

Chapter 7 The Jay Lee Humphrey Family

Jay Lee Humphrey, Sr., the son John Julia Humphrey, was born on August 16, 1881. Jay Lee, his brother John and his sister Clara were educated by a teacher who lived in the home. Later, they attended Reedy Branch School.¹ He also attended North Carolina A & M College, now North Carolina State University.²

His father, John, had many business interests, and when he started a dairy, Jay Lee would deliver milk to customers in New Bern via a horse drawn milk wagon. Later he became involved in the family brick business and managed the operation of the Clark Brick and Tile Company. The farm and brick company was purchased prior to 1878.³ One of several brick mills operated in Clarks, the Clark Brick and Tile Company was incorporated in 1911. A stock certificate was issued in 1912, to Jay Lee Humphrey and was signed by Amos T. Wetherington, Secretary -Treasurer. ⁴

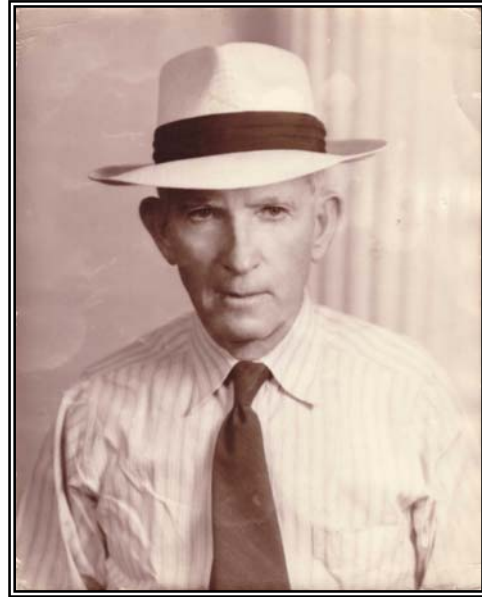


Figure 23 Jay Lee Humphrey, Sr.



Figure 24 Clark Brick and Tile Co. Stock Certificate

Jay Lee ran the company for his father, and after John's death in 1917, the company operated until the Great Depression when a combination of financing issues and lack of clay forced the closure of the company. After the demise of the Clark Brick and Tile Co., Jay Lee operated the Carolina Brick Company at Hymans, on the west side of Bachelor Creek. This company ceased operation about 1950.⁵

In 1912, his mother, Julia Arnold Humphrey, died in January. After her death, he married Stella Rosa (Rose) Pittman on July 31, 1912^a, daughter of Charles and Annie Pittman of Kinston, and sister of Eva Lane Pittman Humphrey, the wife of John W. Humphrey, Jay Lee's brother. The marriage ceremony was performed in F. Swindell Love, MG in Lenoir County. The witnesses were C. D. Wooten, F. S. Kilpatrick, and John W. Humphrey.⁶

In the 1900 Craven census he is listed in the home of his parents.⁷ In 1910 he is missing from the household. In 1920, Jay Lee appears again, along with wife Rose, and three children, Doris, Jay Lee, Jr. and Harold B. Humphrey.⁸



Figure 25 *Rose Pittman and Jay Lee Humphrey*

Jay Lee and Rose made their home in Clarks, in the old John Humphrey home by the brick yard and railroad.

Their children, all born in Clarks, were:

1. Laura Eleanor Humphrey born July 24, 1913.
2. Doris Lee Humphrey born on November 21, 1914.
3. Jay Lee Humphrey, Jr. born on September 7, 1916.
4. Harold Bumpas Humphrey born on March 1, 1919.
5. Donald Holmes Humphrey born on September 21, 1920.
6. William Grey Humphrey born on July 1, 1922.
7. James Carroll Humphrey born on December 25, 1924.
8. Hal Foscue Humphrey born on April 18, 1927. (twin).
9. Helen Archer Humphrey born on April 18, 1927. (twin).
10. Charles Manly Humphrey born on June 29, 1930.

^a The date of this marriage was previously reported as January 13, 1912. The Lenoir Co. marriage register date is July 31, 1912.

Their first child, Laura Eleanor was born on July 24, 1913 in Clarks and died on June 15, 1914 of pneumonia. She was buried in the family cemetery at the John Humphrey home on Deep Branch in Clarks.⁹

Their last child, Charles Manly was born on June 29, 1930 and died on January 31, 1931.¹⁰ He was buried in the family cemetery at the John Humphrey home on Deep Branch in Clarks. This grave is no longer marked in the family cemetery.¹¹

For detail on the other children see the following section on the children.

The old home in Clarks was Jay Lee and Rose Humphrey's residence for thirty years. The Charles Pittman family, originally from Fort Barnwell¹², lived in Kinston in 1910.¹³ After the marriage of Jay Lee and Rose, a home was build (circa 1916)¹⁴ on New Liberty Road adjoining the Humphrey home for the Pittman family. The 1920 Craven census lists the Pittman family at this location. Numerous outbuilding and structures existed over the years, as shown in the sketch below.¹⁵

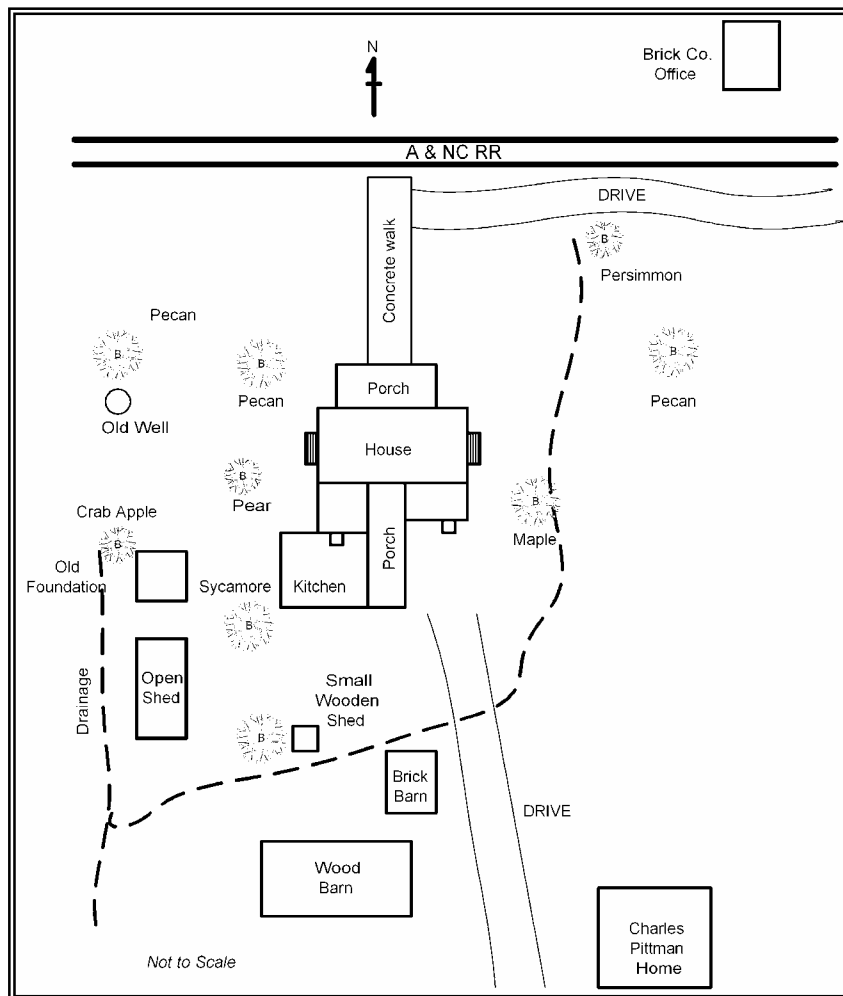


Figure 26 Property Sketch of Jay Lee Humphrey, Sr. Home

The home is mentioned on the 1878 deed to John Humphrey, and reported existed prior to the Civil War.¹⁶ It was originally a small home, with numerous additions occurring over the years. After an absence (circa 1945-1957), Jay's sons renovated the home, and Jay Lee returned to the home until his death in 1964. In 1966, unoccupied, the home caught fire and was totally consumed along with many belongings and furniture.

Unfortunately, no photographs of the home survive. A line drawing of the home, from memory, shows the front of the home as it existed about 1960.



Figure 27 The Jay Lee Humphrey Home, 1960.

After the fire, the property was maintained until the 1980s by Jay Lee Humphrey, Jr., as a small farm and pasture for Charlais cattle for his brother, William Grey Humphrey. In 2000, the 39 acres of the old homestead is owned by a grandson, William Grey Humphrey, Jr. of Spartanburg, SC.¹⁷

Also about 1980, the original Clarks Methodist Church was replaced by a modern structure. William G. Humphrey purchased the old church building and moved it to the homestead. The old church became a new barn structure and was placed on the site of an older, large two-story barn, which existed in the 1920s and until the late 1950s.

In 2000, the old church still stands, one of the old chimneys is withstanding time, part of an old brick outbuilding remains, and the old well can still be found. Some of the larger old trees are quiet sentinels among the small gum trees and pines that invaded the old lawn.

Figure 28 Remaining Chimney of Jay Lee Humphrey Home

Photo 2002 by the author.



Figure 29 The old Clarks Methodist Church in 2001.

Photo 2002 by the author.

Rosa Pittman Humphrey died on July 1, 1942 at St. Luke's Hospital in New Bern.

Her obituary was reported in the July 2, 1942 edition of the Sun Journal:

Mrs. Rose Humphrey Passes At Hospital

Mrs. Rose Pittman Humphrey, age, 50, wife of Jay Lee Humphrey, Sr. of Clarks, died at 2:20 o'clock Wednesday morning at St. Luke's hospital after an illness of two weeks. Funeral service will be held at Clarks Methodist Church Thursday afternoon at 3 o'clock conducted by the pastor, Rev. W. A. Tew of Bridgeton. Interment will be in the Maple wood cemetery in Kinston.

Mrs. Humphrey is survived by her husband, two daughters; Mrs. E. C. McCombs of New Bern and Miss Helen Humphrey of Clarks, six sons; J. L. Humphrey, Jr. of New Bern, Sgt. H. B. Humphrey of the United States Army, Donald H. Humphrey of Clarks, Cpl. William Humphrey of the United States army air corps, James C. Humphrey of New Bern and Hal Humphrey of Clarks; two sisters, Mrs. J. W. Humphrey of Beaufort, and Mrs. Ralph Dail of Snow Hill; four brothers, H. C. Pittman and R. B. Pittman of Clarks, H. B. Pittman of Snow Hill, and J. K. Pittman of Washington, D.C.; and by two grandchildren.

Her funeral was held at the Clarks Methodist Church, Nannie Humphrey recalls James C. Humphrey borrowing a piano from New Bern to provide music at the funeral. Rose P. Humphrey was buried in the Pittman plot in the Maplewood Cemetery in Kinston, NC. Sometime before 1964, she was interred in the Greenleaf Memorial Park in New Bern, NC. After her death, a new Humphrey arrival, Rose Marie Humphrey born in November 1942, was named for her grandmother. Later Helen P. Humphrey also named a daughter Rose Ann, in memory of Rose.¹⁸

After her death, Jay Lee Sr. worked as a Civil Service employee at Jacksonville, NC. About 1950 he lived for a time with his son Hal F. Humphrey and wife, Martha "Dolly". In the 1950s he lived with the family of his son, Jay Lee Humphrey. In the late 1950s Jay Lee Jr. built a new home at Clarks, and Jay Lee Sr. returned to his home in Clarks.

Jay Lee Humphrey, Sr. died on June 28, 1964 at his home in Clarks. The family received friends at the home and a graveside service was held at the Greenleaf Memorial Park in New Bern. The writer was unable to locate an obituary for Jay Lee in the New Bern Sun Journal records.

Jay Lee Humphrey's estate was divided among his children, all receiving property in the Clarks' area. William G. Humphrey received the family home at that time and over the next twenty years purchased tracts from his siblings and consolidated most of the property into his holdings.

The Children of Jay Lee Humphrey and Rosa Pittman Humphrey:

Doris Lee Humphrey was born in Clarks on November 21, 1914. About 1940, Doris lived with her brother, Jay Lee, Jr., and in the New Bern City Directory of 1941, she is listed employed as a hostess in the Coffee Shop of the New Bernian Hotel, a prominent hotel in New Bern, NC. She married Edward Charles 'Mac' McCombs on March 22, 1942. E. C. McCombs was born on August 7, 1914, served in World War II and Korea, and retired from the United States Marine Corps as a Master Sargent. He was employed by the Maola Milk Company of New Bern for a number of years until his retirement. Their children are three daughters, Doris Ann, Linda, and Katherine. E. C. McCombs died on June 1, 1983 in Jacksonville, NC and is buried in the National Cemetery in New Bern. Doris Lee Humphrey currently resides in Jacksonville, NC.^{19,20}



Figure 30 Doris Lee Humphrey, 1946

Jay Lee Humphrey, Jr. was born on September 7, 1916 in Clarks. As a young man, he worked with his father in the brickyard. On November 10, 1936 he married Nannie Belle Wetherington of Tuscarora.²¹ A cousin, Luke H. Wetherington witnessed the ceremony performed by Rev. Poston, Baptist minister. After their marriage they lived in Clarks, in the former home of John C. Stewart until the birth of their first child, Jay Lee Humphrey III, born on February 13, 1939. They moved to New Bern and lived in several locations; among these being a home on Bern Street and 101 Hancock Street. He was listed in the 1941 City Directory as the manager of the Travelers Oil Company on South Front Street, near the old Trent River Bridge.²² This area was later incorporated into the grounds for the restoration of Tryon's Palace. With the buildup of the Cherry Point military base, Jay Lee worked with



Figure 31 Jay Lee Humphrey, Jr. and Jay Lee III, 1940

the Civil Service in the Aviation Petroleum Division. A daughter, Rose Marie Humphrey was born on November 27, 1942. A son, William Christopher Humphrey was born on December 19, 1944.

Jay Lee Humphrey was employed by the Seashore Transportation Company after the war years. A son, Rex Allen Humphrey was born on May 23, 1951. The family lived in Clarks and also at another home on Clark Avenue in New Bern in the 1960s. In 1971 Jay Lee and Nannie lived for several years in Beaufort, NC, at 221 Front Street, in a home owned by cousin, Jack Humphrey. They returned to Clarks in 1975 and he retired in 1981 but continued to work part time and to work as caretaker for the family estate owned by William G. Humphrey.

Jay Lee and Nannie moved to Raleigh in the late 1980s and lived with their son, William C. Humphrey. Jay Lee Humphrey died on July 17, 1990 in Raleigh, NC. His funeral was at the Pollock-Wells and Best Funeral Home in New Bern, NC. The service was officiated by Rev. Mike Scott and Rev. Mann of the Gethsemane FWB church of Tuscarora. He is buried in Greenleaf Memorial Park in a lot adjoining his father, Jay Lee Humphrey, Sr.

Harold Bumpas Humphrey was born on March 1, 1919 in Clarks. "Bump" was named for R. F. Bumpas, Methodist minister of Centenary Methodist Church of New Bern. Harold "Bump" served in the United States Army in World War II. He married Rose Bera Westbrook of Farmville, NC on July 4, 1942. She was born November 3, 1921 and died February 16, 1970. He worked for the US Postal Service in Farmville and retired as Postmaster in 1982. Their daughter, Beverly Humphrey, was born December 31, 1950. He married (2) Jean Allen, and in 1982 married (3) Mildred Pauline Scurlock Pittman of Craven County. They reside in the Neuse Forest area of Craven County.²³



Figure 32 *Photo of Harold Bumpas and Rose Bera Humphrey*



Figure 33 Bump and Mildred Humphrey

Donald Holmes Humphrey was born on September 21, 1920 in Clarks, NC. He married Helen Larue Moore of Fort Barnwell on November 17, 1939.²⁴ Their son, Allen Ray Humphrey, lives in Greensboro, NC. He later married Helen Price on February 4, 1942 and their children are Donald 'Duke' Holmes Humphrey, Jr., Charles Pittman Humphrey, and Rose Ann Humphrey. Donald owned the Coastal Upholstery Company in New Bern and later Coastal Enterprises for many years. He was listed as President of Coastal Upholstery in the 1958 New Bern City Directory.²⁵ Donald died April 19, 1988 and was buried in Greenleaf Memorial Park in New Bern, NC.²⁶



Figure 34 Photo of Donald H. Humphrey, Sr. and Jr.

William Grey Humphrey was born on July 1, 1922 in Clarks. He served in the US Army Air Corps during WW II and later attended NC State College. He married Maclynn Avery Mackie on August 30, 1950 in Granite Falls, NC. He was employed by the Milliken Company and retired from the company. Bill and Maclynn's children are Maclynn Avery Humphrey, Monta Humphrey Betts, and William Grey Humphrey, Jr. William G. Humphrey, Sr. died on August 11, 1994 in Spartanburg, SC.²⁷



Figure 35 Photo of William G. and Maclynn Humphrey

James Carroll Humphrey was born on December 24, 1924 in Clarks. He served in the US Army Air Corps in Europe in WW II. He married Virginia Claire Hamilton on December 27, 1944 in Craven County. Virginia was born on July 7, 1925. In the 1947 New Bern City Directory Jimmy is listed as an employee of Hamilton's Café.²⁸ In the 1951 City Directory he is listed as the asst. manager of Hamilton's Café.²⁹ He later worked for the Leggett and Myers Tobacco Company and in the 1970s he worked for Motorola in New Bern. The children of James C. and Virginia H. Humphrey: James Carroll Humphrey, Jr., Dr. Daune Claire Humphrey, Pia Dannon Humphrey, and Gigg Kerry Humphrey (1953-1953).³⁰ James C. Humphrey died on October 25, 1981 in New Bern and is buried in the New Bern Memorial Cemetery.³¹



Figure 36 James C. and Virginia Humphrey

Hal Foscue Humphrey was born on April 18, 1927 in Clarks, NC. He married Martha Hart “Dolly” Simpson, daughter of James Simpson and Martha Pridgen. She was born July 11, 1927. They were married on July 25, 1946 in Craven County. He retired from the US Army with 25 years service and was employed by the New Bern Housing Authority until his retirement in the 1980s. Their children are Hal Foscue Humphrey, Jr. born October 6, 1948 and Stephen James Humphrey, born August 5, 1953.³²

Figure 37 Photo of Hal Foscue Humphrey, Sr.



Helen Archer Humphrey was born on April 18, 1927 in Clarks, NC. Helen was named for Helen Archer Pittman, wife of James K. Pittman. She married Meriwether Lewis Ferguson on October 26, 1946 in Jacksonville, NC. Meriwether owned the Ferguson Supply Company and retired in 1971. Meriwether L. Ferguson died in February 1987.³³ Their children are Jan Lillian Ferguson, Eve Alston Ferguson and Lisa Humphrey Ferguson.³⁴



Figure 38 Photo of Helen Archer Humphrey

The John Humphrey Family

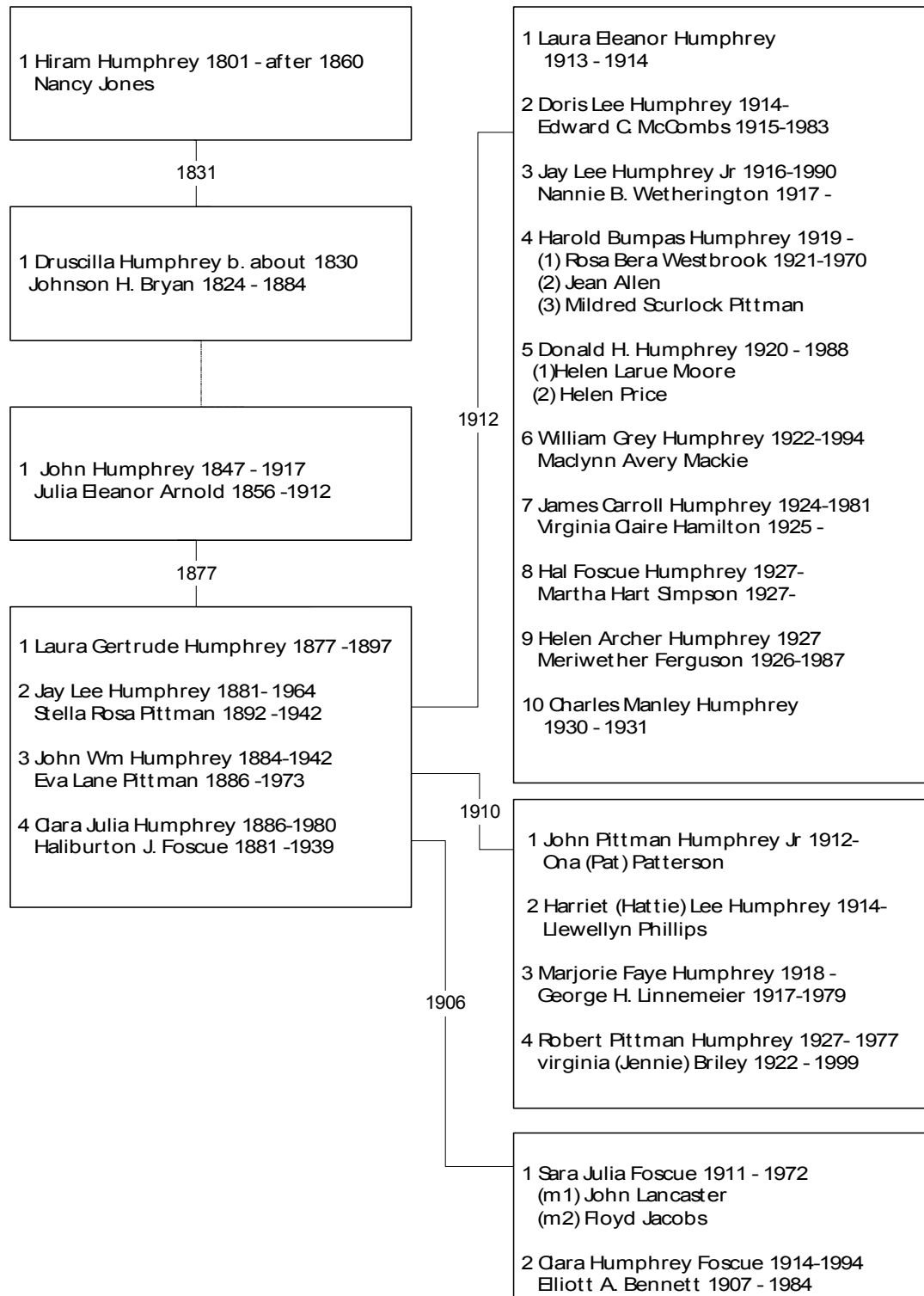


Figure 39 Overview of the John Humphrey Family

The grandchildren of Jay Lee Humphrey, Sr. and Rosa P. Humphrey:

1. Doris Lee Humphrey m. Edward Charles McCombs
 - a. Doris Ann McCombs
 - b. Linda McCombs
 - c. Katherine McCombs

 2. Jay Lee Humphrey, Jr. m. Nannie Belle Wetherington
 - a. Jay Lee Humphrey, III (1939-1999)
 - b. William Christopher Humphrey
 - c. Rose Marie Humphrey
 - d. Rex Allen Humphrey

 3. Harold Bumpas Humphrey m. Rose Westbrook
 - a. Beverly HumphreyHarold Bumpas Humphrey m. Jean Allen
Harold Bumpas Humphrey m. Mildred Pauline Scurlock Pittman

 4. Donald Holmes Humphrey m. Helen Larue Moore
 - a. Allen Ray HumphreyDonald Holmes Humphrey m. Helen Price
 - b. Donald Holmes Humphrey, Jr.
 - c. Charles Pittman Humphrey
 - d. Rose Anne Humphrey

 5. William Grey Humphrey m. Maclynn Avery Mackie
 - a. Maclynn Avery Humphrey
 - b. Monta Humphrey
 - c. William Grey Humphrey, Jr.

 6. James Carroll Humphrey m. Virginia Claire Hamilton
 - a. James Carroll Humphrey, Jr.
 - b. Daune Claire Humphrey
 - c. Pia Dannon Humphrey
 - d. Gigg Kerry Humphrey (1953-1953)

 7. Hal Foscue Humphrey m. Martha Hart "Dolly" Simpson
 - a. Hal Foscue Humphrey, Jr.
 - b. Steven James Humphrey

 8. Helen Archer Humphrey m. Meriwether Lewis Ferguson
 - a. Jan Lillian Ferguson
 - b. Eve Alston Ferguson
 - c. Lisa Humphrey Ferguson
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Endnotes Chapter 7 The Jay Lee Humphrey Family

- ¹ Reedy Branch is a tributary on the south side of the Trent River. The Craven – Jones County boundary.
 - ² The Heritage of Craven County, Volume I. 1984. Article 268. Craven County Library.
 - ³ Craven County Deeds. Book 107 Page 130. 1878. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ⁴ Clark Brick and Tile Stock Certificate. No. 15. 1912. Library of author.
 - ⁵ Family knowledge from J. L. Humphrey, Jr..
 - ⁶ Lenoir County Marriage Register, 1873-1924. Microfilm. C.059.63001. Craven County Library.
 - ⁷ 1900 Craven County Census. 8th Township. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ⁸ 1920 Craven County Census. 8th Township. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ⁹ Craven County, NC Cemeteries. Volume 2. Craven County Library.
 - ¹⁰ Craven County Death Certificate. 1931-282. Craven County Registrar of Deeds
 - ¹¹ Family knowledge from J. L. Humphrey, Jr.
 - ¹² 1880 and 1900 Craven County Census. 3rd Township. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ¹³ Per John W. Humphrey –Eva Pittman marriage license. 1910. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ¹⁴ Craven County Tax Records. 2001. 8th Township. Parcel 8-221-022.
 - ¹⁵ Sketch drawn from Family knowledge. A. Humphrey. 2002.
 - ¹⁶ Craven County Deeds. Book 107 Page 130. 1878. Microfilm. Craven County Library.
 - ¹⁷ Craven County Tax Records. 2001. 8th Township. Parcel 8-221-087.
 - ¹⁸ Family knowledge from Nannie W. Humphrey. 2001.
 - ¹⁹ The Heritage of Craven County. Volume I. Article 268. Craven County Library.
 - ²⁰ Back of photo stamped Marine Barracks NOB. Argentia, Newfoundland. April 7, 1946.
 - ²¹ Craven County Marriage Register. 1924-1948. Volume 8. Microfilm. Craven County. Library.
 - ²² 1941 New Bern City Directory. Craven County Library.
 - ²³ The Heritage of Craven County, Volume I. 1984. Article 268. Craven County Library.
 - ²⁴ Craven County Marriage Register. 1924-1948. Volume 9. Microfilm. Craven County. Library.
 - ²⁵ 1958 New Bern City Directory. Craven County Library.
 - ²⁶ Craven County, NC Cemeteries, Volume II. Craven County Library.
 - ²⁷ The Heritage of Craven County, Volume I. 1984. Article 268. Craven County Library.
 - ²⁸ 1947 New Bern City Directory. Craven County Library.
 - ²⁹ 1951 New Bern City Directory. Craven County Library.
 - ³⁰ Ibid.
 - ³¹ Craven County, NC Cemeteries, Volume II. Craven County Library.
 - ³² The Heritage of Craven County, Volume I. 1984. Article 268. Craven County Library.
 - ³³ The Heritage of Craven County, Volume I. 1984. Article 268. Craven County Library.
 - ³⁴ The Heritage of Craven County, Volume I. 1984. Article 268. Craven County Library.
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