

# UP FROM DUST AND DARKNESS

—By Lew Barton—

## CHAPTER I (Continued)

The Native American, as innumerable I. Q. Tests and other intelligence-measuring devices prove, was inferior in intelligence to no other ethnic group on earth. That he had not had the opportunity to exchange ideas with these other groups at the coming of Columbus, however, is obvious. Naturally, however, when two very different civilizations met for the first time, each considered the other "strange" and unlike them. The main difference between the civilization of the Old World and that of the New was this: While the European civilization had come into contact with and borrowed freely from all the known civilizations of the world, the original American civilization(?) had been isolated from the rest of the world for untold centuries, and shut-in upon itself as it were. Native Americans because of this were compelled to invent and develop their own ways and means of doing everything. But it was just as "dumb" for Europeans to view Native Americans as "dumb" as it was the other way around. The key phrase in considering accomplishments and knowledge of the Indians at the coming of Columbus is "with out benefit of external example," as Prof. Morrison, senior historian of Oxford University, puts it.

A book entitled, **The Indians Knew**, by Tillie S. Pine with pictures for children drawn by Ezra Jack Keats was published by McGraw-Hill Book Co. of NY, Toronto, London and Sydney in 1957. It lists some of the things Indians, without benefit of external example, knew at the approach of Columbus. It did not nor could it mention everything learned by the Indian on his own, of course, but did list many useful skills developed by him, reminding us that the Original American is worthy of our highest admiration for his ingenuity and inventiveness.

For example, the Indians could send messages over mountains long before the telegraph or telephone were invented. They understood the need to fertilize plants so they would grow and produce more. They developed techniques for preventing the spoilage of foods. They harnessed fire and needed no matches to start them at will. They knew how to drill holes, make paints and dyes and make use of the moon as a calendar. They understood how to do many, many other things that people still do today.

Indian swimmers had a good time jumping off the ends of springboards into the water. They knew how to use the same principle for bows and arrows.

Here in North Carolina, the bow and arrow was a deadly weapon. The Indians had only to break the skin of man or beast with an arrow to inflict instant death. This was done by taking the liver of a deer; finding rattlesnakes and angering them until they bit the liver repeatedly. Then the liver was hung up in the sun and dried out until it could be crumbled into a very fine powder. All the Indian warrior or hunter had to do was dip the point of his arrow or spear into this powder and he was immediately armed to the death or to the kill. It was a military secret and a hunting secret that has continued to baffle non-Indians to this day.

But at the proper range, the venom-tipped arrow was just as deadly as the white man's "thunderstick," as the Indians dubbed guns. (Gunpowder was developed before the advent of Columbus but the Indians did not possess the secret.) I learned the secret of the venom-tipped arrowhead and spearhead right here in Robeson County from other Indians who still remembered how it used to be done. There was actually a time when non-Indians viewed these mysterious arrow-tips and spear-tips as some sort of Indian "black magic." Yes, the Indians knew a thing or two. And even today, he can be more close-lipped than anybody when he feels the need to be for the benefit of his own people. Consider the closely-kept secret of the hiding place of Henry Berry Lowry's body, for example. It is inconceivable that the body of a human being as symbolic as that of the Lumbee Indian guerrilla warrior of Reconstruction days could be disposed of without somebody knowing how, when and where it was done. The reason behind this secrecy, perhaps, is that the production of Henry Berry Lowry's body might still bring the huge reward on his head which no one ever succeeded in collecting. It is very doubtful that anyone ever will.

In fashioning their teepees, Indians, knowing that smoke rises, allowed an opening in the center for the escape of smoke when they were cooking inside.

The Indians were skilled at so shaping bark or animal skins that it could glide easily over the water, transporting them wherever they wished to go. Their birchbark canoes were fully streamlined, a design that all vehicles traveling through waterways or on highways still use today. And the same is true of aircraft design.

The Indians designed "tail fans" for their arrows, knowing that this would keep them straight on their course. The same principle is used in aircraft today.

The Indians understood that they could transport things more easily by drawing objects after them, rather than carrying them, and invented the "drag" a small wheel-less cart that is still used by tobacco farmers of North Carolina to this day. This method of hauling is also used by other farmers. Once drawn by an ox, a horse or a mule, tobacco drags today are more often drawn by tractors.

Wheels for ox carts were once made by Carolina Indians by sawing off an end of a large, circular log and drilling a hole in the center of it. Axles, too, were made of wood at times.

Indians were experts at drying certain vegetables and fruits to keep them from spoiling, after which they were placed in a cool area. Grapes dried out this way, become raisins. And prunes are nothing more than dried-out plums. Both were once very plentiful in the Indian area in Robeson County and other areas of the state. Some of the best pork sausage, and the most expensive one can acquire today, is hung in the smoke houses of the Indians to dehydrate to this day.

Indians were good at making paints and dyes, using the juices of certain berries and

vegetables to paint ornaments and animal hides. In modern times, vegetable coloring is still used by the population at large to paint children's toys, for example. The coloring is made more or less permanent by an additive.

Boy Scouts of today, in their programs of self-sufficiency, use many of the methods of the Indians on camping trips, etc. Often, for example, they use the Indian drill to start fires during an outing. Some Boy Scout groups call their club by the name of some Indian tribe.

Fertilizer, made of animal waste, is a well known and necessary item in every farmer's plans. The Indians discovered that plants grew better if and when they buried dead fish near the roots. Today no one would attempt to grow even a few flowers without fertilizing them.

These are just a few of the everyday kind of things we all do, that were also practiced by the Indians - or exclusively practiced by them.

Indians tamed over 200 plants for domestic use. North Carolina Indians, for example, gave tobacco which they called **appowoc** to the Europeans. They also gave corn (**pagatour**) to the world. All corn is a contribution of the American Indian, not just some inferior strain which is referred to in textbooks of American history as "maize or Indian corn." Irish potatoes are not Irish potatoes at all but Indian potatoes. They came to be called Irish potatoes only because they grew well in Ireland when they were carried there from America. The list goes on and on.

The American Indian has given much to the world. Even the 16,000,000 square miles that make up North, South and Central America may be correctly thought of as "an Indian contribution." Why, then, are we still thought of as "foreigners," "aliens" and "strangers" in our native land?

— To be continued —

# Ground Breaking Ceremonies Held at Pembroke's Odum Home



Dr. English E. Jones

PEMBROKE, N.C.— When the 17th Annual Area Conference of the Baptist Children's Homes was held at Odum Home on September 30, between 350 and 400 friends gathered to participate in groundbreaking ceremonies for three buildings.

A family style cottage is being provided by the Burnt Swamp Baptist Association. This Association began the Odum Home in 1942, asked that it become a part of the Baptist Children's Homes in 1958, and has continued as supportive friends of this child care ministry. The cottage will be "a memorial to the Indians who have invested so much of themselves in this work across the years," stated chairman Dr. English E. Jones, Chancellor of Pembroke State University just across the street.

In leading the groundbreaking ceremonies, Dr. Jones made reference to the plans of the Indians to build this cottage for the most part with their own skills: "we have the engineers who can lay off the site...we have the best ditch diggers to be found anywhere...we can pour those footings...we can fill the foundation to the architect's specifications...we can pour and finish the cement because we have the best cement finishers...we can lay the bricks, cut the timbers..."

The Burnt Swamp people did just this kind of thing on their very lovely and adequate Baptist Building next door.

Dr. Jones said in fun, "I took every Friday off to work on the Baptist Building. When I came across the University campus with my nail apron on and wearing my conk shell hat, I never had a professor or student to speak to me! They didn't know me!"

A recreation building is being provided by Hickory area friends led by Mr. and Mrs. Harold Deal and Mr. and Mrs. John Newton, longtime friends of Odum Home.

The third groundbreaking took place on the site for the director's residence. A group of churches in Sampson County and John Flake and other friends in Sampson county are securing funds for this project. A very generous friend in Dunn is supplying building materials, according to Dr. W.R. Wagoner, president of the BCH and W. Isaac Terrell, development director.

Other cottages are planned for Odum Home and friends are at work to secure funding. Harnett County friends, for example, chaired by Dunn Mayor Abe Elmore, have secured nearly \$90,000 toward their goal of \$100,000.

The total development proposed for this southeastern campus approaches \$800,000 as reported during the ceremonies by Trustee Chairman, Dr. Raymond Stone, president of Sandhills Community College. "What does \$800,000 mean," Dr. Stone quizzed? "It means 800,000 opportunities for boys and girls to learn, to dream, to be somebody!"

# CETA Classroom Training Begins

The classroom training program of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) sponsored by Lumbee Regional Development Association, Inc. (LRDA) has begun its 1976-77 fiscal year of operation.

The program is currently working with eighty-five participants from within the four county areas—Bladen, Scotland, Hoke and Robeson. Participants are being trained in various areas such as accounting, general office technology, police science, business administration, practical nursing, medical secretary, medical laboratory technology, secretarial science, carpentry, electrical installation, horticulture, childhood development, cosmetology, automotive mechanics, welding, heavy equipment, criminal justice computer programming, electronics, radio and TV. electronic servicing, industrial maintenance, R. N. Therapy.

The program is working with Robeson Technical Institute, Bladen Technical Institute, Fayetteville Technical Institute, Richmond Technical Institute, Stanley Technical Institute, King's College, Wilson Technical Institute, South Eastern Community College and Sandhills Community College.

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## OFFICERS HONORED



At a workshop and luncheon meeting held at the Hungry Bull Restaurant on Sept. 15, the Robeson County Guidance Counselors Association honored two officers for their work during the past year. Mrs. Patti L. Brayboy [center] guidance counselor at Pembroke Senior High and president of the Southeast N. C. Association of Guidance Counselors, presented certificates to Ms. Aggie Deese, left, guidance counselor at Prospect who served as secretary treasurer the past year, and Clarence F. Locklear, guidance counselor at Pembroke Senior High who served as president.

capacities will be in PSU's Sampson Hall Administration Building.

is recognized in 80 countries which have Jaycee organizations.

Oxendine, 34, a graduate of Pembroke Senior High School, earned his B. A. degree in physical education at PSU in '64 and his M. S. in Administration this year from Appalachian State University.

Two years ago Oxendine was one of three candidates for the presidency of state Jaycees. He was nominated by the Jaycees as one of the five outstanding young men in North Carolina this year, receiving recognition for this at the state meeting in Raleigh.

Extremely active in Jaycee work, he was named this year as a Jaycee International Senator, which is the highest honor awarded in the Jaycees' organization. It carries a lifetime membership. The award

Oxendine is married to the former Connie Locklear of Pembroke. They have two sons: Kendall, 9, and Kelvin, 8.

## Oxendine becomes new PSU placement officer

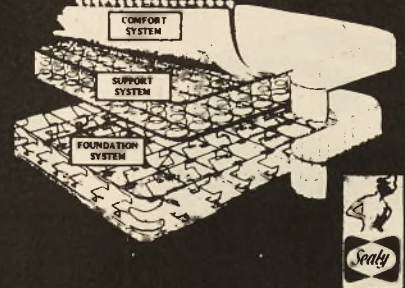
Walter Oxendine, who has served as development officer at Pembroke State University since February, 1974, has been given the additional duties of placement officer, it was announced by Chancellor English E. Jones.

In his new duties he will be responsible for helping to place PSU graduates in positions of employment and contacting industry about PSU students who meet their needs.

"I see this as tying in with my duties as development officer," said Oxendine. "In development I contact industries and business firms about providing financial assistance to PSU. In my new responsibilities I can serve these same industries and business firms in filling their manpower needs."

Oxendine's offices in both

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