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THE YEARS 1770—1776



12 March 1770 - WILL: Robert Hester, wife Barbara. Identified sons Abraham, James, Charles, Francis, Nathan, Samuel, and daughters Barbara Walton, Anne Hester, Susanna Hester, Mary Hester, Eliza Hester, Sarah Smith, and left to son James 258 acres which is part of a tract purchased from **Thomas Baker** and to Nathan 258 acres of same. [**Louisa County** Will Book 2, p 71]

Here Robert Hester, the Louisa planter who bought and sold land with Baker and William Davenport back in the 1750s, divided his various holdings among his children. In particular, he divided the 516-acre tract in Lunenburg County that he had purchased in 1756 from Thomas Baker between two of his sons.

◇ **16 March 1770** - PROBATE: Estate of John Wright, late of **Culpeper County**, Decd. **Thomas Davenport**. Jonas Menefee and Benjamin Gaines were named to inventory and appraise the Estate. (*Culpeper County Wills*, A:499)

A low profile man for most of his life, Thomas, eldest son of Martin, Sr., was sufficiently regarded as to be appointed to evaluate the worth of decedents' estates. Note the association of the Menefee family with the Bakers – Henry Baker, son of Thomas Baker, married Nancy Ann Menefee.

3 April 1770 – LAND GRANT MEMORIAL: for five tracts containing 1,350 acres on Buckhead Creek, Amelia Township, **Berkeley County**, South Carolina, to Jeremiah Strother. Shown as adjoining landholders: **William Baker**, **Catherine Baker**. [Online index, South Carolina Land Grants, Series: S111001 Volume - 0010 Page - 00079 Item - 02]

More research is required to determine the exact identities of this Jeremiah Strother and this William Baker, who is more likely to be Thomas Baker's brother than his son if a family relationship exists at all. And identification of Catherine Baker is also required.

6 May 1771 – ESTATE ACCOUNTING: In the accounting for the Estate of George Strother, a charge was made for **Thomas Baker's** bond with interest thereon to 1 January 1772 [**Culpeper County** Will Book, B/C:71]

Here again is yet another entanglement of the Bakers and the Strothers, with the Kennerlys also involved. Record evidence establishes intermarriage of the Strothers and the Kennerlys; the degree of involvement by the Bakers suggests that there is some intermarriage there as well, albeit not provable as of yet by record. Note that in an earlier accounting in 1768, payments were made to Thomas Davenport, brother of

Dorothy Davenport Baker, and his son Martin Davenport from the George Strother estate, further suggesting that Thomas Davenport's wife may have been an as-yet-unidentified Strother.

- ◇ **16 April 1771** - DEED: James Genn, of Fauquier County, to **Martin Davenport**, of Culpeper County, for 3,000 pounds of good and lawful Tobacco, 280 acres in Brumfield Parish, **Culpeper County**, on the north side of the South Fork of Rush River, a branch of the Rappahannock, adjoining John Strother – being the same tract granted to James Genn, father of said James, by Lord Fairfax on 21 Jul 1748... /s/ James Genn. Wit: None. Acknowledged by said Genn in Culpeper Court the same day. (*Culpeper County Deeds*, F:253)

This was Martin, eldest son of the eldest son of Martin, Sr. Within ten years he would be one of the Heroes of the Battle of King's Mountain on the North Carolina-South Carolina Line in 1780.

- ◇ **19 August 1771** – DEED: William Gambill, wife Mary, to Richard Parks, all of Brumfield Parish, Culpeper County, for £25 Virginia, 100 acres in Brumfield Parish, **Culpeper County**, on Little Fork of Rappahannock River, being part of a 10,000-acre grant by Lord Fairfax to James Compton, Esq., who conveyed to **Thomas Baker** on 16 December 1764, adjoining William Davis, Payton, and the Long Mountain... /s/ William Gambill, [No wife signs.] Wit: None. Acknowledged by Gambill same day in Culpeper Court. (*Culpeper County Deeds*, F:283)

18 March 1772 – PROBATE: Estate of John Daniel Jacoby, late of **Culpeper County**, Decd. Among payments for purchases at Public Sale or in settling debts noted were **Thomas Baker**, Anthony Strother. (*Culpeper County Wills, B&C: ?*)

- ◇ **15 May 1772** – DEED OF GIFT: **Thomas Baker**, wife **Dorothy**, to son **Henry Baker**, both of Brumfield Parish, for natural love and affection, 100 acres in Brumfield Parish, **Culpeper County**, in the Little fork of Rappahannock River on branches of Battle Run, adjoining Richard Parks, William Davis... /s/ **Thomas Baker**, [no wife signs]. Wit: William Gambill, Richard Parks, **Martin Davenport**. (*Culpeper County Deeds*, F:460)

Dorothy Baker was the daughter of Martin Davenport, Sr., of Hanover. Martin Davenport, the witness here, was the only son of Dorothy's brother Thomas. Witness William Gambill was the oldest son of Dorothy's sister Mary Davenport, wife of Henry Gambill, Sr.

- ◇ **15 May 1772** - DEED: **Thomas Baker**, wife **Dorothy**, to William Mallory, all of Brumfield Parish, Culpeper County, for £25, 200 acres in Brumfield Parish, **Culpeper County**, in the Little Fork of Rappahannock, on branches of Battle Run, adjoining Jacoby—part of a 1,000-acre tract granted by Lord Fairfax... /s/ **Thos Baker**, [no wife signs]. Wit: Wm Gambill, Richard Parks, **Martin Davenport**. (*Culpeper County Deeds*, F:476)

William Mallory was married to Thomas and Dorothy Davenport Baker's oldest daughter, Mary.

- ◇ **18 May 1772** - DEED: **Martin Davenport**, wife **Hannah**, to John Strother, Gentleman, all of Culpeper County, for £5, 50 acres in Brumfield Parish, **Culpeper County**, in the Fork of Rush River, a branch of the Rappahannock, adjoining said **Strother** and the Rush River--part of the 280-acre tract conveyed to said **Davenport** by James Genn of Fauquier County... /s/ **Martin Davenport**, [no wife signs]. Wit: None. Acknowledged by **Davenport** in Culpeper Court the same day. (*Culpeper County Deeds*, F:473)

This was Martin of Thomas, grandson of Martin, Sr., of Hanover. Davenport family researchers indicate that his wife was Hannah Baker, a first cousin. However, there is no known Hannah Baker among the children of his aunt and uncle Dorothy Davenport and Thomas Baker.

- 8 June 1772** – DEED: William Rice and wife Jane to George Walton, adjoining **Martin Baker's** line. The witnesses to the transaction included one **William Baker**. [**Louisa County** Deed Book D ½ p 362-363]

- 22 August 1772** – ESTATE ACCOUNTING: account of Estate of George Strother [**Culpeper County** Will Book B/C, xx]

- 11 January 1773** – DEED: Reference to **William Baker's** line in deed from George Walton and wife Elizabeth to John Walton. [**Louisa County** Deed Book D ½ p 511-513]

- ◇ **15 March 1773** – PROBATE: Estate of Sharper Atkins, late of **Culpeper County**, Decd. Report of Public Sale of Estate included a purchase by **Martin Davenport**. (*Culpeper County Wills, B&C: ?*)

- 10 January 1774** – PAYMENT: **William Baker**, for patrolling, 111 lbs of tobacco at 2 pence per pound, £0/18/6. [**Louisa County** Court Orders, 1760-1774, p 188]

- 2 December 1774** - DEATH: **Thomas Baker** in **King William County**. (*Louisa County Wills*, 2:213)

This cannot be our Thomas Baker, since our Thomas was involved in land transactions in 1775 and submitted a deposition in September 1775 in support of a land patent on behalf of William Gambill. (See below.)

- 24 January 1775** – DEED: **Thomas Baker** and **Dorothy** his wife to Jacob Crim Jr., 96 acres in Brumfield Parish in the little fork of the Rappahannock River on the Branch of the Battle Run, adjoining William Mallory... /s/ **Thomas Baker**, **Dorothy Baker**. Wit: James Graves, William Mallory, **James Baker**, Jacob Crim Sr., **Dorothy Baker**, Spinster. Acknowledged by **Thomas Baker** and **Dorothy Baker** at Culpeper Court on 15 May 1775. [**Culpeper County** Deed Book H:3-6]

This is the next to the last land transaction of Thomas and Dorothy Baker in Culpeper County. All indications are they were selling out and preparing to move south.

- ◇ **7 February 1775** - DEED: William Gambill to John and George Strother, all of Culpeper County, for consideration of George Strother, Decd., did in his lifetime

purchase a certain parcel of land in Culpeper County, being part of a 232-acre survey made for William Gambill, including 76 acres granted to said Gambill by Lord Fairfax, Quit Claim Deed, 76 acres in **Culpeper County**, adjoining Kennerly and **Thomas Baker**... /s/ William Gambill. Wit: John Strother, Charles Browning, Joseph Strother. (*Culpeper County Deeds*, H:284)

William Gambill, eldest son and heir-at-law to Henry Gambill, Sr., and Mary Davenport, his wife, of Martin Davenport, Sr., owned land that straddled the boundary between the King's land in Virginia and the Northern Neck, i.e., that part of Virginia that James II gave to Lord Fairfax. The division line between the King's land and Fairfax's land was the Rappahannock River. In the headwaters of the Rappahannock which forked into creeks and then into runs, there was often doubt as to whose land office needed to be addressed to obtain a patent. A prudent man, if he could so afford, obtained patent from both, avoided the jurisdictional dispute.

- 13 February 1775** - PROBATE: **Thomas Baker**, dec'd. in **King William County**, probate returned and recorded in Louisa County, with Mann Satterwhite as one of the appraisers; heirs who get property in Louisa County were **Nancy Baker**, **Overton Baker** and Mr. Dabney. (*Louisa County Wills*, 2:215, 223)

*Once again, this cannot be our Thomas Baker. The widow of this Thomas Baker, one Nancy Baker, remarried to a Dabney. In a 1794 deed, she identified one child as Nancy who married Robert Sharp. A dispute over the ownership of slaves from this Thomas Baker's estate was not settled for many years. (See below.) The relationship of Overton Baker to this or any other Baker is as yet unknown. However, William Thomson Baker, author of *The Baker family of England and of central Virginia* (privately published, c1974, in the collection of the New York Public Library), contends that Thomas Baker left three children, Nancy, Mary and Overton. He cites the Louisa County Order Book for 1774-1782, p. 108, for the qualification of George Dabney as the guardian of Mary and Overton Baker.*

What makes this transaction particularly intriguing is that it was another Satterwhite, Thomas Satterwhite, who petitioned for and ultimately received the land patent originally granted to Josias Baker, brother of our Thomas, after Josias failed to act on his claim to the land. See 20 July 1753. Two Bakers and two Satterwhites at least raises a question as to a possible relationship between and among the Bakers.

- ◇ **20 February 1775** - DEED: **Martin Davenport**, wife **Hannah**, to Joseph Steare, all of Culpeper County, for £130 Virginia, 228 acres in Brumfield Parish, **Culpeper County**, being the same tract sold to said **Martin** by James Genn, excepting 52 acres sold John Strother.... /s/ **Martin Davenport, Hannah Davenport**. Wit: John Slaughter, James Barbour. (*Culpeper County Deeds*, G:477)

Martin was the only son of Thomas Davenport, eldest son of Martin, Sr., of Hanover. Here Martin sold out in Virginia to move to the Western North Carolina frontier, raw, mountainous, unsettled. From there in October 1780, Captain Martin Davenport led his company of Over the Mountain Men into the Carolina Piedmont where they and other Patriots defeated the British in Ferguson's Legion at the Battle of King's Mountain, reversing the string of defeats that had plagued the cause for Independence.

- 11 May 1775** – DEED: **Thomas Baker** and **Dorothy** his wife to Jacob Sands and Benjamin Sands, all of **Culpeper County**, £214/8/0, 596 acres in the little fork of

the Rappahannock River on the Branch of the Battle Run, adjoining William Mallory, Thomas Peyton and **Henry Baker**. /s/ **Thomas Baker, Dorothy Baker**. Wit: John Strother, **Henry Baker, Dorothy Baker**. Acknowledged by **Thomas Baker** and **Dorothy Baker** at Culpeper Court on 15 May 1775. [Culpeper County Deed Book H:7-11]

This May 1775 transaction is the last known land transaction by our Thomas Baker. The witnesses included Thomas and Dorothy Davenport Baker's son Henry and daughter Dorothy.

- ◇ **September 1775** - DEPOSITION: Came John Strother and **Thomas Baker** and made oath that they were acquainted with Henry Gambill and **Mary**, his wife, before their marriage, and William Gambill was their first born. Henry Gambill left no known will, and **Thomas Baker** sayeth that he was in South Carolina where Henry Gambill was buried, as he was informed by his [Gambill's] wife, and that his [Gambill's] wife told him her husband left no will. /s/ Robert Eastham, JP. (**Northern Neck Proprietary records**)

Thomas Baker was married to Mary Davenport Gambill's sister Dorothy; both were daughters of Martin, Sr. Strother was the son of Francis Strother, whose plantation had adjoined Martin, Sr., down river in Hanover County. The Strothers, Davenports, and Gambills moved to the Blue Ridge, likely in concert, in the early 1750s. Thomas Baker, who sold his Louisa land to William Davenport of Martin, Sr., had moved to later Culpeper land prior to 1749.

Note that the source of this document is not a Culpeper County Court Order (the only County Court records that survive from the 18th century are the orders of 1763-1764). Instead, it was submitted to Northern Neck Proprietary in support of William Gambill's application for a land patent. According to the Library of Virginia, a supplemental collection of records as to Northern Neck Surveys for the years 1722–1781 consists of original plats and accompanying papers pertaining to land grants, including transcripts of official records from England and several of the colonies, a small number of Bible leaves, affidavits, and letters. It is among those papers—available on microfilm – that these depositions (affidavits) should be found.

Additionally, some versions of this deposition indicate that Thomas Baker said he was on a venture with Henry Gambill when Gambill died; that does not appear to be the actual text of the deposition.

In any case, the role of John Strother continues to be intriguing: just how did he know both Mary Davenport and Henry Gambill before their marriage? It seems very likely that there is some family tie, but what it is has not yet come to light.

- ◇ **26 September 1775** - DEPOSITION: Came **Dorothy Baker** before Robert Eastham, JP, and made oath that she very well knew William Gambill to be the first born child of Henry Gambill and **Mary**, his wife, and she saw them married, and saw **William** delivered of his mother. Ordered that William Gambill being proved to be Heir-at-Law to Henry Gambill, Decd., a deed to issue to said William, reserving one-third during her life to **Mary** Gambill. (**Northern Neck Proprietary records**)

Dorothy Baker, wife of Thomas Baker, was the second daughter of Martin Davenport, Sr. Her sister-in-law relationship to the Decedent Henry Gambill, Sr., and first hand knowledge of that family's affair made her testimony absolute in qualifying William Gambill for his first-born male rights.

Again, the source of this document, indicated by Davenport researchers to be a County Court Order, is instead a collection of supplemental documents of the Northern Neck Proprietary.

- ◇ **27 September 1775** – FAIRFAX LAND GRANT: William Gambill, of Culpeper County, Heir-at-Law to Henry Gambill, Decd., 230 acres in **Culpeper County**, reserving unto Mary Gambill, widow of said Henry, one-third during her life and after her death the whole to said William Gambill, being a tract surveyed 31 Oct 1754 by Richard Young for Henry Gambill and forfeited by Advertisement, but deeded to said William Gambill, being land adjoining Kennerly, William Minefee, Kennerley's Mountain, **Thomas Baker**, Kennerly (now Henry Gambill), Thomas Kennerly. (*Northern Neck Land Grants*, P:367)

This is the land grant that likely would not have been made without the testimony of John Strother and Thomas and Dorothy Baker as to William Gambill's status as the first-born son of Henry Gambill (see the prior two entries). Note the reservation to William's mother, Mary Davenport Gambill, of her one-third life estate (via her dower rights) in Henry's real estate.

- ◇ **20 November 1775** - DEED: William Gambill, wife Mary, of Brumfield Parish, Culpeper County, to Alpheus Beale, of Province of Maryland, for £100 Virginia, 300 acres of Brumfield Parish, **Culpeper County**, where said Gambill now lives, in the Forks of Rush River, adjoining Thomas Pratt, Robert Sherwood, John Strother, George Strother—being land obtained from Thomas Kennerly and Henry Gambill, Decd.... /s/ W. Gambill, Mary "X" Gambill. Wit: Robert Patton, James Nash, Joseph Strother, Thos McClanahan, William Williams. (*Culpeper County Deeds*, H:553)

This marked the removal of the Culpeper Gambills from Virginia. Unlike the majority of the other related families, who relocated in the area of North Carolina that became Burke County in 1778, the Gambills moved to the area that became Wilkes County. A few Gambills chose to remain behind in the Shenandoah Valley. We will not follow this family further.

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