

History Of Beaufort

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By R. H. Hill, Jr.

1st Installment

The town of Beaufort occupies a peninsula nearly four miles long and two miles wide. The peninsula is surrounded by water except for one narrow neck of land. Beaufort faces the beautiful Core and Bogue sounds and is only one mile distant from the open sea. It is located within sight of the Atlantic ocean directly in front of Beaufort Inlet.

Beaufort is almost on the extreme eastern point of North Carolina, lying in 34 degrees north latitude and 76 degrees west longitude. It is only 20 miles from the Gulf Stream, being closer to the Gulf Stream than any mainland point north of Florida. This assures Beaufort of an extremely mild climate. The average winter temperature is 47.5 degrees; summer 78.4 degrees and autumn, 69.5 degrees. Frost and snow are rare, and the summer is cooled by ocean breezes.

Beaufort is connected to western North Carolina by U. S. Highway No. 70 which extends over 600 miles across the State through New Bern, Kinston, Goldsboro, Raleigh, Durham, Greensboro, High Point, Salisbury, Statesville, Hickory and Asheville and thence across the continent to Los Angeles on the Pacific coast. Beaufort is connected to Morehead City, nearest town on the west, a distance of three miles, by a bridge and causeway which cost \$750,000 at the time of its construction.

The actual bridge work is 3,000 feet long, and the causeway between the two draw bridges is 5,100 feet. Said was thrown upon the marshes by government dredges, and the causeway was paved across this. The foundation consists of 427 untreated piles driven in clusters to form a foundation under the four bridges. Two hundred and 85 precast concrete piles, ranging in length from 25 to 65 feet, were also driven to complete the foundation. In pier

foundation and the bridge itself, 1,200,000 pounds of reinforcing steel was used to hold together 1,860 cubic yards of concrete. The machinery used to raise the two draw bridges weighed 96,000 pounds. This bridge was built by the State Highway Commission and was very important in establishing better transportation and communication with other parts of the country.

The territory now included in Carteret County, of which Beaufort is the county seat, was originally part of the present precinct of Bath, which was one of the original divisions of the territory as made by the Lords Proprietors soon after assuming authority over the Carolinas in 1763. Carteret county derived its name from Sir George Carteret, one of the Lords Proprietors. It was formed as a separate county in 1722, and in the same year Beaufort was made a port of entry.

Beaufort was named for Henry Sommerset, Duke of Beaufort, another of the Lords Proprietors, and in 1723, it was incorporated by the General Assembly.

In 1690, a band of French immigrants came down from Virginia to a tract of the wilderness called Carolina. They settled around the Roanoke River and the Albemarle Sound. Eighteen years later in 1708, a band of these men set out to explore the country to the south of them to find better homes. They traveled for three years, stopping many times along the shores of Pamlico Sound and leaving a good many of their number. Finally the remnant arrived at what they thought to be (and is now) "The Garden Spot of The World." They called this settlement, which afterwards became Beaufort, 'Fishertown.' They were followed by the Swedes, Germans and English from other colonies and many came direct from England.

(To be Continued)