

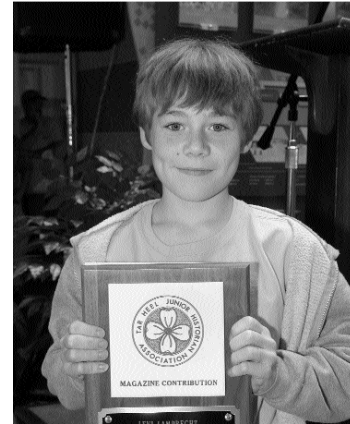
THJHA Essay Contest Winner: A Boy's Journal

By Levi Lamprecht*

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Early Summer 1587: Promise of the New World

Our journey here to Roanoke Island in the New World was absolutely terrible. Almost all of us had to sleep on blankets below deck, except the high-ranking officers, who had the luxury of beds. The food and drink spoiled. During storms, we colonists had to stay below deck. Rats and cockroaches were rampant. Saltwater seemed to be everywhere, not just in the great sea, but in the ship as well. Conditions were deplorable, and the ship reeked of vomit and other horrid smells.



Levi Lamprecht

In spite of it all, what kept us going was the thought of a new life. For my father, this [was] an opportunity to feed his hungry family.

We'd settled some when Father was asked to be part of a search party. Fifteen men who were left here before us, to maintain our English claim on the territory, are missing. Father took me with him, and I was present when the remains of one of the men were found. Father said that the Natives had killed him. Upon hearing this, I became very worried about Mother, who had stayed behind in the colony. I was very relieved to see her again. I never told her about the dead man, or about how I picture savages everywhere, though I have not seen any.

Looking out the window, I see small sprouts of newly grown gardens and livestock grazing on whatever grass they can find. Smoke is rising from chimneys. Women are cooking dinner in new homes rebuilt from the buildings that Governor Ralph Lane's colony left before us. During our rebuilding, we found melons growing in the old dirt floors!

There is such a variety of wildlife here. I can't imagine what is in the great forest behind us! The insects are active, the flowers are blooming, and the sky is blue. Waves are crashing along the shore.

Late Summer 1587: Fear of the Future

I have not been able to write much because all of my chores take a lot of time. My duties

include helping care for the animals and crops outdoors in the exhausting heat. There is a drought now. The few crops that we have planted are dying, food is rotting, and drinking water is sparse. Except for the heat, it feels as though we are back in England.

There is talk of Governor John White leaving to go back to England for more supplies. I hope he returns shortly, if he does leave. Some colonists have made a terrible mistake and attacked whom they thought were the hostile Roanoke Natives. They turned out to be our interpreter Manteo's own people, the Croatoans!

I lie awake at night, nervous about what could happen to us, because there are more Natives than there are English. I'm so afraid that we may be found in the same condition as that dead man.

**Levi Lamprecht won first place in the elementary division of the Tar Heel Junior Historian Essay Contest 2007. He was a sixth grader in the Generations Homeschool Group in Raleigh and a member of the Legacy Legends junior historian club, Jan Deckert, Rebecca Camplejohn, and Lauren Richardson, advisers.*