

***IMPLOSION***

The Secret History of the Origins of the  
Lumbee Indians of Robeson County, North Carolina

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## *Appendix T*

### *List of Lumbee Surnames With Dates of Appearance in the Greater Lumbee Settlement (N= 523 Surnames) 1740-2007*

Typically members of the public, researchers of the Lumbees and BIA staff members have vastly underestimated the number of Lumbee surnames. Even those living in Robeson County among the Lumbees fail to recognize the large number of different Lumbee names. By 1900 Robeson County had at least 120 documented surnames (with numerous variant spellings), self identified as Indian, listed in the "Indian" federal census. Other Lumbees had long left the great Lumbee Settlement area or disappeared as family names. Currently the number of names for families at least partially Lumbee is growing exponentially. Every issue of *The Robesonian* documents the marriages and deaths of local Lumbees who left several sons and daughters who married outside the Lumbee tribe.

Surnames are particularly tricky in Robeson County because many names may be White, Lumbee or African-American or all three. Many names are stereotypically Lumbee and others almost invariably White or Black. Because people often list themselves as they choose, there is no official, governmental, social or biological yardstick to determine whether an individual giving information is Lumbee, but going as White, or possibly Black, going as Lumbee. Objective verification does not exist except possibly to some extent in application procedures, based upon genealogy, to join the Lumbee tribe. Most often, however, Lumbees generally correctly identify themselves and other Lumbees accurately. If you go through official tribal enrollment procedures, your family genealogy or pedigree will be crucial. Your family line had best go back to some of the core Lumbee families of the 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Early writers before 1880 reported with some degree of accuracy that many of the Lumbees of the Settlement came from northeastern North Carolina, from Franklin County (Norment, 1875), which is to say that they came from Bute County, before 1779, Granville County before 1764 and from earlier Edgecombe County and Bertie before 1746. It appears likely that the Lumbees as a so-called tri-racial isolate group, one of about thirty-five such isolate communities in the eastern portion of the United States,

funneled from the tier of counties in northeastern North Carolina. They came from near the Roanoke River, down a small wagon road hardly marked on maps, through what became Franklin County, long before 1800 (see Reid Map of 1797). No doubt they crossed the Cape Fear River near Fayetteville and traveled the Mulatto Road, later called the Lowry Road, through Robeson and spread thinly into various portions of northeastern South Carolina.

Franklin and Granville County deeds contain frequent references to Lumbee surnames such as Bass, Bell, Chavis (Chaves, Chaviss, Chavous, Cheaves), Going(s), and Hammonds/Hammons. The general trend was to move from Tidewater Virginia to the northernmost counties of eastern North Carolina and then to southeastern North Carolina or possibly to northern areas of South Carolina (e.g. Sumter County) and rebound back up to what was then Bladen (see detailed family histories by DeMarce, 1992, 1993, Heinegg, 2002, and White/Taukchiray, 1975, 1988). This was a slow process, over one or two generations, and did not occur all at once.

Most of those listed in the 1850 census of Robeson designed as "Mulatto" were probably Lumbee because a separate designation "b" was clearly used for Black. The term "Indian" was *never* used in early census records of Robeson. The designation "Indian" appeared in only one specific instance, which proves the generalization, "Thomas Britt an Indian James Stewart Senr." was listed in the 1768 tax list for Bladen in Archibald McKissack's district. This should be interpreted to mean that James Stewart Sr. was Indian rather than Thomas Britt. There was considerable and constant confusion in early records over being classified as White, Mulatto (anyone who appeared physically to have some portion of nonwhite ancestry) or "mixt." Pre-1850 censuses called Lumbees *free persons not white, free persons of color* or abbreviated Lumbees as *f.p.c., f.c.* or *mu* for Mulatto. Early Bladen tax records from 1763 to 1789 had a dazzling array of ethnic designations for the same family names which existed for the next two hundred years of Lumbee history. As a cautionary note you *cannot* take any single-entry racial designation, White, African-American or Indian, "as gospel." One-shot proof of ethnicity is simply not possible. Nor can you reliably compute an "average," modal or most *frequent* racial designation as the *correct* ethnic source because what an individual or family was called varied from contact with one tax enumerator to another. Ethnic designations or origins were apt to disagree with each other when the census taker and tax assessor came calling every few years. It didn't help or improve accuracy much that the census taker in Robeson was often a neighbor in the community and familiar with local families. The primary ethnic

identification or "race" reported to the census taker often changed every ten years in census reports from 1790 to 1930 according to who answered the door and the feelings about being labeled one way or another by the person giving the information.

It has been said that we Americans are indeed a "mixed people," probably becoming more so, and those of us from early Bladen and later Robeson probably constitute one of the more ethnically mixed of counties in the nation. Always keep in mind that surnames in Robeson may be claimed by Whites, African-Americans and Lumbees, or, all three! Some names such as Locklear and Lowry are stereotypically Lumbee while some names such as Britt are stereotypically white.

The following comprehensive list contains not only the most frequent, prominent "core" Lumbee surnames but all such names, however infrequent, *ever* identified in the Settlement from the 1740s to the present. Names were compiled from land and tax records, cemetery records, death certificates, census reports, wills, deeds, petitions for acknowledgment, military and church records and newspaper notices. The list includes those who identified themselves as Indian (I) in death records (1916-1955) in official Death Indexes in the Register's of Deeds office at the Robeson County courthouse. These surnames remain, at best, an educated guess based upon a careful and studied perusal of relevant names. Numerous historical and genealogical documents as well as local historians and the most knowledgeable researchers on the Lumbees have been consulted. Undoubtedly there are minor errors in terms of both inclusion and exclusion but they are accidental and simply must be accepted as the best that could be wished for in such a difficult and complicated compilation. Many of the early or "original" Lumbee names have totally disappeared from the area and many new names have more recently joined the Lumbee tribe by marriage. Inter-marriage between Lumbees has been the most frequent pattern with most families having married into either the Lowrys or Locklears during the past century and a half. Hopefully, as the saying goes, there are only a few errors of "omission" and few or none of "commission."

The author encountered one Lumbee name, "Cloeraly," which presented an almost insurmountable mystery. It was initially assumed to be a misinterpreted or miscopied name taken years ago from a Sampson County family and printed erroneously through the years. Nothing similar to such a Lumbee name was found in Bladen Tax lists 1763-1789, in census records or in grantor and grantee deed records for Robeson 1787-1939. Desperate for help, the "Cloeraly" name was shown to several clerks in the Robeson County Register of Deeds Office in Lumberton. They are familiar with and

experienced in frequently deciphering names of Robesonians from birth and death records. They suggested, probably accurately, that the name was probably "C. Loerally [Lowery]" and had been miscopied or spelled phonetically. This is not unlike the situation in which those in Robeson named Musselwhite abbreviate the name as "M'White," or it may appear in the form of "James M. White" when copied but it possibly means "James Musselwhite." There is always a major danger when genealogical abstracts are compiled for deeds, tax lists, wills or marriages for a given county and the researcher lacks a thorough familiarity with *local* names as they appear in a wide variety of spellings. Clerks who have worked for years with local Robeson names such as Lowry in birth and death records report that the two most popular spellings is "Lowry" or Lowery" and almost never the earlier form "Lowrie." A few Lumbees have changed their names from Lowry to "Lockey."

More than a dozen surnames found among the Lumbees have little differentiating power because they are among the most frequent or common in the United States: Smith, Johnson, Williams, Brown, Jones, Miller, Davis, Wilson, Anderson, Taylor, Moore, Thomas, Martin, Thompson, White, Harris and Jackson. Keep in mind that during the last few years of the 20th century there has been an increasingly strong emphasis on tribal enrollment. The official tribal roll stands currently over 48,000. Admission is based on genealogical proof of being Lumbee in heritage. Thus more and more "new" Lumbee families are being added each year as other families marry into core Lumbee families such as Locklear, Lowery, Chavis, Oxendine, Hunt and others. The listing by Jane Blanks Barnhill of 162 Lumbee cemeteries across Robeson County in *Sacred Grounds*, 2007, documents the vast array of new names such as DiGiovine (with the Burnette family), Alessio (with the Warriax family), Arena (with the Jacobs family), Avant (with the Hunt family), Banner, Bardowell, Beck, Cortopassi, Mothershed, along with several dozen others marrying into the Lumbees. Some of these are known to have been soldiers from the North, stationed at Fort Bragg, who married into Lumbee families and became permanent residents of Robeson.

**ADAMS** An infrequent Lumbee name cited at Beulah Baptist Church cemetery by Jane Blanks Barnhill, *Sacred Grounds*, 2007, a listing of 162 Lumbee cemeteries in Robeson County.

**ALFORD** An infrequent Lumbee name found among the "Croatans" of Marlboro, Dillon, Marion, and Horry counties, South Carolina (White, 1975, De Marce, 1993, p. 31) and found in the 1790 census of Cheraw District.