

**HOW DID THE VARNERS COME
TO AMERICA?**

Hint: not on a luxury yacht.

INDENTURED SERVITUDE: SLAVES WITH A TIMER

Servants typically worked four to seven years in exchange for passage, room, board, lodging and freedom dues. While the life of an indentured servant was harsh and restrictive, it wasn't slavery. There were laws that protected some of their rights. But their life was not an easy one, and the punishments meted out to people who wronged were harsher than those for non-servants. An indentured servant's contract could be extended as punishment for breaking a law, such as running away, or in the case of female servants, becoming pregnant.

As demands for labor grew, so did the cost of indentured servants. Many landowners also felt threatened by newly freed servants demand for land. The colonial elite realized the problems of indentured servitude. Landowners turned to African slaves as a more profitable and ever-renewable source of labor and the shift from indentured servants to racial slavery had begun.—PBS History Detective

LOST CHILDREN: SLAVES WITH NO CONTRACTS

1618—The London Common Council sends a group of 100 street children from London to Jamestown, Virginia. Two additional groups of 100 children are sent in 1620 and 1622; the latter as reinforcements following the Indian massacre of 350 settlers in Virginia.

1645—The Corporation for the Propagation of the Gospel emigrates 200 poor children to the colonies to meet the labor shortage. 'Spiriting' (kidnapping) children for deadly work in America continues another 130 years.

1740—500 Scottish children are kidnapped for the colonies, among whom was Peter Williamson ('Indian Peter'). In 1757 Williamson's book *French and Indian Cruelty Exemplified in the Life and Various Vicissitudes of Fortune of Peter Williamson* exposes the kidnapping of Scottish children for the Americas, and leads to civil action against those involved in the traffic. (Was Peter Pan based on his story? Maybe even Pinocchio?)

1776—Exiling prisoners and spiriting children from Great Britain to America is stopped by the Revolutionary War. Eventually they were shipped to Australia instead.

Indentured Migration and the Servant Trade from London to America, 1618-1718

NORTH CAROLINA CAPITAL OF WHITE TRASH AMERICA

- As indentured servants and kidnapped children escaped or fulfilled their time under their masters in Virginia and Maryland, they went south toward the Dismal Swamp to seek their fortunes. They were considered “Virginia’s refuse.”
- In 1712, the English governors split the Carolina colony in two. The south established a class system and fully embraced ownership of African slaves. The north colony became known as “Poor Carolina.” North Carolina became an imperial renegade territory, the Atlantic shore a swampy refuge for the poor and landless (including Black Beard). NC was “overrun with sloth and poverty.”
- In 1732 Georgia was parceled out as an experiment, meant to reform debtors and rescue poor men and families, like those in NC. Georgia originally refused to permit slavery, instead giving land via lottery to men and women, including several Varners.

HOW FORMER INDENTURED PEOPLE GOT TITLE TO LAND IN NC

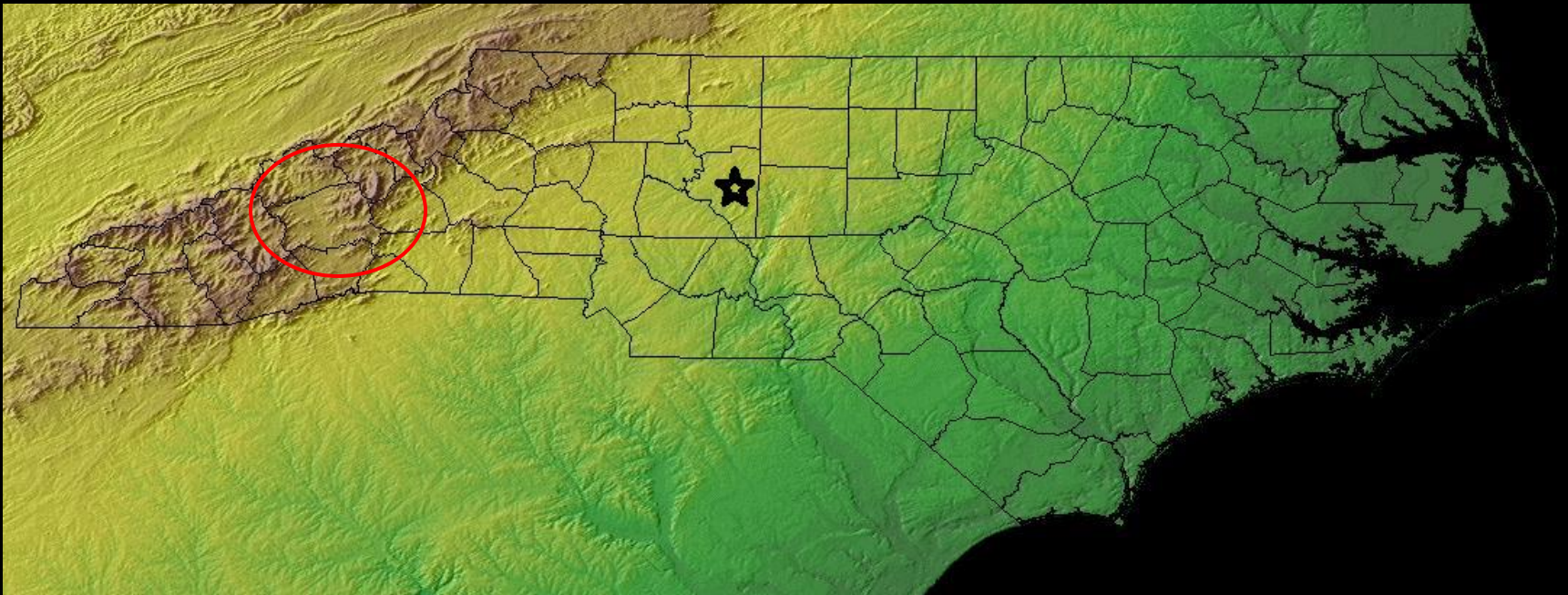
- By 1729 seven of the eight original proprietors who owned NC sold their shares to King George II making North Carolina a royal colony.
- One proprietor refused to sell, and his domain was later known as the Granville District that covered roughly the northern half of the state, including present day Davidson County.
- In 1737, before the boundaries of the Granville District were established, Henry McCulloh received a royal patent for 1.2 million acres in western North Carolina.
- Five of his 12 tracts were within the Granville District in Orange and Rowan counties. Lands granted by McCulloh and by the Granville office were deeds, not grants.

SOME DEEDS TO VARNERS

Name	County	Entered	Issued	Acres	Location
John Varner	Rowan	1796	1800	400	On the E. side of the Yadkin River (western most border of Davidson county)
John Varner [Varnor]	Rowan	1788	1793	25	On the E. end of the Bald Mountain Ridge
George Varner	Rowan	1778	1786	300	On the waters of Beaverdam Creek (near Bald Mountains, in Catawba County)
Eli Varner	Davidson	1831	1832	30	On waters of Lick Creek (20 mi. S of Lexington)

TOPOGRAPHY OF NC

Lexington and Thomasville are in Davidson county, which is now considered part of the Winston-Salem-Greensboro-Highpoint metropolitan area.
The Bald Mountains are circled in red, near Asheville.



ELI AND WILLIAM VARNER
INHERITED THEIR FATHER'S LAND

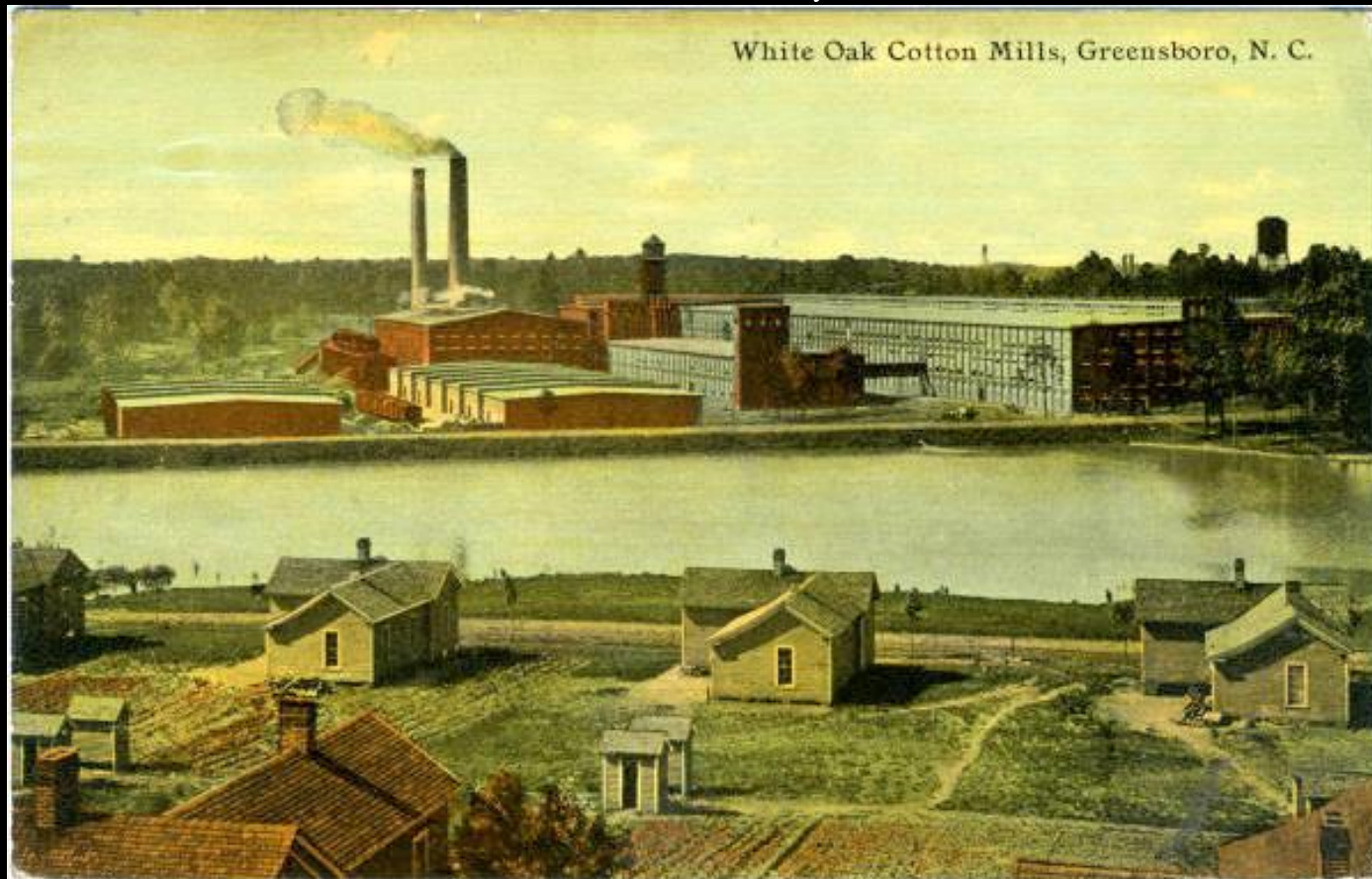
Their older brother, Thomas, did not inherit land. He was a cabinet maker by trade long before the area became known as the furniture capital of the USA.

“Since tenants farmed at the whim of individual landlords, making a crop could be a precarious undertaking for those tenants who rented from unscrupulous individuals. For example, in 1839 Thomas Varner of Davidson County rented a field of seven acres from Lewis Newsome. Varner planted corn on the land, but Newsome, apparently convinced that Varner did an inadequate job working the plot, refused to allow his tenant to harvest the crop. Newsome physically attacked Varner to keep him out of the field, and Varner received nothing for his farming efforts.”

—Poor Whites of the Antebellum South: Tenants and Laborers in Central North Carolina and Northeast Mississippi by Charles C. Bolton

**JAMES VARNER QUOTE, “MILL
WORKERS AND FARMERS”**

Those Varners who stayed in North Carolina worked in the mills or farmed, likely cotton or tobacco.



TRAIL TO TENNESSEE AND BEYOND



Around 1840, one son and one daughter moved to Gibson County, TN with their families, 590 miles away, the journey would have taken at least 6 weeks. From there, in about 1870-86 one son moved to Ft. Smith, then to Muldrow, OK and one daughter moved to Alvord, TX with their families, most of their children ending up in Oklahoma with oil jobs. My gggrandfather and the other daughters stayed in the Trenton, TN area. My great grandfather left his family in Tennessee and ended up in Indian Territory on his own by 1890.