

Chapter 1 : Memories of Manteo and Roanoke Island, N.C by Cora Mae Basnight

These vignettes of Outer Banks life were told to Tate by Cora Mae Basnight () and form the third of her oral history studies (see also Bring Me Duck () and Whalehead ()).

Etymology[edit] The name of Roanoke Island comes from the Roanoke who originally resided on the island for at least years prior to the coming of the English in the New World. The meaning of the word Roanoke itself is derived from the Powhatan language which was geographically close to the Roanoke. Roanoke means "white beads made from shells" or more literally "things rubbed smooth by hand". White beads were used as ornaments and currency for the Coastal Algonquin peoples of Virginia and North Carolina. Cuscarawaoke, where is made so much Rawranoke or white beads that occasion as much dissention among the savages, as gold and silver amongst Christians [â€]. Roanoke People, were therefore known for the trade of shells that are part of Roanoke Island and the other barrier islands of the Outer Banks. The Roanoke People may had created and exported the white beads and shells abroad. Overview[edit] It was, for thousands of years, the site of ancient indigenous settlements. Archeological excavations in at the Tillett Site at Wanchese have revealed evidence of various cultures dating back to BC. Wanchese was used as a seasonal fishing village for years before English colonial settlement. Ancestors of the Algonquian -speaking Roanoke coalesced as a people in about A group of about men, women and children arrived in She was the first English child born in North America. Governor White returned to England later that year for supplies. Due to impending war with Spain, White was unable to return to Roanoke Island until When he arrived, the colony had vanished. Roanoke Island is one of the three oldest surviving English place-names in the U. After Union forces took over the island in , slaves migrated there for relative freedom, as they were considered contraband by the military, who would not return them to the Confederates. The Congregational chaplain Horace James was appointed superintendent of the colony and of other contraband camps in North Carolina. With a view to making it self-sustaining, he had a sawmill built, and freedmen were allotted lands to cultivate. Those who worked for the Army were paid wages. When the United States Colored Troops were founded, many men from the colony enlisted. A corps of Northern teachers was sponsored by the American Missionary Association , and they taught hundreds of students of all ages at the colony. Notice the water in the background. Previously the North Carolina Coast had extended 50 miles eastward to the edge of the continental shelf. The melting of Northern Hemisphere Glaciers at least 14, years ago caused sea levels to rise. Archaeologists discovered that the land of Roanoke Island was part of the Mainland when it was first inhabited by the first Native Americans. For thousands of years the development of Native Cultures on Roanoke Island corresponded with cultures occurring in the Coastal Plain of North Carolina. Around the year AD the area experienced environmental transformation. The sand dune of Roanoke became disconnected from the mainland by water, and inlets in the Outer Banks turned fresh water sounds lagoons into brackish ecosystems. After the year AD the village was occupied by the Colington Culture, the Colington Culture was the predecessor to the Roanoke Tribe who were encountered by the English Expedition. The Roanoke People of the Tillett site had a semi-seasonal life style inhabiting the area from early Spring to early Fall, primarily the village existed for fishing. Shellfish was the main diet of the inhabitants with oysters and clams being the most common food source. Plants including acorns and hackberry nuts. Ronaoke Indians had smoking pipes and used plants such as Cleaver and Plaintain seeds for medicinal purposes. Four burials of Roanoke Indians of various social positions have been found at the site. Roanoke believed that their great warriors and kings lived on in the afterlife but commoners lived only a mortal existence. Englishman Arthur Barlowe described a palisaded town with nine houses made of Cedar bark on the far north end of Roanoke Island. This second village according to historian David Stick was based on hunting of land animals. Upon contact with the English the Ronaoke Tribe had anywhere from 5, to 10, members. The Roanoke Tribe, like many other tribes in the area were loyal to the Secotan. In WIngina was their king. From to there were six expeditions to the area and two groups of colonists who attempted to establish a colony there, both groups failed. When the English first arrived in , they were accompanied by a Croatoan native and a Roanoke native respectively called Manteo

and Wanchese. The two men make history as the first two Native Americans to visit the Kingdom of England as distinguished guests. For over a year they resided in London. On the return journey the two natives witnessed English piracy plunder the Spanish West Indies. English Scientist Thomas Harriot recorded the sense of awe with which the Native Americans viewed European technology: Many things they saw with us Manteo learned the English language and helped Harriot create a phonetic transcription for the Croatoan language, the Croatoan transcription was later destroyed in the Great Fire of London. By contrast, Wanchese came to see the English as his captors; upon returning home in he incited his people to resist colonization at all costs. Despite the Lost Colony story line there is no documentation that Wanchese became a leader of his people. The first attempted settlement was headed by Ralph Lane in Sir Richard Grenville had transported the colonists to Virginia and returned to England for supplies as planned. Augustine, the entire population abandoned the colony and returned with Drake to England. Grenville left fifteen soldiers to guard the fort who were killed or driven away by a Roanoke raid led by Wanchese. Grenville returned to England taking with him the Native American Raleigh. Croatan is a nearby island on the Outer Banks but it could not be investigated due to an approaching hurricane. At this time the Secotan Tribe and their Roanoke dependents were totally hostile to the English but the Croatoan remained allies. Manteo remained aligned with the English and attempted to bring the English and his Croatoan tribe together, even after the newcomers mistakenly killed his own mother- who was also the Croatoan chief. After the incident Manteo was baptized into the Anglican Church. Manteo was then assigned by the English to be representative of all of the native nations in the region, this title was mainly symbolic as only the Croatoan nation followed Manteo. He expected to return to Roanoke Island within three months. Instead, England itself was attacked by massive Spanish invasion, all ships were confiscated for use for defending the English Channel. The settlement was left abandoned. The whereabouts of Wanchese and Manteo after the settlement attempt were also unknown. Speculation has suggested that Manteo left with his people to live on Croatoan island. The Colonists might have tried to reach that island. However, foul weather kept White from venturing south to search on Croatoan for the colonists, so he returned to England. White never returned to the New World. Unable to determine exactly what happened, people referred to the abandoned settlement as "The Lost Colony. A farther Confirmation of this we have from the Hatteras Indians, who either then lived on Roanoke Island, or much frequented it. They value themselves extremely for their Affinity to the English, and are ready to do them all friendly Offices. A New Voyage to Carolina. University of North Carolina Press A merging between at least some of the Lost Colonists and the Croatoan is a distinct possibility though not entirely documented. The partial English ancestry of the Hatteras People may have also come from later shipwrecks and marooned sailors. From the time of the disappearance of the Lost Colony in to the Battle of Roanoke Island in, Roanoke was characterized by isolation due to its weather and geography. Sand shoals on the Outer Banks and the North American continental shelf made navigation dangerous and a lack of deep water harbor prevented Roanoke Island from becoming a major colonial port. Archaeology from the Tilliet site indicates that the Roanoke population persisted until A large mound feet tall and feet wide was recorded to exist Wanchese in the early s, now little evidence remains. Survivors of the English Invasion fled southwards and became the Machapunga. After their defeat most Machapunga settled and adapted to English lifestyle around Hyde County, North Carolina, other Machapunga fled northwards to join the Iroquois Confederation. The North Carolina descendants now live in the Inner Banks of North Carolina and continued to carry some native customs until Some in the former Croatoan Tribe went to Hatteras Island prior to and maintained good relations with the English, being granted a reservation in, decedents of the Croatoan-Hatteras tribes later merged with English Communities. The federal census found that 83 descendants from the Roanoke and Hatteras Tribe lived in Dare County, others lived in the states of New York, Maryland, and Virginia. Carolina under its original name Carolana included the territory of modern North and South Carolina. Pioneers crossed southwards across the Albemarle Sound to settle in Roanoke Island. They came primarily to establish fishing communities but also practiced forms of subsistence agriculture on the Northern parts of Roanoke Island. Ownership at first belonged to the original Lord Proprietors who never visited the area even as Englishmen began to build houses. Ownership by distant far away property holders continued at least until the s a Bostonian by the name of Bletcher Noyes gave power of

attorney of his property to local William Daniels. English Legal documents indicate actual presence of settlers in , with the possibility that the first Englishmen had made permanent homes much earlier. The nearby community of Manns Harbor came into being as a small trading post where goods were transported across the Croatan Sound. Unlike inland North Carolina the British authorities made no roads within or nearby Roanoke, the Tidewater region of North Carolina was avoided entirely. As in other times the Island was struck by deadly hurricanes. During the Revolutionary War there were eight recorded encounters fought in nearby Hatteras, Ocracoke and the High Seas. These battles were between local privateers from Edenton against the British Royal Navy. Patrolling Royal Navy often had little to place to rest during their coastal patrol duty. On August 15, a British patrol sent foragers to the now extinct Roanoke Inlet in modern-day Nags Head to steal cattle.

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Manteo History. The history of Manteo is storied and deep, beginning with the town name's origin itself. "Manteo" was a chief in the local Roanoke Island community of Native Americans who made a long trip overseas as an ambassador of

goodwill to the late 16th Century English explorers.