

CSI: THE LOST COLONY OF ROANOKE

CSI

CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION

BACKGROUND: IN 1587, 117 COLONISTS DEPARTED ENGLAND TO SET UP A COLONY AT ROANOKE ISLAND. WHEN A SETTLER RETURNED TO THE ISLAND IN 1590, EVERYTHING HAD VANISHED. ALL PEOPLE, ANIMALS, AND HOMES WERE GONE.

MISSION: IT IS YOUR MISSION TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO THE COLONISTS AT ROANOKE ISLAND. READ THROUGH THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION CLOSELY AND CAREFULLY. ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS THOROUGHLY IN ORDER TO DOCUMENT ALL ESSENTIAL DETAILS TO THE CASE.

PRESENT YOUR EVIDENCE: AFTER YOU HAVE ANALYZED EACH POSSIBLE SCENARIO, YOU WILL CREATE A PICTURE BOOK THAT SHOWS THE CLUES AND EVIDENCE YOU HAVE GATHERED. MORE INFORMATION WILL BE GIVEN AT A LATER TIME.

ALL MATERIALS IN THIS CASE FILE ARE CONFIDENTIAL

CLASSIFIED INFORMATION

READ CAREFULLY THOUGH THIS INTRODUCTION TO THE CASE, DETECTIVE!

The Lost Colony of Roanoke Island (Killed by Indians, Disbanded, or Abducted by Aliens)

What happened to the 117 people who tried to establish the first English settlement in America?

On April 26, 1587, Governor John White and 117 colonists set sail from Portsmouth, England, to the New World. Their goal was to establish a new colony near Chesapeake Bay. One of the colonists was White's daughter, Elinor, who was married to a man named Ananias Dare and was expecting a baby.

Two years earlier, an unsuccessful attempt had been made to establish a settlement on Roanoke Island. Sir Richard Grenville left 100 men on the island and returned to England to get supplies. The colonists grew tired of waiting for Grenville to return and when Sir Francis Drake stopped at Roanoke in June of 1586, they returned to England with him. Grenville arrived on Roanoke two weeks later with supplies and 15 more men. The 15 were to stay until reinforcements could be brought from England.

When White and Company arrived on July 22, 1587, they found the island deserted and the fort demolished. Only the bones of one man were found.

Less than a month later, on August 18, White's daughter gave birth to a girl named Virginia - the first English child born in North America.

White decided to return to England for supplies, a trip he intended to last 6-8 months. In fact, it was almost three years before White was able to return to Roanoke Island. When he arrived, he found the settlement deserted. The word "Croatoan"

was carved into a tree near the palisade encircling the fort; the letters "CRO" were found on another tree. (It was understood that if the colonists had decided to leave the island, they would leave a clue as to their destination; if they were in danger, they would add a cross to the sign.)

No cross was found carved into the tree, so it was assumed that the settlers had relocated to Croatoan Island, 50 miles to the south. White wanted to sail to Croatoan to continue the search but he was prevented from doing so by bad weather. He returned to England. What happened to the members of the Lost Colony? There are several theories that have been put forward to explain the disappearance:

One such theory is that the settlers were killed by Indians. Local Indians had welcomed the settlers and had helped them to plant corn and fish using a weir. Keep in mind that no cross was carved into the tree, indicating danger, and no bodies, bones or burned-out buildings were found.

Another more far-fetched theory is that this is a case of alien abductions, but no concrete evidence has been found to support this.

The most accepted theory is that the settlers did relocate to Croatoan Island and may have eventually become members of the tribe. They also could have eventually settled in the Chesapeake Bay area or near the Chowan River.

But since no physical evidence has ever been found, all we are left with are theories as to the fate of the members of the Lost Colony.

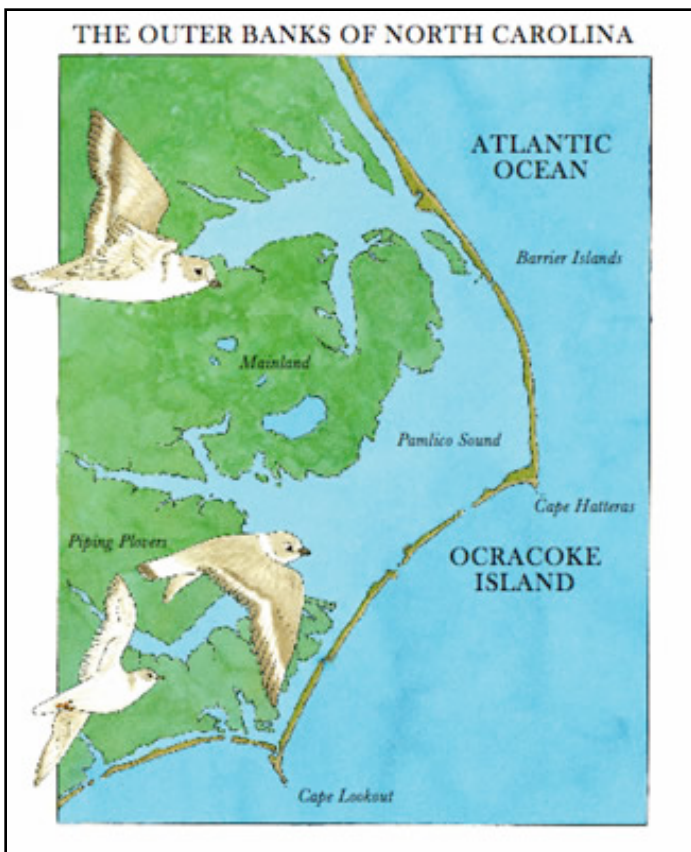
Source: Created and adapted from information at <http://www.history.com/news/ask-history/what-happened-to-the-lost-colony-of-roanoke>

Detective - examine these maps to familiarize yourself with the location!



To give you a sense of where Roanoke Island is, examine this map to the left.

Because early explorers were from Europe (in the eastern hemisphere) it makes sense that they would choose to settle on the eastern part of what would become the United States.



Here is a close-up view of the eastern coast of North Carolina. Notice the collection of islands that make up the eastern coast. These islands are called the Outer Banks. Roanoke Island is located inside the Outer Banks.

Detective, there is one thing you must remember: few primary source documents or artifacts exist from this time period. However, I was able to get my hands on this map for you! This map was created by the early settlers at Roanoke. I have circled Roanoke Island on the map for you!

SCENARIO 1: THE COLONISTS TRAVELED TO CROATOAN ISLAND

The first clue is a message carved on a palisade that was discovered by Governor John White in 1590 on Roanoke Island. The message said CROATOAN in capital letters.

Although this has been cited as some sort of "mysterious clue," the reality is, it's perfectly logical that they left the note. You see, before John White left the colony in 1587 to get supplies from England, he told the colonists to carve the name of the place they were going on a tree if they left Roanoke Island. He also said to put a cross under it if they left for reasons of danger. No cross was found, and White, in his own records, stated he was relieved to know that the colony was safe in Croatoan with a man named Manteo. Manteo was an Indian from Croatoan who had been to England twice, spoke English and had been used as an interpreter. Croatoan Island is also home to the Croatoan tribe of Native Americans.



Did the Colonists at Roanoke know where Croatoan was?

Croatoan is modern day Buxton on Hatteras Island, an island the English had visited on all of their voyages.

It was where they had landed in 1584 and even lived for a time in 1585. The colonists went there again in 1587 and had a feast. It was the hometown of their ally and interpreter Manteo and appears on all of John White's maps. So yes, the English were familiar with Croatoan and there was never a mystery as to where that place was.

However, after John White's failed attempt to reach the island in 1590, no other attempt to reach Croatoan was made for another 80 years!

Another confirmation of this we have from the Hatteras Indians, who either then lived on Roanoke Island, or much frequented it. These tell us, that several of their Ancestors were white People. Their ancestors could also read books, as we do. These ancestors also have gray eyes, which is found frequently amongst these Indians.

So we have the message carved by the Colonists, Manteo's home town, and the oral history of the Hatteras Indians all pointing to Croatoan.

All of this is old news though. What is really interesting is what happened in 1993.

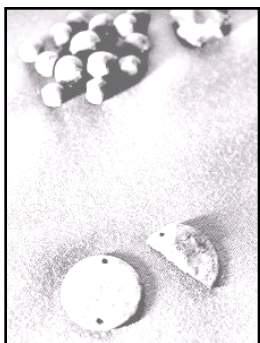
The native families of Hatteras Island can show you arrowheads, pottery and other artifacts that they have found from previous generations of people. In the 1970's, locals of the island used to sit by the road and sell arrowheads for a nickel each to tourists. Buckets full of pottery and arrowheads could be found all over the ridges where Croatoan Village once stood. In 1993, however, Hurricane Emily surged 10 feet of soil and sludge over this village site and ripped out many layers of sand in the process. As a result, an enormous amount of new artifacts were uncovered and found by local residents.

Eventually, archeologists came to the site. Dr. David Phelps had found some Croatoan artifacts before back in the 1980's while doing work for the 400th anniversary of the first English voyages to the New World. Phelps returned to the island and with help from a lot of volunteers launched another excavation. Again, Phelps and his man found remarkable discoveries. **This time not only were Croatoan artifacts found but European ones as well.** Among the European artifacts were the iron ring of a caulking hammer, lead bullets, nails, bricks and, most importantly, a gun that dates to 1583 and a gold ring that probably belonged to a man named Master Kendall, who was part of the 1585 voyage.

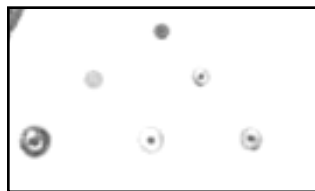
More and more artifacts come out of the Croatoan site each time they dig. Even European skeletons have been found, along with Native American bones.



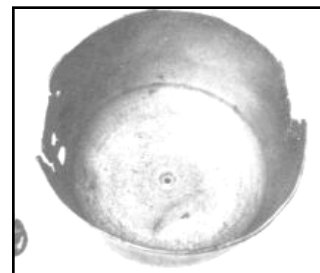
(ring from Croatoan Island)



(lead bullets)



(brass buttons)



(pots and pans)

These are all European items discovered on Croatoan Island. This article states that finding these items proves the Colonists went to Croatoan Island.

1.) What other ways could these items have been found at the island?

(Remember, you are a detective. You have to cover every possibility. No matter how crazy it may sound, it could be true)

Answer question 1 here:

Let's think about this for a second...

Here is an island of people who love you and show great acts of kindness nestled in a world that hates you for vicious crimes carried out by your military the year before.

You had a prearranged agreement to carve the name of the place on a tree (if you chose to leave) and leave a cross under it if you left for reasons of danger.

You carve "Croatoan" on a tree and "Cro" on a palisade and leave no cross. You carefully remove all the buildings and small boats. No one ever goes to Croatoan searching for you.

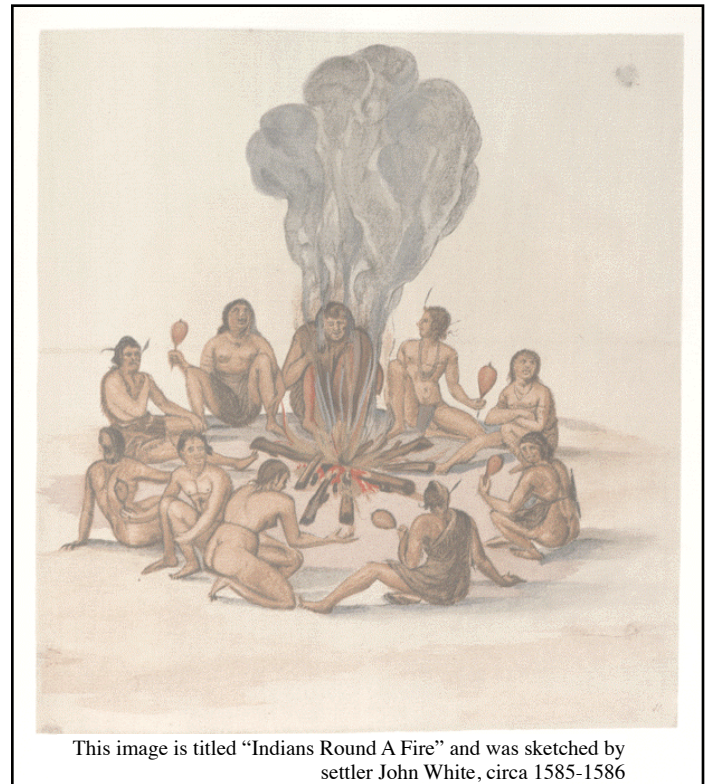
In addition, columns of smoke are spotted when John White passed Hatteras Island on his way to Roanoke to see the Croatoan message. White clearly states that he believes the colony went there in his letter. He attempts to go to Croatoan, but is driven away by a storm.

2.) Examine the picture to the right very closely.
What is happening in this picture?

Answer question 2 here:

3.) Imagine you are sitting in this picture. What might you be hearing? What might you be smelling?

Answer question 3 here:



4.) Look closely at this picture and read the last paragraph on the previous page very closely. Does this picture help prove or disprove the belief that the colonists went to Croatoan Island?

Answer question 4 here:

5.) Other than being written by the colonists, are there any other explanations as to how the words "CRO" and "CROATOAN" appeared? List anything that is even remotely possible!

Answer question 5 here:

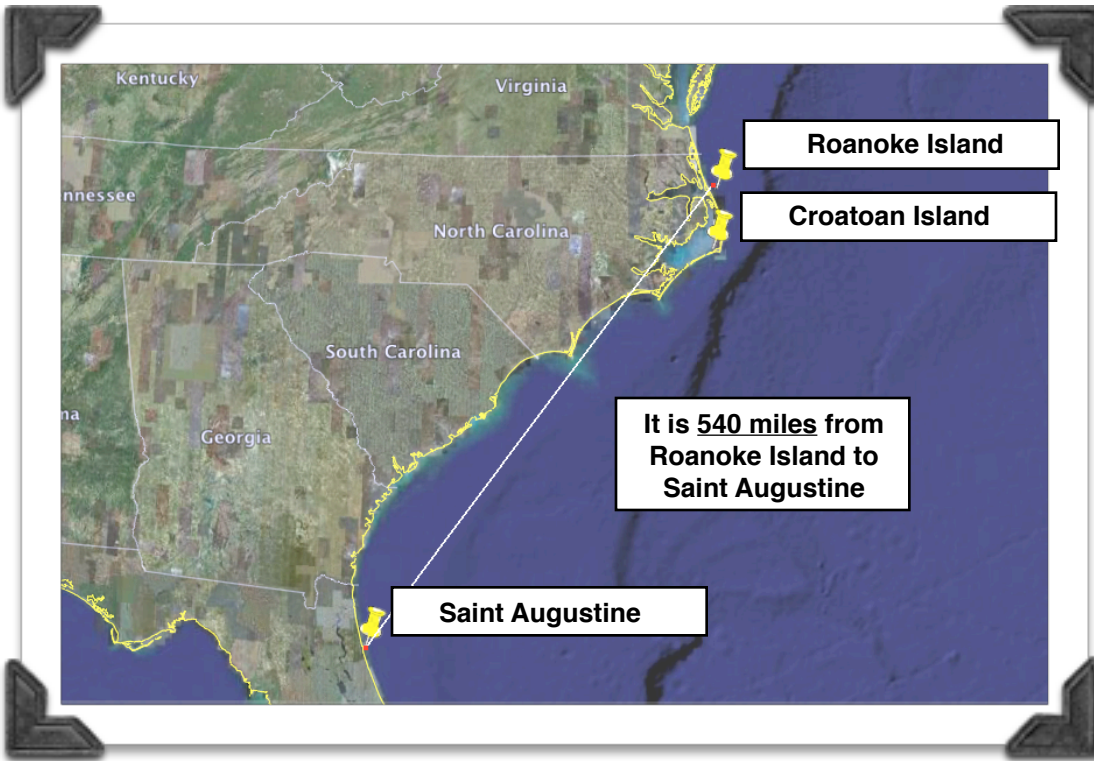
6.) How likely is it that this scenario happened? Explain your answer. (Remember, you are a detective so every detail matters!)

Answer question 6 here:

SCENARIO 2: THE COLONISTS WERE TAKEN HOSTAGE OR KILLED BY THE SPANISH

Saint Augustine was a colony Spain had in the New World. This colony is located on the eastern coast of what is now known as the state of Florida, USA. Spanish soldiers who were living there in 1588 heard reports that England had established a new colony in the New World. The English were at war with Spain and if the location of their settlement got out, the Spanish would find and kill the colonists. The Spanish had already killed off a French attempt to settle down in Florida back in 1562, killing over 130 men.

Spain knew that this English colony was located north somewhere near Chesapeake Bay. The Spanish sent their ships up the coast to destroy the English colonists. The English colonists were seen by the Spanish ships as they sailed their small boats south from Roanoke Island to live with the Croatoan Indians on Croatoan Island. The Spanish ships attacked the English colonists and took them hostage. They may have killed them. This is the reason why English settler's boats were missing when John White returned in 1590 to Roanoke.



1.) If Spain did kidnap or kill the colonists, they would have had to travel 540 miles. If they could travel 70 miles a day, how long would it have taken them to arrive at Roanoke Island? What about 100 miles a day?

Answer question 1 here:

2.) Why would Spain have done this? (Read carefully detective!)

Answer question 2 here:

3.) Think of the journey the Spanish would have taken. What challenges would they have faced?

Answer question 3 here:

4.) How likely is it that this scenario happened? Explain your answer.

Answer question 4 here:

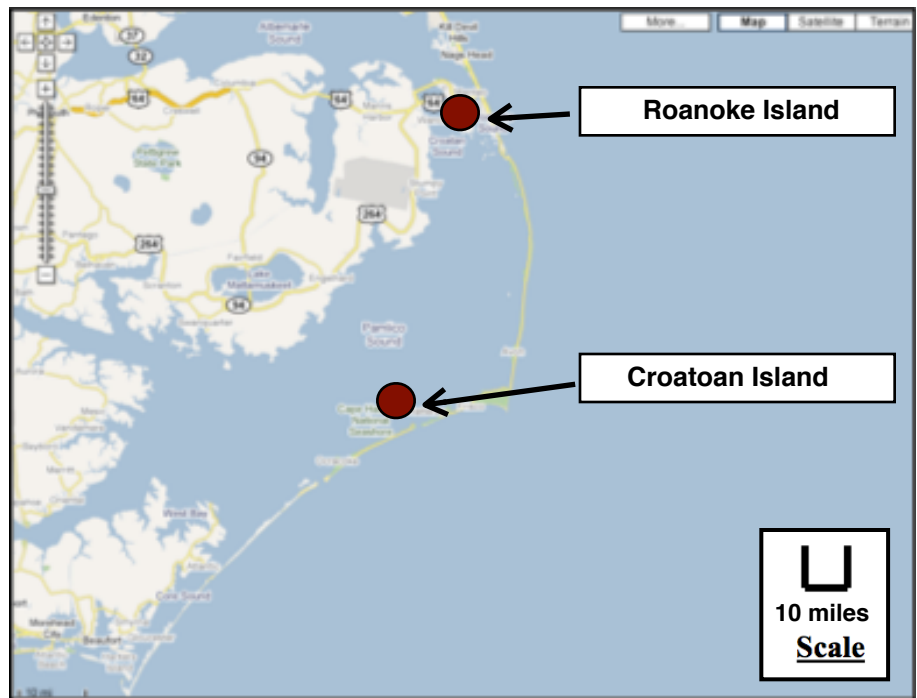
SCENARIO 3: THE COLONISTS STARVED TO DEATH OR WERE LOST AT SEA

Others speculate that the colonists simply gave up waiting, tried to return to England on their own, and perished in the attempt. When Governor White left in 1587, he left the colonists with a pinnace (a small boat) for exploration of the coast or removal of the colony to the mainland.

Another claim suggests that, with the region in drought (a period of very low rainfall), the colony must have suffered a massive food shortage.

The researchers concluded that the settlers of the Lost Colony landed at Roanoke Island in the summer of the worst growing-season drought in 800 years. "This drought persisted for 3 years, from 1587 to 1589, and is the driest 3-year episode in the entire 800-year reconstruction," the team reported in the journal *Science*. A map shows that "the Lost Colony drought affected the entire southeastern United States but was particularly severe in the Tidewater region near Roanoke [Island]." The authors suggested that the Croatoan who were shot and killed by the colonists may have been scavenging the abandoned village for food as a result of the drought.

1.) Use the scale to determine distance. How far would the colonists had to travel *IF* they chose to travel to Croatoan Island? Show your work in the space provided.



Answer question 1 here:

2.) Is it possible they would have gotten lost in their journey? Why or Why not?

Answer question 2 here:

3.) What other problems might they have run into on this journey?

Answer question 3 here:

SCENARIO 4: THE COLONISTS WERE KILLED BY NATIVE AMERICANS

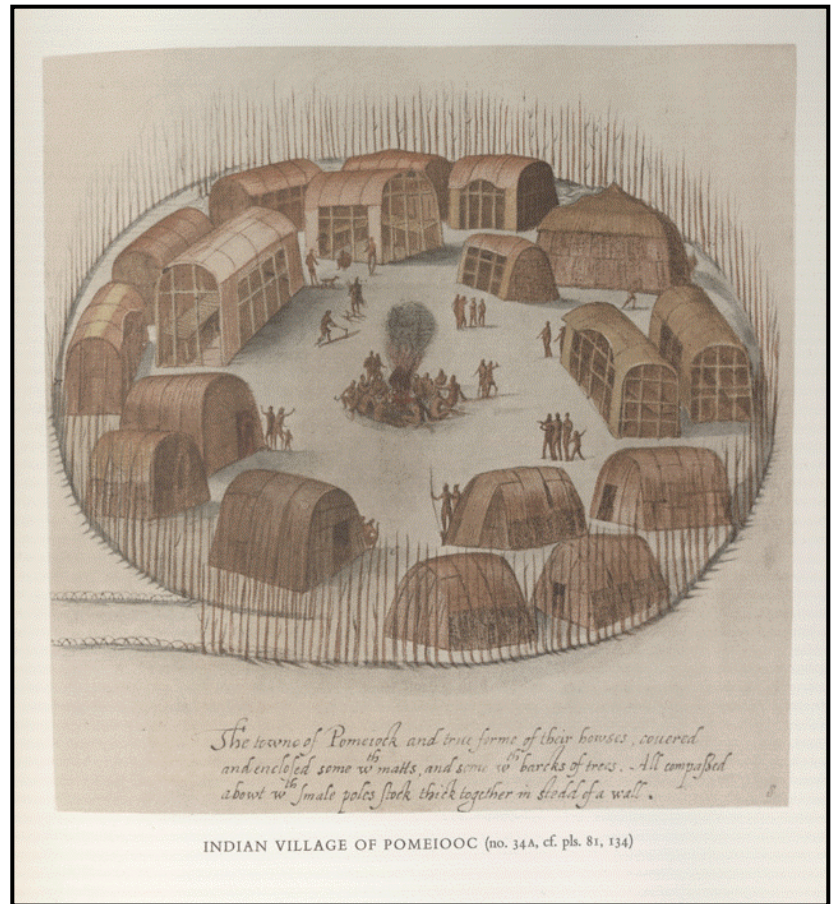
Before the second attempt to set up a colony, the English set up an expedition led by Ralph Lane to establish a colony in North America. Things went well until Sir Ralph Lane, the colony commander, angered the Indians with his harsh policies (captured Indians for ransom and planned attacks on tribes to get more land). The natives fought back, killing one of the settlers. The rest of the colonists were forced to leave the colony, but the natives would not forget.

Several explorers who helped set up the Ralph Lane colony returned to check on their progress. Because of the tense relationship with the natives, the colonists had left, so when the explorers arrived, they did not find anyone. However, what they did find was interesting. They found remnants of one dead body, killed by tomahawk and scalp wounds. The body was found in several pieces, in several different places, giving the thought that the natives tried to hide the remains.

From this past event, we know that the Natives were capable of such horrific acts. We also know they were capable of hiding the bodies. After what the residents of the Ralph Lane colony did to the natives, it is easy to believe they would seek revenge. When the leader of the Lost Colony, John White, returned to England for more supplies, is it possible the natives would attack the second group of colonists? Remember: when he returned several years later, all houses and forts had disappeared. That would be more than enough time for the natives to tear everything and down and hide all the evidence.

2). Do you think this tribe has friendly or violent neighbors? What clues do you see?

Answer question 2 here:



1.) Does this tribe look friendly or violent? What evidence tells you that?

Answer question 1 here:

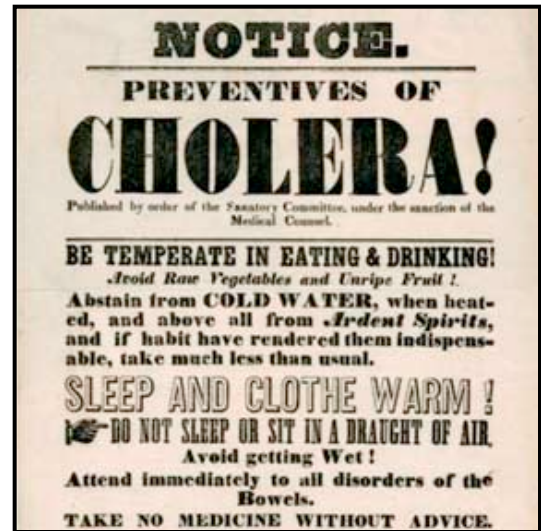
3). After reading and looking at this picture, do you think natives killed the colonists? Why or Why not?

Answer question 3 here:

SCENARIO 5: THE COLONISTS WERE KILLED BY A DISEASE

It is true that the English had brought over some diseases. However, note, there were no bodies found and the houses had disappeared. The only body that was ever found was shortly after the Ralph Lane colony left for England. No bodies were ever recovered from the Lost Colony expedition.

While most diseases were brought from the Old World to the New World, there were several diseases that future colonists would die from, including dysentery, cholera, and "Burning Fever."



1.) On a scale from 1 (least likely) to 10 (most likely), how likely do you think the "disease theory" is? Please explain your answer.

Answer question 1 here:

SCENARIO 6: THE VILLAGE WAS DESTROYED BY A HUGE STORM

Another possible theory is the one that perhaps a hurricane destroyed the Lost Colony. A hurricane could have washed away the colonists and it could have been powerful enough to destroy all of the homes and forts, true. However, there is a huge problem with this theory. See if you can find why this theory is very unlikely.

What makes this scenario a very unlikely one?

NEW EVIDENCE DISCOVERED IN MAY, 2012

Experts from the First Colony Foundation (they study the Roanoke colonists) and the British Museum in London (they own John White's drawings and maps, like the one to the right) issued a statement on May 4, 2012. They believe that some important details on White's map of the Carolina coast have been ignored. Those details, they believe, give us a huge clue in determining the fate of the lost colonists.



Notice the ship in the left-center of the map. Then, look to the left of the ship where the river forks into two. Do you see the slightly discolored "patch" on land right where the river forks? I've zoomed in on the location in the middle map below. This huge breakthrough all began when researcher Brent Lane noticed the discoloration and began to ask the question "What is underneath the patch?" So, researchers decided to take a look.



Using ultraviolet lighting, researchers were able to see underneath the patch without the fear of damaging the original map. What they found underneath is shocking - and raises some questions of its own! Researchers have discovered a drawing of a much larger fort. This fort was entirely unknown until it was discovered on this map. Now, what can this tell us about the whereabouts of the "lost colonists"?



Source: Created and adapted from information at <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/04/us/map-markings-offer-clues-to-lost-colony.html>

Researchers believe this fort is a sign as to where the colonists traveled to. According to White's diaries, he knew the settlers had planned to move "50 miles into the mainland." He also clearly states that the colonists planned to establish a more permanent settlement further inland. Until now, most historians believed the colonists had traveled south to live the Croatoan natives, but the discovery of this fort offers the first new clue in centuries about the 95 or settlers. Unfortunately, the location of this fort is currently owned by private companies and part is underneath a golf course, so excavation will not be happening anytime soon. Now, detective, here is where we need your help. Think about how new discoveries on this map impacts the case.

1.) Let's say for a second that the fort that appears on this map never actually existed. Then, why would White draw it on the map?

Answer question 1 here:

2.) Think about who is paying for John White's voyages to the Americas: Queen Elizabeth I of England. She is investing money to hopefully land riches in the New World. Would White have reason to say a fort is there, when in fact it is not? Explain yourself!

Answer question 2 here:

3.) Now, let's assume the fort did exist and the colonists traveled there. Why would White cover the fort with a patch?

Answer question 3 here:

4.) So, detective, what do you think about this new discovery? How does the discovery of this fort change your thinking on what happened to the colonists?

Answer question 4 here:

