



PRESLEY NATIVE AMERICAN LINEAGE

NOTE: Deborah Cavel Grant, descendant of Sandifer Casiah, has done much research on our Tuscarora line. Here is Deborah's [History of the Tuscarora](#) and [History of the Tuscarora PDF](#)

The Southern Tuscarora were comprised of different clans, Chief Casiah and family being of the "Deer Clan." Additional information on the Southern Band of Tuscarora was given by Tuscarora brother and Native American historian, Wayne Jackson, and a sister of the feather from Canada, Deb Cavel-Grant. Thank you both for your expertise. For more information on this tribe, and to further your Native American lineage, check out the following link:

[Access Genealogy](#)

Barbara Lee, founder of *The Kin of Rock and Roll*, in working together with Casiah family members, has learned startling new information regarding Elvis Presley's Native American heritage. While known to have Cherokee blood, and, a bit of Creek or Chickasaw on his mother's side, Elvis' direct Presley line may include descent from a Tuscarora Indian Chief. In addition is the new knowledge that **Dunnan** Presley, Sr. and Jr., Elvis' 2nd and 3rd great-grandfathers, was actually spelled **DUNNING**, named for a maternal grandfather, Dunning Casiah of Bertie, North Carolina. The *Kin of Rock and Roll* has established that the origin of the name **Dunning** may have stemmed from the surname of one John Dunning, born circa 1685 in England and died in Bertie County, North Carolina circa 1756. This is not to say that John Dunning sired Dunning Casiah for it was known that Native Americans under English jurisdiction sometimes acquired the surnames of their benefactors. Thus far, no connection has been found to cite Dunning Casiah as a blood descendant of John Dunning. More to come on this.

A good portion of southern heritage includes the white-anglo and Native American mix. Many Cherokee, Creek, Chickasaw and white intermarriages had taken place since the earliest of times.

Elvis had a true infatuation with the Native American spirit. His spiritual nature was only part of the native American mystique. He admired the people of the long houses and tribes. He displayed various Native American artifacts in his jungle room at Graceland including the magnificent headdress once presented to him. He was extremely touched when the head of the Sioux Tribe had the little Indian Maiden present him with the award for his portrayal of a half-breed in the film "*Flaming Star*," grateful to him for bringing to light the plight the Native Americans.

On Elvis' mother's side, a full-blooded Cherokee woman named Mourning Dove White married William Mansell, Elvis' 4th ggrandfather. New speculation has arisen that Mourning Dove White was either a Creek or Chickasaw Indian as there were no Cherokee in the Mississippi region at that time. On the Presley side, there is both Cherokee and Tuscarora which can be openly documented.

Included in the Presley family intermarriages is the family name of Casiah/Keziah. This is the name of a family belonging to the Tuscarora tribe of North Carolina, Bertie County, formerly known as Chowan County, in the area known as the Indian Woods tribal region. The Tuscarora were forced to give away their lands in NC in the mid-1700's, and a series of treaties were established to prepare for this final conclusion. By 1760, most of the Tuscarora had gone the way of New York to join forces with the Iroquois Confederacy and built up their reservation in Sanborn, near Niagara Falls, situate there today as one of the few remaining "traditionalist" tribes in the nation. However, two clans of that tribe, the Bear Clan and the Deer Clan, stayed behind in NC to oversee and protect the ancestral lands remaining.

Lore has it that the Casiah people took their name from the nearby Casiah River. Owing



Portrait of a Tuscarora Chief from the 1700's. This could very well be Chief Nicholas Casiah b. 1690.

to misspelling by the British, the river came to be known as the "Cashie River." Chief Casiah, and family members, presided during the destruction of the tribal lands, and in 1831, Chief Nicholas Casiah was one of seven chiefs of the NC tribe who signed over the final "deed." Some of the Casiah Deer Clan remained in North Carolina, while others left for New York. A Chief, William Casiah, has been recorded as having been at the New York Tuscarora reservation.

Among some of the Casiah/Keziah intermarriages with the Presley family was the family of Winchester. Captain William Winchester, an officer in the NC Militia during the French & Indian War, married Princess Sarah Casiah, a daughter of Chief Nicholas "Cashie." Chief Nicholas Casiah/Cashie, through his daughter, Princess Sarah Casiah's marriage to Capt. William Winchester, is the 6th great-grandfather of Barbara Lee.

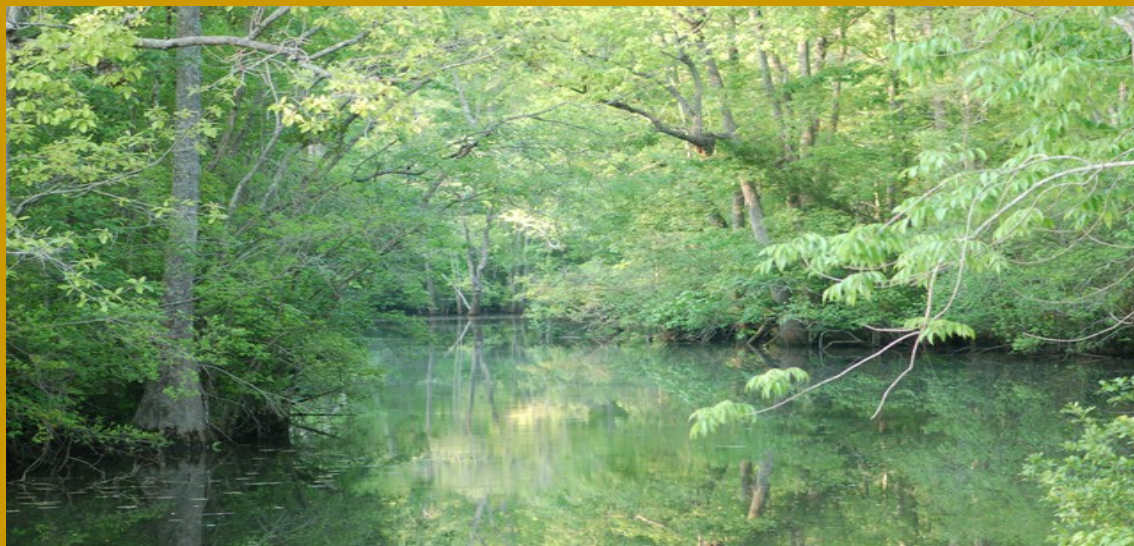
Charles Presley married Polly Casiah/Keziah, the daughter of Dunning Casiah, brother of Sarah and Sandifer.

We have new knowledge that Andrew Presley, Jr.'s son, John Presley, was the father of Dunnan Presley, Sr.

Andrew Presley, Jr. family moved about between NC and SC quite regularly during the pre-Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary War period. Son John, in his pension statement, confirms that he also moved freely between N. Car. and Tennessee.

Three brothers: Thomas, John, and Andrew, Jr. in Anson County, Rowan County, Buncombe County, NC, and Kershaw and Lancaster Counties in SC during the periods from 1771 to 1820. In 1790, Andrew is found both in Buncombe County, NC and in Lancaster County, SC. Kershaw County was a large part of what was to become Lancaster. We have a documented ledger for Kershaw County naming Andrew, Sr., Andrew, Jr. and Thomas along with John Hood. We also show that on the 1790 census for Lancaster County, SC, an Andrew "Priestley" living with "one other, free." On the census records of that time, "one other" usually denoted one of another color other than white but not necessarily a slave. Next door to Andrew is Jno "Priestley." Next door to John is the household of Dunnan Cashialaw, noted as "one other, free." This record has been proven by Casiah family members to be Dunning Casiah who lived in that very area at that very same time. Andrew "Priestley" is not listed with son, Charles "Priestley" as the son is already married to Miss Mary "Polly" Keziah, daughter of Dunning Casiah. Charles and Polly were married in Rowan County, NC, in 1783 and also on the record denoting this, according to Casiah family members, is the comment that Charles "is the son of Andrew Presley, a blacksmith from Cecile County, MD."

Andrew's son, John, had been seen on a document listed as married to ? Casiah. (document to be located and displayed here.) If John Presley was married to a daughter of



Dunning Casiah, that would explain where John's son received his name. According to Casiah/Tuscarora tradition, a son is named for the maternal grandfather. In this case, John Presley's son would have been named "Dunning" for his mother's father, Dunning Casiah. Dunning John Presley was born in 1780 in Lancaster County, SC, where his father was documented as living within the ten-year census period.

Elvis' Cherokee roots came down from his great-grandmother, Morning Dove White Mansell, a Cherokee from Alabama. Lillian Mann Fortenberry, the oldest sister of Gladys, was found to be living as an Absentee Shawnee according to the US Indian Rolls taken in Oklahoma, in 1937. With her first husband, Charlie Mann, and a son, Billy, the Indian Roll shows Lillian with her given indian name, "Lillie Panther.">> [US Indian Census](#)

THIS REMAINS A WORK-IN-PROGRESS. MORE TO COME AS RESEARCH CONTINUES

This beautiful photo was taken at Windsor, NC, near Roanoke by Martha G. Price, a native of Bertie County. Mrs. Price has graciously allowed us to use her photo. As a little girl, Martha, who lived a few blocks from the river, recalls playing there quite often. The essence of her photo captures the essence of the spirituality and historic significance of the river.

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