

Mother Vineyard ^[1]

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by John Hairr, 2006

Mother Vineyard is a community on the north end of [Roanoke Island](#) ^[2] in [Dare County](#) ^[3] where an ancient and famous [scuppernong](#) ^[4] grapevine grows. Known at times as the "Sir Walter Raleigh Vine" and the "Mother Vine," it is the subject of much legend and lore. The vine is reputed to be the oldest grapevine in the United States, as well as the original vine from which all subsequent scuppernong grapes descended. In 1909 horticulturalist F. C. Reimer refuted these claims, showing that the oldest vines in the state grew in [Tyrrell County](#) ^[5]. As for the scuppernong vines of Roanoke Island, he found five old vines growing "in two straight rows." North Carolina grape authority Clarence Gohdes called this statement "sure evidence that they are survivors of a modern vineyard" and placed their origins back to the 1850s.

"Old Mother Vineyard" was established on Roanoke Island ca. 1930 and supplied grapes to winemaker Paul Garrett. Mother Vineyard became a trademark for a popular brand of scuppernong [wine](#) ^[6] originally produced from grapes of Old Mother Vineyard on Roanoke Island. The rights to the name were subsequently sold to a company in Petersburg, Va., in 1956, which claimed to use North Carolina grapes in its wine but not specifically those grown on Roanoke Island.



Photograph of the Mother Vineyard, Roanoke Island, 1930, showing the vines supported by wooden structures. Image from the North Carolina Museum of History. ^[7]

References:

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Additional Resources:

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Image Credits:

William Daniel's Studio. "Photograph, Accession #: [H.1952.90.75](#) ^[7]." Roanoke Island, circa 1930-1940. North Carolina Museum of History.

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Authors:

[Hairr, John](#) ^[18]

Origin - location:

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[Tyrrell County](#) ^[20]

From:

[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.](#) ^[21]

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