

North Carolina

Hello, my name is Sommers Pierce, Mary Sommers Pierce, and I'd like to tell you a little something about my home state of North Carolina.

North Carolina is located on the East Coast of the United States in what is called the "Mid-Atlantic Region." It has a wide range of elevations: from the sandy beaches on the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Smoky Mountains and the Blue Ridge mountains in the west. From the town of Murphy (in the western mountains) to Manteo (on the coast) the state stretches 543 miles or 873 kilometers.

The scenery is beautiful, with something for everyone. For example, Orville and Wilbur Wright, the famous Wright Brothers, made their historic flight from the high and windy sand dunes of Kitty Hawk. The site is now a National Historical Memorial with a museum and reproductions of the airplanes and living quarters. If the mountains are more to your taste, check out Mount Mitchell -- the highest peak on the east coast.

In 1584 Sir Walter Raleigh was granted a charter by Elizabeth I for the land that is present-day North Carolina; and so it became the second American territory that the English attempted to colonize. In 1587, on Roanoke Island, just off the coast of North Carolina, the first English child was born in North America. Her name was Virginia Dare. Dare County is named after her. The state capital, Raleigh, is named for Sir Walter Raleigh.

North Carolina has a couple of nicknames: The Old North State and the Tarheel State. No one is quite sure where the name "Tarheel State" came from. Some say it dates back to the American Revolution but the more persistent anecdotes date the term to the Civil War.

The name is most commonly associated with confederate General Robert E. Lee, who is said to have exclaimed "God Bless the Tar Heel boys." after he heard of an exchange in which a North Carolina soldier answered to the jeer of "Tar Heel" that if the other states' soldier had had some tar on their heels the North Carolina troops would not have had to retake the battle line.

According to the state website, North Carolina is "the 10th largest economy in the U.S. and among the top 30 worldwide, ranking just behind Taiwan." Agriculture continues to play an important role: It is the number one sweet potato grower and the 2nd largest producer of Christmas trees in the U.S.

10.3 million people live in North Carolina with 23% under the age of 18.

It is the 6th most visited state in the country because there is so much to see and do!

So y'all come see us, ya hear!