

# Using Baker Roll and Applications for Native American Research

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*Introduction: Many families have a Native American tradition in their family history. In this lecture, we will explore the Baker Roll and Applications and the wealth of genealogical data they hold. Whether your family members appear on the final Baker Roll or not, if they filled out an application, you are in luck!*

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## **I. Beginning Your Native American Research:**

- a. Consider when and where your ancestors lived
- b. Begin with census records. Collect them all and pay special attention to the race column.
- c. Also note *WHERE* your ancestors were living in a given time period. Does it match with where a Native American tribe was living at the time?
- d. Create your own ancestor timeline including names, dates, and place of residence
- e. DNA results should be carefully reviewed with a professional genetic genealogist

## **II. Cherokee Tribe History:**

- a. After the American Revolution: Cherokee Tribes were living in what is present day Alabama, Georgia, North and South Carolina, and Tennessee.
- b. About 1817, some of these Cherokee tribal members voluntarily left for Arkansas and then moved onto reservations in what is now Oklahoma. These tribal members are sometimes referred to as “Western Cherokee” or “Old Settlers.”
- c. 1838/1839, the remainder of the Cherokee Tribe was forcibly removed. We call this removal the Trail of Tears.
- d. A small group of tribal members avoided this removal and later became known as the Eastern Band of Cherokee.
- e. In 1920, the government put land into a trust to be divided among the members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee
- f. In 1924, Congress established the Eastern Cherokee Enrolling Commission to determine membership and who would qualify for the allotment of designated land

## **III. What information will be found in an application:**

- a. Applicant’s name, age, degree of Indian blood, and residence
- b. Maiden name if applicable
- c. Name of ancestors and their relationship of descent
- d. Name of spouses and children
- e. Degree of Indian blood of mother and father
- f. Residence of mother and father

To determine who was eligible, an application process was needed. Not all the people of the tribe applied, but many did. Some were accepted, some were rejected. Of 3,833 applications, 3,146 were approved. Even if your ancestor was rejected, the application they filled out will hold a great deal of genealogical information.

Today's Eastern Band of North Carolina Cherokee reside in an area of land in western North Carolina known as the Qualla Boundary. The Baker Roll has been used since 1924 to determine membership into the Eastern Band of North Carolina Cherokee.

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