



# Molly's "Beaufort Town"

by Lynn Allred

**A 10-chapter story celebrating  
Beaufort and colonial history.**

## Chapter Ten - "Off to Sea!"

The morning was beautiful. The sky was clear and there was a crisp breeze, just right for sailing, as Mother helped Molly pack for her trip. In just a few short hours, the captain was setting sail for England, and he was taking Molly with him!

Mother was unsure about this trip. It could be dangerous. Storms and pirates threatened. Also, the colonists were beginning to talk about freedom from England, where the ship was headed. Was now a good time for a voyage across the sea?

After much discussion, Father had offered to accompany Molly if Mother would allow it. Reluctantly, she had agreed, with Father promising to return Molly home soon.

The captain, now fully recovered, had a brand new ship and had hired another crew. William's cousin, Samuel was one of the crew members. He wanted to work as a ship's mate and see the world. Samuel's parents had approved, but William made clear that he did not like the fact that Samuel was leaving him behind.

"My friend and my cousin - both sailing away on the same ship - and I can't go!" he had complained. "It's just not fair... not fair, I tell you!"

Lydia was not happy, either. "Whatever will I do without you?" she had asked Molly. "I won't be near as much fun here while you're gone! You and I have always been together!"

Molly had done her best to reassure Lydia that all would be well. "Just teach Elizabeth and Ann the games we play," she said. "Hoops and marbles, hopscotch and jump rope... and you can make cornhusk dolls and play in the creek! You can do plenty together. Just promise you'll never forget me. I'll be back before you know it!"

Lydia had finally agreed to give her new friends a chance. But secretly, Molly was glad that Lydia would miss her so much. They were best friends, after all.

Molly was excited to be sailing to England. She had come over to the colonies when she was much younger and did not remember her grandparents at all. She was looking forward excitedly to seeing them again. Mother was sending a jar of apple butter and some homemade candles as a gift. Molly placed them into her satchel, buckled it up, then carried it outside.

Her family was there on the front porch waiting for her. "You sure do look pretty in your new dress," Father said.

Molly blushed. The general store had gotten some of the lilac fabric with yellow rosebuds she had wanted, and Mother had sewed a beautiful dress, with Molly's initials embroidered on the back of the collar.

"Mother made it for me," Molly said. "I won't lose it, Mother, I promise. If I do, it has my initials on it, so it can be returned to me, just like Mrs. Nelson's necklace!"

Mother smiled. She would miss Molly so much. Father took Molly's satchel and carried it with his own. The family walked together down the street toward the docks.

"So long, Molly," said new neighbor Mrs. Thomson, the wheelwright's wife, as she swept off her front porch. "Elizabeth and Ann will miss you!"

"I'll miss them, too," Molly replied. "Please tell them goodbye for me." She wondered where her two new friends were and why they were not there to tell her goodbye themselves.

"Goodbye, Molly!" Mrs. Nelson waved to her from the widow's walk where she always stood

when her husband sailed out to sea.

"Goodbye, Mrs. Nelson," Molly replied. "I'll take care of the captain for you! If he gets hurt again, I know just what to do!"

Mrs. Nelson laughed. "He's in good hands, then, Molly!"

"Goodbye, Molly!" Susannah Gible said, as she and her future husband passed her on the street in a horse and buggy. "We'll miss you!"

"Goodbye," Molly said. "Sorry I'll miss your wedding! Good luck to you both!"

More said goodbyes as Molly headed off in the direction of the docks. Even Mrs. Ramsey had wished Molly well. "Everyone here is like family," Molly thought. "I wonder if the people over in England will be like this!"

When they reached the docks, the Thomsons were there to see Samuel off on his first voyage. And Elizabeth and Ann were right beside them. "We couldn't let you go without saying goodbye," they told Molly. "We'll miss you." Aunt Susan, Uncle Aaron and Lydia gave hugs and shed tears while saying farewell to Molly. Lydia did not want to let go of Molly. She squeezed her tight.

"I love you, too, Lydia," Molly said. "And I'll bring you back something from England - something grand, like the things at Tryon Palace!"

Lydia smiled and stepped back as Mother bent down for her final words of advice. "You be a good girl, Molly," she said. "Make me proud. And remember - it's nice to know where you came from, but this will always be your home."

"I know, Mother," Molly said. "And I'll be back soon. I promise." She gave her mother a big hug, gave baby Sarah a kiss on her forehead and winked at Jacob as she took Father's hand.

"It's tough being a little sister sometimes because you're never first at doing anything!" she said. "I'm sailing back to England on a ship, and that's something you haven't done yet, Jacob! Imagine that!" She looked towards her baby sister. "Sorry, Sarah, there's not going to be much left for you to do first! Not if you follow me!"

Jacob laughed as he handed Father the two satchels then tousled Molly's hair. "Have a safe journey, little sis," he said.

When the ship sailed away, all were waving from the docks. The last thing Molly saw of Beaufort Harbor, as her friends and family faded into the distance, were the flags flying high on the waterfront. And as they set sail towards the ocean, Molly held tightly onto her father's hand, thinking about the journey ahead. "Get ready, England," she thought to herself. "Here I come!"

**THE END**

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### Use the News:

Define "community." How does the word apply to the community where Molly grew up? How does "community" apply to the place where you live? Use your experiences and people, places and events found in your print and digital newspapers as evidence to support a description of your home.

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*Learn more about Beaufort's founding!*

### Beaufort Harbor

Settlers who came to Beaufort were looking for a deep-water port with easy access to the ocean. A port would enable them to trade with England for the supplies they needed. The area that is now Beaufort met their needs, and the town was established in 1709. Only Bath and Edenton are older towns in North Carolina. By 1722, Beaufort had become a main port for shipping vessels that docked to do business with the original colonies. Because a thriving shipping business grew up around the harbor, people continued to move into the area. In 1723, Beaufort was incorporated as a town.



(Photo courtesy of the Carteret County News-Times)