**Virginia Dare and Legend: The White Doe**

What happened to these "Lost Colonists"? No one knows for sure. As with many mysteries, when the answer cannot be found, [legends grow to explain the story](http://ncpedia.org/history/colonial/roanoke-fact-or-fiction). One of the most enduring North Carolina legends is about Virginia Dare as the white doe.

In 1901 [Sallie Southall Cotten](http://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/cottenss/bio.html) wrote [*The White Doe: The Fate of Virginia Dare*](http://www.archive.org/details/whitedoe00cottiala), a long narrative poem that tried to explain the mystery. According to Ms. Cotten's story and later variations of the legend…

Virginia Dare grew up in the tribe of the friendly Indian Manteo. She became known as Winona-Ska and grew into a beautiful young woman whom everyone loved. Okisko was a handsome young Indian chieftain who wished to marry her. However, an old witch doctor, Chico, also wanted to win Winona-Ska. Chico was very jealous of Okisko. In spite of his efforts to win her love, Chico was turned down by Winona-Ska. Enraged, he used his evil magic to turn her into a white doe. If she wouldn't be his, no other man could have her, either.

Okisko was determined to undo the evil magic of Chico. He found a kindly magician, Wenokan, to help him. Okisko made an arrow with an oyster shell tip. Then he and Wenokan took the arrow to a magic fountain. When Okisko put the arrow into the water, the arrow became pearl. If the white doe was shot with this pearl arrow, the evil spell would be broken, and Winona-Ska would become human again.

At this time Wanchese decided he would seek fame and glory by killing the charmed white doe. He knew that only a silver arrow could kill this special doe. His father, also named Wanchese, was the Indian who had traveled to England with Manteo. Queen Elizabeth I had given a silver arrow to his father. Now the son would use it to kill the white doe.

One day Okisko saw the white doe near the ruins of Fort Raleigh on Roanoke Island. Nervously, he raised his bow and shot his magic pearl arrow, but at exactly the same time, Wanchese shot his silver arrow from another direction. Both arrows pierced the white doe's heart. Magically, Okisko's pearl arrow turned her back into a beautiful young woman, but Wanchese's silver arrow pierced her human heart. Okisko rushed to her, but Winona-Ska died in his arms.

In desperation, Okisko ran to the magic fountain and threw both arrows into the water, begging for Winona-Ska's life. When he returned to the place where she had died, he found no sign of either the doe or Winona-Ska. Later the white doe appeared and looked at Okisko with her soft eyes. Then she ran into the woods.

To this day many people report seeing a ghostly white doe near the area where the Lost Colony first settled on Roanoke Island. Will the mystery ever be solved? We may never know all the facts, but this legend of the white doe is an interesting way to explain the fate of Virginia Dare, one of the Lost Colonists.