

FINDING *THE LOST COLONY* (1937): PAUL GREEN, SYMPHONIC DRAMA,
AND THE HISTORY OF A COLLABORATION

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ABSTRACT

CHRISTA ANNE BENTLEY: Finding *The Lost Colony* (1937): Paul Green,
Symphonic Drama, and the History of a Collaboration
(Under the direction of Tim Carter)

In 1937, Paul Green wrote and produced *The Lost Colony*, a drama about the mysterious disappearance of the Roanoke Colony in 1587 on North Carolina's Outer Banks. As he was writing, Green envisioned *The Lost Colony* as a new genre of theater, calling it a "symphonic drama." To achieve this, Green enlisted the help of composer Lamar Stringfield and arranger Adeline McCall. The play includes Elizabethan carols and Native American dances, creating a musical background thought to portray a realistic historical setting. In addition to examining the ideas behind "symphonic drama," I explore the musical identity that *The Lost Colony* creates for the state of North Carolina within the context of the New South. Furthermore, I examine *The Lost Colony* within the frame of the Federal Theatre Project, exploring the intersections of regional projects and national trends.

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Preface

It is still my belief that only in an imaginative, poetic and musical theatre can the true heart and soul of this great upsurging nation of ours find adequate and worthy dramatic state.

—Paul Green, *The Carolina Play-book*, Vol. XII, No. 2

In 1584, Sir Walter Raleigh received a charter from Queen Elizabeth I to establish a colony in the New World, to be called “Virginia.” Raleigh sent a ship with a crew led by Philip Amadas. The preliminary trip was successful, and shortly thereafter, in 1585, Sir Richard Grenville sailed with 107 men, women, and children as the first colonists to settle on what is now known as Roanoke Island. They fostered a friendly relationship with a native tribe, the Croatoan, on nearby Hatteras Island. However in the face of a harsh winter, Grenville sailed back to England, seeking supplies. In case that conditions forced the colonists to leave site, Grenville established a method to indicate their new location. If needed, the colonists were to carve its name on a tree for the British to find. If the colonists had left in distress, they were additionally to carve a cross into the tree. Two years later, Raleigh dispatched an expedition back to Roanoke, led by John White. When he and his crew landed, they found the place deserted, with the word “CROATOAN” carved into a tree. Because the colonists left no sign of distress, White believed that they had sought refuge with the Croatoan tribe on Hatteras Island. However, a dangerous storm prohibited White and his crew from sailing there. The fate of the settlers of Roanoke has never been resolved.

An American legend, the story of the lost colony of Roanoke Island ends with a mystery that has not been put to rest for over 400 years. It has become entrenched within the account of the nation's beginnings and holds particular resonance for North Carolinians, who take pride that their state holds some of the oldest and richest history in the United States. During the early twentieth century, in the wake of the Civil War, an impulse to establish patriotic roots in an older America caused many citizens to reach all the way back to the country's colonial origins. The desire to define the nation through a period other than the Civil War held even greater importance for many people in the American South, and the tale of Roanoke Island became a perfect way for the state of North Carolina to demonstrate its colonial heritage. Particularly, Paul Green produced many plays that illustrate this idea of the "New South"—an American South that was no longer pinned down as racist and intolerant. Furthermore, claims that the South had no artistic culture, such as those famously made in H. L. Mencken's essay *Sahara of the Bozart* (an early version of which was published in 1917), rallied Green and others to demonstrate that art was a part of Southern life.

One of the results of this turn toward colonial history is Paul Green's *The Lost Colony* (1937), a "symphonic drama" that tells the story of the Roanoke colony through drama, dance, and music, ending with the characters walking "off the stage and into the pages of history." *The Lost Colony* has been performed annually on Roanoke Island since its first performance in 1937, apart from 1941-45, when the production was cancelled due to a blackout along the North Carolina coast in response to the presence of German U-boats during World War II. Famous North Carolinians have paid homage to their state's

history by performing in the annual summer festival, including Andy Griffith, who played Sir Walter Raleigh from 1947 to 1953.

In creating *The Lost Colony*, Paul Green enlisted the assistance of several important collaborators. He had the help of Lamar Stringfield and Adeline McCall for the musical portions of *The Lost Colony* and received the support of committed colleagues such as Frederick Koch and Samuel Selden to execute the production. Unfortunately, most of the scholarly literature and the production's website neglect this collaborative aspect of the play, citing Green alone. Green's life has inspired multiple biographies compared to a single dissertation on Lamar Stringfield and just a few newspaper articles about Adeline McCall. Only James R. Spence's biography of Green, *Watering the Sahara*, does greater justice to the work of Green's friends and colleagues, and even then it leaves much unsaid.

The first chapter of this thesis examines this network in which Paul Green worked, and seeks to show the important roles that Frederick Koch, Elizabeth Lay Green, Lamar Stringfield, and Adeline Denham McCall played as collaborators in *The Lost Colony* project. *The Lost Colony* was meant to define a new dramatic genre called the "symphonic drama," a term coined by Paul Green. In my second chapter, I explore the nature of this term and hope to contextualize the genre and *The Lost Colony* by placing it within the tradition of American pageantry and productions within the Federal Theatre Project. The third chapter examines the place of music within *The Lost Colony* and the circumstances surrounding the 1938 publication of *The Lost Colony Songbook*. Finally, in the fourth chapter, I consider the aftermath of the closing of the Federal Theatre Project

in the 1939 season. I have included an appendix of “Personalialia,” which includes short biographies of the lesser-known figures discussed here.

In my transcriptions of original documents, I have silently standardized titles and corrected typographical errors. Original spellings have otherwise been retained. I use the following abbreviations to cite use of archival materials: NARA/FTP, National Archives and Records Administration (College Park, MD), Record Group 69, Federal Theatre Project Collection; UNC/LS, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Southern Folklife Collection, #3522, the Lamar Stringfield Papers; UNC/PG, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Southern Historical Collection, #3693, the Paul Green Papers; UNC/NCC, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina Collection. I used the typed copies of Paul Green’s diaries found within UNC/NCC; however, I have also consulted the original handwritten versions in UNC/PG.

I would like to thank my advisor, Tim Carter, for his encouragement to take on this project and for his help along the way. His enthusiasm and work ethic inspired me to accomplish far more in one semester than I thought I could. Thanks to my committee members: Annegret Fauser, for the wonderful semester spent exploring and interrogating ideas about music in the United States; and Brigid Cohen for her counsel both in my research on this specific topic and in the direction for my research interests in general. I am also grateful to Lydia Hammesley, who provided support during the semester and helped me sort out the mysteries of the Paul Green Collection at the Society for American Music conference in Charlotte. Also, the staffs of UNC’s Southern Historical and Folklife Collections deserve my sincere thanks for helping me navigate their holdings. In addition, the staff of the North Carolina Collection helped me maximize the university’s digital

archives in order to research more broadly about the lives of the lesser-known figures in my thesis.

Chapter I

The Project's Beginnings: 1930-1936

And what material we have had and put to no use!—material for music, drama, poems, pictures, novels, songs—matter for dreams. But we've had no dreamers. Where is the man, where are the men? Come out of your hiding-place. Strike up the harps, let the bands play. Where shall we find him who will light up the struggles of our people? Who will tell of the builders, the road-makers, the pioneers, the creators of cities, or railroads? Their records stand unsupported in themselves. Let them have their place in story and song—in the illumination of art. Are these high sounding phrases? They have some meaning. Who among us has told the story of the lonesome seashore, of the early settlers along that ocean, of the wrecks and disasters there? Nobody. Along the empty sand banks lie the rotting ribs of many a ship, the disappearing records of struggle and death. In that wide and barren land of sand and battered trees are symbols of man and his bravery enough to move an army.

—Paul Green, “Southern Commonwealth”¹

The formative years of *The Lost Colony* were greatly affected by the cultural climate of the University of North Carolina. UNC, situated in the town of Chapel Hill near Raleigh and Durham, became the creative locus of Green's work, where he began as a student and eventually worked as faculty. Within this community, called “The Hill” by its members, Green connected with fellow students who would later become his collaborators. Additionally, Green became submersed in the intellectual culture of the university. An understanding of this atmosphere becomes crucial to interpreting Green's work, *The Lost Colony*.

¹ Paul Green, “Southern Commonwealth: A Case I t,” in idem, *The Hawthorn Tree*, 61. This essay was originally published in the *Carolina Play-book*, ed. Koch.

Green's move to Chapel Hill as a student in 1916 coincided with many changes in the United States, including its entry into World War I in 1917 and rapid economic growth during the 1920s. During Green's time as a faculty member, the swift economic decline after the 1929 market crash and the financial distresses of the South during the 1930s took an additional toll on the nation. Under such circumstances, many scholars mark this period as a time in American history when people became increasingly interested in defining the nation culturally. This is especially true for Green and many others in the South, as H.L. Mencken's "Sahara of the Bozart," claiming that the southern United States was completely void of artistic culture, cast a shadow over the region and made the search for an artistic identity even more urgent. Surely, Mencken's statement troubled Green, prompting his call to arms in his 1930 essay "Southern Commonwealth." The desire for a distinctly southern expression was evident at UNC, namely through the Carolina Playmakers and their folk-theatrical idiom.

Furthermore, North Carolina and other states south of the Mason-Dixon line continued to adjust to ways of life after the Civil War and Reconstruction and sought to rebuild their regional identity. Declaring the region a "New South," these states aimed to compete with the Northern half of the nation, which had suffered considerably less damage to both their infrastructure and ways of life than the former Confederacy had during the war.

Chapel Hill and the "New South"

The concept of a New South emerged after Reconstruction. The term has been used widely, ranging from discussions of populist movements in the 1890s, through the effects

of the New Deal on the southern United States, to the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. In his historiography of the New South, Paul M. Gaston notes that the word was used to designate a new society and “expressed the passage from one kind of civilization into another,” meaning that the former Confederate states had put behind previous ways of life and established a new order.² After the Civil War, the United States “believed that the future of the Republic and the success of free government would depend heavily on the extent to which the South could adjust...to the national viewpoint.”³ Because creating a separate country was no longer an option for these states, southerners began to recognize the “Old South” as a bygone era. Identifying three ideas that began to permeate the rhetoric of the New South—opulence, triumph, and innocence—Gaston argues that this new order manifests itself as a mythology of the South, in which the rhetoric of progressivism allowed its citizens to ignore the poverty and racism that prevailed in their society. The idea of a region that flourished financially and exhibited racial tolerance projects illusions of how the South wanted and needed to be perceived by the country more than they reflect any reality about southern cultures during this time. This mythology contributed to the themes of the South as a pastoral utopia, promoted the region as financially prosperous, and brought Appalachia to the forefront of romanticized representations of the region.⁴ These themes imbued the ethos of student life and the intellectual culture at UNC. Furthermore, they manifested themselves in the artistic products emerging from the UNC community at this time.

² Gaston, *The New South Creed*, 3.

³ Loc. cit.

⁴ Webb, “Southern Politics in the Age of Populism and Progressivism.” See also Inscoe, “The Discovery of Appalachia,” 2

During the 1920s and '30s, these ideas of opulence and triumph can be found through the growth of southern industry, the developments in institutions of higher education, and an upsurge in southern literature. One prominent understanding of the outcome of the Civil War was that the South had been defeated based on its reliance on slave-based agriculture, and that the region needed to restructure its industry in order to succeed.⁵ Therefore, the development of urban centers and industrial infrastructure signaled not only that the South had forgone slavery, but also that it could be a successful contributor to the American economy. Furthermore, the growth of southern industry stimulated the endowments of many universities in the region. Both James Buchanan Duke, through financial successes in electricity and tobacco, and Ernest Woodruff, with his company Coca-Cola, directed their capital to Duke University and Emory University, respectively.⁶ This became a way for the idea of opulence to permeate the rhetoric of the South during this time. Particularly in North Carolina, the construction of Duke University in Durham served as a site to display the changing fortunes of the South. The building of the university's campus between 1925 and 1932 was at the time the biggest construction project undertaken there. Duke Chapel towers above the campus, serving as the crowning triumph of this massive undertaking. The neo-Gothic style of architecture

⁵ Cooper and Terrill, *The American South*, 2: 428-32. Part of the New South Creed asked the question, "Why did the North defeat the South?" The answer stated "The South could not compete with the North because the South relied too much on cotton and slave-based agriculture. The South failed to develop industries and cities and towns. Southern leaders were too interested in politics and too uninterested in work and making money." This understanding of losing the Civil War convinced many Southerners that establishing urban centers and industry was a key to the future success of their society.

⁶ Watson, *A History of Southern Drama*, 99-100.

foregrounds the campus' prosperity and creates a sense of longstanding heritage, if only through facades.⁷

Other universities, such as Vanderbilt and UNC, demonstrated the same upsurge of higher education in the South and became viable competitors with those in the North.⁸ Central organization, through the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, allowed the standardization of academic programs across the region, and allowed the Southern Association of Colleges to establish academic criteria to meet the standards set by schools in the North.⁹ Universities also became central to the building of intellectual communities in southern states. After World War I, the student populations at these universities consisted mainly of young war veterans, comprising a well-traveled body of students that these campuses had not seen before, students that Charles S. Watson has referred to as “the least provincial southerners since the Revolutionary generation of great Virginians.”¹⁰ One such community, the Vanderbilt Agrarians, contributed to the rhetoric of the New South through their poetry and writing. This group of young intellectuals associated with the Nashville-based university published a collection of essays entitled *I'll Take My Stand: The South and the Agrarian Tradition* in 1930, which describes the centrality of farming communities in the development of the South. In addition to this intellectual renaissance, the city of Nashville began to promote

⁷ “Construction of Duke University, 1924-1932,” University Archives, Duke University. The finding-aid for this collection states that this project cost over 21 million dollars.

⁸ Watson discusses the role of universities in stimulating artistic expression built from ideas crucial to the formation of the New South in *A History of Southern Drama*, 99-100.

⁹ Cooper and Terrill, *The American South*, 2: 564-65. This passage also states that the secularization of colleges held a significant impact to establishing higher standards for universities in the South, including Duke University and Vanderbilt University emancipating themselves from religious institutions.

¹⁰ Watson, *A History of Southern Drama*, 99-100.

itself as the “Athens of the South,” summoning the authority of ancient Greece to establish its regional importance. The Nashville Parthenon, originally a wooden replica of the ancient Greek structure erected for Tennessee’s centennial exhibition, was reconstructed in 1930 in a more permanent form, displaying opulence through the ornamented pediments and colossal pillars.¹¹

In Chapel Hill, UNC’s growing intellectual rigor drew many remarkable faculty members to the campus between 1910 and 1920. Edwin A. Greenlaw, a professor of literature, and Frederick Koch, a professor of dramatic literature, joined the faculty at this time and became central figures shaping intellectual culture and student life. A particular festival at UNC illustrates a nexus of New South themes shaping the university. The Dogwood Festival (1932-38) promoted the preservation of the dogwood tree, native to North Carolina, through folk music, dancing, folk crafts, and drama.¹² Green attended the event in 1935, no doubt because of his personal interest in southern horticulture, and wrote in his journal describing the festival:

Touching singing of ballads, old three-part hymns, the dulcimer, fiddling, etc. Square dances beautiful—the girl with the peach cheeks, going joyously and lightly around like a figure in a merry-go-round. Memorial Hall nearly filled. A number of tourists in the back looking on with slightly patronizing amusement.¹³

The agrarian, the folk, and the Appalachian mountain region were each celebrated here through the promotion of music, art and drama. But above and beyond this yearly

¹¹ “Parthenon,” Nashville Parks and Recreation, accessed 27 February 2012, <http://www.nashville.gov/parthenon/>. The Parthenon served as a stage for large-scale pageant productions during the summer.

¹² Folder 1, “Original Finding Aid,” Dogwood Festival, Incorporated Records, #3654-z, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

¹³ UNC-NCC, Paul Green Diaries, vol. 2, entry for 27 April 1935.

festival, a student theatrical group called the Carolina Playmakers embodied the vision of the New South through their promotion of folk plays on the UNC campus.

The Carolina Playmakers

The Carolina Playmakers, established by Frederick H. “Proff” Koch in 1918, was founded as an organization for students to write, produce, and act in plays. This shaped a rich network of creative activity through the various aspects of dramatic production on UNC’s campus. In their initial years, the Playmakers established a makeshift performance space in the campus’s Y.M.C.A. building. As Koch remembers it, “we built a temporary platform over the front row of seats and strung a curtain across.” To enter or exit the stage, performers had to climb through a window.¹⁴ In terms of repertory, Koch stressed the importance of folk plays, and encouraged his students to use the rich variety of vernacular and folk experiences from their life in North Carolina as the inspiration for writing original dramas.

To Koch, drawing on folk materials meant turning to the “legends, superstitions, customs, environmental differences, and the vernacular of the common people.”¹⁵ Koch went on to develop this conception of the folk by suggesting that the main issue in writing a folk drama is “man’s conflict with the forces of nature and his simple pleasure in being alive...But the ultimate cause of all dramatic action we classify as ‘folk,’ whether it be physical or spiritual, may be found in man’s desperate struggle for

¹⁴ Frederick Koch in “First Stage and First Theatre of The Carolina Playmakers” from *Pioneering a People’s Theatre*, ed. Henderson, 28.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 10.

existence and in his enjoyment of the world of nature.”¹⁶ Koch saw this deep investigation of the particularities of a folk culture as a way to discover the universalities of human experience. By tapping into this resource, Koch felt that presenting the material of folk culture in dramatic forms would lead to the first national, American style of theatre, or in his words, “native” theatre, rather than the “imitative” plays that had been created elsewhere in the United States.¹⁷

One important aspect of this native folk theater came from the fact that the authors of these folk plays were “sons and daughters of Carolina.” The students who had grown up in the region could invoke an authenticity as they relayed their lived experiences of Carolina folk life to the Playmakers’ stage. Koch claimed that “the materials were drawn by each writer from scenes familiar and near, often from remembered adventures of his youth, from folk tales and the common tradition, and from present-day life in North Carolina,” showing that this folk culture was not relegated to distant memory, but a vital part of the contemporary lifestyles of his students.¹⁸

The Carolina Playmakers, who produced dramas throughout the school year, also began a “trouping” initiative through which students would travel throughout North Carolina and present their plays in towns from the mountainous western region of the state to the eastern coast. The troupe toured in a bus towing scenery, portable lighting, and costumes. The Playmakers could transform any school auditorium, church, or town hall into a theater to bring the folk plays to the folk themselves. In addition to production,

¹⁶ Ibid., 10-11.

¹⁷ Ibid., 11.

¹⁸ Koch, “Folk-play Making” in *Carolina Folk plays*, 10.

Koch facilitated the publication of student's dramas through several volumes entitled *Carolina Folk Plays* issued by Henry Holt and Co.

During this time the Playmakers functioned with no organization-specific building on UNC's campus. Koch recalls that fans of the project encouraged the Playmakers to continue presenting plays within the broader community, so that "the people will see that you get a theatre." Thus the Playmakers traveled in this manner for seven years, gaining support for a people's theatre. In 1925, the University Trustees authorized the renovation of Smith Hall to become the permanent on-campus theatre for the Carolina Playmakers. The Carnegie Corporation supplemented the project, providing the finances for seating, lighting, and stage equipment.¹⁹ Finally, in 1936, UNC established a Department for Dramatic Art through Proff Koch's advocacy of training actor's in academic institutions.

Paul Green Comes to "The Hill"

Growing up in Lillington, North Carolina, Green first moved to Chapel Hill in 1916 when he enrolled at the university. During his first year, Green excelled in his studies, enrolling in sophomore-level classes. This accelerated coursework eventually permitted him to graduate in three years of taking courses.²⁰ However, after his initial year at UNC, Green enlisted in the army to serve in World War I. Green joined a North Carolina regiment, the 105th Engineers. When back in school, Horace Williams, of the philosophy department became one of Green's mentors. Williams, a graduate of Harvard, was at the time the

¹⁹ Koch, "First Stage and First Theatre of The Carolina Playmakers," 31.

²⁰ Avery, ed., *A Southern Life*, 5. Although Green left school to serve in the military, his total time involved in coursework was three years.

only professor of philosophy at UNC. His classes were popular, and Green had been unable to enroll as a freshman, although on his return to UNC, he enrolled in two of Williams' courses and ended up majoring in philosophy.²¹ However, Green also became involved with the Carolina Playmakers, which served as a particularly fruitful formative experience for him, also providing him with another mentor who emphasized the rich potential of southern, or "folk" culture, as a basis for dramatic material, and a captive audience interested both in theater in general and, in particular, a Southern theater.

Additionally, through the Carolina Playmakers Green built many relationships with his student colleagues that remained influential throughout his career. The group involved many of the women on UNC's campus. Since 1897, women had been allowed to complete their final two years of coursework at UNC, and during World War I, women made up a large majority of the Carolina Playmakers. When Green returned from the war, he connected through the organization with fellow students Elizabeth Lay, Adeline McCall, and Thomas Wolfe, among others. Koch's first volume of *Carolina Folk-Plays* included Elizabeth Lay's *When Witches Ride* along with Thomas Wolfe's *The Return of Buck Gavin*.²² Lay (who later became Green's wife) was active on campus as a playwright and actress. She also served as a leader in the UNC Women's Association, along with another member of the Carolina Playmakers, Adeline Denham (later, McCall), who was Frederick Koch's niece. This association was the administrative organization for female students at UNC, where both Elizabeth Lay Green and McCall sat on the Honors

²¹ Spence, *Watering the Sahara*, 87.

²² Koch describes Elizabeth Lay's creative process in the preface to the first publication of *Carolina Folk-plays*, writing, "Miss Lay tells how she scoured the countryside to find a log cabin to serve as a model for the scene in her initial play...how she 'sketched the details and drew in the logs on the big canvases,' and how after 'weeks of experiment with the new kind of paint'...a really creditable log cabin set achieved."

Committee. During her senior year, Denham served as the representative of the Women's Association to the Campus Cabinet, where she was the only female representative.²³

After graduating, Elizabeth Lay continued to write plays. Following her marriage to Paul Green in 1922, she often assisted him in research for his dramatic subjects. McCall pursued a career in music as a pianist, training in New York City and Paris, before returning to Chapel Hill where she began to teach music at Chapel Hill and Carrboro elementary schools. She and her husband, Frederick B. McCall, remained friends with the Greens, and she arranged the music for many of Green's dramas.

After graduating in 1921, Green decided that he wanted to become a writer, even if he was briefly lured by money to pitch for the baseball team in his hometown of Lillington in the summer after graduation. Eventually, Horace Williams encouraged him to apply to Cornell University's doctoral program in philosophy. Green enrolled at Cornell in 1922. One year into his degree, Williams contacted Green again, saying that UNC had expanded, and invited him to teach in the Philosophy Department. Green accepted and joined the faculty of UNC in 1923.²⁴ Throughout this time, however, Green continued writing plays, and the Carolina Playmakers produced his *Last of the Lowries*, *The Miser*, and *Blackbeard, Pirate of the Carolina Coast*, which Green co-wrote with his wife.

When Green began writing his folk dramas, he drew inspiration from African American folk culture. As John Herbert Roper explains in his biography of Green,

²³ UNC/NCC, *Yackety-Yack* (1922): 56, 204, 207. *Yackety-Yack* was the UNC yearbook and is now available in digital form.

²⁴ Spence *Watering the Sahara*, 98-104, gives more information about Paul Green's life as a graduate student.

Green's political stance was considered liberal for the region in which he was living. Roper claims that to be considered liberal in this time meant accepting racial integration.²⁵ As a young boy, Green remembered rejecting the racial prejudices that prevailed in his rural hometown. His close childhood friendship with his African American neighbor, Rassie, allowed him to overcome some of the discrimination. In an interview with James R. Spence, Green also recalled witnessing several instances of racial violence during his childhood which similarly led to his disdain of racist attitudes in the Jim Crow South.²⁶ He grew to incorporate these values into his art through plays that developed themes of racial integration. These works placed Green as someone with progressive social values. *The Last of the Lowries*, for example, centered on a family of Lumbee Indians who were known to have descended from African Americans and Native Americans. Writing a play with an interracial family as its protagonist was seen to be socially progressive for its time, and Paul Green would continue to incorporate such messages into his dramas. In addition to these artistic expressions with a political stance, Green also took an interest in the case of the Scottsboro Boys from 1931, and began his long-standing advocacy against the death penalty.

Raleigh, the Shepherd of the Ocean

In 1918, the State Literary and Historical Association of North Carolina commissioned Frederick Koch to write a pageant commemorating the tercentenary of Sir Walter Raleigh's execution. Different from the folk drama, the pageant typically drew on

²⁵ Paul Green, p. xi.

²⁶ Spence, *Watering the Sahara*, 14-19.

historical subjects, so the genre fit the commemorative occasion. The genre had also grown increasingly prominent in community theaters in the United States. In 1914, Ralph Davol's *A Handbook of American Pageantry* boasted that pageantry had taken over the United States like "a fertile meadow."²⁷ Davol claimed that "pageantry is expression" and believed that it was a way for people of the United States to connect to their past and resist a modernist progressivism: "Pageantry is opportunity for self-discovery. It typifies in a broad sense the love of life itself, and should stand, as does the American magazine *Life* for the finer old-fashioned sentiment and picturesqueness and shun screeching modernism."²⁸ Likewise, in 1921 *Drama Magazine*, published by the Drama League of America, noted the upsurge of pageantry in American theatrical life. It credited the necessity of such an indulgent form of drama to the discontinuance of firework displays celebrating the Fourth of July, stating that the genre could "express the sentiment and emotion inspired by our dearest historical and patriotic anniversaries."²⁹ Whether or not the pageant was truly meant to replace fireworks, the unrestrained patriotism certainly prevailed in many pageants. Furthermore, the pageant called for a greater involvement of participants from the community. In a review of Koch's *Raleigh, the Shepherd of the Ocean* by J. Vandervoot Sloan, the pageant was praised for requiring a large cast, noting

²⁷ Davol, *A Handbook of American Pageantry*, 11.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 13.

²⁹ *The Drama Magazine* 11 (1921): 292. The magazine also draws a correlation between the large number of pageants based on the Pilgrims and Woodrow Wilson's establishment of "Pilgrim Day" as a national holiday in 1921. It showcased two of these pageants, *Baylor, the Deliverer* produced by students at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and the *Tercentenary Pilgrim Pageant* in Truro, Massachusetts. However, seven years earlier, pilgrims seem to be a major theme of Davol's *A Handbook of American Pageantry* as well.

that the script necessitated fifty people and could accommodate even more.³⁰

Unfortunately, an outbreak of influenza prevented its first performance in 1918, but in 1920 over 500 performers participated in the pageant.³¹

Koch had been very involved in writing historical pageants during his early career. He had previously composed *A Pageant for the Northwest* and *Shakespeare, the Playmaker* while teaching in North Dakota, and he joined the American Pageant Association in 1914.³² One benefit Koch found in the genre was the communal nature of pageant production. A successful pageant required “people from all levels of society, all working together—writing, acting, carpentering, making costumes or directing—to present the history of their community...or some other theme of civic importance.”³³

For his new display of community history, Koch presented the colonial origins of North Carolina. Koch dedicated *Raleigh, the Shepherd of the Ocean* to:

To the citizens of the “Citie of Raleigh”
In North Carolina
Inheritors of the brave spirit of the pioneer colonizer
SIR WALTER RALEIGH
WHO WROTE JUST BEFORE HIS FALL
“*I shall yet live to see it an English nation*”

If the title is not sufficient indication of the hyperbolic representation of Raleigh’s life, then the format of the pageant makes it clearer still. In his preface on the Raleigh Tercentenary, Koch attempts to elevate the historical importance of the Roanoke colony,

³⁰ Ibid., “Books” by J. Vandervoot Sloan, 240.

³¹ Elizabeth Lay was one of the participants in the Raleigh Tercentenary pageant.

³² Koch, “The Raleigh Tercentenary” in idem, *Raleigh, the Shepherd of the Ocean*, 11.

³³ Kai Heiberg-Jurgensen, “Drama In Extension,” in *Pioneering a People’s Theatre*, ed. Henderson, 56.

saying that these first English settlers in America should “be cherished along with the better known later settlements at Jamestown and Plymouth Rock.”³⁴ Koch’s promotion of the Roanoke colony as a historical moment of the same importance as those two landmarks fits into the narratives of the New South discussed above in terms of American patriotism on the one hand, and on the other, a glorious Southern past from before the Civil War. *Raleigh, the Shepherd of the Ocean* showed the United States establishing their colonial roots, and regionally, it established North Carolina as an integral site of that colonial history.

The pageant unfolds in five episodes divided into two parts. The first two episodes take place in England where Sir Walter Raleigh has sailed back to seek supplies from the queen, who was allocating more resources toward defeating the Spanish Armada than for the survival of the colonies in the new world. The second part of the pageant, entitled “The Martyrdom of Sir Walter Raleigh,” follows Raleigh’s journey to South America where he sought the lost city of gold, and then covers Raleigh’s involvement in a conspiracy against King James and his successive execution.

These seemingly disparate episodes exemplify a practice valued in pageantry—freedom from the constraints of time and place. According to Linwood Taft’s handbook, *The Technique of Pageantry*, pageants are meant to be “much wider in scope” than traditional drama with “events widely separated in time so long as they are closely related in character or in the ideals expressed.”³⁵ By this standard, Koch could present scenes in England, North Carolina, and Venezuela without needing to connect them in a single

³⁴ Koch, “The Raleigh Tercentenary,” in *Raleigh, the Shepherd of the Ocean*, 9.

³⁵ Taft, *The Technique of Pageantry*, 2. Taft’s handbook is an expanded version of an article that he published in *The Drama Magazine* in 1920.

narrative arc. Audiences would have expected each scene of the pageant to transport them to a new setting, while following the adventures of a single character, Sir Walter Raleigh, served to provide enough unity for a pageant subject. Each scene contains speaking and pantomime actors, and sections called interludes separate the scenes. During the interludes, a chanting chorus represents “the spirit of youth,” another one of the unifying factors of the episodes separated by time and place.

The pageant was successful enough that in 1921 the state of North Carolina funded a (silent) film, which included a reenactment of a Native American attack on Fort Raleigh.³⁶ The production involved reconstructing the historical fort on Roanoke Island, and in June 1921, Paul Green accompanied Koch to Manteo where the re-enactment was filmed. While on this trip, he experienced the terrain of eastern North Carolina, the land of the Lost Colony, for the first time. In a letter to Elizabeth Lay from the island of Manteo, Green wrote:

I went out to the place where the Spirit of the Renaissance first built its altar in the New World. Nothing much to be seen. On one side of the fort they’ve put up a log palisade fence. Tomorrow they stage the Indians attacking the fort. I’m going out to write it up for the papers.

While out there I measured off the ground of the ancient site of sorrow, hope, and despair. Alone for one tiny minute I felt a passing breath of the dreadful story. Oh, if I only could give it expression—the thoughts that lay anchored in the depths of Virginia Dare’s eyes, the emotions, the thrills, bravery, sunny laughter changed to the curdling cry for Death—well we are finite—and it’s best.³⁷

³⁶ The National Park Service webpage for Fort Raleigh identifies that the attack was led by an Algonquian tribe, although it does not specify which. “Fort Raleigh National Historic Site: Manteo, North Carolina,” accessed 3 May 2012
http://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/cultural_diversity/Fort_Raleigh_National_Historic_Site.html.

³⁷ UNC-PG, Folder 3135, Paul Green to Elizabeth Lay Green, June 1921.

Rhapsodizing about the legend of the Lost Colony, Green expresses interest in natural and dramatic elements and introduces a new character to the drama. Virginia Dare was born to Eleanor Dare at the Roanoke colony in 1587 and is known as the first child born to English colonists in the New World. Furthermore, Green extrapolates the drama of the situation at Roanoke Island to express the universality of human existence, a trademark of Koch's dramatic representation of folk materials.

Additionally, various "musical" elements of Koch's pageant seem to have made an impression on Green as he took in his experience at Manteo. Green took particular interest in a sea-shanty entitled "The Mermaid," for which he provided the lyrics and melody in this letter back to Elizabeth. The elements of pantomime, chant, and song as presented in *Raleigh, the Shepherd of the Ocean* clearly left an impression on his conception of "symphonic drama" as he attempted to concretize the genre while writing *The Lost Colony*.

Whether or not Green employs these elements in completely similar ways to Koch, components of pageantry assimilated from *Raleigh, the Shepherd of the Ocean* and other historic pageants are clearly present in Green's *The Lost Colony*. However, until 1937, Green avoided this type of dramatic work, preferring to work in the genre of "folk play" as presented by Koch through the Carolina Playmakers.

Green and Stringfield

As Paul Green was working on UNC's campus, he rekindled a connection with a friend from the 105th Engineers, Lamar Stringfield. Stringfield, a fellow North Carolinian from Mars Hill, pursued a career in music after World War I. His musical studies began during

the war, where he had learned to play the flute. He extended his performance studies at the Institute of Musical Art (which became the Juilliard School) in New York City. During this time, Stringfield also gained training as a composer and conductor. In 1928 he was awarded a Pulitzer Traveling Fellowship for his composition *From the Southern Mountains*. He went to Paris, where he briefly studied composition with Nadia Boulanger.³⁸

After completing his fellowship, he returned to North Carolina. Stringfield began to prepare a publication—*America and Her Music*—a bulletin for what Stringfield labeled as “Music Clubs.”³⁹ The bulletin was a type of study guide and workbook for groups of music appreciators to use at social gatherings similar to book clubs, published through the University of North Carolina Press. Perhaps to gain greater esteem for his publication, Stringfield asked his Green to write the foreword.⁴⁰ As they reconnected,

³⁸ There is little information available about Stringfield’s studies with Boulanger in UNC/LS, but see the list of Boulanger’s American students at <http://www.nadiaboulanger.org/nb/amstudents.html> (accessed 28 April 2012).

³⁹ Stringfield, *America and Her Music*, 11. Stringfield explained a music club as “a gathering of cultured people [that] forms a unified organization for the promotion of musical activities in a community,” and claimed that it “makes for better homes and a more contented citizenship.” In this bulletin, Stringfield puts forward the idea that an American musical idiom should draw on the folk music of Anglo-Saxon America. To support this, the bulletin contains a list of recordings and study guide for the music club to work through during a meeting. Many of the recordings are Stringfield’s own compositions, such as *John Henry* and *Cripple Creek*, along with the recordings of other American composers, including MacDowell, Gershwin, John Powell, and Dvorak’s “American works” placed in the company of standard pieces of the European canon. Surprisingly, Stringfield does not include any other American composers, such as Aaron Copland or Virgil Thomson, which one might expect based on his connection to Nadia Boulanger. This exclusion likely represents the differences in compositional style, Thomson and Copland representing modernist composition and Stringfield’s idiom remaining more conventional.

⁴⁰ Avery, ed., *A Southern Life*, 173. In a letter to Elizabeth Lay Green on August 16, 1930, Green writes “Tell Lamar to have the bulletin done, or partly so.” Avery notes that this “bulletin” is Stringfield’s *America and Her Music*.

Stringfield turned to Green for more help in finding work in the area, and Green invited Stringfield to compose the music for his play, *Tread the Green Grass*, in 1930.⁴¹

Unfortunately, that production had not yet found financial backing. Although Stringfield was working hard trying to complete the score, the producers in New York could not advance Stringfield his pay.⁴² Green continued to help Stringfield search for work and eventually proposed a new position for him in the Music Department at UNC. Green outlined his proposal for the responsibilities of the new position in a letter to Frank Porter Graham, the president of the university, on 5 May 1931. Green imagined Stringfield's position as working with both the Music Department and the Carolina Playmakers, and for the former, instructing students in composition and establishing connections to the state's folk music through fiddler's contests. Additionally, Stringfield would facilitate the performance of students' compositions on the UNC campus. With the Carolina Playmakers, Stringfield would fulfill any musical needs for students and playwrights, composing incidental and integral music for plays.⁴³ At this time, the UNC music department was struggling to find its organization, and Green's proposal did not fit within the university's goals for it. But Stringfield was hired through the folklore department, founding the Institute for Folk Music at UNC in 1931. Stringfield and Green continued as collaborators for the remainder of the decade.

⁴¹ *Tread the Green Grass* was produced by the University of Iowa and directed by E.C. Mabie. Mabie held similar beliefs about folk drama to Koch. When Green traveled to Iowa for the production, he was very impressed by Mabie's troupe, writing to Elizabeth Lay Green on 15 August 1930 "Mabie is doing more here in a week than Proff [Koch] does in a month. It seems that while we spend a lot of time at C.H. [Chapel Hill] talking about what we're doing, Mabie is doing." Avery, ed., *A Southern Life*, 172.

⁴² Ibid., 175.

⁴³ Ibid., 184.

Even in these early stages, Green and Stringfield had a complicated relationship. As friends who met through their experiences in the Great War, Stringfield and Green shared some sense of obligation to each other—this in addition to the fact that both had an appreciation of the performing arts. However, the two held very different attitudes towards social issues. While Green did Stringfield a favor by writing the foreword to his bulletin, he established certain boundaries between himself and Stringfield that highlight these differences. For example, in that text Green outlined Stringfield’s position toward the superiority of Anglo-Saxon folk music in composing American music:

As a composer, Mr. Stringfield differs from most of his fellow artists in that he has now turned directly to the folk-life of America for his themes and inspiration. The ballads, songs, and dances of the Anglo-Saxon American type are the sources from which will come the great American music, he says...He thinks Indian music is unimportant and Negro music mainly a copy and distortion of deeper Anglo-Saxon sources.⁴⁴

But Green added the caveat, “Whether his theory is correct or not, his own compositions based upon that theory are eloquent in appeal.”⁴⁵ Here Green was willing to put Stringfield’s ideas forward for his friend’s sake, but he made sure that any reader understood that he did not endorse his position. These differences also framed the beginning of their collaborative work on *The Lost Colony*.

Despite their differing attitudes towards race, Green and Stringfield found common ground in promoting the colonial origins of North Carolina. A belief largely held during this time imagined the folk customs of the people of North Carolina as remnants of Elizabethan culture surviving from the British colonists. This is manifest also in the preface to Frederick Koch’s *Carolina Folk Plays*: “North Carolina is still without

⁴⁴ Paul Green, foreword to Stringfield, *America and Her Music*, 6.

⁴⁵ Loc. cit.

large cities, and a strong folk-consciousness persists. The State is still regarded by the people as a family of ‘folks,’ due to the fact that the population is almost pure Anglo Saxon and still remarkably homogenous.”⁴⁶ Koch believed that this “purity” of heritage was sustained in particular through the isolation of the towns on the North Carolina coast, “where the customs of the first English settlers still prevail, where folk-tales still survive in words and phrase long since obsolete to us, handed down by word of mouth from one generation to another.”⁴⁷

Similarly, Stringfield demonstrated that such older traditions survived in the mountain communities of North Carolina’s Appalachia. This belief was most commonly promoted by the British folksong collector Cecil Sharp, who found examples of English ballads preserved in the folk music of communities in North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia, claiming that the communities had retained English customs due to their seclusion from modern society:

The region is from its inaccessibility a very secluded one. There are but few roads—most of them little better than mountain tracks—and practically no railroads. Indeed, so remote and shut off from outside influence were, until quite recently, these sequestered mountain valleys that the inhabitants have for a hundred years or more been completely isolated and cut off from all traffic with the rest of the world. Their speech is English, not American, and from the number of expressions that have been long obsolete elsewhere, and the old-fashioned way in which they are talking the language of a past day, though exactly of what period I am not competent to decide...⁴⁸

Like Sharp, Stringfield asserted that the music in North Carolina’s mountain communities remained “the least affected of the folk-music that exists in America...Lack of modern

⁴⁶ Koch, “Folk-play Making,” pp. xvi-xvii.

⁴⁷ Loc. cit.

⁴⁸ Sharp, *American-English Folksongs of the Southern Appalachians*, iv.

transportation has left these people in a natural state of human feeling and their music free from minstrelsy.”⁴⁹ Stringfield promoted this folk music as the material that should provide the basis of an American style of composition, similar to Koch’s vision for an American theatrical idiom. His collection *30 and 1 Folksongs: From the Southern Mountains*, included songs deemed authentic in their “melodic content, harmony and general localisms.”⁵⁰

While Stringfield and Koch sought the remnants of colonial customs in two different regions of the state, they found commonalities in the perceived authenticity of Elizabethan customs. This shared understanding of the colonial origins of North Carolina united Green, Stringfield, and Koch in their vision for *The Lost Colony*.

350 Years Later—The Roanoke Island Historical Association

In 1932, W. O. Saunders established the Roanoke Island Historical Association. Saunders, also the founder (1908) of the *Independent*, a progressive newspaper in Elizabeth City, N.C., organized the Association to promote the importance of the Outer Banks with the hopes of increasing tourism.⁵¹ The group decided to hold a celebration in honor of the 350th anniversary of the British landing on American soil (in 1584). The planning for this celebration began in 1932, when the Roanoke Island Historical Association decided to commission a play to commemorate the occasion for performance during the summer of 1934. The Association reached out to Green through Koch, presumably through his connection to the area through the state film about Roanoke.⁵²

⁴⁹ Stringfield, *America and Her Music*, 13.

⁵⁰ Stringfield, *30 and 1 Folksongs*, p. iii. In the foreword, the publishers make sure to note that Stringfield grew up near the mountains, which “fostered in him a strong feeling for the mountain music.”

Koch passed the information along to Green, marking 1932 as the year of his first involvement with the Roanoke Celebration.⁵³

In a letter of 15 January 1933, Stringfield wrote to Green asking “Have you heard anything more about the Roanoke Island celebration? I have not.”⁵⁴ This suggests that by early 1933, Stringfield was already involved in the project. But the Roanoke Island Historical Association feared that finances would not come through for the celebration originally planned for 1934. Green and Stringfield were unsure about the prospect of the play that was meant to be their next collaboration. In the same letter, Stringfield explains his most recent composition, *John Henry*, and an idea for a future program.⁵⁵ “If I knew that another work such as *John Henry* would come out I would carry out the urge to write another symphonic work that has been in my system for some time. A person has to be a millionaire before he should compose music. Adeline has suggested that I write a legend of Virginia Dare, (after ‘The White Doe’). It could be very interesting, but I am not so

⁵¹ Additionally, Saunders is credited with creating the idea of the Wright Brothers Memorial on Kitty Hawk and advocating for the construction of bridges to make tourism more accessible in North Carolina’s Outer Banks. Powell, ed., *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*.

⁵² The page for “W.O. Saunders” on Stoppingpoints.com contains information from the William Oscar Saunders historical marker in Elizabeth City, NC, at <http://www.stoppingpoints.com/north-carolina/sights.cgi?marker=W.+O.+Saunders+1884-1940&cnty=Pasquotank> (accessed 19 March, 2012).

⁵³ Other accounts of *The Lost Colony* cite 1936 as the date when Green was contracted to write the play. “*The Lost Colony* Drama Timeline,” last modified August 12, 2010 <http://thelostcolony.org/education/Students?ProducingTLC/The-Lost-Colony-Drama-Timeline.htm>

⁵⁴ UNC/PG, Folder 274, Lamar Stringfield to Paul Green, 25 January 1933.

⁵⁵ Stringfield described *The Legend of John Henry* (1936) as “a symphonic ballad,” which holds interesting parallels to Green’s delineation of *The Lost Colony* as a “symphonic drama.” However Stringfield’s composition merit’s invoking “symphonic” as it is performed by a symphony orchestra. The program of the piece follows the legend of John Henry through his “early life and romance, his manhood and death in conquest” and concludes as “his companions carry on.”

sure about doing it before I get this other work out of my system.”⁵⁶ Stringfield and McCall, in communicating about future works, actually provided the material for what would become the central subject of *The Lost Colony* through the idea of writing a work based on Virginia Dare.

In June 1933, Stringfield wrote again to Green: “I understand that the Roanoke Island celebration has been postponed to 1937 due to lack of finances.”⁵⁷ Indeed, facing the economic hardships of the Great Depression, the Roanoke Island Historical Association had decided to delay the production. It then redesigned it to observe the 350th anniversary of the first English settlement in America. The discrepancies between the celebratory occasions made for different dramatic subjects, depending on whether the drama would surround the British landing on American soil or actually establishing a settlement. Furthermore, 1587 marked the birth of “the first English child to be born in the New World” as Green writes in *The Lost Colony*. This child was Virginia Dare, the very subject that McCall had suggested to Stringfield as the basis for his next programmatic work, and the character who inspired Green during his visit to Roanoke in 1921.

⁵⁶ UNC/PG Folder 274, Lamar Stringfield to Paul Green 25 January 1933. The *White Doe*” was a book written about the legend of Virginia Dare by Sallie Southall Cotten, published in 1901. The story holds that Virginia Dare survived and grew up with a friendly Native American tribe, adopting the name “White Doe.”

⁵⁷ UNC-PG, Folder 274, Lamar Stringfield to Paul Green, 10 June 1933.

Chapter 2

The Lost Colony in Production (1937)

In the last two years another miracle has occurred at Roanoke Island; a human event so amazingly successful that it matches anything in the history of the island's endeavor. Three summers ago, Manteo didn't know what a tourist looked like. Last year 80,000 of them descended upon the startled village, and this year the figure jumped to 100,000, all converging on the little fishing town of 500 persons.

—Anthony F. Merrill, *Morning Sun*, Baltimore, Md., 1938⁵⁸

Despite rescheduling the Roanoke Island celebration for 1937, Green, Stringfield, McCall, and Koch had still to write the drama or to compile and compose the music, to fund the celebration, and to find the wherewithal to execute a summer-long production. The process began with Green's drama, where the genre-anxieties surrounding *The Lost Colony's* pageant pedigree played out in the creation of a genre, the "symphonic drama." Frederick Koch became a crucial mediator for the production aspects of the play, advocating for funding through his connections to the Roanoke Island Historical Association, the Federal Theatre Project, and the Carolina Playmakers.

An Experiment in "Symphonic Drama"

Shifting from his focus on folk plays, Paul Green attempted to pioneer a new genre in the 1930s called "symphonic drama," which he hoped would combine the theatrical elements of drama, dance, music, chant, and pantomime. In a diary entry for 23 July 1937, Green wrote:

⁵⁸ NARA/FTP Box 78, Folder 920A, "WPA Play Brings Boom to Little Tarheel Town," *Morning Sun*, 2 October 1938, Baltimore, Md.

By symphonic drama I mean that type of dramatic presentation which (necessarily) demands for its creation the intense and full use of all dramatic elements—words, music, dance, light, masks, color, sculpture (shapes), movement—each one impassioned and integrated in the whole—a sounding (in the Greek sense) together. The word is not exactly apt, and yet “synthetic” is worse.⁵⁹

This idea was spawned during Green’s Guggenheim fellowship, spent in Berlin from 1928 to 1929.⁶⁰ During that time, Green connected with Alexei Granowski, a Russian director touring in Berlin with the Moscow State Yiddish Theatre.⁶¹ He saw one of Granowski’s productions there, a version of I.L. Peretz’s *A Night in the Old Marketplace*, which he described as having “hardly any dialogue or spoken words, nearly all pantomime, dance, and musicalized action.”⁶²

Granowski commented on the practical aspect of conveying theatrical drama through music:

With music and stylization of the proper sort, one can obtain short cuts in scenery, properties and in moving the story forward. It is easier to get right down to business, go right to the heart of your dramatic matter, to reach the inner meaning and symbolism even of the story you have to tell, to make it immediately available to the audience—with music.⁶³

This thought proved to be an attractive reason for Green to incorporate music into a play. However, Green’s conception of symphonic drama would end up going beyond mere

⁵⁹ UNC/NCC, Paul Green Diaries, vol. 2, Entry for 23 July 1937. Tim Carter notes that this entry was composed while in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., for a six-week FTP Summer Theatre Program at Vassar College; “Celebrating the Nation,” 309.

⁶⁰ For more detailed account of Green’s fellowship year in Berlin, see Spence, *Watering the Sahara*, 128-40.

⁶¹ Spence, *Watering the Sahara*, 134-35.

⁶² Green, “Symphonic Outdoor Drama: A Search for New Theatre Forms,” in idem, *Drama and the Weather*, 17.

⁶³ Ibid., 21.

aspects of practicality, becoming a theatrical mode encompassing the essence of drama through the union of various aspects of the theater.

Significantly, Green's thoughts about the use of music in drama intersected with the search for a national American theatrical idiom.⁶⁴ Granowski critiqued the American theater for not having developed a style of musical drama such as he and others had done in Europe and Russia. However, Granowski saw the potential for material that would lend itself to such treatment in the United States, remarking (according to Green's memoirs) that he would be interested in going himself to the United States, the country he thought "the richest in dramatic subject matter—conflicts of individuals, of types, of institutions and organizations—a land of boundless energy, color, music, imagination—in short, the most creative nation on the globe."⁶⁵ Granowski saw specific potential for a Negro theater in the United States, particularly "the singing, the religious rituals and practices, the vivid folk speech, folklore, and tall tales," an idea that intersected with Green's concept of folk drama stemming from the Carolina Playmakers.⁶⁶ When Green returned to the United States, he began incorporating these ideas into his plays.

Green's own notions of the place of music in drama date back much earlier than *The Lost Colony* or the birth of the term symphonic drama. It is clear from entries in Green's diary that he considered music to function in some kind of dramatic terms. For example, on 9 June 1935 he wrote, "At night to Hill Auditorium to hear Schubert's Mass in E sung by the C.H. [Chapel Hill] Choral Club. Piano and pipe organ in foreground

⁶⁴ Carter, "Celebrating the Nation" discusses the connections between Granowski and Green as they pertain to another historical drama, *The Common Glory*, a drama based on the Revolutionary War composed in collaboration with Kurt Weill.

⁶⁵ Paul Green, "Music in the Theater," in idem, *The Hawthorn Tree*, 87.

⁶⁶ Green, "Symphonic Outdoor Drama," 21.

helped dramatize the singing.”⁶⁷ Likewise, on 23 May 1933 Green noted an example of a musical work that for him embodied the very idea of drama: “K. Defenbacker and I worked at analyzing Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony. The real parallel to the symphonic play.”⁶⁸ What exactly Green meant by drawing the connection between Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony and symphonic drama remains unclear. But whether delivered through a specific instrument like the organ in Schubert’s Mass or through an entire work like Beethoven’s symphony, Green dwelled on the idea that drama could be conveyed through music.

Green’s first attempt to incorporate these ideas, *Potter’s Field* (1931), was called “A Symphonic Play of the Negro Race.”⁶⁹ The play began preparations for a tryout production in New York from 1930-31, but the tryout was cancelled and Green was advised by Sidney Ross, the producer, to revise his script.⁷⁰ In this version of the play, the characters sing lines from spirituals, which are integrated into the dialogue. However, Green only utilizes solo singers in this play. One character in particular, Farrow, most frequently expresses his lines through singing spirituals. Usually, characters will insert one sentence of a spiritual into their lines, but occasionally, characters create dialogue through their sung lines. This is the case in Act I when a character named John Henry introduces himself, to which Farrow sings “This Old Hammer Killed John Henry.” Henry

⁶⁷ UNC/NCC, Paul Green Diaries, vol. 2, entry for Sunday 9 June 1935. Green mistakes the key of Schubert’s Mass, which is in E flat major.

⁶⁸ Ibid., entry for 23 May 1933. Karl Defenbacker was the state director of the Federal Art Project in North Carolina.

⁶⁹ Watson, *The History of Southern Drama*, 103.

⁷⁰ Avery, ed., *A Southern Life*, 175-76.

responds by singing, “I Heard a Mighty Rumblin’,” another spiritual that makes reference to the legendary character.⁷¹

Similarly, Green’s *Tread the Green Grass* attempts to integrate music and drama. Green wrote the play for the University of Iowa and it was performed in 1931. However, it was called “A Folk Fantasy in Two Parts with Interludes, Music, Dumb Show, and Cinema,” and not a symphonic play or symphonic drama. For *Tread the Green Grass*, Green enlisted the help of Lamar Stringfield and incorporated a pit orchestra to accompany the voices.⁷² The music in *Tread the Green Grass* includes complete songs and hymns, rather than the interjected single lines of singing in *Potter’s Field*. Furthermore, *Tread the Green Grass* introduced chant, pantomime, and musical interludes to Green’s dramatic style, which mark him attempting to include more of the elements of drama he saw necessary in creating “symphonic drama.”

Green eventually returned to *Potter’s Field*, revising the play and giving it a new title, *Roll Sweet Chariot* (1934).⁷³ Still, *Roll Sweet Chariot* did not meet Green’s expectations of his idealized genre. Green began to rethink the way that he intended to bring together the different elements of theater in order to integrate them in *The Lost Colony*. His vision for the production used the idea of symphonic drama to extend the possibilities of the characters. Rather than only hearing a monologue, the chorus would

⁷¹ Paul Green, “In Potter’s Field,” in “*The House of Connelly*” and *Other Plays*, 153-155.

⁷² Spence (*Watering the Sahara*, 141) notes that Green needed Stringfield because he could not notate music, saying that Green would sing the tunes to Stringfield, and Stringfield would notate them;. But this might not be entirely true, as Green had notated music in his previous plays. Perhaps the help from Stringfield was more out of convenience than incompetence.

⁷³ *Roll Sweet Chariot* was performed at the Cort Theatre in New York City, opening on 2 October 1934 and running for seven performances; Avery, ed., *A Southern Life*, 710.

chant and bring more power to the moment. In his diary, Green laid out the impact this would have in *The Lost Colony*:

The logic (rightness) of symphonic drama is the audial and visual completion of what lives in the characters. It comes from the characters to outward statement and is that accompaniment in any external sense. For instance in *The Lost Colony* when the chorus chants a prayer to Almighty God it is the prayer the characters have in their hearts. The chorus can express it better, that's all. These means are for the extension and power of the characters on the stage. The same necessity occurs, say in a big theatre where the actor's face is too small, too far away for effective portrayal of some intense emotion. Then in the new drama some means must be derived whereby the defect is remedied—say, music or an amplified voice, which tells us what we cannot see or hear but should.⁷⁴

Green also interrogated the elements of expressionist drama in terms of his vision of “symphonic drama.” To Green, the main difference between expressionist drama and the symphonic drama were the objective presentation of reality, and that the characters are “more real rather than less real”:

Consider Elements in Symphonic Drama

1. Objective representation of reality as well as subjective.
2. Characters must be the more real rather than less real.
3. The scenes are mainly supported by the lines in the play and the lights, with just enough props to allow for the at-homeness on the part of the spectator.
4. Accordingly, in the sweep of time and space the story is pretty much free to go where it will.⁷⁵

This freedom in terms of time and space echoes Linwood Taft's comments in *The Technique of Pageantry*. Green makes use of this liberty by skipping from action occurring in the Roanoke Colony and events taking place in England freely between scenes.

⁷⁴ UNC/NCC, Paul Green Diaries, vol. 2, entry for 23 July 1937.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

Although literary scholars have largely avoided calling *The Lost Colony* a pageant, preferring to use Green's loftier "symphonic drama," resisting the term prevents a proper discussion of the history and genre of *The Lost Colony*. In fact, Green's diaries call *The Lost Colony* a pageant, demonstrating the working status of the definition of symphonic drama at the time when Green created the play, and furthermore, suggesting the connection to the tradition of the pageant. Likewise, the more immediate reception of *The Lost Colony* situates the production in line with Frederick Koch's pageant works. In the collection *Pioneering a People's Theater*, edited by Archibald Henderson and commissioned for North Carolina's sesquicentenary, *The Lost Colony* is considered a pageant that comes directly out of Koch's *Raleigh, the Shepherd of the Ocean*. Finally, the initial brochure for *The Lost Colony* published in 1937 advertises the production as "Thrilling Pageantry," making no mention of Green's new concept of the "symphonic drama."⁷⁶

The Olde Christmas Masque and White Fawn: FTP Endeavors in Manteo, NC

The Federal Theatre Project (FTP) began in 1936 as an outgrowth of the Federal Emergency Relief Association (FERA). The FTP had three goals:

- 1) The re-employment from the relief rolls and the rehabilitation of professional theatre workers, thus conserving their skills; 2) contributing, in cooperation with the other arts and with the entire Works Progress administration, varied and purposeful community services; and 3) reviving the living theatre throughout the nation, making the vital life of various communities live in plays and methods of production as essentially different and significant as are the communities themselves.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ NARA/FTP, Box 2188, Folder 651.312, Brochure from 1937 Roanoke Festival.

⁷⁷ NARA/FTP, Box 41, Folder 1, memorandum from the national office, 30 August 1935. In this memorandum, Flanagan reported that in New York City, FTP projects had reached a total 2,000,000 and estimated that 60% of this audience were viewing live theater for their first time.

The FTP put the majority of their efforts towards producing theatre in the major cities of New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles at a price affordable to a wide general public. It worked in a variety of genres—dramatic performances, circuses, vaudeville, pageants, musical dramas and a new genre called the Living Newspaper all thrived. The FTP made a point to reach out to many racial and ethnic minority groups, encouraging theatrical performances in Yiddish and Spanish as well as a thriving Negro theatre.⁷⁸ This diversity is reflected in the FTP's third objective, to produce theater as different as the communities themselves. The FTP also came to be known for their left-leaning performances, epitomized by the problems surrounding Marc Blitzstein's *The Cradle Will Rock* in June-July 1937.⁷⁹

Called a "proletarian opera," *The Cradle Will Rock* told the story of workers in "Steeltown, U.S.A." coming together to fight against Mr. Mister, Steeltown's big businessman. However, fearing that *The Cradle Will Rock* would jeopardize the organization's reputation with its pro-union message, the FTP pulled the funding for the production just days before the preview was scheduled to open, claiming (perhaps rightly) that it was mandated to do so by new budgetary instructions coming from Washington, D.C.⁸⁰ Orson Welles, who was producing the show, remained determined to run *The Cradle Will Rock* and opened the show to an audience of 600 people after renting

⁷⁸ See Fraden, *Blueprints for a Black Federal Theatre*.

⁷⁹ For more on *The Cradle Will Rock*, see Denning, *The Cultural Front*, 283-94.

⁸⁰ In his account of the FTP, Anthony Buttitta claims that two factors caused the Project to pull the funding at the last minute; see his *Uncle Sam Presents*, 144-46. The first was a march from New York to Washington, DC in which WPA workers presented petitions to the government to stop pay cuts. The second was the premier of *Revolt of the Beavers*, a children's show which reviewers claimed to be spreading the message of Communism to children. For the FTP's side of the story, see Carter, "Celebrating the Nation," 310.

a new theater on a moment's notice. The reception caused great damage to the reputation of the FTP and contributed to the House Committee on Un-American Activities accusations of the organization's communist ties. In the face of this negative press, the FTP's involvement with historical dramas allowed the organization a bit of redemption. New projects such as E.P. Conkle's *Prologue to Glory* (1938), a dramatization of Lincoln's life before his presidency, and *The Common Glory* (1938), Green's story of the Revolutionary War in collaboration with Kurt Weill, and *The Lost Colony* served the FTP with their patriotic sentiments.

Although historical dramas served the organizations left-leaning reputation after the premier of *The Cradle Will Rock* in 1937, the Project had been very involved with historical celebrations from its inception. In its first complete year of operation, 1936, the FTP produced or supported several state centennial celebrations. These types of productions, prominent in southern branches, fostered the Project's outreach to other regions of the United States. *America Sings*, staged in Little Rock, commemorated the Arkansas centennial as "a living mural with choral accompaniment depicting great crises in American life."⁸¹ The same year in Malvern, Arkansas, the FTP sponsored a production called *Pioneer Processional*, which acted as a dramatic parade, presenting episodes on floats that processed down a stretch of the Andrew Jackson Military Road before a roadside audience.

The state of Texas, also celebrating a centennial in 1936, produced *Pioneer Texas* through the FTP. The production staged "characteristic moments" of the state's history. Shows put on through the Dallas/Fort Worth branches, *This Is Our Country*, a play about

⁸¹ NARA/FTP Box 78, Folder 920B, press release, 8 June 1936, entitled "Federal Theatre to Present Plays in Southern Cities." Civic murals were also an important genre for the Federal Art Project.

the battle for the Alamo, and *Dance Girl*, described as “open-air entertainment,” exemplify the value placed by the FTP on historical dramas and outdoor venues during this period. According to a press release from the national office, “Few, if any, of these original local plays would have found production through the ordinary channels of the commercial theatre.”⁸²

This press release proclaimed that the FTP hoped to stimulate such local productions by “promising production to all plays of the sort found worthy,” in the hopes of creating “a dramatic literature close to the lives of Americans, and unhampered by conventions which govern the writing of most plays submitted for Broadway production.” During this time, the more regional or experimental theatrical expressions could find a voice through the Federal Theatre.

In North Carolina, this idea of southern, local drama as funded by the FTP flourished. The Asheville branch produced two federally funded plays in 1936, *Valley Lights* and *Abram’s Wife*. In Raleigh, the FTP funded the production *Raise a Tune, Sister*, based on the folk experiences of Carolina fisherman. Roanoke Island, however, became the central locus of folk and local expression for FTP productions in the state.

In Manteo, a troupe called the Elizabethan Players attracted the FTP’s attention by having mounted two dramas relating to Roanoke Island. The Elizabethan Players began through one Martha B. Mathis and her husband, Alexander, who privately funded the group with the intention of organizing a theatrical troupe native to Roanoke focused

⁸² Loc. cit.

on drama centered on the island's history.⁸³ *White Fawn*, the first of these, was a dramatization of the popular legend that Virginia Dare, the first English child born in the New World, survived the fate of the Lost Colony and lived on with a neighboring Native American tribe. It was written by Howard Twine in "an approximation of Elizabethan English," and the author was also proud to promote "the Indian blood in his veins."⁸⁴ Billed together with *White Fawn*, *This Changing Island* addressed political issues facing Roanoke. The very favorable reception of the second show spurred the FTP to suggest producing future political dramas on Roanoke Island. The FTP even suggested a theatrical format that mimicked a Town Hall meeting, placing the historical problems faced by Sir Walter Raleigh parallel to the concerns of present-day islanders. This proposed genre fell along the lines of the Living Newspaper, a genre adopted by the FTP to address many social issues, from public housing to syphilis.⁸⁵ However, Mathis saw the fusion of music and politics in *This Changing Island* as expressive of the island's

⁸³ Before the FTP stepped in and aided funding in 1936, Mathis and her husband funded the Elizabethan players privately, although Mrs. Mathis noted that this was not a feasible financial undertaking for a seafaring island.

⁸⁴ NARA/FTP, Box 2188, Folder 651.312, letter written on 4 June 1936 from Martha B. Mathis to Hallie Flanagan. Howard Twine's proclamation of his Native American heritage in an Elizabethan play intersects with a short story sketched by Paul Green in his diary in 1934 where an Indian named John Oxendine struggled to prove his legitimacy as an heir of the English colonists due to racial prejudice: "John Oxendine, the man who had to be a Negro... I want to take a representative of the Croatan race who is determined to prove that he is a white man—that he was a descendant of Sir Walter Raleigh's lost colony. He goes to all lengths to prove it—even comes to the University here and goes up to the desk—he wants to look at the old books, you know—Haykluyf's Voyage—and the girl looks at him as if he were a Negro—and he finds his own name. There is an Oxendine in the list of colonists." This story exemplifies that a possible moral of the White Fawn legend could be one of racial equality. UNC/NCC, Paul Green's Diaries, vol. 2, entry for 6 January 1934.

⁸⁵ See *One Third of a Nation*, *Power!* and *Spirochete*, Living Newspaper productions about, respectively, housing, the Tennessee Valley Authority and syphilis. Witham's *Federal Theatre Project* discusses the details surrounding the invention of the genre at length. The genre perfectly fit the agenda of the FTP by allowing for large casts, which would employ significant numbers of performers.

culture, saying that the new play was composed so that the audience could play a part, “Our people are grounded in their *music* and their *politics*! So they will love this play.”⁸⁶

Mathis led the lively tradition of theatrical life on Roanoke Island through her direction and creativity. Hallie Flanagan, the federal director of the FTP, took a direct interest in this theatrical activity, making a special trip to the Outer Banks to interview Mathis during a tour of southern theaters. Green was also connected to Mathis and her Roanoke plays through the Roanoke Island Historical Association. During January 1937, Green and his wife took a trip to Manteo to meet with the RIHA regarding the site of the open-air theater, and as a part of their stay they attended *White Fawn*. Green commented that the production was “very amateurish but real.”⁸⁷

In addition to historical drama, the Elizabethan Players put on a holiday production in early 1937 called *The Olde Christmas Masque* on 5 January (when, as Mathis explained, many communities of the Outer Banks observed Christmas).⁸⁸ *The Olde Christmas Masque* highlighted regionalism within the FTP: a play in an Elizabethan dialect celebrating the occasion of Olde Christmas to a town of 500 people. The niche

⁸⁶ NARA/FTP, Box 2188, Folder 651.312, Martha B. Mathis to Hallie Flanagan, 23 May 1936.

⁸⁷ UNC/NCC Paul Green Diaries, vol. 2, entry for 16 January 1937.

⁸⁸ NARA/FTP Box 41, Folder 3, Martha B. Mathis to Hallie Flanagan, 22 January 1938. According to Mathis’s letter, “*The Olde Christmas Masque*, arranged by myself, in accordance with the Christmas celebrations presented, or held, here on the Island from the time of its beginnings with the English settlements, proved the most exciting and enjoyable, of all the holiday presentations. On this coast, along the Banks especially, Olde Christmas (5th ending 6th of Jan.) is still the most important celebration of all the holidays. Many communities scarcely celebrate the 25th of December at all.” The discrepancy between the date of the Christmas celebration runs back to the shift from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian one in 1582. The shift was not adopted in England until 1752, when the discrepancy between the two calendars made a difference of eleven days. Therefore, Christmas would have been observed on 5 January in England until this date, when it was moved forward 11 days to 25 December. That the residents of the Outer Banks observed Christmas according to the Julian calendar was meant to show the persisting traditions of their colonial ancestors.

nature of *The Olde Christmas Masque* was a perfect candidate for the FTP to produce a play “as essentially different as are the communities themselves.”

Financing *The Lost Colony*

In addition to bringing theatre to the people, *The Lost Colony* was meant to bring people to the Outer Banks. The impetus for creating and funding *The Lost Colony* was as much to boost tourism on the North Carolina coast as it was to present history as art. As discussed in the previous chapter, W.O. Saunders founded the Roanoke Island Historical Association in part to increase the number of visitors to the Outer Banks. At the time, Elizabeth City, where Saunders established the *Independent*, acted as the gateway to this stretch of islands off the coast of North Carolina.

In a similar vein, a summer theatrical celebration would attract people from across the state of North Carolina to celebrate the state’s heritage—the journey to the Outer Banks was now feasible given the newly constructed bridge (completed in 1931) leading to Roanoke Island, along with a ferry that could bring travelers to other destinations along the Outer Banks.⁸⁹ Luring in a large audience to the island would also boost the economy for local businesses on Roanoke, and increase traffic through the towns en route. The brochure from the 1938 production mapped out all the sites the audience would be able to see during their trip to Manteo:

Route 344 will bring you over a beautifully banked, hard-surfaced road all the way to Roanoke Island. The smooth paving of Route 344 cuts through a maritime forest, crosses three-mile Wright Memorial Bridge, and passes famous Kill Devil Hills, skirts the ocean shore and shifting sand dunes for

⁸⁹ Senter, “Dreams as Old as Roanoke,” 278.

a magnificent 17-mile drive on the northeastern North Carolina coast; thence over the one-mile Roanoke Sound bridge to Roanoke Island.⁹⁰

Tourists traveling through Elizabeth City would have used the Wright Memorial Bridge and then the Roanoke Sound Bridge. Tourists traveling through Plymouth, NC, would have used ferry services to travel to the island—yet another method to stimulate the economy along coastal North Carolina.

For the 1937 celebration, the Roanoke Island Historical Association rethought their financial plans, and this time they raised enough to support the production. It did so, however, with a great amount of help from other institutions, making the production a joint endeavor between the Roanoke Island Historical Association, the Federal Theatre Project, the University of North Carolina, and individual patrons.

The Federal Theatre Project provided support by way of supplying actors for the production. John A. Walker, the State Director of the North Carolina branch of the FTP, Paul Green, and Samuel Selden requested ten actors (eight men and two women) and four staff members (a costumer, a make-up artist, an electrician, and a director of folk dancing) for *The Lost Colony*.⁹¹ The University of North Carolina in effect paid the salaries of Green, Stringfield, and Koch, who were thus able to become involved in an outside production without needing to be paid additional fees. This left the RIHA to cover production costs, and importantly, the construction of the Waterside Theater.

⁹⁰ NARA/FTP Box 2188, Folder 651.312, Brochure from 1938 production of *The Lost Colony* entitled “Information About the Roanoke Island Celebration.”

⁹¹ NARA/FTP Box 2188, Folder 651.312, letter from John A. Walker, Samuel Selden, and Paul Green to Hallie Flanagan, 17 April 1938. In this letter, Green and Selden specifically requested Katherine Cale and Lillian Ashton to play the parts of Eleanor Dare and Queen Elizabeth, respectively, and arranged to view auditions in New York to select the remaining actors provided by the FTP.

The RIHA commissioned the federal government to mint a commemorative coin.⁹² Members of *The Lost Colony* team solicited support by selling the half-dollar coin door to door, which ultimately served the production in two ways. On the one hand, selling the coin earned financial support: figuring that people would be more likely to open their wallets if they got something in return, the coin seemed a better alternative to merely asking for monetary support. On the other, the coin acted as publicity for the performance: those who purchased it might be interested in actually taking a trip to see the production that they were helping to support. Even those who did not choose to donate would have at least heard about the production through the coin solicitation. Perhaps this publicity was an even more valuable endeavor than gaining preliminary funding, partly affirmed by the sold-out audiences in *The Lost Colony*'s preliminary season.

Opening Season (1937)

After six months preparing the script, the music, and the staging, *The Lost Colony* opened on 4 July 1937. The show was staged and directed by Samuel Selden, assisted by

⁹² In the United States, commemorative coins are authorized by Congress to be minted in limited quantities. The coins are valid legal tender; however, they are not meant for general circulation. The U.S. government has used commemorative coins to raise money for a variety of causes, including the preservation of historical sites and maintenance of national monuments, such as the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington, D.C. For more information on commemorative coins in the first half of the twentieth century, see the webpage "Commemorative Coin Programs" on the United States Mint website at http://www.usmint.gov/mint_programs/?action=commemoratives (accessed 28 April 2012). The Roanoke Island commemorative coin was sold at \$1.50 a piece, and 25,000 were minted in total. According to Paul Green, a majority of them was sold; Avery, ed., *A Southern Life*, 302. The commemorative coin features Sir Walter Raleigh on one side and Eleanor Dare holding her child on the other. Inscribed below Eleanor Dare are the dates 1587-1937, as well as the words "The Birth of Virginia Dare." Information about the commemorative coin can be found at <http://www.coinweek.com/coin-guide/commemoratives-coin-guide/1937-raonoke-colony-half-dollar/> (accessed 16 February 2012). In this same letter, Green also notes that of the many plans the RIHA constructed to gain funding, one called for a nation-wide beauty contest to select the actress to play Virginia Dare. This plan only fell through when Green's dramatic choice ended the play while Virginia Dare was still a baby. Additionally, Laurence Avery mentions a Lost Colony stamp issued by the government to garner publicity in the introduction to his edition of *The Lost Colony*, 3.

Frederick Koch, the supervising director, and Martha B. Mathis, who served as the diction coach. Erle Stapleton, the State Director of the Federal Music Project, directed the musical portions of *The Lost Colony*, which included a choir from the Westminster Choir College accompanied by organ, played by James McClendon. Interestingly, this mimics, at least in part, the instrumentation that Green valued in the performance of Schubert's Mass in E flat major in Chapel Hill just two years earlier.

The drama unfolds in two acts, each with six scenes containing moments of dramatic action, pantomime, dance, chant, and song. Green decided to use sixteenth-century Elizabethan carols as his main source of music in *The Lost Colony*. This musical decision reflects the verisimilitude valued in the drama, presenting historical events on the island on which they occurred, along with music with which the historical people would have performed. But less is known about the specifics of the music in the 1937 production, save that Green had researched hundreds of English carols in order to find songs best suited for his dramatic situation.⁹³

A brochure advertising the 1937 performance describes the Roanoke Celebration as “63 Lavish Days on the 350-Year-Old Site of America’s First English Colony” with a chart following the description that shows Roanoke established in 1587, twenty years before Jamestown (1607), and certainly before Plymouth Rock (1620).⁹⁴ This assertion echoes the advocacy of Koch’s *Raleigh, the Shepherd of the Ocean*, proclaiming Roanoke to be as important as these other celebrated sites of colonial history in the United States. The program for the 1937 production features a drawing of Englishmen

⁹³ Lydia Hamessley is currently working on a project to reconstruct the music of the 1937 production.

⁹⁴ NARA/FTP, Box 2188, Folder 651.312, brochure from 1937 Roanoke Festival.

returning to Roanoke to find the abandoned colony and “CROATOAN” carved into a tree. Surrounding this drawing are sketches of prominent tourist attractions on the Outer Banks, including the Wright Brothers Memorial, the Cape Hatteras lighthouse, and scenes of fishing, sailing, and hunting.

President Roosevelt came to see the play on 18 August 1937, Virginia Dare’s birthday, after being invited by North Carolina congressman Lindsay Warren.⁹⁵ Jim Senter explains that at this time in Roosevelt’s presidency, after economic conditions had steadily improved since 1932, those who opposed Roosevelt had become increasingly more vocal, calling the New Deal socialist and rampant un-American central planning.⁹⁶ President Roosevelt used his speech at Roanoke Island to address such opposition, claiming:

It is well, too, to bear in mind that in all the pioneer settlements democracy and not feudalism was the rule. The men had to take their turn standing guard at the stockades raised against the Indians. The women had to take their turn husking the corn stored for the winter supply of the community. In other words, they were all working for the life and success of the community. Rules of conduct had to be established to keep private greed or personal misconduct in check...And I fear very much that if certain modern Americans, who protest loudly their devotion to American ideals, were suddenly to be given a comprehensive view of the earliest American colonists and their methods of life and government, these modern Americans would promptly label them socialists. They would forget that in these pioneer settlements were all the germs of the later American Constitution.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Senter, “Dreams as Old As Roanoke,” 279. Senter also notes that Warren had invited Roosevelt to attend Virginia Dare Day in 1934; however the President declined.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 280. Senter goes into great detail surrounding the specific political circumstances in 1936-37, explaining the crisis surrounding the National deficit, political leaders evading taxes, and the Supreme Court case that ruled Roosevelt’s National Industrial Recovery Act unconstitutional.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 289-92.

For all of *The Lost Colony's* efforts to look at the United State's past, the parallels drawn between the lives of the colonial settlers and present-day citizens in Roosevelt's speech drove the meaning of the production straight into modern issues.

In a letter on 19 August 1937, Howard Bailey, *The Lost Colony's* production manager, wrote that Roosevelt "was quite enthusiastic in his praise for the production and was impressed by the co-operative nature of the production, especially since the WPA and the Federal Theatre had such a large share in making it a success."⁹⁸ However, Green thought it inappropriate for the President to politicize the occasion.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ NARA/FTP, Box 2188, Folder 651.312, Howard Bailey to John McGee, 19 August 1937.

⁹⁹ UNC/NCC, Paul Green Diaries, vol. 2, entry for 18 August 1937. See also Carter, "Celebrating the Nation," 314-15.

Chapter 3

Music and Drama in *The Lost Colony*

“But still that vision of the new drama eludes me. Sometimes I think I see but then it’s gone.”

—Paul Green, diary entry from 22 July 1937

After a successful summer run in 1937, the RIHA signed on for future productions of *The Lost Colony*. The invitation to continue annual summer productions allowed Green to refigure certain aspects of his drama. Music remained at the center of this discussion. After briefly considering Kurt Weill for the role, Paul Green brought Lamar Stringfield to the team to add new music for the second season.¹⁰⁰ Also, because tourism was an importance call for the production, the team worked to develop souvenirs for *The Lost Colony*. An initiative to create *The Lost Colony Songbook* further prompted the revision of many musical portions of *The Lost Colony* for its 1938 season.

The Lost Colony Songbook (1938)

When the RIHA agreed to make *The Lost Colony* as an annual summer event, Green was given an opportunity to revise his play before its second run. Furthermore, the promise of future performances allowed the producers of *The Lost Colony* to expand the play’s marketing potential. *The Lost Colony Songbook* reflects changes made to the musical

¹⁰⁰ Carter, “Celebrating the Nation,” 307. Carter notes that Green had approached Weill to compose the music, however, Weill seemed to be committed to other projects at the time. In a letter on 14 December 1937, Green wrote to Weill to see if he could have the music ready quickly and suggested adding another composer for extra help.

portions of the show for the 1938 season, whether instigated by revisions pertaining to the dramatic nature of the lay, or motivated by the effects of a marketing impulse.

As Green began writing *The Lost Colony*, his main musical role was as lyricist, which *The Lost Colony Songbook* reflects. Green first engaged in extensive research, exploring over a hundred Elizabethan carols before selecting twenty-two most appropriate for his drama. In these notes, Green does fairly extensive bibliographic research, considering the historical background of each tune and what this background will bring to the final production.¹⁰¹ Green's notes show that he researched from a variety of sources, including the *Oxford Book of Carols* (1935), *Roxburghe Ballads* (1871-1880) edited by William Chappell, Thomas Ravencroft's *Melismata: Musical Phansies* (1611), and volumes of English folk songs collected by Cecil Sharp (1904-9 and 1921). Interestingly, Green studied both Sharp's *English Folk Songs* and the volumes of *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*, which found English ballads preserved in the mountains of North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. He rewrote the lyrics of several tunes to fit the play, and Stringfield notated the manuscript versions of the music.¹⁰² He also relied on Adeline McCall to conduct additional research on early English carols and other such works, and also to provide four-part vocal arrangements of a good number of them.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ UNC/PG, Folder 3124, "Music Notes."

¹⁰² Stringfield's hand is evident in the notation from the music in the 1937 arrangements; UNC/PG Folder 3125.

¹⁰³ Adeline McCall later wrote her Master's thesis on "Forty Three English Christmas Carols of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries." Her extensive notes and bibliography on Elizabethan carols, particularly in Stainer's *Early Bodleian Music* (1901), are available in UNC/PG, Folder 3127. McCall identified twelve carols in *Early Bodleian Music* that correspond to Green's selected carols.

Green also selected a variety of Elizabethan songs, including “Greensleeves” and Thomas Morley’s “Now is the Month of Maying” in order to portray the English music of the first colonists. Both of these examples retain the original words, although the words in other musical numbers are rewritten to fit the dramatic action. For example, “O Farewell England” (no. 13), includes new words to “The Mermaid,” the sea-shanty that Paul Green heard on his first trip to Roanoke. The song occurs at the end of Act I, when the colonists are boarding the ship to embark on their journey to the new world. Paul Green’s lyrics and stage directions paint the picture of this scene:

O, farewell England, farewell all,
And here’s a parting hand,
 *(Lastly goes Eleanor Dare on the arm of her
 husband...Meanwhile the spirited song has continued, the
 music accompanying, the flag flying and the drum beating.)*
We leave to you our hearth and hall,
To seek an unknown land,
 *(The people are more excited now. At last, at last they are
 setting forth on the great adventure so long dreamed about.
 Some of the men wave their hats and others of the crowd
 skip and dance along, their voices soaring.)*
O the stormy winds my blow
And raging seas may roar,
But merrily we sail away,
To that fair land Virgini-ay.¹⁰⁴

Meanwhile, McCall’s arrangement retains the lively character of the sea-shanty through spirited dotted rhythms in the melody, and sometimes even in the vocal harmonization. As the colonists exit, Sir Walter Raleigh salutes the colonists and kneels to pray. The convivial musical setting and excitement of the colonists presents a dramatic contrast for the audience anticipating the fate of the first Roanoke Islanders. By channeling the sea-shanty from his first trip to Roanoke, where he imagined the fate of the lost colony, Green could incorporate the music that remained a part of the Roanoke tradition.

¹⁰⁴ Green, *The Lost Colony Songbook*, 22-23; idem, *The Lost Colony*, ed. Avery, 72.

Example 1:

“O, Farewell England,” Traditional sea-shanty, arranged by Adeline McCall, lyrics by Paul Green from *The Lost Colony*



For additional help, Green turned to his wife, Elizabeth, to write the lyrics for two songs. One was “Eleanor Dare’s Lullaby,” the song for Virginia Dare’s mother, set to the sixteenth-century air “Rowland.”

When Jesus came from heaven
To be a little child,
He chose a lowly maiden,
His mother, Mary mild.

To warm him were the oxen,
His bed a manger bare,
And for out needs He suffered
Great want and cold and care.

Green tenderly dedicated *The Lost Colony Songbook* to “Eleanor Dare, America’s first mother.”¹⁰⁵ The lyrics, likewise, paint the character of Eleanor Dare in an almost spiritual light. The scene draws parallels between Eleanor Dare as the first mother in the New World and Mary, the mother of Jesus, as Eleanor Dare sings to her daughter in the cold of winter as the colonists awaited supplies from England.

When Green went to publish the music for *The Lost Colony Songbook*, however, he was unable to gain permissions for several carols under copyright by Oxford

¹⁰⁵ Green, *The Lost Colony Songbook*, 3.

University Press.¹⁰⁶ This marks a musical change for the 1938 production based solely on restrictions from the songbook as a commercial endeavor, rather than a revision relating to the dramatic structure. From the 1937 production, Green needed to replace the carols “The Seven Virgins,” “The Carnal and the Crane,” “Green Growth the Holly,” “Personet hodie,” “Puer nobis,” “Adam Lay Ybounden,” and “I Sing of a Maiden”—all protected by copyright. Thanks to his substantial research, when his request for copyrights fell through, Green was able to replace them from the slough of songs in his Elizabethan repertoire.

Each participant—Green, Stringfield, McCall, and Elizabeth Green—contributed to *The Lost Colony Songbook* in significant ways, although the publicity and scholarly literature generally credit Green alone. Parsing out the roles as credited in the songbook, however, provides a better picture of the collaboration that took place in constructing the music of the 1938 production (see Table 1 in Appendix). The borrowed tunes comprise about three-quarters of the music in *The Lost Colony* and musically provide a distinct period feel, affiliating the audience with the Elizabethan era. For the vocal and piano arrangements in the songbook, Green turned to Adeline McCall, who arranged the carols for four-part chorus. Outside of the borrowed music, Green turned to Stringfield for three newly composed dances for the 1938 production, as well as commissioning him to revise other portions of the music according to the dramatic structure.

In Green’s writings about “symphonic drama,” dance was a crucial component of the genre. Including three specific dance numbers gave this element of theater a larger role to play in the 1938 production of *The Lost Colony*. For the “Indian music” in these

¹⁰⁶ UNC/PG, Folder 3170, Paul Green to Oxford University Press, 3 May 1938.

dances, Stringfield would have likely turned to models from his conducting repertory, specifically Edward MacDowell's *Indian Suite* and Henry Hadley's *Indian Ritualistic Dance*. Stringfield had ordered the music for both of these pieces during his time as conductor of the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra from 1932-35, although he never performed the MacDowell piece, despite its being the more popular of the two.¹⁰⁷ Hadley, Stringfield's conducting teacher from his time at the Institute of Musical Art, maintained a lasting relationship with his former student during Stringfield's career as a conductor, and Stringfield attended an "All Hadley Program" performed by the New York Civic Orchestra in New York City in 1934, which had the *Indian Ritualistic Dance* on the program.¹⁰⁸ The piece was excerpted from incidental music Hadley composed for *The Legend of Hani*, a Grove Play based on Native American creation stories.¹⁰⁹ Stringfield also invited Hadley to conduct the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra in 1934.¹¹⁰

Both MacDowell's *Indian Suite* and Hadley's music for *The Legend of Hani* display stereotypical exoticist treatment of Native American music.¹¹¹ Hadley's uses of

¹⁰⁷ UNC/LS, Folder 2. Henry Hadley served as the president of the Association for American Composers and Conductors. Although less well known nowadays, he was hailed by the *Musical Courier* in 1933 as "the most importance composer of the contemporary American scene"; see Richard Jackson, "Hadley, Henry" in *Grove Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/12138> (accessed January 25, 2012).

¹⁰⁸ Loc. cit.

¹⁰⁹ Junius Cravens, *The Legend of Hani* (San Francisco: The Bohemian Club, 1933). The Grove Plays were composed for annual performances at the Bohemian Club in San Francisco, Ca., beginning in 1878 up until 2010. The club commissioned plays from members within, called "Sires." Each commission would designate a "Sire" and a "Musical Sire" to write the script and music for the production. Hadley became involved with the Bohemian Club during his time as conductor of the San Francisco Symphony. *The Legend of Hani* was Hadley's third Grove commission, having previously composed music for *The Atonement of Pan, A Music-Drama* (1912) and *Semper Virens* (1923).

¹¹⁰ UNC/LS, Folder 2, concert program. Hadley conducted his "Intermezzo" from *Cleopatra's Night*.

¹¹¹ Perlove, "Inherited Sound Images."

pentatonic and gapped scales are also found in Stringfield's "Corn Harvest Dance." The clearest parallel, found in Hadley's "Prayer to Soyal," has a strictly pentatonic melody and displays highly accented and strictly 4/4 ritualistic meter. In the Prelude to *The Legend of Hani*, Hadley also writes a melody in D minor, but treats it as a gapped scale that imitates the pentatonicism typical of would-be Native American exoticist music. In this excerpt, the rhythm includes generous ornamentation to imitate the winding melody or flutter of a tribal flute. Likewise, MacDowell's *Indian Suite* contains ornamental figures in the piccolo and presents pentatonic melodies in accented 4/4 rhythms. Although Stringfield did not have the forces of an orchestra to signify Native American tropes through instrumentation, he made use of similar musical signifiers to make the "Corn Harvest Dance" and "King Wingina's Dance" sound "Indian" to *The Lost Colony* audience.

In "Corn Harvest Dance," Stringfield opens the piece with two measures of the organ beating every eighth note of a four beat measure in open fifths, with movement in parallel fifths.¹¹² The right hand begins to play a winding, ornamented melody, treated in ways similar to MacDowell and Hadley and gaining complexity as the melody continues.

¹¹² Lamar Stringfield, "Corn Harvest Dance" in *The Lost Colony Songbook*, 12-13. Stringfield's manuscripts for Corn Harvest Dance are held in UNC/LS, Box 17a,, containing an excerpted version of "Corn Harvest Dance" that Stringfield hoped to publish as an organ solo through Carl Fischer; the manuscript adds a tom-tom, with instructions to ad-lib within this rhythm throughout the entire piece.

Example 2:

Stringfield, “Corn Harvest Dance” from *The Lost Colony*



“King Wingina’s Dance” begins with a slow introduction, prominently featuring a tritone in the bass line and building up diminished chords in the melody. Originally called “Invocation Dance” in the manuscript score, this introductory sequence conveys darkness or mystery in King Wingina’s ritual, before setting the heavily accented 4/4 open fifth chords in motion when the dancing begins.¹¹³ The melody of this dance similarly uses pentatonicism, this time Stringfield moves into the key of E flat minor, facilitating a “black-key” treatment of the pentatonic scale.

Example 3:

Stringfield, “King Wingina’s Dance” from *The Lost Colony*



Finally, in “Virginia Dare Dance,” Stringfield composes a dance more similar to his typical Americana idiom, as this dance represents the English colonists—the direct musical ancestors of the North Carolinian folk music he considered the most “purely” American.¹¹⁴ The lively dance in 2/4 contains modal melodies and harmonies and resembles the fiddler’s tunes that Stringfield published in his *Thirty and One Folk Songs From the Southern Mountains*, such as “Little Margaret” or “Cindy.”

¹¹³ Lamar Stringfield, *The Lost Colony Songbook*, 20-21.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 36-37.

Example 4:
Stringfield, “Virginia Dare’s Dance” from *The Lost Colony*



The musical team established by exploring the origins of *The Lost Colony Songbook* proves helpful in understanding the development of the dramatic work as a whole, as the music changed significantly between the first and second seasons. Many of these changes show Green’s attempt not only to integrate music into his drama, but also show him reconsidering the place of dance, another element crucial to his “symphonic drama.”

Toward a Symphonic Drama?

Throughout Green’s process of writing, and rewriting, the music for *The Lost Colony*, it becomes evident that his priority was to use music for historical veracity and local color. Rather than his initial purpose for the music to elevate the moment, Green seems to spend most of his efforts in the research of historical sources. Despite the promise of a new, synthetic form of musical drama, music in *The Lost Colony* remains conventional.

Ultimately, this use of chant, pantomime, dance, and music keeps *The Lost Colony* within the realm of pageantry, not constituting the new unified genre that Green had hoped for. Even Green expressed that *The Lost Colony* had fallen short of his goal in his diary, yet Green never thought to explore music outside of the historical setting of the production.

Green had similar difficulties integrating music in *The Common Glory*, on which he collaborated with Kurt Weill. Adopting the same structure as *The Lost Colony*, Green suggested to Weill several volumes of songs used during the Revolutionary War to reflect the time-period of the plot; however, Weill found the tunes unsuitable and uninspiring for the emotional content of the play. While Green still imagined a synthesis of music and drama for *The Common Glory*, he continued to limit his use of music to historical setting. In the end, Weill did not think that using historical pieces was the way to create an integrated musical theater, and Weill dropped out of the project at least in part due to the difference of opinions.¹¹⁵

Certainly, Green's reluctance to stray from his own procedure for using historical music may have been due to a strong-willed attitude. Yet Green's treatment of traditional material never brought him to his new genre. This may connect to the broader theme of the New South in that while the general idea was to assure that the old ways of Southern thinking had faded, New South ideals relied too heavily on tradition, rather than innovation, to be completely convincing in their rhetoric. Likewise, the heavy reliance historical conventions and pageantry proved to be detrimental in the case of Green's "symphonic dramas."

¹¹⁵ Carter, "Celebrating the Nation," 324-25.

Chapter 4

Aftermaths (1939)

While the addition of the songbook caused significant changes to *The Lost Colony*, the 1939 season involved even greater modifications regarding finances. Examining the way that the Federal Theatre Project dealt with *The Lost Colony* as their funding decreased illuminates the value that the Roanoke festival added to the FTP's ideas about reaching a national audience as an organization. Likewise, *The Lost Colony* had to deal with the loss of a major source of funding after the FTP closed, requiring the organization to focus on other investors as they moved forward as a production.

The Closing of the Federal Theatre Project

In September 1938, the Federal Theatre Project announced in the *New York Times* that they were implementing new plans for the national theater after their first three years as an organization:

After three years of necessarily precarious existence, the Federal Theatre is constantly being urged by many people and many forces so far unable to ignore it out of existence, to settle down....

It is our present concern to divide what sort of show is vast enough to engage 9,000 people throughout America in theatre activity which will be of value not only to the workers on the project, a value attested by the fact that over 1,000 of them have been chosen for jobs in private industry...

This study of the local and regional aspects of American history and contemporary life as material for drama has reached the point where we are setting up in each region one large dramatic festival center.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ NARA/FTP Box 78, Folder 920B, clipping from the *New York Times*, 4 September 1938.

Flanagan continued, announcing that “regional theaters” would be constructed in Oregon, Springfield (IL), and Boston, representing the Northwest, Midwest, and New England regions. Flanagan also appropriated the Roanoke festival at the Waterside Theatre into this initiative as the Southern regional theatre, claiming that the first season of *The Lost Colony* represented “a regional theatre which involves not only the Federal Theatre but the University of North Carolina, the State and the community.”¹¹⁷ Flanagan urged other projects to combine funding in this manner. The push to pool together funding from multiple sources seems an effective strategy for the FTP to use in order to allocate its funding to a more diverse range of productions in terms of geography.

The North Carolina division of the FTP ran with the new vision of outdoor drama outlined in Flanagan’s 1938 article in the *New York Times*. In the North Carolina FTP newsletter entitled “Backstage,” the new state director, Mary Dirnberger, wrote

This summer the Federal Theatre is looking to the open air. The Theatre, which has ever been able to adjust itself to changing conditions takes a heat wave in its stride by transplanting actors and audiences to grass slopes and shaded lawns. The theatre, which began on Greek hillsides, moves again into stadia. Outdoor recreation centers, public parks, and even in some instances, front porches offer new backgrounds for new staging methods. As we go to press, plans come rolling in for a Mountain-side theatre, a Children’s Festival, a Negro morality play, an Indian Pageant, and a Living Restoration of Days in a Lost Colony. The Federal Theatre in North Carolina will measure its ceiling in terms of the sky.¹¹⁸

However, this national strategy created a conflict between officials of the FTP. Josef Lentz, the Regional Director of the FTP in New Orleans, argued that *The Lost Colony*,

¹¹⁷ Loc. cit.

¹¹⁸ NARA/FTP, Box 2188, Folder 651.312, May E. Campbell to Ellen S. Woodward, 14 July 1936. The bulletin for the North Carolina Regional FTP, “Backstage,” is attached.

which received funds from several other sources, did not require the financial help of the FTP.¹¹⁹ On the other hand, Flanagan remained extremely invested in the idea of *The Lost Colony*, claiming that this project was one of the few instances of the project actually reaching an audience broader than the FTP's urban centers. In a telegram, Flanagan wrote, "Wish to continue participation in Roanoke activities. Cancellation of our participation would be distinct blow to national aspect of federal theatre. Rely on your ability to work out satisfactory plan with Koch whereby we pay actors but not per diem or transportation."¹²⁰ Flanagan hoped that the FTP would be able to cut a portion of the funding for *The Lost Colony* without removing the production completely from the FTP budget in order to demonstrate geographical breadth, given that the majority of FTP productions remained concentrated in the larger metropolises of New York City, Chicago, and Los Angeles. But *The Lost Colony* on Roanoke Island, which successfully attracted 50,000 people in its first season of performance, demonstrated the FTP's accomplishment in their goal of reaching a national audience.

In fact, this conflict had been rooted in FTP discussions since the project's inception, wrapped up in an argument about "decentralization," i.e., a "branching of the Federal Theatre from its main body in New York City to all parts of the country, West, North and South."¹²¹ The North Carolina FTP, and particularly *The Lost Colony*, seemed to represent to Hallie Flanagan a success in these terms. In 1936, she wrote to Frederick Koch, the regional FTP director for North Carolina and Virginia, "I find that I am more

¹¹⁹ NARA/FTP, Box 2188, Folder 651.312, J. Howard Miller to Josef Lentz, 20 September 1938.

¹²⁰ NARA/FTP Box 2188, Folder 651.312, telegram from Hallie Flanagan to Josef Lentz, 24 May 1939.

¹²¹ NARA/FTP, Box 64, Folder "NC Project Reports," report to Kate Lawson in the Bureau of Research and Publication, 4 May 1936, unsigned.

than ever impressed with the variety of work you are doing and with its value to the community...how much it gives of the real meaning of Federal Theatre!”¹²²

In the end, the FTP folded in July 1939. Flanagan announced the process for pulling workers out of the program in a press release to newspapers on 16 July, saying that funding would continue until 31 August, narrowly allowing *The Lost Colony* to run for its third summer season.¹²³ In regard to the sad news about the FTP, *The Lost Colony*’s publicist, Anthony Buttitta, wrote his condolences to Hallie Flanagan, saying “The Federal Theatre did me a great deal of good in more than one way, and you made it possible. You have done a great job during the past four years and I don’t believe you’ll be easily forgotten.”¹²⁴

The 1939 Season

In 1939 Green’s former student, Anthony Buttitta, joined the staff of *The Lost Colony* as the production’s publicist. Tensions rose between Buttitta and Stringfield, Buttitta’s former boss at the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra. During Stringfield’s time there between 1932-35, his careless financial habits had threatened the continuance of the organization. Stringfield left the North Carolina Symphony, but not without burning bridges, particularly marring his connection to Buttitta, the former press representative for the symphony. These frustrations manifested after Buttitta sought a radio broadcast of *The Lost Colony* and excluded Stringfield’s music from the production.

¹²² NARA/FTP Box 63, Folder “NC Project Reports,” Hallie Flanagan to Frederick Koch, 14 May 1936.

¹²³ NARA/FTP, Box 78, Folder 920B, press release entitled “Federal Theatre Project Workers to be Paid Until October 1, Except Where 18-Month Limit Applies,” 16 July 1939.

¹²⁴ NARA/FTP 2188, Folder 651.312, Anthony Buttitta to Hallie Flanagan, 24 July 1939.

Jim Fassett, the radio producer of Columbia Broadcasting, became interested in Buttitta's proposal to broadcast *The Lost Colony*. According to Stringfield, Fassett had not found Buttitta very helpful in constructing a compelling program, so Fassett contacted Stringfield, who had more experience in producing radio broadcasts through his work as a composer and conductor. When Buttitta found out that Stringfield was involved, he informed Stringfield that his involvement in the play was no asset in terms of publicity. On 23 June 1939, Buttitta wrote, "I'll say that I am smart enough to know that I plan to plug Paul Green and [*The*] *Lost Colony* and not Lamar Stringfield. The name of Paul Green is a guarantee that a play is fine but that of Lamar Stringfield doesn't mean the same for a piece of music. Someday you'll find that out, too."¹²⁵

Green sided with Buttitta and advised the radio producer to stay away from including Stringfield's music. In a letter of 15 June 1939 to Jim Fassett, he wrote, "It seems to me that it would be much better to use some of the madrigal, folk song, and ballad melodies typical of the Elizabethan spirit...Stringfield's contribution to the show was three or four ordered or commissioned pieces to fill in a few gaps, and unfortunately it does not fit the play as well as the material mentioned above."¹²⁶ A similar tension arose between Green and Weill as they were writing *The Common Glory*. In the end, Green's subverting his composers shows how he held on to his own ideas of music and drama and remained unwilling to compromise, even with someone who had greater experience with music.

¹²⁵ UNC/PG Folder 3170, copy of a letter from Anthony Buttitta to Lamar Stringfield, 23 June 1939.

¹²⁶ Avery, ed., *A Southern Life*, 308.

In the same year, Green played down the idea of including Stringfield in a proposed outdoor production in Williamsburg, Virginia. Green notified the management at Colonial Williamsburg, Incorporated that he would like “the best possible composer for the job. Mr. Stringfield and I have worked together before...he’s a good man, but for the present I personally should prefer to wait on the matter of composer.”¹²⁷

After the producers of *The Lost Colony* were informed that the FTP would be closing, but that funding would continue throughout the summer, another message came without warning in the middle of the season. The government pulled funding after 11 July without notice for productions associated with the Federal Theatre outside of New York City. Howard Bailey, the production manager of *The Lost Colony*, wrote to Joseph Moss, the FTP’s administrative assistant, protesting the decision: “we do not think it fair either to the Loan Personell or to us to drop these people from your payroll as of July 11th because they happen to be working here. They certainly would have continued on your payroll if they had returned to New York.”¹²⁸ With these new changes to the budget, *The Lost Colony* would either have to assume the financial responsibility for funding the salaries of these actors, or be forced to send them back to New York and essentially forfeit their season. In a similar appeal to Flanagan, Bailey explained that the production’s funds ran especially low in July, presumably because the season began during the first week of the month, and at that point, the production had not had any chance to earn anything back as ticket revenue.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 305.

¹²⁸ NARA/FTP Box 2188, Folder 651.312, Howard Bailey to Joseph Moss, 19 July 1939.

Models for Outdoor Drama

In a 1938 article in the Baltimore *Morning Sun*, Anthony Merrill had pointed readers toward *The Lost Colony* as an innovative mode of communal theater, saying, “If you’re looking for the birth of a communal theater in this country, watch Roanoke Island, for here is a maturing dramatic innovation which is taking its place in the economic pattern of the community.”¹²⁹

When Frank Staley decided to commission a historical play to honor colonial Williamsburg in Virginia, he turned to Green to write the play and sought advice about the process of producing an outdoor drama. In Green’s reply to Staley on 28 February 1939, he talks about the dramatic potential for a drama about Williamsburg and the benefits of the outdoor venue in Manteo:

“10. I feel that there is more dramatic material connected with Williamsburg than Roanoke Island. Whereas the American idea can be said to have had its first faint vision on Roanoke, it came to realization and full statement through Williamsburg and the leaders (Washington, Henry, Randolph, Jefferson, Mason, and others) who made it historically a hallowed place.

11. No doubt the location of *The Lost Colony* theatre on the site once occupied by the colonists had a great deal to do with the success of the play, and the same thing would be true in the Williamsburg production. Except more so, for the whole place and its spirit there are dramatic and imaginative to begin with. The theatre there should be located in some dell or place convenient to the capitol, or on the site of an imagined dwelling where these leaders used to meet and talk over their dreams and plans for the Republic. Then when the play opens and the prologue part is spoken the audience can immediately be conducted into the point of view of witnessing actual events and personages...”¹³⁰

¹²⁹ NARA/FTP Box 78, Folder 920A, “WPA Play Brings Boom to Little Tarheel Town,” *Morning Sun*, 2 October 1938, Baltimore, Md.

¹³⁰ Avery, ed., *A Southern Life*, 305.

Green was also able to provide some advice about the financial structure of *The Lost Colony*. After the FTP closed, Green would be a logical person to turn to for such advice since the production received funding from a variety of sources rather than relying solely on funds from the FTP. This production at Williamsburg, *The Common Glory* (not the same work as the one on which Green had been collaborating with Kurt Weill), however, was not completed until 1947. Green did go on to write fifteen more outdoor dramas, including *The Stephen Foster Story* in Kentucky, *Cross and Sword* in Florida, and *Texas!* in Texas, following his experience with the Roanoke celebration.¹³¹ None of them went any further than *The Lost Colony* in terms of creating a “symphonic drama.”

* * * * *

The Lost Colony serves as an interesting focal point that unveils the intersection of regional and national theater during the 1930s. Surveying regional theater offers a different picture of the theatrical landscape during this time and shows the continuing importance of pageantry, outdoor theater, and dramatic productions to commemorate historical events. *The Lost Colony* interacts with each of these aspects, even though Green sought to distinguish the play through the creation of his new genre, the “symphonic drama.” Financially, although most narratives look towards the FTP to understand the economic structures of the time period, *The Lost Colony* shows a different model for producing theater that fits in perfectly with the FTP’s idea of “decentralization.” By pulling in funding from a variety of sources, *The Lost Colony* was

¹³¹ Each of these productions has continued annually: *The Stephen Foster Story* in Bardstown, Ky., since 1959, *Cross and Sword* in St. Augustine, Fl., since 1965, and *Texas!* in Palo Duro Canyon, Tx., since 1966.

able to continue even after the FTP closed, unlike productions that were funded entirely by the Project. Claiming North Carolina's national importance, *The Lost Colony* presents many of the values of the New South. *The Lost Colony* demonstrated North Carolina's colonial roots and English heritage, particularly through musical means by using the music of Elizabethan England, along with the claim that these songs could still be found in the rural sections of the state. Finally, understanding Green's place within a network shows the way that these ideas interacted within a community, rather than remaining the vision of one individual. Forging a "New South" was always going to be a collaborative venture, and for all its problems, *The Lost Colony* played a significant role in it.

Appendix 1: Personalia

Anthony Buttita (1907-2004)

Buttita was born in Monroe, Louisiana in 1907. He graduated from the University of Texas, and continued on to graduate school at the University of North Carolina. After he completed school, he organized a literary magazine called *Contempo* (1931-1934), which focused on the works of contemporary writers such as F. Scott Fitzgerald, William Faulkner, and Langston Hughes. Buttita moved to Asheville, N.C., in 1935 where he worked at a bookshop and organized the public relations of the North Carolina Symphony under Lamar Stringfield. Having heard about the possibility of a government sponsored national theater, Buttita wrote to Hallie Flanagan asking to join what became the Federal Theatre Project. Buttita worked in public relations for the FTP from 1936-1939 both in New York City and in North Carolina for *The Lost Colony*. His memoir, *Uncle Sam Presents*, chronicles his experiences with the organization. Buttita continued to work in public relations in New York and California after his work for the FTP.

Hallie Flanagan (1890-1969)

Flanagan was born in Redfield South Dakota, and eventually moved to Iowa, where she attended Grinnell College. After graduating in 1911, Flanagan began her career as a high school teacher, but returned to Grinnell to teach English. In 1925 Flanagan was hired as a professor of theater at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York. Her most well-known play, *Can You Hear Their Voices?* became the prototype for the Living Newspaper, telling the story of tenant farmers in Arkansas during the Great Depression. Flanagan was appointed as the National Director of the FTP in 1935. After the organization folded in 1939, Flanagan returned to teach at Vassar College. She continued to devote her life to the theater and education.

Frederick H. "Proff" Koch (1877-1979)

Frederick H. Koch was born on September 12, 1877 in Covington Kentucky, where he grew up. He was educated at Ohio Wesleyan University before pursuing a graduate degree in English from Harvard University, where he received his Master's in 1909. Before graduating from this program, Koch began to teach English at the University of North Dakota. There he founded The Dakota Playmakers, establishing the same principles as his later student production group at the University of North Carolina. Koch began producing Prairie Folk Plays through this student group, which were based on pioneer, western folk topics. Koch described the plays as "honest, simple folk plays, near to the good, strong, wind-swept soil."¹³² When Koch was appointed to the Department of English at the University of North Carolina, he similarly created an organization for

¹³² Koch, "Drama In the South," in *Pioneering A People's Theatre*, ed. Henderson, 8.

student composed and produced folk plays, The Carolina Playmakers, along with publishing four volumes of student plays in *Carolina Folk Plays*. The group utilized “native materials” of North Carolina, presented through “fresh dramatic forms.”¹³³ Koch remained at UNC for the rest of his career.

Adeline Denham McCall (1900-1989)

Adeline Denham McCall was born in Denver, Colorado in 1900. Throughout her childhood, McCall and her family traveled extensively. By the time she was 22, McCall had visited London, Paris, and New York. After attending her first two years of college courses at the University of Denver, McCall moved to North Carolina to study, where her uncle—Frederick Koch—was the head of the Drama Department. McCall became involved with dramatic productions through the Carolina Playmakers, and her senior yearbook noted her role as Mabel in “Suppressed Desires.”¹³⁴ She also served as the student representative to the U.N.C. Woman’s Association for the senior class during her final year as a student at UNC, and also became the first female student to serve on the Campus Cabinet.

After graduating, McCall continued her education at the Institute of Musical Art (today the Julliard School of Music), the Peabody Conservatory, and L’Ecole Normale in Paris, although the details of her study at these institutions remain unclear. Eventually, McCall returned to Chapel Hill where she taught music and ultimately became the supervisor of music education for Chapel Hill-Carrboro Schools. Throughout her career, McCall wrote children’s music books and children’s programs for the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra called “Symphony Stories.” McCall was awarded the North Carolina Distinguished Service Award for Women from UNC in 1980 for her dedication to music education and outreach.

Lamar Stringfield (1897-1959)

Lamar Edwin Stringfield was born near Raleigh, N.C., on October 10, 1897. His father, a reverend, worked raising financial support for the Baptist Female University in Raleigh (today, Meredith College). The family moved several times from 1903-1906, eventually residing permanently in Asheville, N.C. Stringfield attended Mars Hill College, where he studied medicine, until 1916, when he entered the military to fight in World War I. His military service began in Mexico with the Army, and eventually he served in France as a bandsman in the 105th Engineers, where he played the cornet. Stringfield’s time in the military marked the beginning of his career in music. He began to play the flute and also took theory lessons with the regiment’s bandmaster, Joseph DeNardo. In 1918 the military offered five musicians from his division the opportunity to receive musical

¹³³ Ibid, 9.

¹³⁴ UNC/NCC, *Yackety Yack* 1922, 51.

instruction in Paris. Stringfield was selected, and went to Paris where he studied both flute performance and composition—the latter with Nadia Boulanger.¹³⁵

After his military service, Stringfield moved to New York City to continue his musical education. He attended the Institute of Musical Art (today, the Juilliard School of Music). He studied in three areas: flute performance, composition, and conducting. Stringfield took flute lessons with Barrère, composition lessons with Percy Goetschius, and conducting lessons with Henry Hadley. Stringfield returned to North Carolina in 1927, where he conducted the Asheville Symphony Orchestra and continued to compose. Stringfield received a Pulitzer Prize in 1928 for his composition, *From the Southern Mountains*. In addition to composing, Stringfield began the Institute of Folk Music at UNC in 1930 and the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra, where he served as conductor from 1932-1935. Stringfield died of “lung congestion” on 21 January 1959 and was buried in Asheville, N.C., at the Riverside Cemetery.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ Nelson notes a letter from Stringfield’s colleague, Charles B. Glass, in which Glass writes “Mlle. Boulanger remembered you well,” confirming that Stringfield’s term of study with Boulanger occurred during the war years. UNC-LS, letter, 21 May 1948.

¹³⁶ Nelson, “The Life and Works of Lamar Stringfield,” 60.

Appendix 2: Contents of *The Lost Colony Songbook* (1938)

Number	Title	Composer	Arranger	Lyrics	Borrowed	Further Description
1	Overture	Stringfield	---	---		Overture
2	O, God That Madest Earth and Sky	Traditional	---	Green	X	Chorus
3	“This Was the Vision”	William Byrd	---	Green	X	Chant
4	“The Earth Is the Lord’s”	Thomas Tallis	---	Psalm 24	X	Chant
5	Indian Corn Harvest Dance	Stringfield	---	---		Dance
6	English March	Anonymous	---	Anonymous	X	---
7	Old Tom’s Lament	Traditional	McCall	Green	X	---
8	We Come From Field and Town	Traditional	McCall	Green	X	---
9	Milkmaid’s Dance (a)	Traditional	---	Anonymous	X	Dance (a)
10	Milkmaid’s Dance (b)	Traditional	---	Anonymous	X	Dance (b)
11	Old Tom’s Drinking Song	Traditional	McCall	Green	X	Drinking Song
12	King Wingina’s Dance	Stringfield	---	---		Dance
13	O, Farewell England	Traditional	McCall	Green	X	---
14	“We Commend to Thy Almighty Protection”	Thomas Tallis	---	Prayer Book	X	Chant
15	“God Is Our Hope and Strength”	Farrant	---	Psalm 24	X	Chant
16	God Save the Queen	Traditional	Stringfield	---	X	Address to the flag
17	Women’s Work Song	Traditional	---	Anonymous	X	---
18	Baptism of Virginia Dare	Thomas Tallis	---	E.L. Green	X	---
19	Virginia Dare’s Dance	Stringfield	---	---		Dance

20	Christening Dance	Thomas Morley	McCall	Anonymous	X	---
21	Old Tom's Love Song	Folk tune	McCall	Green	X	---
22	Child's Dead March	Traditional	Stringfield	---	X	March
23	Eleanor Dare's Lullaby	Traditional	---	E.L. Green	X	Lullaby
24	Christmas 1588	Traditional	---	Anonymous	X	---
25	O Death! Rock Me Asleep	Anne Boleyn	---	Boleyn	X	---
26	Sir Walter Raleigh's Ship	Traditional	McCall	---	X	---
27	Sleep, O, Pioneers	Tye	---	---	X	Hummed by chorus
28	Into the Wilderness	Stringfield	---	---		March

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