

# UP FROM DUST AND DARKNESS

-By Lew Barton-

## CHAPTER 2

### NORTH CAROLINA INDIANS (CONT.)

How do North Carolina Indians compare with other Indians all across the nation?

The population of the American Indians at the arrival of Columbus, as I have already stated elsewhere, was an estimated 850,000 in what is now the continental United States. That is, the U.S. exclusive of her extra-continental possessions, such as the state of Hawaii. But Native Alaskans are American Indians, too. Today the American Indians and Alaska natives are estimated at better than 800,000. Because of this plus today's high birth rate among American Indians, writers have long been proclaiming to the world that the American Indian "is no longer a vanishing race," seemingly out of a sense of alarm. Such writers seemingly still espouse the prejudicial old belief that "the only good Indian is a dead one." But while it is a fact that the population growth is higher now for American Indians and Alaska natives than that for the general population at large, the population growth of other ethnic groups has not only held its own, but doubled, tripled and even quadrupled since the advent of Columbus. And the infant mortality rate for American Indians is higher than for anyone else, and that is true of American Indians right here in Robeson County, North Carolina, according to county health statistics for the three races. As to the life span of the three races of Robeson, according to the same health statistics, it is highest for white people, lowest for Black people and the Indians fall somewhere in between. As among other groups of American Indians throughout the Indian world, Robeson's infant mortality rate among Indians is much higher than for the population at large.

About one-half of the nation's American Indians live on Government reservations. The other half living in urban and rural areas. Practically all Indian reservations are located in the Western part of the nation and impoverished villages of largely barren Alaska. While the Lumbee Indians became citizens of the United States following the conclusion of the Revolutionary War, a conflict in which they fought side by side with other Americans, and remained so until they were deprived of their citizenship in 1835, as did also the Cherokees of western North Carolina, most other American Indians were not made citizens of the United States until 1925, and even then it took an Act of Congress. Even then, Indian voting rights were not recognized by all states until judicial action on their behalf was taken in 1948. In individual cases, however, citizenship rights for various Indian groups, including the Lumbee, date back to colonial times.

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Although Indians on reservations are understandably not required to pay real estate taxes, they are required to pay all other taxes just as anyone else.

The average income of American Indians, considered as a group, falls to the lowest point of any ethnic group in the United States. It is roughly one-half of that of the poverty level of the nation as a whole.

Indians living in remote reservation areas are virtually inaccessible because of a lack of good roads. Productivity of their arid lands is understandably minimal. The diversion of water from their lands to new communities for non-Indians has been called the most critical of all reservation problems.

The unemployment rate, high now for the entire country, is and has always been even higher for Indians. Because of the remoteness of their reservations, at least a good one-half of all adult Indian males are unemployed.

It is estimated that about four-fifths of all Indian housing is sub-standard.

In the light of all this, and other adverse conditions not even touched, is it any wonder that American Indians have the highest suicide rate in the U.S.? The suicide rate among American Indians is twice that of the national average.

Indian lands have disappeared just as the wildlife which once sustained the Indian. Indians today own less than 3% of the land they occupied at the coming of the white man. In fact, less than one-third of the land originally placed in the trusteeship of the U.S. Government "in order that no one could take it from the Indians" still remains today. Not even the United States Government could or would prevent people from acquiring Indian lands by hook or crook. And this refers to lands reserved for Indians through valid U.S.-Indian treaties! It takes a full-time judicial body, the U.S. Indian Claims Commission, to look after the valid, legal land rights of the American Indians and it is doubtful if they will ever catch up with their legal work, there is such a backlog of it piled up!

Yes, the Indians of Robeson and adjacent counties are better off without the Bureau of Indian Affairs as custodians of their lands! We still occupy the original lands occupied by us when the first permanent white settlements were made in the area now comprised in Robeson and adjoining counties of North Carolina. And that is saying a lot more than can be truthfully said of most, if not all other groups of American Indians!

We have stuck right here on our ancestral lands, come Hades or high water; although throughout a major portion of our history in this location, we have had much of both. We have been right here in this self-same location since 1650, if the reckoning of local

# The Life and Times of Henry Berry Lowry



by G. L. Barton

Many local men, during Henry Berry Lowry's Reign of Justice (1864-1872), who seemingly had everything going for them, could not fight off the temptation to track down the notorious Lowry Gang. The prospect of being the man to murder Henry Berry Lowry and the Lowry Gang was financially rewarding as well as gaining a great deal of prestige. And everyone, be it conscious or unconscious, possesses a secret desire to become famous in one's own lifetime. One such man was Captain Owen Clinton Norment.

The Norment family had long been among the more prominent and wealthy families in Robeson County. Although a vast amount of wealth was tied up in slaves, the abolition of slavery following the end of the Civil War did little to decrease the Norments' wealth or their political power in the county. At one time "Black Owen", so called because of his black eyes, hair and beard, had a grandfather who was chairman of the county court, his father was solicitor, and his uncle was clerk. Furthermore, Black Owen was commissioned a lieutenant during the war in a company that was commanded by his brother.

After Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox, Black Owen was commissioned a lieutenant in the Robeson County police company. He so distinguished himself by combing the woods and swamps for lying out Indians that he was raised to the rank of captain. It was only fitting and proper that he was put in charge of a company of men and entrusted with the task of tracking down and ridding the

historians is correct, and I believe it is. And knowing the tenacity of my beloved people, it would not surprise me to learn from my eternal abode that they were still here in 2650!

People come to Robeson, stay at their time in Robeson and leave Robeson. But the Lumbee Indians go on forever! Long live the Lumbees!

right-hand man, were still free. The six Indians arrested were: Tom Lowry, Stephen Lowry, Henderson Orendine and his brother Calvin, and John Dial (the sixth Indian was possibly James Locklear, a lesser known member of the gang). George Applewhite and Eli Ewin (Shoemaker John) were the two Black members arrested. It should be noted that Andrew Strong did not actively join the Lowry Gang until 1870, and therefore could not have possibly been the sixth Indian arrested. It should be noted here that the identity of the sixth Indian arrested above (James Locklear) is mere speculation on my part.

The trial for the 8 members of the Lowry Gang was slated for the spring term of Superior Court in Robeson County, 1870.

Continued next week.

## OFF THE WALL

REMEMBER WHEN INFLATION WAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH A BALLOON

## SPORTS QUIZ

WILT CHAMBERLAIN HOLDS THE CAREER RECORD FOR TOTAL POINTS AT 31,419! WHO HOLDS THE RUNNER-UP SPOT WITH 26,710 POINTS? A. OSCAR ROBERTSON B. JERRY WEST C. ELGIN BAYLOR

Black Owen was not satisfied however for Henry Berry Lowry and Boss Strong, his

# Governor Proclaims Awareness Week

The North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs recently announced that Gov. Jim Holshouser had proclaimed the week of October 10-16 "Native American Awareness Week" in North Carolina.

A. Bruce Jones, a Lumbee Indian, and executive director of the N.C. Commission of Indian Affairs, accepted the proclamation in the name of all Indians in North Carolina.

An Executive Proclamation was issued commending this observance to the citizens of the State.

The text of the proclamation is as follows:

WHEREAS, few non-Indian people today recognize the vast contributions made by native Americans to many and varied professions and occupations; and WHEREAS, there is a strong and renewed interest in the self-preservation of all aspects of Indian culture and heritage; and

WHEREAS, there is urgency to promote a unified effort of all for the common good, and to bring about a more wholesome relationship among native Americans; and

WHEREAS, the native American population is working for a better future, for a revival of participation in the tribal affairs, and for a revival of moral support for the tribal councils; and

WHEREAS, the native American communities are voicing greater self-expression and exposure of their values to surrounding communities and are taking a more active role in the use and development of their skills and resources; and

WHEREAS, Indians were a significant influence in the colonization of North Carolina and have contributed much to our State ever since;

WHEREAS, we are proud that today North Carolina ranks fifth among all the states in our native American population;

THEREFORE, I proclaim the week of October 10-16, 1976 NATIVE AMERICAN AWARENESS WEEK IN NORTH CAROLINA and commend this observance to our citizens.

The Commission Board and Staff endorse this action and hope that this effort will create a better understanding of Native Americans and their culture.

## TURN ON'S

DID YOU SLOW DOWN LIKE I TOLD YOU TO DO? SURE DID, AND I LOST MY JOB. NOW I CAN'T PAY YOU!



By M.A. PETTI, M.D.

When you can't relax and can't get to sleep, fill your tub with hot water and submerge yourself to the neck for about 20 minutes. You'll be surprised at the results.

## ROCK TRACKS

RINGO STARR's newest single, "A Dose of Rock 'n' Roll," features none other than PETER FRAMPTON on lead guitar. PAUL McCARTNEY and WINGS will have a live album out by Christmas. It'll feature performances from their recent U.S. tour... Other artists who will be out with nifties in time for the holidays include SLY STONE, AMERICA and KINKY FRIEDMAN... IKE and TINA TURNER have separated... ELTON JOHN's recent disclosure of his bisexuality caused much less comment than you would think. Maybe because everyone in rock has known about it for years... LABELLE's new "Chameleon" LP fairly glitters, but there's nothing on it that will duplicate the success of their "Lady Marmalade" hit. Skill, LABELLE's fans won't be disappointed... We also like BONNIE BRAMLETT's new LP, "Lady's Choice," in which she sings some duets with GREGG ALLMAN... GRAND FUNK RAILROAD seems to have a winner in their new "Good Singin'" album.

## KIDS KORNER

ACA  
MLE  
LLA  
AAB  
MIA

BEGIN AT THE UPPER LEFT AND DRAW A STRAIGHT LINE, ONE LETTER AT A TIME, IN ANY DIRECTION TO SPELL ALABAMA. THE REMAINING LETTERS WILL SPELL OUT THE NAME OF ITS STATE FLOWER.

61773440

"It's The Kids That Count"

# For Continued Public School Improvement:

## Re-Elect Craig Phillips

State Superintendent of Public Instruction

EXPERIENCED — QUALIFIED — PROVEN

26 Years As A Teacher — Coach — Asst. Principal — Principal  
Asst. Superintendent — Superintendent — State Superintendent

"It's The Kids That Count"

PAID FOR BY PEMBROKE SUPPORTERS OF CRAIG PHILLIPS