

Editorial And Opinion Page



AS I SEE IT

by Bruce Barton
A Tribute to Lew (is) Randolph Barton
By his oldest son,
Bruce Barton



Lew (is) Randolph Barton

Main" Movement. Thanks to warriors like Lew Barton, Old Main (the first brick building on what is now UNC-Pembroke) was saved and is being used today for many worthy causes, including home to the American Indian Studies Department.

He wrote hundreds of songs, and poems and newspaper articles and books and essays dealing with many different themes, but he cared and wrote mostly about his people, the ones who broke his heart—the Lumbee. And he sang and played various musical instruments, including a guitar, an upright bass and a Musical Saw.

The Indian schools (especially Prospect where he went to school and grew into manhood) were integrated against his wishes. He fought tirelessly against it. He lost the battle but he won the war. And we know why too although many of us will not say it out loud like Lew Barton did so long ago.

And I have become his long shadow, more like him than I am myself. I thought for a long time that I hated his very guts, but the truth of the matter is that I now admire him with all of my being without fully understanding why. I am becoming just like him all over again. I even look and walk and talk like him.

I sometimes live on the spiritual edge and possess the same dauntless and foolish courage and pride too. I often chase political windmills, and fight for hopeless causes just like he did because someone, by God, has to do it. And I am the son and the father too, the one and the same. Amen!

Despite limited vision from a car accident in 1950, Lew Barton never asked for special concessions, and he gave no spiritual quarters. He told me once, when I remonstrated with him about an illicit matter, as I saw it, that he was engaged in that "...it is none of your d--- business." Besides, he said, "I have taught you how to love good books and how to be independent and how to do your own thinking." And he closed the discussion (sic) by saying heatedly, "What in the h--- else do you want from me?" As usual he was probably right.

No matter, I would have liked to go fishing with him, maybe even attend a basketball game or two. He never knew that I was a Boston Celtics fan and he never asked me why I liked basketball so. If he had asked, I would have told him that basketball is a microcosm of life itself, and the game teaches harsh but real and lifelong lessons.

Daddy wrote beautifully. He loved a good quip, a good turn of phrase. He liked people for who they were and was much less judgmental than the son. But both of us were (and are) committed to Indian causes, even though some would think, if they subscribed to the John Wayne vision, that we both look like "a White man from the big city" as one Prospect woman labeled me once when I was ranting and raving about the Indian cause of the moment.

And I came to the UNC-Pembroke Board of Trustees (February 19, 1999) to speak to them about our need to get involved in the Chancellor's Selection Committee and insure that Indian candidates are fully considered. They paid me no mind. They never do. Those kind of committees, as my daddy once told me, "are made up of company people who will not ask hard questions unless the building is falling in on their pious heads." And I thought to myself: Is there anyone in that august room that I would trade places with and I cried out in my spirit, "No! No!" And my father would not have either.

It is true: sons become their fathers, and I am doing that as I enter the winter of my life (I am now 58 and my father would have been 82 if he had lived to see his birthday on June 4, 2000). Daddy I hardly knew you. I will spend the rest of my life trying to make you proud of me. I love you with all my heart. Amen!

AND THE KU KLUX KLAN UPRISING REMEMBERED

Just a note, too, to mark the 42nd anniversary of the Ku Klux Klan Rally on January 18, 1958. It was a time when race was the supreme arbiter of our social graces. And the Klan came to Robeson County to teach the impertinent Indians a lesson on good civic matters. The sin! It seems that some Indians dared court across racial lines. Ummm! The Klan held a rally in a field in Maxton to show us how to more correctly comport ourselves. (sic) The hooded ones were met by hundreds of Lumbee Indians who responded by interrupting the rally and routing the Ku Klux Klan. It was good riddance then, and doubly so



The photograph shows Charles Shelby "Shell" Warriax, now in his eighties and living in Charlotte, and the late Sim Oxendine smirkingly wrapped in the infamous KKK banner that they helped take from the Klan that long ago night.

today when Robeson County openly tries to be better than she ever was as far as human and race relations are concerned. The hope is, obviously, in the attempt, even if it sometimes seems feeble. I always point to this moment in our history as a proud one and an example of "my people" at their very best.

I ain't a 'Rebel'-rouser, folk

Rantin' and Ravin'



Garry Lewis Barton

Note: The views and opinions expressed herein are mine and are not necessarily shared by anyone else. Heck! They're not necessarily views and opinions -- just one poor man's "rantings" and "ravings," I guess.

I work in South Carolina where there's an ongoing furor to have the Confederate flag taken down from atop the Capitol Dome in Columbia. It's weathered a lot of inclement weather since being first raised in the '60s. But I don't know if it'll withstand the storm of controversy initiated by the NAACP to have it taken down.

A lot of white folk in S.C. contend the Confederate flag is a symbol of their heritage; after all, South Carolina was the first state to try and secede, precipitating the Civil War.

Some black folk say it's a symbol of slavery and therefore an insult to all blacks.

Some folk contend the Civil War was fought because of slavery, which then President, Abraham Lincoln, abolished, earning a Rebel bullet to his head for his troubles.

But I think the South took up arms against the Union to defend their unique way of life, their ideals and institutions, one of which was slavery.

From what I've gathered from history books and such, Ol' Abe assumed a lot of dictatorial powers he wasn't empowered with. A classic example was his decision to confiscate property belonging to the millions of folk living in the South, something unheard of in other wars. And I know it's gonna ruffle a lot of black feathers, but the truth is that slaves were considered property, just like cows and horses and such. Now, don't y'all get mad at the messenger just 'cause y'all don't like the message. Not saying that out loud ain't gonna rewrite the history books, folk.

Ol' Abe might have been honest, as they say, but he was a ruthless, ornery ol' bird too, allowing his generals to destroy everything in their path as they marched through the South, burning and pillaging at their will. So, you see, the Civil War wasn't just about slavery, as some would have us believe.

My personal opinion is that if anyone is justified in crying about a flag, it's us Native Americans. After all, it was the United States' avowed intention to wipe Native Americans off the face of the earth, in essence declaring open season on so-called "Indians." And all the troops which slaughtered the thousands of Native American men, women and children had an American flag flying at the front of its formation. (Native Americans only comprise about 2% of this country's population, attesting to the success of the U.S. government's campaign to wipe us off the face of the earth.)

Despite the fact the U.S. flag flying alongside that Confederate flag is soaked in the precious blood of thousands of my ancestors, I'm an American first and foremost. Then a Native American. I say, "America. Love it or leave it!"

If I, a Native American, can look at an American flag with pride being well aware of its history of abusing and mistreating Native Americans, then black folk ought to be able to look at the Confederate flag with at least a modicum of tolerance.

Don't misunderstand me, folk. I'm not forgetting or forgiving the shameful way this country has treated, and continues to treat Native Americans. I just know crying about it ain't gonna change the government's cruel policy toward us. I also know black folk crying about the Confederate flag ain't gonna cause it to come down.

I have a suggestion: Since I don't think Jesse Jackson has ever done anything but pontificate and posture for the cameras, why not let him do something positive for a change by shimmying up that pole and bringing the flag down.

Just kidding, folk. Don't y'all tell ol' Jesse I said that. Seriously, though, my personal opinion is that all y'all black folk need to get over it.

Uh, oh! I have another suggestion: Why not put that energy wasted on fretting over an ol' tattered flag to good use by addressing what I consider to be the most important issue facing us. Which I think is: why do young black males commit a disproportionate amount of the crime in this country, although blacks only comprise 14% of this country's population, and young black males only comprise a small percentage of the black population? Now, I could get excited about that issue. But I can't muster up any sympathy or concern about an ol' strip of clothing flying harmlessly in the breeze.

Truth is, I really don't care whether the Confederate flag comes down or not. I'm just sick and tired of hearing about it. Ain't y'all?

We'll talk again, folk.

Hatcher responds to Robesonian editorial

(Open letter to The Carolina Indian Voice; To Donnie Douglas, Editor of the Robesonian)

Regarding the editorial that the Robesonian carried about me on January 11, 2000, I offer the following response. I am going to go through the editorial detail by detail so that your inchoate brain can absorb the important points.

First, you call me a publicity hound and state that your ragged tabloid will not let me use it for my forum. I would like for you to tell the people of Robeson County exactly how many times I have contacted the Robesonian concerning anything much less the murder charges presently against me. In fact, tell the people how many times I've contacted you since Bob Horne was the editor. If you tell the truth, which I know is not in your character, you would have to say, zero. Not one time have I contacted your newspaper. In fact, the last time I even talked to anyone from your paper was in November, 1998, when your nosey reporter called me at Moore Regional Hospital where I was being treated for a gunshot wound. All of the front page articles and editorials that you have carried on me since June 1, 1999 was of your own choosing. You chose to print these stories. How can I be a publicity hound? Moreover, I've not had to depend on the Robesonian and its cut-throat charlatan reporters as I have been carried in countless nationwide newspapers, magazines, radio and television news programs. So simply, I've had no thought as to whether the Robesonian has carried anything about me or not.

Secondly, you say that stories about me probably hurt sales of the Robesonian. The fact is, Donnie, many people no longer even subscribe to your paper and choose The Fayetteville Observer because of its more accurate and unbiased reporting of Robeson County. Isn't it a fact you lost a lot of subscribers after my action of February 1, 1988, and it has continued till today? So please don't conjure up fault when the poor sales are the result of a know-nothing, got-nothing, semi-illiterate editor who carries a hidden racist, controlling agenda.

The problem is you and pitiful people like you created this monster. Are you saying I have that much power that I can control what major newspapers carry? I'm humbled, Mr. Douglas. The fact is you people kept me on the front pages of the newspapers for the past 12 years and that's why there are presently more than 5,000 web pages on me, 2,400 in YAHOO alone. So don't throw the blame on me for the wanton greed that's costing your newspaper. Ty Hester stated in an article in your paper in 1990 that I had cost Robeson County over one hundred million dollars in lost industry. One hundred million in 1990! I'm pushing for five hundred million by 2002! If you want to dance you've got to pay the piper. The corrupt, padded, mercenary mentality of the judicial and law enforcement of this county must accept the consequences if they choose to file bogus murder charges against me. As I and my supporters all over the world intend to leave Lumberton impoverished and make beggars of the uppity white nobility. That's right, Donnie, I have at least eight full force defense committees from the West Coast to the Netherlands, movie stars, educators, students, religious leaders and politicians who support me and have come out publicly on my behalf. Countless people ready to move on my command. People who view the Lumberton aristocracy for the true imperialist, money changers they are. So, all the billboards that are along I-95 promoting Robeson County will not have the impact of the lone, huge billboard soon to appear at the Virginia/North Carolina border advising travelers not to spend one dime in Lumberton, N.C., the home of racist oppressors, who are leftovers from the old slave South, trying to kill Eddie Hatcher. You want to talk about the effect several well-known movie stars will have when they issue a personal appeal to Ed Asner, anti-death penalty advocate, and the Screen Actors' Guild to boycott the movie industry in N.C.? All burdens of Robeson County. You want to talk lost industry, Donnie? Let's talk about tourism!

If you had any concern for what's the truth, instead of spending so much time blaming me for the gratuitous, destructive cloud that hovers over Robeson County, you'd ask District Attorney Johnson Britt to tell you how the SBI lab says at least three weapons, if not four, were fired into Brian McMillian's house, yet I am the culprit for all this murder and destruction. So, Donnie, with the superhuman capabilities the DA says I have, i.e. the ability to drive down a road with four guns blazing, changing gears, shooting a man right between the eyes, and not one closely situated neighbor saw anything, you should use your newspaper to market me as the next best thing to Jessie James. Have you thought of that?

The bottom line is, you and slimy, greedy bottom dwellers like you created these problems; this nasty, distasteful, reputation of the most corrupt county in the U.S. I, my supporters, my website, my newsletter, and my mama, are going to make you and all of your unscrupulous, redneck, banjo, nose-picking, good ole' buddies regret that you ever aroused this, what was a sleeping bear. You will hate the day that you sat back and watched Robeson County charge me for a crime I could not have committed. I can't wait to see what you write the day I walk out of the courtroom, and I will. You can believe that! You people still haven't caught the hint that has hit you beside the head so many times they can't be counted.

If you are any semblance of a man you'd print my letter as is, because it's the truth. But I remember you from February 1, 1988 when I walked into the Robesonian and you literally knocked women down getting out the back door. You were a coward then and you are a coward now, and cowards know nothing about the truth. Yes, Donnie Douglas, you should pray that I walk out of that courtroom. If I don't, I just don't think Robeson County will ever recover from the extensive campaign that will take place against it.

As always,
Eddie Hatcher
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PAID FOR
BY SUPPORTERS OF
EDDIE HATCHER

The Carolina Indian Voice
Published each Thursday in Pembroke, N.C. by
First American Publications
The first issue of The Carolina Indian Voice was published on January 17, 1973, made possible by a \$500 loan acquired by then editor, owner and founder, Bruce Barton.

Connee Brayboy Editor
Bruce Barton Publisher
Ricky Barton Business Manager
Garry Lewis Barton Production Manager



When the United States celebrates Columbus Day—the second Monday in October—Canada is celebrating Thanksgiving.

The Carolina Indian voice
Published every Thursday by First American Publications.
Connee Brayboy, Editor.
Second class postage paid at Pembroke, NC

Let's Keep Mitchell "Bosco" Locklear Working for You!
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May 2, 2000
This is a County Wide Election

***For Experience *For Continued Progress**
***Someone Who Speaks Up For Your Interests**
Re-elect Mitchell "Bosco" Locklear
"A Man you Can Trust"