

Jamestown's Ancestors & The Seminoles

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To answer the question:

Does the unique pronunciation of English words, the dialect of Jamestown's generational residents, indicate a connection to the Seminole Indians of Florida?



Some time in 1923, the community of Jamestown was platted. That is not where it was born though. It is recorded, via a 1910 photograph, to have been established about a mile south from its current location. This document is a account of a piece of Jamestown history, a small community on Davenport's north side.

Jamestown crosses US Route 17-92, which means that there is both a west and an east side to this community. It forms one of three entrances into the historic area of Davenport.

Jamestown is like so many other communities throughout the United States. They hold dear to their unique American accent. Theirs is just like other American accents, including: Southern drawl, Yat of New Orleans, and the dialects from New York's boroughs, like Brooklyn or Queens. Accent is culture. Often you can tell where someone comes from simply by the way they pronounce their words.

I was told by a long-time resident I had befriended that the reason current residents in Jamestown have such a unique accent is because their ancestry is associated with the Seminole Indians, whose US-permitted reservation spanned a vast area in central Florida many years ago. As it turns out, Davenport is located smack-center in the region that the Seminole called home at one time, that is, until the soldiers and the Settlers arrived.

The resident who gave me this nugget of information was nicknamed *Dollar*. His actual name was Benjamin Robinson.

He was a kind and friendly middle-aged man with sickle cell disease. He walked in front of my home every morning to address his disorder. He walked all the way from Jamestown to the then-vacant elementary school on Suwannee Ave. He attended that school when he was a kid. He told me that one time he cut the grass for the old lady who lived at my home long before I moved here myself. He told me how that person had paid him barely anything for chopping down nearly a quarter-acre of tall grass, and he told me how he felt about that. But he mostly told me about Jamestown.

I went there to Jamestown one day and walked around. I waved at a few folks sitting out in front of their homes, smiling. I wondered about its past. Where did these people come from? How did they end up next to a huge, dilapidated citrus