

## A Chief Lorde of Roanoac

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"A Cheiff Lorde of Roanoac." Theodor de Bry's engraving of an American Indian man, published in Thomas Hariot's 1588 book *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*. In the foreground, the man is depicted from both the front and back, standing with his arms crossed. He is wearing a fringed garment and a necklace with a large ornament. In the background is a body of water in which people are rowing canoes. A fishing weir can be seen in the background on the left side of the image. The text accompanying the image reads: "The chief men of the island and town of Roanoke reace the hair of their crowns of their heads cut like a cock's comb, as the others do. The rest they wear long as women and truss them up in a knot in the nape of their necks. They hang pearls string upon a thread at their ears, and wear bracelets on their arms of pearls, or small beads of copper or of smooth bone called minsal, neither painting nor pouncing [tattooing] of them selves, but in token of authority, and honor, they wear a chain of great pearls, or copper beads or smooth bones about their necks, and a plate of copper hinge upon a string, from the navel unto the middle of their thighs. They cover themselves before and behind as the women do with a deer's skin handsomely dressed, and fringed. More over they fold their arms together as they walk, or as they talk one with another in sign of wisdom. The isle of Roanoke is very pleasant, and has plenty of fish by reason of the Water that environs the same." Theodor de Bry was a Flemish-born engraver and publisher who based his illustrations for Hariot's book on the New World paintings of colonist John White. These depictions of the landscapes and residents of North Carolina provided Europeans with some of their earliest notions of what the North American continent looked like. This engraving was based on White's watercolor painting, "Indian Elder or Chief."

UNC *Documenting the South*: article on "Thomas Hariot", including more engravings by Theodor de Bry. <https://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/hariot/hariot.html>



**Citation (Chicago Style):**

de Bry, Theodore. *A Chieff Lorde of Roanac*. Print: Engraving. 1590. British Library. <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/engravings-of-native-americans-and-pi...> (Accessed October 31, 2018)

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