AWESOME stories

SIR WALTER RALEIGH



0. SIR WALTER RALEIGH - Story Preface

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Walter Scot tells us about an incident involving Raleigh and Queen Elizabeth: "The night had been rainy, and just where the young gentleman stood a small quantity of mud interrupted the Queen’s passage. As she hesitated to pass on, the gallant, throwing his cloak from his shoulders, laid it on the miry spot, so as to ensure her stepping over it dry-shod." (From The Waverley Novels: With the Author's Last Corrections and Additions, Volume 4, at page 52.) Image online via Scotiana (“Everything Scotland”).

> *Whosoever commands the sea*
> *commands the trade;*
> *whosoever commands the trade of the world*
> *commands the riches of the world,*
> *and consequently the world itself.*
>
> Sir Walter Raleigh

Walter Raleigh, a British explorer who (in 1584) sent an expedition to what is now North Carolina, was born near the village of East Budleigh. At the time (1552), his parents leased his birthplace (now known as Hayes Barton) from another family.

Walter's hometown, and the place where he was educated as a youngster, has existed for a very long time. It was likely settled by invading Saxons during the seventh or eighth century.

It has been said that Raleigh was one of the most handsome courtiers during the Elizabethan Age. He was a sort of Renaissance Man, skilled in various areas including poetry.

After spending time in Ireland, Raleigh (who spelled his name Ralegh, without the "i") wrote letters to Francis Walsingham (the Queen' secretary) and Robert Dudley (the Earl of Leicester), requesting an introduction at

Elizabeth' court. He was twenty-eight and six feet tall. The forty-eight-year-old Queen took notice of him.

Protestant, intelligent, well-spoken (with a Devonshire accent) and eager to be useful at court, Walter (for a time) worked for Walsingham. Among other things, he was instrumental in uncovering the Babington Plot against Elizabeth. As a reward - after Babington's horrifying death - Raleigh was given his lands.

Historians record that Walter became the Queen' favorite. Traveling with her to various palaces, he was a rising star in the Tudor court. While at Greenwich Palace, Walter - according to legend - placed his own cloak over muddy ground so Her Majesty's feet could stay dry.

Raleigh had sailed to the "New World" and had visions of an English empire overseas. Elizabeth granted him an exploration charter. Naming the territory "Virginia" (in honor of the "Virgin Queen"), Raleigh sent an expedition to establish America's first English settlement in the summer of 1584.

Attempts at permanently settling Roanoke Island (today part of North Carolina's "Outer Banks") failed, however, despite repeated efforts. The fate of the 1587 settlers remains a mystery, and they are now referred to as "The Lost Colony." Raleigh himself was knighted for his various exploits in 1585, and the Queen made him Captain of her Guard.

At court, he met Elizabeth ("Bess") Throckmorton, one of Elizabeth's ladies-in-waiting. The couple, with access to the Queen's private chambers, fell madly in love during a time when heads were lost if one fell out of royal favor.

When Bess became pregnant, the pair secretly married without the Queen's permission. When Elizabeth found out, she banished them both from her court and sent them to the Tower. That, however, happened in 1591, three years after Britain successfully defended itself against the famous Spanish Armada.

What was the Spanish Armada? How many ships did it include? When, and where, did the naval battles take place? What did the Spanish king intend to accomplish by invading Britain? And, what were his motives for launching the expedition in the first place?

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:
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See Learning Tasks for this story online at:
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/SIR-WALTER-RALEIGH-Elizabeth-I-The-Golden-Age

Media Stream



Sir Walter Raleigh
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East Budleigh - Sir Walter Raleigh's Birthplace
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Home where Sir Walter Raleigh was Born
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Portrait of Raleigh

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The Handsome and Sought After Raleigh

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Francis Walsingham - The Queen's Secretary

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Robert Dudley - The Earl of Leicester

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Greenwich Palace

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Raleigh Placing Cloak over Muddy Ground for the Queen

Image, described above, online courtesy Main Lesson.

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Raleigh Ventures off to the New World

Image, described above, online courtesy Main Lesson.

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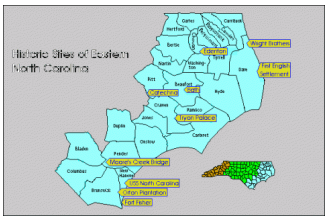
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Elizabeth "Bess" Throckmorton - Portrait

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Historic Sites of Eastern North Carolina - The First Settlement

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