

Chapter 2 Colonial and Onslow Area Humphreys

By 1710, settlers had begun arriving on the White Oak River, within a few years they had begun setting up homes on the shores of New River in what is now Onslow County. These people came from further north in the state, Virginia, Maryland, and New England. Also considered part of New Hanover County, many early papers were filed in the Craven records. In 1734, the General Assembly created what is now Onslow County.¹

Already the Humphrey family had gone down into Albemarle County, North Carolina, as indicated in the wills of Richard Humphries, in 1688, and John Humphries, of Pasquotank precinct, in 1708.²

In 1748 the county of Lunenburg, Virginia, was formed from Brunswick County. On the tax lists for that year, but not for the years following, appear the names, John, William, Thomas, and Charles Humphreys and the names, William Wood, John Williams, Daniel Humphreys, Richard Ward, John Ambrose, John Ellis, and other names often seen early in Onslow County, North Carolina.³

Defense of the Onslow area being a concern, the community mounted a militia. In Captain John Shackelford's company, 1754, were Thomas Johnston, Lieutenant; James Howard, Ensign; William Shackelford, Clerk; Jesse Williams, John Humphrey, and Lott Williams, Corporals. Among those listed in the company were Joseph Mumford, Jacob Humphrey, William Humphrey, William Williams, Stephen Williams, Benjamin Johnston, John Johnston, William Ambrose, and John Ambrose.⁴

William Humphrey and Furnifold Green were the witnesses on a deed for Thomas Graves and James Reed on June 17, 1760, as recorded in *Book 2*, page 92, at the courthouse in New Bern, Craven County, North Carolina.⁵

One William Humphrey died in Craven County, North Carolina, in 1767. Nathaniel Scarborough, next of kin, made the inventory of this estate.⁶

In the Craven County records, October 15, 1752, one Joseph Humphrey left "cousin Sarah Roberts of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania" a legacy; he also left legacies to his nephew, Joseph Humphrey, the son of John Humphrey, and to his friend, Evan Ellis. One Joseph Humphries was the executor in Pasquotank County in 1740 of the estate of Christopher Humphrey, brother of John and William.⁷

Two related Humphrey families, it appears, came from Virginia to Onslow County, North Carolina -- one through Pasquotank and Craven Counties to Onslow and the other through Halifax and Bertie Counties into Onslow.⁸

Joseph Humphrey of Onslow made affidavit that he was born in Halifax County, North Carolina, on January 16, 1750. This Joseph Humphrey was a Revolutionary

soldier as shown on a record in the Pension Bureau in Washington, D. C. ⁹

It is helpful at this point to learn that of the Humphrey family early in Onslow County, North Carolina, Thomas Humphrey had a son, Francis; Eustres Humphrey had sons, Lewis and David; Jacob Humphrey had a son, Robert; and William Humphrey had sons, William Humphrey, junior, Jacob Humphrey, and Daniel Humphrey; and William's wife, Sarah, deeded land to her son, Jacob Wood, evidently the child of a former marriage.¹⁰

In Chowan County, North Carolina, in 1789, the will of David Humphrey named sons: William, John, and Richard. Listed in Captain Thomas Graves' company in the Craven County Militia for 1751 were: William, John, and Richard Humphrey.¹¹

The United States Census for 1790, Onslow County, North Carolina, lists as heads of families: Eustace, Eustace Jr., William Umphrey, Mary (the widow of Thomas), Josiah, Jacob, Francis, and David Humphrey. The census for 1800 lists as heads of families: John Umphrey, David, Jacob, Joseph, and Daniel Humphrey.¹²

Although the Humphrey name appears in numerous Craven County records prior to 1790, it appears the majority of the Humphrey families resided in Onslow County. Many of the early marriage records reveal relationships between Onslow and Craven residents.¹³

A Daniel Humphrey purchased land in 1810 and 1817 in Craven County.¹⁴ In 1820 the sheriff transferred land from Daniel Humphrey to one Abraham Taylor of Craven County. A younger aged Daniel appears again in the 1830 and 1840 Craven census. After 1840 there are no Daniel's in Craven County.

In the 1840 Craven census, Lott W. Humphrey resided in Craven County near Hiram Humphrey.¹⁵ Lott Williams was the son of William Humphrey of Onslow County. Sometime after 1840 Lott returned to Onslow County. This migration, to and from Onslow County may have been common in the period. Several Onslow Humphrey family names, Daniel, Lott, and Lewis, appear in Craven and Onslow between 1810 – 1840.

See Appendix A for more detail on Onslow Area Humphreys.

Endnotes Chapter 2 Colonial and Onslow Area Humphreys

¹ Colonists of Carolina. Blanche Humphrey Abee. Page 3.1938. Craven County Library. Also see Appendix.

² Ibid. Page 11.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid. Page 5.

⁵ Ibid. Page 14.

⁶ Ibid. Page 12.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid. Page 13.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid. Page 15.

¹³ Craven and Onslow County Marriage records. Craven County Library.

¹⁴ General Index to Deeds and Mortgages, Craven County, NC to 1912. Microfilm. Craven County Library.

¹⁵ 1840 Craven County Census. Pages 82 and 83. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
