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Abstract Title: In Pursuit of a Humble Beast: The Connection Between Diamond City Whalers and the Maritime Landscape of Cape Lookout

Abstract Description: Although the deserted landscape that occupies Shackleford Banks today may not suggest it, this small island once supported North Carolina's most lucrative shore whaling industry. Every year, several pods of right whales migrate from their feeding grounds near the coast of New England and Nova Scotia to as far south as Florida's east coast. Cape Lookout served as the perfect natural harbor along their migration for these whales to stop and rest between December and June. This therefore allowed for a shore whaling industry to develop within the protected cape and sound that supplemented household incomes when other fisheries were out of season. Diamond City, a town of nearly 500 residents in the late nineteenth century, was initially established to serve whalers and fishers and cultivated a unique maritime culture around its fisheries. This presentation seeks to articulate the whale fishery in this distinct maritime landscape and explain its position in the global whaling industry.