

# Book Is A Catalogue Of Catawba History

## Details On Crafts, Wartime Efforts. Land Leases Make Up Profile Of Tribe

By **LOUISE PETTUS**  
 In the fall of 1987, Scarecrow Press published "Bibliography of the Catawba," compiled and annotated by Thomas J. Blumer.

The 502-page book is the 10th volume of the "Native American Bibliography Series" and will undoubtedly be invaluable to anyone



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interested in information about the Catawba Indians. It is of special local interest because of the tremendous number of references to people and events associated with York County. In combination, the entries (arranged chronologically) and the lengthy index serve to point out the major events of Catawba history.

There are 4,271 references covering 305 years of Catawba history. Of these references, 612 deal with events before the American Revolution and 640 cover the period between the Revolution and the Civil War. Most are of recent times. More than 500 references are cited for the Catawba land claim as it has moved through the U.S. court system the past 10 years.

Blumer found these references in many places. Newspapers were a valuable resource. Blumer cites 75 newspapers, many of which are no longer published. In the colonial period, The South Carolina Gazette carried all of the official news and its accounts reveal the significant role played by Catawbas in serving as a go-between for other Indian tribes and the Royal government.

In modern times, the major suppliers of articles on the Catawbas were The Herald, The Fort Mill Times and The Yorkville Enquirer. Blumer's position (a senior editor of the Library of Congress law library) enabled him to take advantage of the tremendous capabilities of the Library of Congress to locate materials and articles that can only be labeled obscure.

Among the sources, as would be expected, are the official archives



The York County Story

of the State of South Carolina and the National Archives in Washington.

The South Carolina Archives house a large number of the extant Catawba Indian land leases — some 128 leases. Blumer lists each of the leases, the date of the lease, the number of acres involved and the names of the leaseholders and the Indian officers who granted the lease.

The National Archives' holdings begin in the 1880s and include all the Bureau of Indian Affairs files on the Catawbas.

Besides the land leasing system, and references to cultural artifacts (chiefly pottery), there are numerous references to Catawbas and warfare.

The entries reveal Catawba involvement in all the wars. Catawba warriors fought in the Revolution while their women and children stayed in Virginia with the Pamunkey Indians. N.C. Moravian records showed that more than 100 Catawbas passed through Salem, N.C., on their way from Virginia to South Carolina June 13, 1781.

During the Civil War, The Lancaster Ledger reported Nov. 12, 1862, "The Catawba Indian population is estimated between 80-100. Most of the men are serving in the army, and their families are destitute."

The Rock Hill Record, Sept. 2, 1918, under the heading "Indian Women Showing Their Loyalty," stated that "Catawba Indian women are knitting for the Red Cross, and the Mormon Relief Society has donated \$8 to the cause. Four Catawba Indians are in the service and one is serving in France. Netti Owl's daughter, Lula Owl, is a Red Cross Army Nurse."

The Evening Herald, May 27,

1944, in an article headed, "Catawbas have 28 Braves in Armed Services," listed the names of the men. By March of the following year there were 34 Catawba men in the military.

Catawba pottery is the subject of many of the bibliographic entries. There are 33 articles cited on the pottery tradition alone. Many more entries fall under such topics as demonstrations, exhibits, manufacture, peddling and sales.

The Journal of Southern History recommended the bibliography, saying, "The book is a must for historians, ethnologists, genealogists, folklorists, economists, local historians and students of the American Indian."

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 Thomas J. Blumer  
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