

Map Errors and Indians of the Carolinas

Wesley D. Taukchiray
Independent Scholar

Nathan Phillippi
University of North Carolina - Pembroke

Thomas E. Ross
University of North Carolina - Pembroke

Sometimes scholars minimize the importance of accuracy on maps that accompany their publications. Errors of omission are common, and perhaps the most frustrating. However, it is maps that contain errors of toponymy that are most frequently found in the literature (Map 1). Usually such errors are justified by the author of a paper claiming locations shown are approximate or "in the ballpark." This essay and our revised map address errors in a map accompanying the *Southeast Handbook of North American Indians* (Volume 14: 2004, p. 329), a publication that contains numerous errors in the siting or naming of Indian places (hereafter referred to as "the *Handbook* map"). For example, the Indian settlements of Four Holes and White Oak are placed incorrectly. Two other Indian settlements (Antioch and Shiloh) are named, but do not exist where they are located on the *Handbook* map. Two tribes, the federally recognized Catawba in South Carolina and the Lumbee, the largest tribe east of the Mississippi River, are not mentioned on the *Handbook* map. It is also unclear why the Cherokee is sited in south central North Carolina.

We argue for a more accurate toponymy and suggest placing the various Indian groups in the Carolinas on a revised map (Map 2). We believe that map errors

sometimes occur because scholars have not actually visited the places on the maps used in their books or articles. Our revised map is based on several decades of on-site field experience and ongoing personal communications with Indian people living in the areas mapped. The senior author has lived with the Lumbees since 1982 (except for most of 1986) and has resided or visited all of the tribes mentioned in this essay except the Saponny of Person County and the Saponi Band of Occaneechi. The senior author has also stayed with the Coharies from time to time over the years since 1984.

The most egregious error on the *Handbook* map is one of omission. Unaccountably and incredibly, the map does not show the Lumbee Indians at all, unless the term "Tuscarora" is intended to denote this tribe. The term "Cherokee" on the map in the core area of the Lumbee is inexplicable. The Lumbee tribe has been written into state law as an Indian tribe since 1885 and is the largest Indian group in North Carolina. The Coharies were recognized by the State of North Carolina as Indians in 1917. The *Handbook* map shows two Coharie settlements (Harrells and Antioch) that do not exist. There is an unconfirmed report that a few decades ago a few Lumbees did live at Harrells, but the Coharie Tribal Office confirmed that there is

no Coharie settlement there. Holly Grove is in the correct place, also the main settlement of New Bethel, and the tiny rural settlement of Shiloh. The "Dunn settlement" in Harnett County, where Coharies settled shortly after the 1910 U.S. Census is correctly placed. In 1990, the senior author and Mr. Ammie Jacobs of Holly Grove, then 82 years old, drove to and mapped each of these settlements, viewing each in its entirety. The Dunn Settlement is called Bearsville by its inhabitants. Antioch is the name of a Free Will Baptist Indian church, recently closed, founded in 1926. The church stood in the Dunn settlement of Coharies, not at Shiloh. It still had a small number of congregants in 1990. Maynortown, a fifth Coharie settlement of about 40 people, about the same as in 1910, is astride the Harnett and Cumberland County boundary, but mostly in Harnett County.

In South Carolina, there is no Indian community at the Clarendon County location of White Oak although there is an Indian settlement two miles north of Holly Hill, S.C., called White Oak but misidentified on the *Handbook* map as Four Holes. This White Oak can be distinguished on the federal census as early as 1840. It is identified as Indian on South Carolina State Highway Department maps from 1938 forward, which show an "Indian church" there, and in the 1930 census in Holly Hill Township, the location of White Oak, one cluster of sixty people identified as Indian bear the surnames appropriate to the community as do sixty-five others, also identified as Indian, scattered through the township. Death certificates in Holly Hill township beginning in 1918 identify individuals on the tribal genealogies as Indian.

The Santee tribe is not, in the classic sense, state-recognized in that there is no law on the books at the state level that mentions them. State recognition in South Carolina consists of a ceremony, a handshake, a newspaper article, and a letter of congratulations. A letter to Chief Roosevelt Scott of the Santee Indian Organization from the State of South Carolina Commission for Minority Affairs, notes that "the Board

Members of the South Carolina Commission for Minority Affairs unanimously voted on January 27, 2006 to grant State Recognition as a "Tribe" to the Santee Indian Organization." But again, there is no state law mentioning that tribe by name; which is what state recognition generally means in North Carolina, Virginia, and Louisiana.

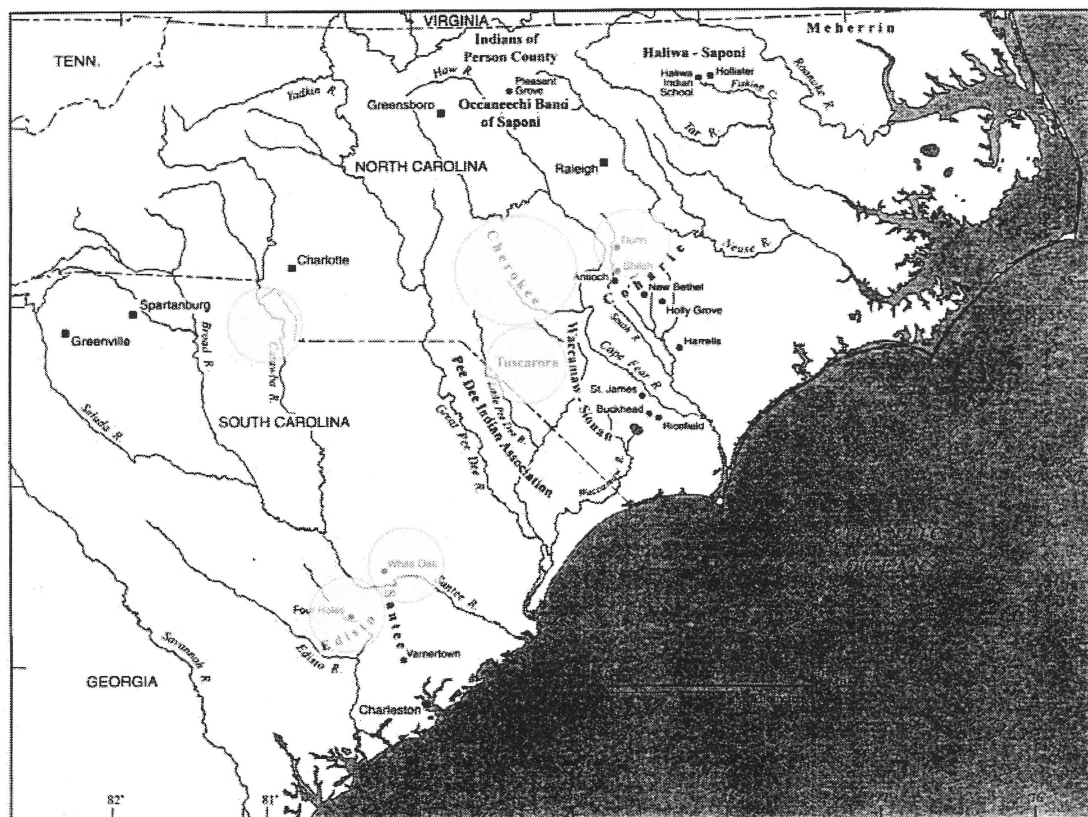
Varnertown on the map is shown accurately (the neighborhood of Carnes Crossroads, S.C.). A letter of February 25, 2005 to Lisa Leach, Chairperson of the Board, Wassamassaw Tribe of Varnertown Indians states that the "Board Members of the South Carolina Commission for Minority Affairs unanimously voted on February 5, 2005 to grant State Recognition as a 'Group' to the Wassamassaw Tribe of Varnertown Indians." Again, there is no other official or historical mention of "Wassamassaw" Indians as a tribe. In 1709, however, "Wassum-isau" is the name for the far upper reaches of Ashley River in Berkeley County, which, beginning at Charleston Harbor on the Atlantic, is known first as Ashley River, then as Big Cypress Swamp, then as Wassamassaw Swamp.

Lastly we note that the map mentions the "Edisto." This tribe, the Edisto Natchez Kusso, has two settlements, one called Four Holes, dating from 1904, on the north side of Givhans Ferry State Park three miles southwest of Ridgeville, S.C. The small, parent community, Creeltown, dating from at least 1850, is at the junction of Highways 61 and 651. The actual location of Four Holes is on the outside of a sharp bend of Edisto River, not as shown on the *Handbook* map; and Creeltown lies nine miles to the west of Four Holes, on the south bank of Edisto River. During the 1985-2005 period when the group was headed by Chief Matthew Creel, the Edisto Natchez Kusso Indians refused to deal with the South Carolina Commission for Minority Affairs because they did not wish to formally renounce all land claims.

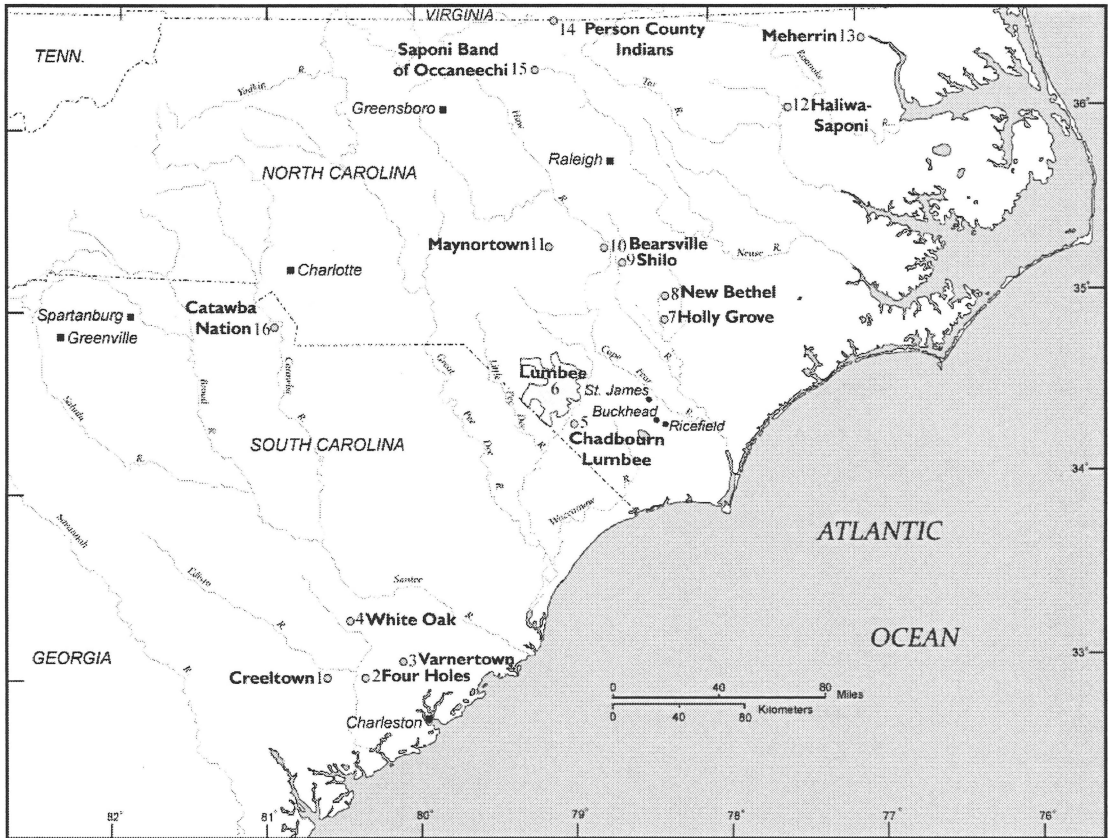
The *Handbook* map does accurately show several Indian locations. The Waccamaw Siouan settlements of St. James (on the upper reaches of Slap Swamp) and Buckhead-Ricefield, are in the right place, as

one might have expected, given that the *Handbook* map accompanies an article by P. B. Lerch, who has published extensively on that tribe. The Waccamaw Siouan has been recognized as an Indian tribe by the State of North Carolina since 1971. The locations on

the map showing the Haliwa-Saponi Tribe, recognized by the State since 1965, are also correct.



Map 1. Errors on published map in *Handbook of North American Indians*. Errors are circled on this map.



Map 2. Map showing corrected modern locations for Indians on the piedmont and coastal plain of the Carolinas.

Key to Corrected Map

The locations of *Ricefield* and *Buckhead* (in reality one settlement, usually referred to as *Buckhead*, split by a highway running north-south) north of Bolton, NC and *St. James* near Lake Waccamaw, NC (on the upper reaches of Slap Swamp) are accurately sited on the map. These are Waccamaw Siouan Indian settlements.

1. *Creel town*, at the junction of SC Highways 61 and 651 north from Cottageville, SC. The parent community of the "Edisto" (Edisto Natchez Kusso Indians); nine miles from its branch, *Four Holes*.

2. *Four Holes*, an Indian community of that name. Mostly along a one-mile segment of SC Highway 386, on the north side of Givhans State Park and three miles southwest of Ridgeville.

3. *Varnertown* is near Carnes Crossroads on US Alternate Route 17. They are now called the Wassamassaw Indians. Other Indians or Indian descendants have communities up and down Alternate Route 17 from Carnes Crossroads, toward Moncks Corner and in the opposite direction towards Summerville and in Lincolnville and Cooks Corner, but these avoid involvement in Indian affairs.

4. *White Oak Indian Community*, along the Fire Tower Road, recently renamed Bay View Road, two miles north of Holly Hill.

Note: The *Dimery Settlement*, consisting of a small American Indian community four miles north of Aynor at Dog Bluff in Horry County, SC, is not shown on this map, partly because it has dispersed to other parts of the county since 1987, when its church burned for the second time in as many years.

5. The *Lumbees* started a distinct settlement at Chadbourn, North Carolina in 1945.

6. *Robeson County, NC* is the major area of *Lumbee* population, home to more than 40,000 of the total nationwide Lumbee population of about 55,000. Within the county are several diffuse settlements: *Prospect* in the northwest of the area marked which shows Robeson County Townships having 50 percent or more Indian population in the 2000 federal Census; *Saddletree* in the northeast; *Fairgrove* in the south; and *Pembroke* in the center. Written into state law as an Indian tribe under one name or another since 1885. The Lumbee population spreads out thinly from Robeson County in all directions, with the nearest sizable urban outpost being Fayetteville, NC. Another is in Baltimore, MD. The latter are the only two Lumbee settlements outside of Robeson County that have churches with predominant Lumbee membership, other than a few in bordering Dillon County, SC and other bordering counties.

7. *Holly Grove*, the southernmost of the Coharie settlements along US Highway 421 in Sampson County, though not particularly noticeable from 421 because the two parts of the community are connected by an overpass. Holly Grove is partly within the Clinton city limits, but even that part appears very rural.

8. *New Bethel*, some eight miles north of Clinton on Highway 421; interspersed with white households that have no connection with the Indians there. This is historically the largest and the oldest Coharie community.

9. *Shiloh*, a small Coharie community on the South River along the Sampson-Cumberland County border.

10. *Bearsville*, as it is called by the Coharies who live there; or the *Dunn Settlement*, as it is called by the Coharies of the three aforementioned Coharie communities. It is located near Dunn, North Carolina and from there to the Harnett-Cumberland County border.

11. *Maynortown* of the Coharies, just north of the Harnett County line and due north of Fayetteville. Many Coharies live in Cumberland County east of the Cape Fear River.

12. *The Meadows*, the main settlement of the Haliwa-Saponi, is on the lower part of the Little Fishing Creek watershed and extends from Hollister south along the Halifax-Warren County line. Most live in Halifax County.

13. *Old California*, the Meherrin settlement named after a long-defunct store of that name between Union, Ahoskie, and Cofield in Hertford County. Residents have had a seat on the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs since 1986 and are recognized by the State as Indians.

14. *The Saponny Indians of Person County*. Tribal members live at Christie and Virginila, near the North Carolina-Virginia state line. According to Dr. Helen C. Rountree, after 1850 this group extended their territory into Virginia from the North Carolina side of the state boundary. The tribe has been recognized by state law since 1913.

15. *Little Texas Community*, located at the junction of Caswell, Alamance, and Orange Counties, is the primary settlement of the Saponi Band of Occaneechi, formerly called the Eno-Occaneechi. This tribe has had a seat on the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs since 2001.

16. *Catawba Nation*, nine miles south of Rock Hill, SC, near Leslie and Van Wyck, on the east bank of the Catawba River, live on their one square mile (640 acres) reservation and on considerable acreage adjacent and near the reservation. Lately there is also a "New Reservation." The Catawba became federally acknowledged in 1946; dropping that status in 1962, and picking it up again in 1993 after an epic 16-year court battle, during which they sued every landowner in the 225 square-mile claim area, including, incredibly, their own U.S. congressman.

Other shadowy groups most likely still exist, but the senior author has only visited one such group, that being the Goins community of about 15 people isolated at the end of a long road, two miles from Greelyville, South Carolina. This group had no contact with other Indians in the Carolinas until March of 1994.

References/Suggested Readings

- Campisi, J.; J. T. Pierce, C. Hunt, and W. White.** 1987. Lumbee Petition For Federal Acknowledgment (microfilm reel Z.1.57, N.C. Archives).
- Campisi, J.; C. Hunt, and W. Taukchiray.** 1989. Haliwa-Saponi Petition For Federal Acknowledgment (microfilm reel Z.1.38, N.C. Archives).
- Crediford, Gene J.** 2009. *Those Who Remain: A Photographer's Memoir of South Carolina Indians*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.
- Hicks, Theresa, ed.** 1998. *South Carolina Indians. Indian Traders and Other Ethnic Connections*, Columbia, SC: Peppercorn Publications, Inc.
- Lerch, Patricia B.** 2004. Indians of the Carolinas Since 1900. In Raymond D. Fogelson, ed. *Handbook of North American Indians: Southeast, Volume 14*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian and Government Printing Office.
- Ross, T. E.** 2005. *One Land, Three Peoples: A Geography of Robeson County, North Carolina, 3rd edition*. Southern Pines, NC: Carolinas Press.
- Ross, T. E.** 1999. *American Indians in North Carolina: Geographic Interpretations*. Southern Pines, NC: Karo Hollow Press.
- Taukchiray, W. D.; A. B. Kasakoff, and G. Crediford.** 1992. Contemporary Native Americans in South Carolina. In Paredes, Anthony, ed., *Indians of the Southeastern United States in the Late 20th Century*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.
- Taukchiray, W.** 1993. American Indian References in the South Carolina Gazette, *South Carolina Historical Magazine*, Vol. 94 (July 1993, pp 185-192).
- Taukchiray, W. D.** 1996. American Indian References in the South Carolina And American General Gazette, The Gazette Of The State Of South Carolina, And the Royal Gazette, *South Carolina Historical Magazine*, Vol. 97 (January 1996 pp. 65-70).
- Taukchiray, W. D.** 1997. Aboriginal Poetry, *Carologue*, Summer 1997, p. 57.
- White[Taukchiray], W. D.** 1980. *Some of the Written Memory of the Natchez-Kusso Indians Of Edisto River* (published on demand since 1980 by the Four Holes Indian Organization, Edisto Tribal Council, 1125 Ridge Road, Ridgeville, S.C. 29472).