the original edition as "typographically . . . , one of the most beautiful works of the period." Hariot provided in rich and glowing detail, information concerning both the land and its inhabitants.[288] Hariot's work was influential in forming initial European opinion concerning the New World for generations.

However, even the best intentions can be sidetracked and waylaid. The Great Depression accomplished exactly that. The state and Federal governments were in no position to underwrite such a massive project. The Depression's vice grip on the nation's economy precluded what many individuals might have considered "frivolous" spending on either the state or national level.

An indication of how badly the Great Depression affected North Carolina and Roanoke Island was the announcement that the 7th Coast Guard District expected to cut its already depleted ranks by another 10 percent. District Commander W.W. Bennett stated that at least 30 surfmen would be discharged and many others would be reduced in rank as a result of the cutbacks. This would leave several stations severely undermanned. Additionally, several picket boats were to be decommissioned. Three local men who enlisted the previous year, Carl Scarborough, Rollins Daniels, and W.P. Twiford, were expected to be among the first released from service.[289]

In an effort to forestall any personnel reductions by the Coast Guard, R. Bruce Etheridge and W.O. Saunders traveled to Washington and personally visited the Coast Guard Commandant, Adm. H.G. Hamlet. Hamlet flatly stated, "If I could have my way not one of my men would be sacrificed; but I am helpless." The Coast Guard's appropriations had been slashed by 20%, from $25,000,000 to $20,000,000, resulting in the loss of 1,400 of the service's 11,103 enlisted men. While Hamlet hoped the reductions were temporary, many believed this action signaled the beginning of the end for the Coast Guard. Dare County would be one of the hardest hit areas in the state as a result of the projected cutbacks.[290]

Still, the leading citizens of Roanoke Island were undaunted. They did not miss a step and began to focus their sights on 1937, the 350th anniversary of

284. There were various arguments among scholars as to what the proper name for the celebration should be.
285. *New York Times*, December 8, 1931.
286. *New York Times*, July 14, 1932.
287. *New York Times*, August 16, 1932.
288. *New York Times*, July 30, 1933.
289. *Elizabeth City Independent*, May 26, 1933.
290. *Elizabeth City Independent*, June 2, 1933.

the birth of Virginia Dare, when hopefully, the economic atmosphere of the nation would be more conducive to the acquisition of the necessary funding.

However, how to go about changing the dates did not go unchallenged by opposing ideas. Some individuals still wanted to mount a large celebration in 1934 commemorating the initial landing of Amadas and Barlowe. However, many individuals believed that mounting any sort of major celebration in 1934 would "take the edge" off the projected 1937 celebrations.[291] In the end, a consensus was arrived at for the 1937 date, with only local celebrations being held in 1934.

W.O. Saunders, President of the Roanoke Island Historical Association, announced that the celebration would be held in 1937. He pointed out that the unavailability of state or Federal funding in 1934 was a major factor in the decision. The opinion of the executive committee of the Roanoke Island Historical Association was that "the unsettled conditions in America and the rest of the world will be well behind us in another year or two." Additionally, there were expected to be better roads connecting Roanoke Island with the mainland and the bridge tolls were expected to be eliminated by that time.[292]

There were two interesting aspects of the Roanoke Island Commemoration that took place on the national level. The first was that the United States Post Office decided to issue a commemorative stamp depicting Virginia Dare as its central theme. President Franklin D. Roosevelt was an avid philatelist and believed that the event was worthy of a commemorative stamp to be issued to honor the occasion. Not only did Roosevelt contact James A. Farley, the Postmaster General and his political confidant, about his desire for a postage stamp to be commissioned; he also took a keen interest in the design of this stamp. Roosevelt "suggested" that the stamp be square in shape and this was the first time an American postage stamp was square. Additionally, Roosevelt indicated he would like the color to be "baby blue" and sketched a design that contained a man with a musket in his hands, standing in front of a log cabin, along with a woman holding her baby, Virginia Dare, in her arms. The Post Office Department printed 20,000,000 copies of these stamps and sold numerous first day issues from the Manteo Post Office on August 18, 1937, the 350th anniversary of the birth of Virginia Dare. One odd feature of this stamp was that it sold for five cents. The cost of mailing a first class letter at the time was only three cents, limiting the usefulness of the Dare stamp.

The commemoration of Virginia Dare's birth also attracted international interest. British Guiana and Newfoundland issued postage stamps celebrating the occasion. These stamps had the likeness of Sir Humphrey Gilbert, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Queen Elizabeth I. Raleigh had stopped in British Guiana during his travels and later penned "The Discovery of Guiana" recalling his exploits. Sir Humphrey Gilbert had traveled to Newfoundland, although he never established a permanent colony on the island.[293]

The story behind the fifty- cent commemorative coin issued by the United States Mint is also quite unusual. Despite the desperate economic plight of the majority of American citizens, there were a vast number of commemorative coins issued by the U.S. Mint during the 1930s celebrating virtually everybody and everything. The obverse, or front of the Roanoke Island 350th anniversary coin, depicts Sir Walter Raleigh; the actor Errol Flynn was the model for his likeness. However, the correct spelling of "Ralegh," which had been used for hundreds of years, was not used. Since Congress authorized "Raleigh," that was how the name appeared on the coin. The reverse, or backside of the coin, had the likeness of Eleanor Dare holding her daughter, Virginia. In an unusual move, Congress authorized a minimum number of coins to be struck rather than a maximum. Congressman Lindsay C. Warren presented the first coin struck to President Roosevelt.[294]

Initial sales were brisk; so after the first 25,000 were struck, another 25,000 were minted. Each coin cost $1.65, of which fifteen cents went for postage. However, the public interest began to wane as

291. *Elizabeth City Independent*, May 5, 1933.
292. *Elizabeth City Independent*, May 10, 1933.
293. *New York Times*, May 30, 1937.
294. *Dare County Times*, April 2, 1937.

Americans finally developed "fatigue" from the proliferation of commemorative coins being sold during the era and sales stagnated. Almost 30,000 were returned to the mint and melted down. Some coins were still available to the public as late as 1940. The Roanoke Island Historical Association had a small supply that could be purchased at the Fort Raleigh Museum or by contacting C.S. Meekins, who was the treasurer of the RIHA.[295] Today, one of these coins fetches between $200- $300 each.

A particularly interesting side story concerns Margalene Thomas, who proudly proclaims her Midgett ancestry. Over the years, this lady has played every female role in the "Lost Colony" production. As a very young girl, she was paid for her part in the production with several of these commemorative coins. As times were tough during the period, most ended up being used to pay for family expenses. However, she still has one remaining coin, that she still wears proudly around her neck as a reminder of he early childhood days in the "Lost Colony."

National interest in the projected celebrations began in earnest during May 1937. The event was going to be sponsored by both the state of North Carolina and the Federal government. Expected to make appearances were Josephus Daniels, at that time Ambassador to Mexico and former Secretary of the Navy, North Carolina Gov. Clyde R. Hoey, and former Gov. J.C.B. Ehringhaus, North Carolina Senators Josiah W. Bailey and Robert E. Reynolds, North Carolina Representative Lindsey C. Warren, and Orville Wright. The centerpiece of the festivities would be Paul Green's *The Lost Colony*, which was to be presented numerous times during the merriment of that summer. However, there was no mention of Josephus Daniels attending the 350th anniversary commemoration in any newspapers. This was strange because of his close personal relationship with Roosevelt. FDR was his Assistant Secretary of the Navy during WW I, following in the footsteps of his cousin Teddy. Daniels was also the only individual able to continue to address FDR as "Franklin" when he became president, without incurring the wrath of Roosevelt. In turn, Roosevelt always referred to Daniels as "Chief."

The open- air amphitheater was expected to have a 10,000- seat capacity (either an obvious exaggeration or typographical error on the part of *The Times*). Today, there are 1,600 available for the audience. Most of the 120 actors would be locals, and professionals from throughout the country would perform only the major parts (over time, all the parts would be played by the local inhabitants). Newly discovered drawings of John White were transported from Great Britain, along with numerous other artifacts, and placed on display. Even a number of Indian crops such as maize, tobacco, squash, and pumpkins were planted to provide an aura of authenticity to the occasion. [296] Later, national interest would soar geometrically after the press announced that President Roosevelt would attend the ceremonies commemorating the birth of Virginia Dare on August 18. This was just the sort of "shot in the arm" that the backers of this event needed to give the anniversary national attention.

Although administration insiders knew in May that Roosevelt planned to visit Roanoke Island and attend *The Lost Colony*, the American public did not receive the news until late July.[297] *The New York Times* reported that FDR intended to travel by train to Elizabeth City and from there the Coast Guard would transport him to Roanoke Island. Not only was Roosevelt going to attend the play but was going to be the keynote speaker on August 18. However, *The Times* added the caveat that the president's attendance was contingent upon the "legislative and foreign situation at the time."[298]

The collective efforts of those who wanted Roanoke Island on the map began to pay off in 1937. Newspapers all along the East Coast and, at least as far west as Kansas, printed articles concerning the upcoming festivities and the restoration of Fort Raleigh. In April, the *Atlanta Constitution* ran an article on the WPA's efforts to restore the site. The article also noted that Plymouth and Jamestown

295. *New York Times*, August 25, 1940.
296. *New York Times*, May 23, 1937.
297. An internal WPA memorandum indicates that Roosevelt made a decision at least as early as April 1937 that he would attend the festivities. See RG-69, Works Progress Administration, Division of Information, Records Concerning the Restoration of Historic Shrines, 1937-1938, North Carolina to Ohio, Entry 74, Box 9, George W. Coan Jr. to James R. Branson, Dated: May 5, 1937.
298. *New York Times*, July 28, 1937.

previously received national recognition for their early colonization while Roanoke Island had all but been ignored.[299]

The Richmond Times- Dispatch ran a piece covering Roanoke Island in June. The article provided a brief history of the island and detailed the efforts of the Roanoke Island Historical Association to obtain recognition for the historical importance of Fort Raleigh to the United States. It also reported that Virginia's Governor Peery was cooperating with North Carolina to make the occasion a success and recounted the problems that the National Park Service had with the authenticity of the reconstructed buildings at the Fort Raleigh site.

The announcement that FDR would attend the festivities was the "crowning achievement" for the efforts of all involved. The article went on to express concerns that the "picaresque" and "quaint" qualities of the town might be lost because of the expected boom in tourism. Manteo reminded one of a New England fishing village. However, it was noted, with "tongue in cheek," that bathrooms in private dwellings were still considered a novelty on Roanoke Island. Retold was a story about a New York City woman who married a local man who installed a bathroom in their home upon her arrival. A relative said, "you shouldn't spoil her so. Ain't the sound good enough?" Water still was drawn from brackish wells or from rain barrels, and many homes still used kerosene lamps for lighting.

The article concluded by describing the Fort Raleigh site and *The Lost Colony* play. Although the authenticity of the buildings was suspect, "reputable geologists" certified the rocks that formed the fireplace in the chapel "as being part of the ballast carried by the first colony." Frank Stick, former illustrator turned Realtor, designed the chapel. It was hoped that thousands of people would flock to Roanoke Island that summer and observe all the activities.[300] This was a very positive piece that undoubtedly influenced many individuals to see first- hand what Roanoke Island was like.

Three days before the Virginia Dare birthday celebration, the *Daily Capital* in Topeka, Kansas, ran an article about Roanoke Island. Although not very long, it covered the major facts concerning the island's history and the festivities in progress. It made the observation many other papers did not that this was a colonization project and not merely a forward base for piracy, which was not exactly accurate.[301] The article was a little too late to have people make plans for that year, but must have provided "food for thought" when it came to the future vacation plans of its readership affluent enough to be able to afford a vacation during the Great Depression.

Roosevelt's speech of August 18 had decidedly partisan overtones, to put it mildly. After initially speaking about the significance of Roanoke Island, the president's address shifted into a political statement. Even members of his own party saw the speech as a direct challenge to the opposition of FDR's attempt to "pack" the Supreme Court with judges favorable to his New Deal programs and other legislation Roosevelt was attempting to push through Congress. Many viewed the speech as an attempt to purge the Democratic Party of any opponents to FDR's New Deal policies. Several individuals highly objected to a reference FDR made to a speech made by British Lord Macaulay in which Macaulay predicted the downfall of American democracy. Others faulted FDR for, as usual, speaking in generalities rather then addressing specifics.[302] Roosevelt's attempt to add two more justices to the Supreme Court failed miserably and wound up alienating many of his former supporters.[303]

British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden sent a message, read by Lindsay C. Warren, that conveyed the pride Great Britain had in founding the United States. It went on to talk of the pioneering spirit of

299. *Atlanta Constitution*, April 25, 1937.
300. *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, June 6, 1937.
301. *Topeka Daily Capital*, August 15, 1937. Initially, Roanoke Island was to be a base from which the English could attack Spanish treasure ships. The earliest colonization efforts involved men only, which supports this thesis. Later, the "Lost Colony" included women, which suggested a serious attempt at colonization and not merely plunder.
302. *New York Times*, August 20, 1937.
303. Initially, FDR wanted to add as many as six justices to "aid" justices who were over seventy years of age and who were slowing down the court's calendar. However, by the time he tried to compromise the number down to two additional justices, the initial uproar he caused made any compromise impossible.

the early settlers. Eden was honored to pay homage to the celebration.[304] No mention was made of either the Revolutionary War or the War of 1812.

A humorous observation was made on the success of *The Lost Colony* the following year in *The New York Times*. The primary occupations before the coming of the anniversary celebration had either been fishing or serving with one of the numerous lighthouses or lifesaving stations located in the region. However, the influx of tourists had created a problem of sorts. There was a shortage of bathtubs. Two individuals, Bud Quidley and Homer Austin, had become the installers of bathtubs, although the article stated that neither of them had ever used one for "conventional use." Bud Quidley did not understand that there were only so many homes that could be outfitted with such a modern convenience. Interestingly, his father, who was a fisherman, resisted any attempt by Bud to introduce a bathtub into his own home, presenting him with one less opportunity to demonstrate his skills at his newly acquired profession and earn some additional income.[305]

In retrospect, the Great Depression was more beneficial to the development of Roanoke Island than harmful. Four agencies became very involved in the overall development of both the island and Paul Green's *The Lost Colony* play during the 1930s. These were the National Park Service, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Civilian Conservation Corps, and the Works Progress Administration. These four agencies pumped untold millions of dollars into the local economy during the 1930s and 1940s. The only two agencies still in existence, the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, still provide jobs to inhabitants of the island.

The Civilian Conservation Corps was not the original name of this large group of mainly young men from across the nation who engaged in labor-intensive work throughout the nation. It was initially called Emergency Conservation Work. Although Franklin D. Roosevelt received credit for being the architect of the program, the basic concept dates back to 1912 when Harvard philosopher William James published "The Moral Equivalent of War," calling for youth conscription to work the land. Roosevelt later claimed never to have read the essay but thought the idea was "interesting."[306] The majority of historians concur that the CCC became one of FDR's most favorite projects.

Aside from declaring a "Bank Holiday" immediately after his inauguration in order to stabilize a faltering banking system, Roosevelt faced the daunting task of getting the nation back on it economic feet by devising other immediate steps necessary to aid the nation's recovery. He met with the Secretaries of War, Interior, Agriculture, and Labor on March 15, 1933, and presented them an outline of his proposed agency for America's youth.[307] Congress atypically rushed through the approval process, making only three amendments to the initial proposal. One was that applicants would not be discriminated against by virtue of race, color, or creed. In practice, it was difficult to enforce, especially since the director, Robert Fechner, was a Southerner and was loathe to interfere with the status quo in that region of the country. On March 31, 1933, FDR signed legislation creating the new agency. Congress actually provided Roosevelt with greater latitude than he requested to make the program a success. The case has been made that the reason the CCC made it through the legislative process so rapidly was that there were more important events taking place nationally and internationally upon which the public's attention was focused.[308] Japan's actions in the Far East and Hitler's rise in Germany, along with Fascist Italy in Europe, were the primary culprits.

Upon assuming the office of the president, FDR faced innumerable problems, including what to do with the vast numbers of unemployed American youths in both urban and rural environments. Roosevelt was multi- faceted and he was particularly astute in solving two problems with a single solution. America's youth and land were both being wasted.[309] There was a vast amount of work that America needed accomplished both in its

304. *New York Times*, August 19, 1937.
305. New York *Times*, July 10, 1938.
306. John A. Salmond, *The Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942: A New Deal Case Study* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1967), 4-5.
307. Ibid., 11.
308. Ibid., 24-25.
309. Ibid., 4.

infrastructure and undeveloped areas. Roads, parks, schools, and other things needed either upgrading or initial construction. Author Leslie Alexander Lacy states that the CCC "was the greatest blessing ever to come to the forest, soil, and water of America."[310] Vast areas of public land needed protection from erosion, forests needed work, and wetlands needed improvements so Americans from all walks of life could enjoy them. Although machinery was at a premium, labor was exceptionally cheap. The CCC enrolled mainly young men, although there were a number of WWI veterans (approximately 10 percent), into the program. They were provided with uniforms that were military in appearance, to the chagrin of many, fed, and received $30 a month, most of which went home to their families. There were many who complained and those individuals generally did not last, but for many others, the CCC provided work experience and income for their families which they were otherwise unable to obtain during a time of massive unemployment throughout the nation. One must take into consideration that unemployment was running at approximately 25 percent across the nation, with some areas reaching as high as 80 percent.

Virtually everybody was involved in manual labor and the one thing consistent in the CCC was the type of food it provided to the young men. Although the quality of food that was provided might have varied from camp to camp, it was generally wholesome and the average individual in the CCC ate far better than the family members he left behind or his "civilian" counterpart. Although the camps were segregated (designated "W" for whites and "C" for colored), the type of food served both white and black members was the same, although high in fat and cholesterol by today's standards.

A typical breakfast consisted of eggs, sausage or bacon, bread and butter, fruit, milk, and coffee. Lunch might include stew, potatoes, bread and butter, vegetables, fruit, and coffee. The typical evening meal might include beef or chicken, potatoes, vegetables, more fruit, bread and butter, along with milk. Coffee generally was not served with the evening meal.[311] The heavy physical demands made on CCC members burned off these calories. There are numerous pictures of CCC members, especially unit photographs, that were taken, and the vast majority of CCC members were a far cry from being overweight, despite the large number of calories they consumed on a daily basis.

Like the military units they were compared to, CCC companies were subject to inspection. The company commander, along with the cadre of supply and mess sergeants, was drawn from the regular or reserve armed forces and were responsible for the overall welfare of their charges, although the actual work these individuals performed was done under civilian supervision. Occasionally, there were naval or marine officers assigned to either command or serve in CCC companies, but this was the exception rather than the norm. As they were under military supervision, certain standards were expected to be adhered to by CCC members. Individuals were to have access to weekly religious services and this was always the first item of inspection. Recreational activities were provided and consisted of sports, reading material, radio, movies, and occasional dances and trips.

Educational opportunities were also an item that was reported on during these inspections. In addition to reading, mathematics, and writing, other subjects were also taught. Citizenship, general science, and journalism, in addition to woodworking and auto mechanics, were also available to the Corps members. At most of the camps, such as Company 426 at Camp Virginia Dare, the appearance of the mess hall and buildings was rated either good or excellent and the camp received an overall rating of excellent in this area. However, the morale and spirit rating for this camp was deemed only fair. This may be due in part to the seven AWOL's (absent without leave) and thirty-one discharges for other reasons out of a total strength of one hundred and seventy individuals assigned to the company.

CCC Company 436 also had its own newspaper, *The Log*, which reported information considered of value to its members. *The Log* was a rather primitive

310. Leslie Alexander Lacy, *The Soil Soldiers: The Civilian Conservation Corps and the Great Depression* (Radnor, PA: Chilton Book Co., 1976), 175.

311. Record Group 35, Records of the Civilian Conservation Corps, Entry 115, N.C. P-63, Dare County, Dated: May 6-11, 1936, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.

and amateurish journalistic attempt, but it served a purpose. It informed its members of transfers of personnel as well as newcomers to the unit. This publication also provided information concerning boxing matches, which were the highlight of virtually every camp's life. Worship services were posted along with the times they were held. Local businesses advertised in *The Log*. A single copy was five cents and a monthly subscription ran ten cents. Unfortunately, there is not enough available information to determine how often *The Log* was published.[312]

In 1936, the company published a much more professional looking magazine entitled the *High Tide*. Unlike its predecessor, *The Log*, which was composed on a typewriter and had no pictures, the *High Tide* provided the reader with pictures and was produced on a printing press. This was an annual publication that provided a history of the unit, along with various other information about both the camp and its personnel. Boxing was still a "hot button" issue, but there was more diversity in the overall contents. Educational opportunities were covered, as was the availability of the canteen, and it included a number of pictures of the camp staff and CCC members. There was also a page dedicated to a Hermon Horne, an individual who passed away in 1935. There was no indication of how he died but he was in his early twenties and one can only assume it was either an accident or an illness that led to his demise. Local businesses placed a number of advertisements in both publications in order to attract customers from the company.[313]

It is interesting to note the remarks made concerning the camp's sanitation. The water supply and drainage were deemed satisfactory and the garbage was removed on a daily basis. However, the inspection revealed that the camp possessed "flush type latrines." The town of Manteo did not even get the Works Progress Administration to construct a sewage system until 1942.[314] As previously stated, the CCC was living at a level better than that of many other Americans of the period.

A later inspection of the camp conducted in October 1939 was not nearly as flattering or complimentary. The mess facilities were only rated fair while the barracks were considered poor. The inspector noted that there was an excessive number of desertions. He attributed these to the combination of individuals being unsuited to camp life along with camp officers either being inexperienced or overbearing. The inspector indicated that the problem with the officers had been corrected but did not indicate what corrective measures were taken. He also stated that he believed there had been improvements in the quality of CCC selectees.[315]

The report of the last inspection available is also informative. This inspection was conducted in March 1942, shortly after the outbreak of WWII. The inspector commented on the neatness and cleanliness of the personnel assigned to the company. The buildings, although old, were being maintained in the best manner possible. The desertion rate was high, but the inspector chose to make no special note of it other than the actual statistics, and the camp discipline and its administration were deemed satisfactory. The inspector's comment of the camp being in an "area of considerable importance for National Defense" is noteworthy.[316] The previous July, a Federal appropriation had been made for an airfield on Roanoke Island, in the amount of $100,000. Over the years, the importance of shipping in the Outer Banks region still was essential to the United States government and the nation's overall economic recovery.

In 1935, there was some concern that the CCC might relocate Camp Virginia Dare on Roanoke Island because of a "selfish few." It appeared that while the great majority of the islanders appreciated the efforts made to eliminate mosquitoes and prevent

312. *The Log*, June 22, 1935, Uncatalogued Recently Received Material, Outer Banks History Center, Manteo, North Carolina.
313. *High Tide*, 1936 (Camp Annual Staff: Camp Virginia Dare, N. C.), Uncataloged Material, Outer Banks History Center, Manteo, N.C.
314. Record Group 35, Records of the Civilian Conservation Corps, Entry 115, Inspection of Camp P-63, CCC Co. 436, Manteo, N.C. Dated: February 28, 1936, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.
315. Record Group 35, Records of the Civilian Conservation Corps, Entry 115, Camp Inspection Report, Dated: October 12, 1939, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.
316. Record Group 35, Records of the Civilian Conservation Corps, Entry 115, Camp Inspection Report, Dated: March 9, 1942, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.

erosion of the beaches, some landowners were being less than cooperative. For example, an individual named Lewis who hailed from Roslyn, Long Island, was stifling conservation attempts by the CCC. Unless Lewis began to display a spirit of communal cooperation, *The Independent* advocated that the county commissioners take over the oceanfront property owned by Lewis and any others who impeded the improvements necessary for the well- being of the majority of the citizens of Dare County. Although the ostensible purpose of the article was the possible loss of the CCC camp, the fact that Lewis was an outsider from New York must have factored into the process in way.[317]

While discussing inspections, it might be interesting to mention that there was concern about the state of the CCC Camp prior to President Roosevelt's visit to Roanoke Island for the 350th anniversary celebrations. Keep in mind the CCC was one of the president's favorite projects during the New Deal era. National Park Director Arno B. Cammerer wrote to the Acting Assistant Director of the National Park Service concerning the state of the camp located in Manteo. Cammerer had received a report that the camp was in poor shape and wanted it clearly understood that it should not be in that condition if President Roosevelt visited the camp as expected. The individual stated, "if a little whitewash could be applied to the fences and buildings it would avoid a bad showing before the President."[318] Cammerer closed by emphasizing that he expected the Acting Assistant Director to follow- up and make sure that the camp would not embarrass him or the National Park Service.[319]

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Civilian Conservation Corps Camp NC FWS- 2 was headquartered in Manteo. Early in its history, the company had been designated P- 63 because of the work it did at Fort Raleigh National Park reconstructing the fort and replicating many of the original structures for the National Park Service. This is often confusing to many individuals when looking at the surviving records, which are often spotty at best. The company's numerical designation within the CCC was 436 and it was stationed initially at Durham, North Carolina. Later, some individuals were assigned to a site-camp located on Pea Island, the former site of the only U.S. Lifesaving Service Station manned by an all- black crew, which later became part of the U.S. Coast Guard. The facilities, by that time in a state of disrepair, were deemed salvageable. There also was to be a concession stand operated by a certain Mr. Tillett, who was obviously a native of the area. He had been granted permission to do so but the building he was to use was later determined to be actually property of the U.S. Government. Since he had already moved the structure, it was advised that rapid consideration be given to the amendment of his contract.[320] This camp was still operational in May 1942, after the outbreak of WWII although many others had been closed by this time and dismantled.

The opening of this additional camp was announced by the chairman of the Coastal Development Committee, Frank Stick, in May 1935. According to Stick, the new camp was to be located in the vicinity of Oregon Inlet. The camp's main tasks were to concentrate on forestry, although it was anticipated that there would also be some work done about mosquito control. Mr. Stick expected that work on the new camp would commence on about June 1. Stick also speculated that the National Park Service would establish a National Park within the vicinity of Hatteras in the near future.[321]

Many of the man- hours of the CCC Company 436, in Manteo, were spent fighting fires. In addition to putting out forest and peat fires, these individuals also assisted in putting out a major fire in Manteo during September 1939, that caused $250,000 worth of damage to the business district. Aside from fighting the actual fire, the CCC boys also secured both government and personal property from pilferage. Additionally, they also aided in the

317. *Elizabeth City Independent*, April 12, 1935.
318. Record Group 79, Records of the National Park Service, Central Classified File, 1933-1939, National Historic Sites, Fort Raleigh, Box 2613, J.M. McGee to Cammerer, Dated: August 10, 1937.
319. Record Group 79, Records of the National Park Service, Central Classified File, 1933-1939, National Historic Sites, Fort Raleigh, Box 2613, Cammerer to Johnston, Dated: August 12, 1937, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.
320. Record Group 22, Records of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Bureau, A.C. Elmer to James Silver Entry 192, Box 48, Dated: August 8, 1941, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.
321. *Elizabeth City Independent*, May 31, 1935.

cleanup, which helped prevent the spread of disease. The work of the members of CCC Company 436 was highly appreciated by the citizens of Manteo and local newspapers praised the efforts of the individuals who participated in these efforts.[322] It might also be noted that several of the individuals serving in the company were local boys and had a vested interest in preserving their hometown. Compliments bandied back and forth were mutually beneficial. It was good press for the CCC and it might possibly keep Federal dollars flowing onto the island.

The boys of CCC Company 436 were also involved in a first for the National Park system. Beginning in 1933, members of the CCC began work on a number of projects in the Cape Hatteras region. The region had been devastated by a massive hurricane that August which packed winds of up to 130 miles per hour. There was a distinct possibility that Cape Hatteras would be ruined if conservation efforts failed. The CCC worked on restoring the beach and sand dunes that had been eroded severely by wind and rain. They placed fences in the dunes to stabilize them and then planted vegetation behind them to stabilize the soil. On August 17, 1937, Cape Hatteras National Seashore became the flagship of what was to become a system of national seashores under the auspices of the National Park Service.[323]

In early May 1935, there was criticism concerning the manner in which the Emergency Recovery Act (ERA) was being run in Dare County. There was discord about the Fisherman's Cooperative and the cold storage plant that was necessary for the area's fishing industry. Presently, there was a glut of fish and no market for them. Thousands of pounds of fish were either being used as fertilizer or just thrown away. Cold storage would keep the fish from spoiling until the market fluctuations made their sale worthwhile. Also advocated was putting fish on the menu of the armed forces once or twice a week. The article questioned why surplus items such as sugar, meat, cheese, and rice were purchased by the government, and fish was not.[324]

The very next month, work began on a plant to keep fish on ice in Manteo, and this was announced by John H. Sikes, the public relations director of the NCERA. The facility would service Dare, Hyde, and Currituck Counties. This plant would be part of a system of plants for the storage of edible fish, with others located at Belhaven and Lockport, along with a freezing facility at Morehead City. It was hoped that this system of coolers and freezers would ease the plight of fishermen in the area by absorbing the glut of fish and keeping them until the market recovered enough to restore their profitability.[325]

However, there were those who complained about the $15,000 expenditure of public funds. I.P. Davis, the Associate Editor of the *Elizabeth City Independent* railed against these individuals in an editorial. He stated these individuals were shortsighted. For a mere $15,000, Dare County eventually would be able to realize a profit on hundreds of thousands of pounds of fish that otherwise would have been thrown away. Dare County needed the venture to succeed for the betterment of all its citizens.[326]

Although tourism was becoming the economic backbone of Roanoke Island, not every tourist was welcome. While in an obviously intoxicated condition, some tourists thought it was humorous to remove the cross from the chapel located at Fort Raleigh. A local resident, Jule Modlin, observed the cross mounted on the automobile of those tourists as they stopped to make a purchase. He informed the Nags Head Coast Guard Station, which recovered the cross. The speculation was that if these individuals had been returned to the island that night, "they likely would have received a good sound thrashing and then some tar and feathers." The local inhabitants were not going to tolerate such vandalism and wanton acts on their island.[327]

322. Record Group 22, Records of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Unk to Coordinator CCC, Dated November 27, 1939, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.
323. John C. Paige, *The Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Park Service, 1933-1942: An Administrative History* (National Park Service: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1985), 123. See also Daniel C. Couch, "Civilian Conservation Corps Changed the Islands," *Looking Back* (Summer 2003):, 40.
324. *Elizabeth City Independent*, May 3, 1935.
325. *Elizabeth City Independent*, June 28, 1935.
326. *Elizabeth City Independent*, July 26, 1935.
327. *Elizabeth City Independent*, June 14, 1938.

Another New Deal agency that had a major impact on the people of Roanoke Island was the Works Progress Administration (WPA) that was created during 1935 over serious opposition in the Senate. It was funded from the Emergency Relief Appropriations Act. On May 6, 1935, Roosevelt signed Executive Order 7034 creating the new agency. The WPA was the successor of the short-lived Civil Works Administration (CWA). The WPA was terminated finally on June 30, 1943. It was an ambitious program designed to provide employment on specific projects rather than "make work" tasks. It was renamed the Work Projects Administration in 1939.[328]

One may credit the WPA Director, Harry Hopkins, for many of that organization's achievements. Hopkins insisted that the WPA should match individual skills to a specific project. Hence, the Federal Writer's Project, artists painting massive murals in public buildings, and sculptors creating monuments in national parks and sites of battlefields, such as Gettysburg, were significant accomplishments of the WPA. Hopkins received criticisms from many quarters because these individuals believed many of these projects had little or no merit. Many also criticized the manner in which Hopkins allocated projects to states, saying the vast majority went to those who supported Roosevelt's New Deal.[329] Congressman Lindsay C. Warren was a New Deal Congressman, and Dare County and Roanoke Island received an amount of Federal largesse far in excess of many areas with a much more substantial population.

There was a tremendous amount of behind- the-scenes maneuvering that took place before the National Park Service would accept the Fort Raleigh site and convert it into a national park. There were reports that, in 1935, Congressman Lindsay C. Warren was already corresponding with the Department of the Interior about making Fort Raleigh into a national park.[330] Making the Fort Raleigh site into a national park would guarantee a constant flow of visitors to the island over the years and also bolster the local economy. North Carolina Congressman Lindsay C. Warren not only was on the Joint Committee on Government Organization, but he also had the ear of President Roosevelt. The Congressman took an intense interest in the project. Warren had been pressing the NPS Director, Arno B. Cammerer, for a rapid decision concerning whether the National Park Service would accept the Fort Raleigh site. However, Cammerer demurred, citing the need for additional investigation and documentation necessary before arriving at such an important decision.[331]

Cammerer's reluctance may have been a result of a memorandum he received from his Acting Assistant Director, Branch Spalding, concerning the Fort Raleigh site the following year. Spalding cited the Assistant Historian of the Civilian Conservation Corps who had stated that it could not be determined definitely that the structures which had been reconstructed were historically accurate. The historian questioned both the location of the structures and their actual manner of construction. Furthermore, he cited that there was also no documentary evidence supporting the authenticity of these buildings.[332]

Even the North Carolina press got into the fray. The *Charlotte Observer* ran an editorial concerning what was transpiring with reference to the Fort Raleigh site. It described the situation as a "pretty kettle of fish." While informing the reading public that the property belonged to the State Historical Commission, it stated that agencies of the Federal government, namely: the CWA (Civil Works Administration), the ERA (Emergency Recovery Act), and the WPA (Works Progress Administration) had already invested $31,000 of public funds to reconstruct the buildings at the site. The editorial went on to praise the State Historical Commission and those agencies for their collective efforts. However, the writer severely castigated the National Park Service for its intransigence on wanting the

328. Paul S. Boyer, ed., *The Oxford Companion to American History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 841.
329. Searle F. Charles, *Minister of Relief: Harry Hopkins and the Depression* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1969), 162.
330. *Elizabeth City Independent*, November 15, 1935.
331. Record Group 79, Records of the National Park Service, Central Classified File, 1933-1939, National Historic Sites, Fort Raleigh, Box 2613, Cammerer to Warren, Dated: October 9, 1936, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.
332. Record Group 79, Records of the National Park Service, Central Classified File, 1933-1939, National Historical Sites, Fort Raleigh, Box 2613, Spalding to Cammerer, Dated: August 24, 1937, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.

buildings demolished prior to accepting the location as a National Historic Site. The writer went on to praise Governor Clyde R. Hoey for his admirable "restraint as well as diplomacy" when tempering his comments concerning the situation. R. Bruce Etheridge, a prominent local businessman and native of Roanoke Island, was not as tactful in his comments. Etheridge, who by 1935, was the Director of the North Carolina Department of Conservation and Development, said the Historical Commission should "keep the park as it is for the State and the nation." His frustration and anger can be explained because he had been trying for 40 years to obtain national recognition for Fort Raleigh.[333]

A voice of reason came from C.C. Crittenden of the North Carolina Historical Association. He wrote Governor Hoey that the vast majority of the work at the Fort Raleigh site was complete and the best course of action was to proceed with the anticipated celebrations for the 350th anniversary. The success of the project should be the primary concern of everybody involved and everyone concerned should temper their comments and say as little as possible concerning the disagreements that had arisen among the various parties involved. Crittenden ended by informing the governor that he was sending a copy of this missive to R. Bruce Etheridge, Arno B. Cammerer, Lindsay C. Warren, D.B. Fearing, Frank Stick, W.O. Saunders, among others, as the principal parties concerned in the celebrations.[334]

Developer Frank Stick became involved in the fracas, but he was one local resident who took the National Park Service's position. He wrote to the Associate Director of the National Park Service, A. W. Demaray, stating that "lack of vision and a true understanding of the situation" was the culprit. He agreed that the architectural design of the buildings was unsubstantiated. He also enclosed two recent newspaper articles that he hoped would "counteract other stories" and this hopefully would meet with the approval of both Demaray and Director Cammerer.[335]

In October 1937, Warren once again wrote Cammerer that "interested citizens" intended to stage another pageant on even a grander scale the following year with the intention of making it an annual event. He wanted to know when the Park Service intended to officially take possession of the property, the status of the structures, and whether the Park Service had any objections to any future pageants and celebrations being held on the property. Warren closed by clearly stating that "the president was much interested" in what the final outcome concerning the Fort Raleigh site would be.[336]

Although it appears unlikely that either man was aware, at this point, President Roosevelt had already expressed his intentions at the end of August when he wrote a memorandum to E.K. Burlew at the Department of the Interior. FDR indicated that he understood the quandary that all the concerned parties were in with respect to the historical accuracy of the buildings at the Fort Raleigh site. However, since the buildings were already in place and were expected to meet the needs of the Department of the Interior, he believed that they should remain standing until their serviceability expired. He "suggested" that Burlew get in contact with the North Carolina Historical Association and resolve the impasse.[337]

It took until 1940 to get a resolution to the issue. On March 8, 1940, FDR authorized Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes to accept the Lost Colony site of 16.45 acres. He also noted that the entire proposed site would eventually encompass over 2,000 acres. Roosevelt included a caveat that the land to be acquired would either have to be donated or purchased with donated funds. Considering that events in Europe and the Far East were looming

333. *Charlotte Observer*, April 14, 1937.
334. Record Group 79, Records of the National Park Service, Central Classified Files, 1933-1939, National Historic Sites, Fort Raleigh, Box 2613, Crittenden to Cammerer, Dated: April 19, 1937, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.
335. Record Group 79, Records of the National Park Service, Central Classified Files, 1933-1939, Fort Raleigh, Box 2613, Stick to Demaray, Dated: April 29, 1937, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.
336. Record Group 79, Records of the National Park Service, Central Classified File, 1933-1939, National Historic Sites, Fort Raleigh, Box 2613, Warren to Cammerer, Dated: October 5, 1937, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.
337. Record Group 79, Records of the National Park Service, Central Classified File, 1933-1939, Fort Raleigh, Box 2613, Roosevelt to Burlew, Dated: August 30, 1937, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.

large in the president's mind, it is interesting that he himself became involved in what many might consider such a comparatively trivial matter.[338]

Although the Fort Raleigh site was a subject of much interest, both in North Carolina and nationally, life continued on Roanoke Island. By 1936, Herbert A. Creef, of the family famous for the shad boat, was involved in buying and selling a new type of vessel: the hydroplane. *Miss Manteo* was constructed in New Jersey. It possessed a then amazing 155 horsepower emanating from an engine having a 225 inch cubic displacement and capable of speeds of in excess of 62 miles per hour. *Miss Manteo* had won several races, including the President's Cup Regatta races in Washington, D.C., held in August 1935. Creef sold the boat to a Colorado businessman and intended to replace it with a new boat having 175 horsepower.[339]

Major crime was not frequent on Roanoke Island, but it did occur. In the summer of 1938, the island was abuzz with the story of a young black girl having been killed just outside Manteo. Evelyn King was with a group of young people that got into an altercation when she was beaten with a baseball bat. King later died as a result of lockjaw. A nineteen-year old black man, Bruce Mann, was charged with the crime. Mann was on a suspended sentence for previously purchasing liquor for Alvin Dowdy in May. Police arrested Mann at an uncle's home in Norfolk, Virginia, and transported him to the Dare County jail to await trial that was expected to begin in the fall.[340]

An indication of what sort of "justice" Mann might expect to receive was evidenced in a newspaper article published the month before concerning justice in Dare County. The previous summer, an all- white jury convicted a black man, Nat Selby, of stealing fish and he was sentenced to 18 months in prison. However, when Alton Best, a white man on whose boat Selby was a crewman went to trial for participating in the same crime, he was acquitted by another all- white jury. Upon learning of the jury's decision, Judge Burgwyn, who presided over the trial, stated, "I'm glad I don't own any pound nets in Dare County." A number of local fishermen who observed the trial were also upset with the jury's verdict, since apprehension of an individual for stealing fish was very difficult and the acquittal of such an individual rubbed a raw nerve.[341]

In 1903, a local authority on maritime matters, A. W. Drinkwater, discovered the hulk of an ancient vessel after a storm. It remained undisturbed until 1939, when a severe storm uncovered more of the ship. The hulk was believed to be a cromster, a light warship developed during the era when Raleigh sailed the seas. The Roanoke Island Historical Association decided to excavate the site using 100 CCC volunteers. To discourage souvenir hunters, a guard was placed over the vessel's remains. Dr. Joseph T. Holzbach, the superintendent of the Maritime Museum at Newport News, was expected, along with his staff, to peruse the site.[342]

In 1939, the third annual production of Paul Green's *The Lost Colony* was staged. Heretofore largely unnoticed, Roanoke Island was rapidly changing to accommodate its new status as a tourist attraction. *The Lost Colony* attracted a widespread audience from around the nation, and the local economy received an infusion of tourists along with their much sought after cash. The town became swamped with tourists every weekend the production ran. The local telegraph clerk evolved into an informal booking agent for rooms because well over 1,000 people attended each performance of *The Lost Colony*. The standard joke on the island was that the CCC boys were the luckiest individuals on the island. They at least knew where they each were going to sleep each night.

There were also insightful comments made concerning Paul Green in this article. The writer stated that Green "infused history with a religious reverence," while transforming "his characters into

338. Record Group 79, Records of the National Park Service, Central Classified File, 1933-1939, National Historic Sites, Fort Raleigh, Box 2613, Roosevelt to Ickes, Dated: March 8, 1940, National Archives and Record Administration, College Park, MD.
339. *Dare County Times*, April 17, 1936.
340. *Dare County Times*, July 15, 22, 1938.
341. *Dare County Times*, June 3, 1938. For a personal insight into black life on Roanoke Island, see Arvilla Tillett Bowser and Lindsey Bowser's *Roanoke Island: The Forgotten Colony* (Chesapeake, VA: Maximillian Press, 2002). Although there are some historical inaccuracies, this narrative presents a view of life on Roanoke Island from the nineteenth century until the present from the black perspective.
342. *New York Times*, June 4, 1939.

unconscious symbols of a brave new world." The comments were nothing less than effusive in praise of Green.[343]

By 1941, the State of North Carolina realized the importance of *The Lost Colony* play to both the economy of Roanoke Island and the state itself. For its fifth year of production, the state legislature voted to allocate $10,000 to underwrite the production. This funding was to be reviewed on a yearly basis. Additionally, the Federal government instructed the National Park Service to "make it possible for *The Lost Colony* to reach an ever-increasing number of American people." There were to be five performances each week during the running season.[344] One can only speculate whether the invisible hand of Roosevelt was the guiding force behind the announcement concerning the National Park Service's decision to extend this cooperation.

Just before Christmas 1938, *The Dare County Times* reported that Josephus Daniels had been invited to speak at the dedication of the formal opening of the new community center in early January 1939. Daniels had already planned to spend his Christmas holiday in Raleigh and would try to adjust his schedule to make a dedication speech. Daniels was formerly editor of the *News and Observer* in Raleigh and had family ties to Roanoke Island. The WPA spent $20,000 on the facility that would have a kitchen, house the public library, and provide office space for several Federal agencies, including the WPA. This article is interesting because no mention of Daniels was made for the 350th anniversary press coverage of Virginia Dare, although he was a confidant of President Roosevelt and a vice-president of the Roanoke Island Historical Association.[345] There must have been some important political developments in Mexico to keep him away from such an occasion.

In the same issue, *The Dare County Times* reported that the statewide reductions affecting the WPA payroll should have little effect upon Dare County. The arrival of the new year would mean that approximately 1,000 WPA jobs would be lost a week for a seven week period. That translated to about 70 jobs lost in each county in North Carolina. However, according to I. P. Davis, the Dare County Superintendent of Welfare and WPA Certifying Agent, since the fishing season commenced concurrently, the effect in Dare County was expected to be minimal. Davis also stated that "we certainly will not have to cut off anyone who is in dire need."[346]

Agitation for a water and sewer system for Manteo was already in progress during summer 1935. The argument was put forth that Manteo needed a "sewer and water works as much as any town we know." Not only would this provide people with an incentive to build homes in the town, but it would lower the fire insurance premiums for the downtown district. The combination would add substantially to the number of citizens along with an added tax base. The only stipulation was that the system needed to generate enough income to cover costs.[347]

In 1939, there were only 547 year- round residents living in Manteo. It must have taken a great deal of political clout for the state's legislators to get the Works Progress Administration to appropriate $100,000 to install a sewer system in the town. *The Dare County Times* reported that Manteo voters overwhelmingly approved two bond issues totaling $37,000 to construct a water and sewage system to complement the Federal funds. Since the booming tourist economy began, the sanitary and water facilities had been taxed to the limit during the summer seasons. The Federal government would provide an additional $100,200 for the project. Manteo received 13,000 feet of sewer lines, 17,500 feet of water mains, and 300 water and sewer connections. There also were projected to be a 75,000 gallon steel water tank, a 200,000 gallon concrete storage tank, plus 27 fire hydrants, a pump house, and other equipment. At that time, raw sewage was being pumped into Dough's Creek, creating an unhealthful situation, especially during the summer tourist season. The project was expected to commence shortly.[348] In fact, it was 1942 before the actual installation of the sewer system commenced.[349]

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343. *New York Times*, August 15, 1939.
344. *New York Times*, March 24, 1941.
345. *Dare County Times*, December 23, 1938.
346. Ibid.,
347. *Elizabeth City Independent*, July 5, 1935.
348. *Dare County Times*, June 28, 1940.;

Considering there was a war on the horizon, this was truly a major accomplishment. Although the money was appropriated prior to America's entry into the Second World War, it is amazing that these funds were not diverted for some other project germane to the national defense effort. One may conjecture that FDR had a deeply abiding interest in Roanoke Island.

Although aviation pioneers Wilbur and Orville Wright are the two most notable individuals when it comes to flight, there is also another individual that hails from this region who was on the cutting edge of aviation technology in the early 1940s. During 1941, Dave Driskoll flew what was known then as an autogyro, or what is currently known as a helicopter.

For the era, it was a most unusual flying machine, although we take it, and especially its military applications, for granted today. Driskoll's aircraft was a wingless aircraft that possessed 225 horsepower. Its blades were capable of folding. The autogyro had a tank with a fifteen- gallon capacity. This aircraft was especially useful in patrolling the vast expanses of the newly developed Cape Hatteras National Seashore.[350]

On the nation's birthday in 1941, it was announced that the airport, then under construction at Manteo by the CCC, would receive $120,000 in Federal funding. Already in place was a 3,000 ft. runway that ran north- south, with the clearing of a second one running east- west still in progress. This work had begun in 1940. The caveat for the Federal funding was that in the event of "a national emergency," the airfield would revert to Federal control. However, once the emergency had ended, Dare County would regain control along with any improvements made by the Federal government. This would result in Dare County having a modern facility in the future while incurring minimal expense to its taxpayers.

Forward thinking individuals on Roanoke Island realized that this was a golden opportunity for both the business community and citizens of the island. Roanoke Island was already largely dependent upon income from tourism that most likely would be interrupted by any European conflict. An airfield would provide an influx of servicemen that would possibly offset such losses. One should not fail to mention that airplanes based here would help insure safe passage of the merchant marine through the Outer Banks region, which was vital to the nation's and, for that matter, much of the world's economic lifeline.[351]

Exactly one month later, the Civil Aeronautics Administration's (CAA) regional office in Atlanta sent a missive to John Ferrebee, Chairman of the Dare County Commission, in response to that commission's inquiries. R.C. Copeland, the CAA Regional Director, informed him that the Federal government had designated the Manteo Airport as "necessary for national defense." Additionally, the sum allocated for this project was now $404,000—a figure almost four times the original amount. Aside from the runways and taxiways, lighting, along with a seaplane ramp and apron, were proposed. This was predicated upon Dare County deeding the property to the Federal government. The government must have wanted the airfield badly, because if the terms were unsatisfactory or needed modification, then the Atlanta office would be contacted to seek a resolution to any problem.[352]

The Civil Air Patrol began using the facilities as soon as the runways were ready. They operated various types of light planes while engaging in anti-submarine patrols. On March 3, 1943, Naval Auxiliary Air Station (NAAS) Manteo was commissioned. The first aviation squadron assigned there was VF- 17, composed of F4U Corsairs, which later gained recognition in the Pacific Theater of the war. Several other squadrons flew out of Manteo during WWII. On December 15, 1945, NAAS Manteo was placed in caretaker status with the facility reverting once again to Dare County in 1947.

349. For additional Federal information pertaining to the sewer construction, see Record Group 69, Records of the Works Progress Administration , Project Files NC (E442) Box 724, Roll 10, Box 727, Roll 39, Box 730, Roll72, Box 729, Rolls 61 and 62, and Box 724, Roll 9, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.
350. *Dare County Times,* March 7, 1941.
351. *Dare County Times,* July 4, 1941.
352. R.C. Copeland, CAA, Atlanta, to John Fereebee, Commissioner, Dare County, Manteo, N.C. Dated: 4 August, 1941, located in CAP Museum, Dare County Regional Airport, Manteo, N.C.

During the war, NAAS Manteo added an additional runway and located the seaplane ramp on Croatan Sound. During 1944, almost 150 officers and 1,250 enlisted men were stationed at Manteo. During the war, 10 servicemen died as a result of accidents, but there are no recorded combat fatalities. Such were the contributions of Roanoke Island during the Second World War.[353]

353. M.L. Shettle Jr., *United States Naval Air Stations of World War II, Vol I, Eastern States* (Bowersville, GA.: Shaertel Publishers, 1995), 125.

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