Cherokee Communities of the South

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In this article I would like to present the reader with a brief sketch and some history of the various groups of Indians in the South who are referred to as Cherokees, and who generally consider themselves to be Cherokees. There are several such groups, some of them unrelated to others. There is one "block" of Indian people who live in the Cumberland region of Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and southern Ohio and who refer to themselves as Cherokee. It is this group which I would like to examine in detail, but I would like, also, to look at the whole spectrum of groups who refer to themselves as Cherokees.

Of course, the best known body of Cherokees are those Indians who I will call, for lack of a better name, legal Cherokees. They are descendants of the Cherokees who lived in the region of southeastern Tennessee, western North Carolina and northwestern South Carolina at the time of white contact. By 1820 most of them had moved from the old Cherokee area south and west into northern Georgia and northeastern Alabama. Northwestern South Carolina, as well as a great deal of the original Cherokee country in southeastern Tennessee and western North Carolina, had been sold to the United States by 1820. The area of the Cherokee Nation was restricted largely to northern Georgia and northeastern Alabama by 1820. In 1838 most of these Cherokees were removed to the Indian Territory, now Oklahoma. A few families escaped the removal in scattered areas of northern Georgia and northeastern Alabama. A larger group, the majority of whom had been living out of the Cherokee Nation under
American jurisdiction in western North Carolina, were able to negotiate with federal authorities and remain, as a community, in their home territory.

Of this body of legal Cherokees, who have treaties with the federal government, there are now two main groups. One is a group which lives in North Carolina still within the original Cherokee country; on the Qualla Reservation around Cherokee, North Carolina and further west about 50 miles in a small community near Robinsville, North Carolina. These Cherokees at Robinsville do not live on a reservation but on a patchwork of scattered trust lands which are occupied by individual Cherokee families. There are probably, altogether, of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, some 4,000 Indians who are resident on the Qualla Reservation and in the Cherokee settlement near Robinsville. Of this 4,000, 3,000 are predominately of Indian blood; of that 3,000 some 1,500 or more are Cherokee speaking in the home. Language use varies in different parts of the reservation. Some townships are much more conservative and traditional than others. But insofar as the spectrum of Indians in the United States goes, all the North Carolina Cherokees are fairly conservative and traditional Indians.

Besides this group of legal Cherokees in North Carolina there is also a category of people who are descendants of the Cherokee Indians who were left behind after the removal in northern Georgia and northeastern Alabama. These people do not live in a separate Indian community; they are simply members of the general white society who have some Cherokee blood in them.

Recently, members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians have migrated to other areas. Ohio and southeastern Michigan has been
the region to which they have migrated, primarily. There are Cherokees of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, for instance, in the Flint area.

This above population is, by and large, all the Cherokee Indians who have a connection to the legal Cherokee tribe now living in the eastern United States.

The other large body of Indians that are legal Cherokees live in eastern Oklahoma. There are now about 15,000 of what are called full blood Cherokees residing in five counties in eastern Oklahoma in the Ozark region. These 15,000 people are traditional, conservative Cherokee speakers of predominately Indian ancestry. There are some other 10,000 full blood Cherokees who live in Tulsa, Muscogee, Fayetteville, etc.; working just out of the "core" area and who maintain very close contact with "home", perhaps even returning on weekends. Functionally, there is a tribal society of at least 20,000 Cherokees in eastern Oklahoma. There are also besides this 25,000 in Oklahoma, probably another 10,000 full bloods now living in Texas and California. There is a large body of Cherokees in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. In fact, there is a colony just west of Fort Worth near Weatherford, Texas of about 1,200 full blood Cherokees from southern Adair County, Oklahoma. There must be at least 5,000 Cherokees from this group of traditional full blood Cherokees scattered over the state of California.

Besides this body of traditional full blood Cherokees, there are many other people in the general society of Oklahoma who are functionally whites, that is socially, culturally, and linguistically whites, who have a legal claim to being Cherokee. There are many thousands of such people. They, like other white Oklahomans, have also migrated in
recent years to Kansas, Colorado, the Southwest, and California. It would be very hard to estimate the number of such people but I would guess there are a minimum of 60 or 70 thousand in Oklahoma and other western states.

The above migrations are not the first migrations out of the Oklahoma area. There were two other areas to which individual Cherokees migrated in past years. One, some of the Cherokees who sympathized with the Confederacy during the Civil War remained in Texas and never came back to the Cherokee Nation after the war. They, then, pioneered into west Texas and became ranchers. They are now simply white Texans with a special Cherokee heritage.

During the gold rush times there were quite a few Cherokees who went to California. In fact, in the 1850's there was a community of Cherokees called Cherokee Flats near Oroville, California that existed as a distinct Cherokee community until about 1900 and then dispersed. There were also individual Cherokees scattered around through California in the mid-1800's. Most of them either married Whites and their descendants became Whites or else they married local Indians and their descendants are now native California Indians. Among California Indians you find names like Hicks, Ridge, and the like that are old Cherokee names, passed down from some Cherokee wagon train scout or gold miner.

Briefly, those are the two main bodies of legal Cherokees, plus the areas to which these Indians have migrated in recent years.

Now, besides these two groups of legal Cherokees there are quite a few other groups in the South who are referred to by Whites as Cherokees and who think of themselves as Cherokees. More than that, there are some groups in which a significant number of people refer to themselves as Cherokee, but others of the same group may not so
identify; that is to say, there is not unanimous agreement in how all the Indians think of themselves in some communities. In some groups in the South different individual Indians will present themselves as being of different tribes. I want to examine both community types; those where everybody refers to themselves as Cherokees and are thought of by whites as Cherokees, and at those groups where only a significant proportion of the community identifies as Cherokees.

The first such community is a small group of Indians that live north of Charleston, South Carolina and call themselves the Four Hole-Edisto Cherokees. There is a large swamp in that region called Four Hole Swamp where many of these Indians live. Others live along the neighboring Edisto River. They have joined together into one group and call themselves the Four Hole-Edisto Cherokees. In fact, they are, socially, one group. There must be about 1,500 of these Indians. They speak only English and are quite heavily mixed with white and probably a little black blood from early days. In fact, most of the Indian people in the South who refer to themselves as Cherokees, other than the legal Cherokee tribe, are very heavily mixed in background. Sometimes they are mixed with white and sometimes with both white and black. In the case of the Four Hole-Edisto Cherokees, it appears to be mainly with white. In style of life these Indians are very much like any other rural southerner in the area.

The Four Hole and Edisto Indians have a strong notion of being Cherokee. They have a tradition that about the time of the removal of Indians from the east in the 1830's they fled from the Cherokee Nation, down the Santee River in dugout canoes, to Four Hole Swamp. I am sure that they probably did come down the Santee River in
dugouts, but I doubt that they came from the area of the old Cherokee Nation. To come down the Santee River in a dugout from where the Cherokees were living in the 1830's would have been practically impossible unless you wanted to carry a dugout over the Blue Ridge Mountains. I would guess that this tradition aludes to coming down the Santee from the Catawba area, which is a rather hilly, rough area not too far north of their present site. Quite a number of small, unrelated groups had moved into the Catawba country in the middle 1700's and were living with the Catawba. In fact, there was one group of Natchez Indians who fled from Mississippi to the Cherokee area, then to the area of Four Hole Swamp, and then later in the 1700's moved north to the Catawba area. It is very likely that during the time of the removal, some of these Natchez returned to the Four Hole Swamp area to avoid the possibility of being caught up in the removal. I would guess that the Indians on the Edisto are probably an old native tribe which has married very heavily with Indians on the Four Hole Swamp so that both groups have come to think of themselves as the same people and as Cherokees.

There is in northern North Carolina a tribe which is officially called the Haliwa Indians. They live in Halifax and Warren Counties, North Carolina near the town of Roanoke Rapids. They are a fairly large group of about 5,000. Their official name is Haliwa - a contraction created by putting together the names of the counties of Halifax and Warren and creating the term Haliwa. Many of the Indians in this group refer to themselves as Cherokee. They do not accept the term Haliwa and refer to themselves as Cherokee; although the term Haliwa is gaining more acceptance as time goes on. This tribe appears, from the research I have done, to be the
remnants of the North Carolina Tuscaroras. When the Tuscaroras fled north in the early 1700's they left a large body, of so-called neutral Tuscarora, on a reservation just to the east of the modern Haliwa country near Windsor, North Carolina. There were several hundred Indians left on that reservation after the "hostile" Tuscaroras fled north and became part of the Iroquois League in New York. Slowly throughout the 1700's, parties of Indians left that reservation and joined their brethren in New York. In the first decade of the 1800's the few remaining Tuscarora sold their lands at Windsor, North Carolina. It appears they simply moved west a few miles to the present Haliwa area. There were a few other Indians, possibly Tuscarora, already living in that area. In any case, it appears that the Haliwa are remnants of the neutral Tuscarora.

If one continues north into the state of Virginia, there is another group of people who refer to themselves as Cherokees, fairly unanimously. The Indians in Four Hole Swamp and on the Eidsto River in South Carolina uniformly say they are Cherokees. The Haliwa are divided. In Amherst County, Virginia just north of Lynchburg in the foothills of the Blue Ridge, there is a group of 1,500 or so Indians who uniformly refer to themselves as Cherokees and are generally referred to by whites as Cherokees or as "Issues". From the research I have done, they appear to be Indians who migrated west from the east coast of Virginia, east of Richmond, from the several Powhatan Indian communities in that area. Slowly over the space of 20 years or so, about the time of the American Revolution, they formed a fairly cohesive community in the area in which they are today. There are also scattered families of this same stock north of Amherst County on the east side of the Blue Ridge. There is another small community of Indians on the west
side of the Blue Ridge, north and west of Amherst County. All of these Indians identify as Cherokees.

Further north and west of Amherst County, Virginia there is a fairly large group of about 5,000 Indians living in the counties of Taylor and Barbour in northern West Virginia. Some of these people speak of themselves as Delawares and others identify as Cherokees. They are, at least in part, descended from Powhatan Indians from the east coast of Virginia who migrated there, plus others from a group living in Maryland right south of Washington D.C. who refer to themselves as Piscataway Indians. Some of these Indians in Taylor and Barbour Counties have, over the years, moved into southern Ohio until there is a fairly respectable number now living in Vinton County, Ohio.

There are also reputed to be two small groups of Cherokees in Pennsylvania but I have not been able to verify this and I have no information on these two groups. I do not know if, in fact, they are still in existence as distinct communities.

By far the major population of Indians in the South who refer to themselves as Cherokees, or where at least a large number of Indians in the community refer to themselves as Cherokee, have the same historical origin. These are the Indians of Robeson County, North Carolina, many of who identify as Cherokees, but who are officially called Lumbees; scattered individual families in central South Carolina; a fairly cohesive community south of Augusta, Georgia; a small community near Dead Lake in northern Florida; scattered families in Patrick County, Virginia; and many small kin based communities and scattered family groups in Appalachia. All of these families and communities have the same historical origin. In order to show you how these communities tie together, I will have to start with their beginnings.
In my research I find a small group of Saponi Indians in Granville County, North Carolina (now Vance County) who lived in that region between 1743 and sometime in the 1760's. The Saponi originally lived several miles further north on the Roanoke River in Virginia when they were contacted by early Europeans in the late 1600's. Later, because of pressure from whites, they moved west to the Yadkin Valley, near modern Winston-Salem, North Carolina. About 1710 they were migrating east and appear to have gotten caught "in between" the whites and the hostile Tuscarora Indians. The Saponi "sat out" the war in the neutral Tuscarora country near Windsor, North Carolina. Around 1714, Governor Spotswood, the governor of Virginia, settled them along with two kindred tribes, the Tutelo and the Occaneechi, at Fort Christiana, Virginia close to modern Lawrenceville, Virginia. The Saponi absorbed the Occaneechi at about this time. In 1722 the Tutelo moved north to join the Six Nations Confederacy. However, the Saponi remained in the area until around 1728 or 1730 when, due to hostilities with the neutral Tuscarora and Meherin, they retired to the Catawba country in South Carolina.

The Catawba spoke a Siouan language and it is probable that the Saponi were also Siouan speakers. These two tribes may have even been able to understand one another. We do know for certain that there had been contact between the two tribes for a great many years. The Catawbas were always going back and forth between their country and Fort Christiana when the Saponies were living there. Conversely the Saponi were always visiting the Catawbas.

The Saponi did not remain in the Catawba country for long. At least some of them left in the early 1740's. We pick up, in the records, one band in northern Virginia in 1743 who appear to be heading north. A few years later they settled on the Susquehanna River in
Pennsylvania. By the late 1740's they had moved to New York and were adopted by the Iroquois, the League of the Six Nations. This is the last record we have of Saponi in the north. They were probably absorbed by the Cayuga now living near Buffalo or there might be descendants of these Saponi among the Tutelo on the Six Nations Reserve in Ontario, Canada.

One band of Saponi came back to their original country, some 30 people, and settled on the plantation of Colonel William Eaton in Granville County, North Carolina. They lived there from 1743 to sometime in the 1760's, at which time they disappear from history; that is, there are no more records of them as a tribe of Indians. This area of Granville County, North Carolina (now Vance County) was the coastal frontier in the period between the 1740's and 1750's.

It appears that this band of Saponi were not the only Indians in the area. Individual Indian families from broken tribes further east were gravitating into this same area, perhaps to attach themselves to the Saponi or perhaps just to live in an area where there were other Indians. In the 1730's and 40's the Yawpim and Potoskite tribes near the coast in extreme northeastern North Carolina had lost their lands. Individual Indian families were moving to the frontier from this region. Indirect evidence indicates these were families like the Braveboys, Hatchers, Taylors, Jones', Sandersons, and others. The Nansemond and other tribes in southeastern Virginia were being fragmented as well and settling in the Granville and Edgecombe Counties area of North Carolina; families like the Basses, Goings', Powells, Kerseys, and others. So that by the 1750's there appears to have been a fairly extensive number of Indian families other than Saponies in that region. Many of these Indians were involved in the military, in frontier Indian fighting, almost like professional mercenaries for whites.
In the early 1760's Indians, as families, began to move out of the Granville County area. Many went south into the region of Cumberland County, North Carolina around Fayetteville and then into present-day Robeson County. (These were simply the first Indian settlers in Robeson County. They were later joined by Hatteras from the coast and Cheraw from South Carolina. Robeson County became a refuge for "loose" Indians and Indian families from all over that region congregated there over the years.) These Granville County families who went south into Robeson County were the Chavis', Locklears, Gibsons, Collins', Goings', etc. These are families that we are sure came from the area of Granville County, North Carolina. Some of these families may have been composed of a black or white man with an Indian wife, although there is fairly good evidence that Collins is a Saponi family name. The Gibsons moved on further south from Robeson County so that name is no longer found in Robeson County among the Indians there who are officially now called the Lumbees.

All these above families not only settled in Robeson County but also scattered further south and west through central South Carolina. In fact, in central South Carolina some names show up from that original northern center in Granville County which one does not find in Cumberland and Robeson Counties in that period. I presume that they came directly from Granville County into South Carolina. These are families like Taylor, Hicks, Bunch, and Strickland. Many of these northern migrants married into the Cheraw and Pee Dee and almost absorbed these native South Carolina tribes. Later in South Carolina other family names show up - Willis, Ware, Dial - who appear to be Indians of this same "northern" stock. However, we cannot find these family names in the north. These family names may
have originated with blacks, whites, or native Indians who married into these scattered Indian families.

By 1840 most of these families had left South Carolina. A few went to Robeson County, North Carolina. One does find south of Augusta, Georgia near what is called Shafertown, a small community of people called either Creeks or Cherokees. The main family name in this group is Shafer which is a variant of Chavis or Chavers, or Shavers. But most of the Indians who migrated to central South Carolina from North Carolina had moved on by 1840. By Civil War times there appears to have even been a community of these former South Carolina Indians in northern Florida west of Blountstown in Calhoun County, near a large body of water called Dead Lake. The main family name in this community is Strickland.

However, this migration did not stop in Georgia and Florida but continued west and in census records in the 1830's in western Louisiana you begin to see names of Indian families from South Carolina. As far as I can tell, most of these families moved on further west into east Texas. The Bass', Dial, Wares, Willis', etc., particularly, tarried awhile in western Louisiana and then moved on to east Texas. However, while they were in Louisiana they intermarried quite heavily with a group of Indians who were the remnants of small tribes from the Mobile, Alabama area - Chatot, Bayagoula, and others; that is to say, individuals from these South Carolina families married native Indians to form what is known by whites in that area as the "Redbones" of western Louisiana. This is quite a prolific group. I do not know how this group of people refer to themselves. I simply know the local nickname for them. I have heard that some of them identify as Choctaws and some as Spanish, but I cannot verify this. I do know that Indians coming in from South Carolina married into this local group and then
moved on west leaving members of their families there in western Louisiana.

Some of these same South Carolina Indians - Hicks, Strickland, Bunch, etc. - moved northwest into east Tennessee in the 1830's and 1840's. There they joined another stream of Indian pioneers of this same Granville County, North Carolina stock moving south from Newman's Ridge on the Tennessee-Virginia border.

A large body of Indians from Granville County very early started moving straight west. In the 1760's we pick up Collins, Gibson, and Bunch in Orange County, North Carolina which was just immediately to the west of Granville County. These families are listed in the records as Mulattoes. In the Carolinas in the 1700's and 1800's Mulatto meant a person with one white parent and one non-white parent, either Indian or black. Thus, by 1760 Indians of this stock were beginning to push west. If one goes west from Orange County there is a little community of people in Rockingham County, North Carolina made up primarily of two family names, Goings and Harris. Harris is found widely among Indian groups in the Carolinas. So it is probable that this was a group of Indians which dropped off here in the main migration west.

The next "drop-off" we find is just a little further west in Patrick County, Virginia just across the state line and west from Rockingham County, North Carolina. The county seat of Patrick County is Stuart, right at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains. One finds a great many families in Patrick County called Goings. The Goings and Harris families in Rockingham County tend not to identify as Indians, for some reason I am unclear about. However, the Goings's in Patrick County generally identify as Cherokees. It
appears that Indians from Granville County, from 1760 on, were moving in individual family groups west. Some went straight west and by 1790 many were in extreme northwestern North Carolina in the present day counties of Ashe and Alleghany. The family names of Collins and Gibson were particularly common in Ashe and Alleghany Counties in the 1790's. However, some families did not move directly west into the very mountainous northwestern North Carolina counties. Some had "swung" a little bit north, over the Blue Ridge and into the wide valleys of southwestern Virginia; valleys which run from northeast to southwest. They continued their journey west by that route. In the 1790's one finds these family groups in Floyd, Carroll, and Wythe Counties, Virginia. They were living just as far west, however, as the Collins and Gibson families who were further south in northwestern North Carolina.

By 1810 these families were beginning to come together in the present day northern Hancock County, Tennessee and southern Lee County, Virginia on a mountain known as Newman's Ridge, near Sneedville, Tennessee and Blackwater, Virginia. This became the core community of these Granville families in the west by 1810. In this community one finds that Collins, Gibson, Mullins, and Goings are the predominate and most numerous family names; other family names are Minor, Odell, Delph, etc. However, on the way west this stream of migration left behind the Goings and Harris families in Rockingham County, North Carolina and the Goings' in Patrick County, Virginia.

There was another small stream which parted from this general westward migration. When these migrating families came to the region of the New River, which heads in northwestern North Carolina and then flows straight north through southwest Virginia, some migrants went
north down the New River and settled close to the West Virginia border in Giles County, Virginia, near the small town of Pembroke, Virginia. Families in this area are Collins, Cumbee, and Shavers.

This westward movement tended to terminate at Newman's Ridge. Within a generation this core community began to send out migrants north and south. However, a few families came to Newman's Ridge, stayed a few years, and then continued on further west. Families like the Drowns who appear to have come from Lincoln County, North Carolina to Newman's Ridge, continued on west into southeastern Kentucky, particularly into Knox and Bell Counties. The Taylor family is another such family which scattered into McCreary County, Kentucky and Scott County, Tennessee. The Bell family is found all over this same area.

However, the main migration of this group of Indians was not further west after forming this core community on Newman's Ridge, but north or south. The northern migration simply spread north from Newman's Ridge into Lee, Scott, Wise, and Washington Counties, Virginia. There are little pockets of Indians all over this area. Once again, the names of Collins, Goings, Mullins, and Gibson are in the majority. However, there begins to be other family names which show up in this period in southwest Virginia, particularly Nash and Hall. These appear to be families that tarried in the northwestern counties of North Carolina until the 1830's and then moved in and joined the general stream of Indian migration. The original seat of the Nash family appears to be Orange County, North Carolina in the early 1760's. Colonel Nash was a Virginia gentleman who settled in Orange County in the early 1760's. He was heavily involved in Indian affairs and had fought in many frontier military engagements. I would guess that an Indian family either took
his name or else, more probable, he sired an Indian family. Hall, however, shows up as a family name modernly among the Meherrin in northeastern North Carolina and I suspect that is its origin as well. Thomas is another early Meherrin family found in this region.

After working north through these Virginia counties this stock of Indians then moved through the Pound Gap on the Virginia-Kentucky border and into Letcher County, Kentucky. I would estimate that at least half of modern Letcher County is of this stock of Indians. Indian migrants to Letcher County must have had a strong Indian identity. In the pre-Civil War census for Letcher County one finds Indian "given" names like Blackfish Thomas, Tecumseh Collins, and the like. From Letcher county, Kentucky some families moved west into Knott County and a few continued on even as far west as Breathitt County. However, the main stream of migration continued north from Pound Gap, as did the main stream of white migration; down the Big Sandy Valley into Pike County, to Martin County, and on to the region of Ashland, Kentucky.

There is a small group west of that main stream that went north down the Big Sandy River in Magoffin County, near Salyersville, Kentucky. These people appear to be primarily from this original Granville County group, but one begins to find other families in Magoffin County - Freeman, Perkins, Cole and Nichols - who did not originate in Granville County, North Carolina but are from south-eastern Virginia, in Suffolk County; from a small former Indian community called Skeetertown. This is now a community of small farmer blacks with some Indian background. I would guess that the Indians began to move out of Skeetertown in the 1830's and 1840's as it began to grow progressively more black and that they then joined this stream of migrating Indians going north into eastern Kentucky.
Other Indians continued on north from the Ashland area and scattered into southern Ohio. In fact, some of these migrants finally ended up in the last part of the last century in Vinton County, Ohio where they met Indian migrants coming from West Virginia. There are quite a few families in the Vinton County region who are an amalgam of migrants originating from Newman's Ridge and the migration stream west from northern West Virginia.

The second migration stream of these Indians from Newman's Ridge was south along the eastern edge of the Cumberland Escarpment. These Indians were very poor people; they had little money, and probably were not able to purchase land in productive areas. In most places they were simply squatters in hollows. The general east Tennessee region is an area of productive valley land. However, the Cumberland Escarpment is extremely rough country. There are hollows along the eastern edge of that Escarpment where one could "squat" without fear of being dispossessed. Indians from Newman's Ridge, thus, began to move south. They are scattered all along the eastern edge of the Escarpment in Tennessee. I suppose that the largest concentration would be in Anderson County and Roane County. I know that there are small clusters of Indian families around Petros, Coalfield, Harriman, Oakdale, and Rockwood. Continuing south, Rhea County has a great many of these Indians. There is one small settlement in southern Rhea County, Graysville, which is primarily composed of Goings'.

At Chattanooga the stream of migration south begins to turn west and "peter out". For one thing, this area was occupied until 1838 by what I have called earlier, the legal Cherokees. One finds many members of this stock of Indians just west of Chattanooga in Marion County near Jasper. However, by this time one finds other family
names here besides Gibson, Collins, Goings, etc. Near Chattanooga one finds Bunch, Hicks, and Strickland. Indians were moving from South Carolina in this period and joining the Newman's Ridge stream of migration here at Chattanooga. From Marion County a few of these families moved south over the Alabama-Tennessee line into Jackson County, Alabama. Most of them, however, continued northwest on the old pioneer trail which is now Interstate 24 and which runs from Chattanooga to Nashville. Some settled near modern Monteagle, Tennessee which is north and west of Chattanooga, towards Nashville.

There are a few other Indian families in east Tennessee who migrated independently of the main migration from Granville County and who appear never to have lived on Newman's Ridge. Two such families are the Andersons and Thompsons who live in Blount County, Tennessee, south of Knoxville, almost in the Smoky Mountains. As you can see from the attached map, this area is completely separate from the main migration south from Newman's Ridge.

From this point on, the migration begins to be a little vague to me. I know there are some Indians of this stock north and west of Nashville in Cheatham County, I also know that there are Indians in Stewart County, quite a distance north and west of Nashville near a place called Indian Mounds. I think that is probably the extent of Indian communities in that region. However, a great many families continued further west and scattered all over western Kentucky and Tennessee and in Arkansas and Missouri. Individuals of this stock wandered all around and married into communities all over this section of the South. It is very common in Arkansas and Missouri to find families who have a tradition of Indian ancestry. If one looks closely, one will usually find their Indian forebears were from Granville County, North Carolina by way of Kentucky or Tennessee. There is only one
place I know of west of the Mississippi where these Indians formed any kind of community. That was in southwestern Missouri in Stone County. I think, however, they were victims of racial persecution after the First World War and that the community dispersed into other parts of Missouri, Arkansas, and Oklahoma.

There is a third and early small migration of Indians into the Appalachian area. It came into the region of Asheville, then went north along the French Broad River into east Tennessee. It appears to have "petered out" at this point. I am not clear as to the source of this stream. There are some indications that it came from a settlement of largely Hatteras Indians on the Neuse River near New Bern, North Carolina, on the coast. It may have originated in Granville County, or in both communities. There is evidence that there was intermarriage and movement between the Indian settlement in Granville County and the one on the Neuse. This is not an important stream in the history of Appalachia and we will have to wait for further investigation to be sure of its source.

Some Indians from Robeson County, North Carolina did migrate to the Cumberland Mountains of Tennessee after 1800. We can find them listed in the census in Campbell County, Tennessee, Dials, Lockeards, and Oxendines. But they soon moved on west or else returned to Robeson County. I suspect that the Taylors who now live in northern Scott County near the Kentucky line came from Robeson originally.

One other scholar besides myself has examined the Indians in Appalachia; his name is Price, a geographer trained at the University of California. He did his doctor's thesis on what he called "mixed blood" communities in the South, among them the Indians in Appalachia.
He concludes that most of these communities, including the ones in Appalachia, are simply collections of old free black families who have absorbed a lot of white blood, over the years, as well as an incidental and small amount of Indian blood. He thinks that their claim to being Indian is fraudulent and simply a way to raise their social rank. I was never able to ascertain from Price's data exactly why he thinks this is the case. I find the idea preposterous. Why any free black would want to pass for Indian in the 1800's in the South is quite beyond me. That would be like "jumping out of the frying pan into the fire." Further, the historical records tells another tale.

It is true that there were many whites and a few blacks married into Granville County Indian families in the 1750's. However, if possession of some black ancestry makes one a black then many whites in the modern coastal South, especially the aristocracy, are really blacks. It is true that some of the Lumbees show some black ancestry, dating from this early period; but I see little evidence of black ancestry among Appalachian Indians. Most of the Indian families in Granville County with black "blood" appear to have moved south to Robeson County; Chavis', Locklears, and a few others. Appalachian Indian families carry little or no, black ancestry in their families. Visually, the Indians in Appalachia look much more Indian than do the Lumbees. Indian features predominate in Appalachian Indian families. Rarely, does one see a "nappy" haired Indian in Appalachia. Price's hypothesis is simply beyond the realm of possibility or probability.

By the time of the Civil War, I think that most of the areas I have listed had been settled. I would guess that some 40 thousand
people in Appalachia are descendants of this westward stream of
Granville County Indians. That seems like a tremendous number of
people and it is, indeed. However, the Lumbee Indians have more
than doubled their population every 20 years, from 1790 on. In
1790 there were hardly 300 Indians in Robeson County. Presently
there must be 30,000 Indians in Robeson County and another 30,000
Lumbees in other parts of the United States who have migrated out
of Robeson County since World War II. This is not an unusual
situation. It is a population explosion, but a population explosion
that is fairly normal for the southern United States. Most Americans
in the South and West descend from some 200,000 or 300,000 immigrants
from northern Ireland who entered the United States before the
Revolutionary War. The population explosion of the Lumbees and the
Appalachian Indians is probably very little more than the population
explosion of pre-revolutionary stock Americans generally.

Now how did these Indians settle all over this area in such a
short time? Think, for example, that you are living on Newman's Ridge
in 1810 and you have 12 children. This means that after awhile, every
four or five years, two or three grown children are probably going to
be leaving home and going north or south. So that by the time your
youngest child is ready to leave home, your oldest child is living
in another area and has children or even grandchildren. It was
possible not only to have a very quick population explosion but a
very rapid migration spread, as well, in those times.

It appears that when these people from Granville County first
came into Appalachia, they were known to whites as Melungeons. In
fact, some whites in southwest Virginia and east Tennessee still refer
to these people as Melungeons. I would guess that this term was used by these Indians when whites asked their nationality. There is some evidence that this term was applied to the early Indians in Robeson County, as well. It appears to have been a term that originated around New Bern, North Carolina. It was coined by the French speaking settlers of that section. It connotes a population that is mixed, coming from the French word melange, "to mix"; thus, Melungeons. Melungeons are said, in east Tennessee, to be a mixture of Indian and Portuguese.

I imagine that very few people on the frontier in those days wanted to be known as Indian; particularly not Cherokee. Newman's ridge is in an area in which the Indians, whom I call the "legal Cherokees", were periodically raiding and burning, up until 1795. I do not imagine that Indians on Newman's Ridge in 1810 were telling whites who had had relatives killed by Cherokees some years earlier that they were Cherokee Indians. However, all of this is speculative, except I do know Melungeon is a term applied to these people by older whites in this region. I would guess that these Indians brought this term with them from eastern North Carolina and communicated it to local whites, and were not in any rush to be considered Indians.

I think that the term Cherokee got fixed on a lot of Indian groups in the South after 1850. Whites began to refer to nearly all Indian groups as Cherokee, after 1850 in the South. After several generations of communicating this term to Indians it tended to stick; so that by 1900 most Indians in the South who did not have some legal relationship with officialdom, like the Paumankey and Mattaponi in eastern Virginia, which firmly fixed an old legal label in their
minds, simply became Cherokees. Cherokee really came to mean southern Indian or "civilized" Indian.

Most of these small Indian communities and scattered families in Appalachia were very much like their white neighbors from their early beginnings. Indians in Granville County in 1750 were a tribally mixed group of Indians to begin with. There was also in that generation, around 1750, extensive out marriage, with whites particularly. By 1780 there were no Indian languages spoken by these family groups moving west through the Appalachians. By 1840 they were culturally and linguistically like their white neighbors in all outward respects.

They came into Appalachia just behind the first settlement. Southwest Virginia was first settled in the late 1780's and Indians from Granville County began to "bunch up" on Newman's Ridge in 1810. They were about 20 years behind the true frontier. This appears to have been an unconscious "policy" all through their migrations; to be about 20 years behind the main tide of settlement. This "policy" put them in an economically disadvantaged position since they came into already settled areas and had to take up marginal land even if they had money to buy land. Most of their descendants have clustered in small pockets of two or three families in the Appalachian area, particularly the Cumberland area. In some areas family groups were scattered but knew and associated with one another. However, there were many families and individuals who very early assimilated into the general population.

Up until 1900 most of these small Indian communities in Appalachia were very cohesive. However, after the First World War their cohesion began to break up; for what reason I cannot say. Some communities began to have a lot of intermarriage with outsiders; that is, no longer
did a Collinc marry a Gibson or a Goings, but tended to marry a local white. This varied considerably in different parts of the Cumberland Mountain region.

The breakdown of cohesion increased after World War II in some places. I presume that highways and industrialization began to "open up" the Cumberland region. There are few Indian communities in Appalachia that are still cohesive and yet identify as Indians; what proportion I am not able to say. I do know that in Letcher County, Kentucky, where the majority of people are of this stock, they refer to themselves as having Indian blood or as part Indian; with the implication that they are whites, just like anyone else in the general population. In one area in Virginia which I visited, there had not been extensive out marriage, but people had simply begun to think of themselves differently. In several interviews, respondents would say that all four of their grandparents were Indian, but they would add that "there were Indians around here in our grandparents' generation"; or they would say, "Our grandparents were Indian." They thought of themselves as whites, whites with some Indian blood, usually Cherokee. In a few communities I visited the older people thought of themselves as Indian, but the younger people thought of themselves as not "really" Indians or as part Indians. They would say things like, "Well, you won't find any real Indians around here", or "There hasn't been a full blood around here in a hundred years." I ran into one community in Knott County, Kentucky in which everyone consistently identified as Indians. Several older people there told me they were full blood Cherokees and that both their parents and all their grandparents were full blood. I can think of
one such old gentleman by the name of Gibson in Knott County, Kentucky who was, about three years ago, some 70 years old. He reported this to me. The condition of these communities, in terms of cohesion and identification, varies considerably. How much out marriage has recently occurred varies, as well.

The racial situation relative to whites differs considerably, too. In some places, as in Letcher County, Kentucky, these families are thought of by whites as whites who are part Indian. In Roane County, Tennessee it is my experience that most whites, as does Dr. Price, think the Indians in that county are really light complexioned blacks who are trying to escape the disability of being black by claiming to be Indians. I don't know how common that attitude is, but there is tremendous variation from county to county as to race relations and as to social acceptance.

It would be my guess that 90 per cent of the people in southeastern Michigan who identify themselves as Cherokee are from the communities that I have been outlining. Since the Second World War there has been a lot of migration from this region of eastern Kentucky and southwestern Virginia into the Detroit area. Along with that general migration came a great many people from these Indian, or former Indian, communities. Some of them no doubt come from communities that are fairly cohesive and which identify as Indian. Others come from communities that assimilated into the general population several generations ago, even though they might be of considerable Indian background. Other individuals are the result of two or three generations of mixed marriage, after the local Indian community dissolved. Some simply have an Indian grandparent
who wandered into a white community, married, and settled down there. There is tremendous social variation in the areas of origin of Michigan people who identify as Cherokees.

That these transplanted Indian communities in Appalachia have held onto their Indian identity with no separate land base and with no distinctive cultural symbols is something of a social miracle; that so many have assimilated into the general society under such adverse (for survival) conditions is no surprise, but that so many still proclaim themselves to be Indians is astounding. Their history is one of America's little known adventures and a great saga of a fascinating people.
APPENDIX I

I. Areas and Family Names of Possible Cherokee Identification.

A. Cherokees of Dead Lake, Florida
   1. Calhoun County
   2. Family names:
      Strickland
      (Other names not known)

B. Cherokees of Shafertown, Georgia
   1. Richmond County, south of Augusta
   2. Family names:
      Shafer (Chavis, Chavers, Shaver)
      Clark
      Woods
      Deal

C. Cherokees of Central South Carolina (scattered families)
   1. Counties:
      Orangeburg
      Bamberg
      Richmond
      Charendon
      Williamsburg
   2. Family names:
      Chavis
      Oxendine
      Scott
      Bunch
      Driggers
      Gibson
      Boone
      Goings or Goin
      Swett
      Jacobs

D. Pee dee in South Carolina
   1. Marion County, near Pee dee
   2. Family names:
      Taylor
      Goings
      Gibson

E. Cheraw in South Carolina
   1. Marlboro County, near Cheraw
   2. Family names:
      Chavis
      Quick
      Silver
      Brigham
F. Lumbee in South Carolina
1. Dillon County, near Latta
2. Family names:
   Braveboy
   (See Lumbee names in North Carolina)

G. Cheraw in North Carolina
1. Richmond County, near Hamlet
2. Family names:
   Chavis
   Jacobs

H. Lumbee in North Carolina
1. Robeson County, center at Pembroke
2. Family names:
   Locklear
   Revels
   Maynor
   Taylor
   Warricks
   Collins
   Viccars
   Scott
   Lucas
   Strickland
   Wright
   Thomas
   Deas
   Coleman
   Goins
   Williams
   Lowry
   Dial
   Braveboy
   Wilkins
   Carter
   Brown
   Swett
   Sampson
   Wood
   White
   Hammonds
   Jacobs
   Jones
   Ransom
   Williamson
   Oxendine
   Brooks
   Cuming
   Powell
   Harris
   Bass
   Lasie
   McMillan
   Willis
   Woods
   Cooper
   Sanderson
   Reid
   Bennett
   Bell

I. Indians of Cape Fear
1. Cumberland County, near Fayetteville, North Carolina
2. Family names
   Gibb or Gibbs
   (Others not known)

J. Haliwa in North Carolina
1. Halifax and Warren Counties, center is at Hollister
2. Family names:
   Richardson
   Mills
   Copeland
   Harris
   Wilson
   Lynch
   Silver
   McGee
   Green
   Dale
   Evans
   Carter
   Daniel
   Francis
   Hedgpeth

K. Meherrin in North Carolina
1. Hertford County, near Ahoskie
2. Family names:
   Brown
   Chavis
   Lewis
   Thomas
   Flood
   Hall
   Melton

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L. Nansemond in Virginia
   1. Chesapeake County, near Bowers Hill
   2. Family names:
      - Bass
      - Weaver

M. Potomac Band of Powhatan in Virginia
   1. Stafford County, northwest of Fredericksburg
   2. Family names:
      - Newton
      - Green

N. Cherokees of the Virginia Blue Ridge Region
   1. Counties:
      Amherst, near Sweet Briar College
      Nelson (scattered families)
      Albemarle (scattered families)
      Greene (scattered families)
      Madison (scattered families)
      Rappahannock (scattered families)
      Loudon (scattered families)
      Rockbridge, on Irish Creek
   2. Family Names:
      - Adcox
      - Branham
      - Johns
      - Hicks
      - Redcross
      - Willis

O. Indians of northern West Virginia
   1. Taylor and Barbour Counties (colony located in Vinton County, Ohio)
   2. Family names:
      - Adams
      - Collins
      - Croston
      - Dalton
      - Dorton
      - Kennedy
      - Male or Mayle
      - Miner or Minear
      - Newman
      - Norris
      - Pritchard
      - Proctor?

P. Indians of Person County, North Carolina
   1. Person County, near Virginia line
   2. Family names:
      - Epps
      - Martin
      - Coleman
      - Stewart
      - Shepherd
      - Tally

Q. Indians in western Louisiana and east Texas who are descended of migrants from central South Carolina
   1. Locations:
      - Rapides Parish, Louisiana, near Glenmora
5. Cumberland County, Kentucky
   (Family names not known)
6. Migration southwest out of Newman's Ridge
   a. Anderson and Roane Counties in Tennessee
      Collins
      Goings
      Gibson
      Mullins
      Carter
      Dougherty
      Other Newman's Ridge family names
   b. Rhea County at Graysville
      Goings
   c. Marion County, near Jasper
      White
      Hicks
      Strickland
   d. Jackson County, Alabama
      (Family names not known)
   e. Cheatham County, Tennessee
      (Family names not known)
   f. Stewart County, near Indian Mound
      (Family names not known)
7. Indians east of Tennessee River, unconnected to the Newman's Ridge migration
   a. Blount County, Tennessee, south of Knoxville
      Anderson
      Thompson
   b. Polk County, Tennessee
      Hicks
      Chandler
8. Migration north of Newman's Ridge and vicinity
   a. Letcher County, Kentucky
      Nash
      Hall
      (Other names same as Newman's Ridge)
   b. Knott County, Kentucky
      (Family names same as above)
   c. Breathitt County, Kentucky
      (Family names not known)
   d. Pike County, Kentucky
      (Family names same as Newman's Ridge)
   e. Magoffin and Floyd Counties, Kentucky
      Cole
      Nichols
      Gibson
      Perkins
      Freeman
   f. Martin County, Kentucky
      (Family names unknown but probably same as Newman's Ridge)
   g. Lawrence County, Kentucky
      (Same as above)
   h. Carter County, Kentucky
      (Same as above)
i. Boyd County, near Ashland, Kentucky
   Cooper
   (Other names not known)

j. Bath County, Kentucky near Olympia and Salt Lick
   (Family names not known)

k. Rowan County, near Morehead, Kentucky
   (Same as above)

l. Pike County, Ohio near Cynthiana
   Gibson
   Nichols
   Perkins

m. Vinton County, Ohio
   Goings
   (Others unknown but probably same as Newman's Ridge)

n. Rest of southern Ohio is unknown but probably same
   as those on Newman's Ridge

S. Part Cherokees in old Cherokee Nation area

1. In north Georgia
   Towns County
   Union County
   Fanin County
   Gilmer County
   Lumpkin County
   Pickens County
   Cherokee County
   Gordon County

2. In northeastern Alabama
   DeKalb County
   Cherokee County

3. Family names unknown
APPENDIX II

Many distinguished Americans have been or are Appalachian Indians, or are descendants of Appalachian Indians. A few are listed below.

Major William Anderson
Second in command of Quantrell's Raiders during the Civil War

Captain Anderson Hatfield
Leader of the Hatfield family of Hatfield - McCoy feud fame

Sam Bass
Legendary Texas outlaw

Harry S. Truman
33rd President of the United States

John S. Cooper
Senator from Kentucky

Cordell Hull
Secretary of State under Franklin Roosevelt

Jack Dempsey
World's champion heavyweight boxer

Loretta Lynn
Musical entertainer

Waylon Jennings
Musical entertainer

Johnny Cash
Musical entertainer

Dolly Parton
Musical entertainer

Jonathan Winters
Comedian

Burt Reynolds
Actor

Forrest Carter
Writer
KEY TO MAP

A. Mattaponi - Powhatan Confederacy
B. Paumunky - Powhatan Confederacy
C. Chickahominy - Powhatan Confederacy
D. Amherst County Cherokees
E. Nottaway
F. Nansemond
G. Chowan
H. Meherrin
I. Yawpim and Potoskite (off of map to the east)
J. Tuscarora
K. Haliwa
L. Hatteras (off of map to the east)
M. Coharie Siouans
N. Pee dee
O. Four Hole Cherokees
P. Edisto Cherokees
Q. Cheraw
R. Catawba
S. Cherokee reserves
T. Person County Indians
U. Barbour and Taylor County Indians (off of map to the north)
V. Saponi and refugee Indians center
W. Waccamaw
X. Columbus County Indians
Y. Lumbees
Z. Newman's Ridge
Indian Tribes and migrations 1750-1835