

# Beechland

AND THE LOST COLONY

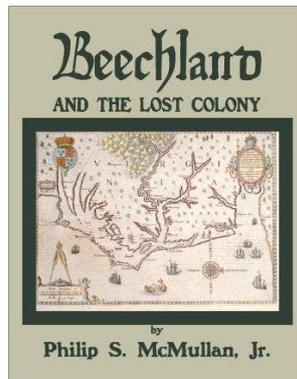


by

**Philip S. McMullan, Jr.**

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## THE LOST COLONY



*In a thorough study of original accounts, native alliances, oral histories, naming patterns, archeological remnants and reanalysis of early maps, Mr. McMullan explores the longstanding mystery of what became of England's earliest colonists.*

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## THE LOST COLONY

Sir Walter Raleigh's attempt to settle Virginia remains one of the greatest mysteries of early American history. John White, the colony's governor, described how the colonists were forced to remain on Roanoke Island when their intended destination was Chesapeake Bay. There they were abandoned and became lost to history after the Spanish Armada caused their resupply ships to be diverted.

However, significant evidence suggests that they intentionally relocated inland and that Raleigh, at least, kept in touch with them. They continued the alliance they had formed with the Croatan tribe and, for at least ten more years, supplied Raleigh with a valuable commodity: Sassaparilla. They chose Beechland, a protected sassafras site about fifty miles into the mainland, in order to prevent the Spaniards (and potential competitors) from finding them. This profitable venture ended when Raleigh lost his patent and his head after the death of Queen Elizabeth. In this scenario, the so-called Lost Colonists were not lost but were finally abandoned when Raleigh could no longer send ships to them.

Evidence for the colonists' movement was found in original accounts, native alliances, oral histories, naming patterns, archeological remnants and reanalysis of early maps. A thorough archeological investigation of the site might yield the crucial clues to resolve the longstanding mystery of what became of the majority of the lost colonists.



Philip S. McMullan, Jr., is a native of historic Edenton, North Carolina, and has been immersed in the colonial history of his state since childhood. Despite his early interest in history, he spent much of his career as a research scientist with RTI International in the newly created Research Triangle Park in 1960. After retirement, he researched the history of Beechland and its possible relationship to the abandoned. He prepared this thesis as part of obtaining his Masters of History at North Carolina State University. He has taught World History and American History for the Gateway to College Program at the College of the Albemarle since 2007.

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