

ON THE BANKS OF MARROWBONE CREEK Henry County, Virginia By Joyce Browning, May 2005

*County Formation: Brunswick County, 1732 > Lunenburg County, 1746 >
Halifax County, 1752 > Pittsylvania County, 1767 > Henry County, 1777*

"She spoke all of her life with great fondness of their life in Goochland"

So goes oral history in my Dalton family. "She" is Anne Redd, wife of Samuel Dalton. In the late 1760s, this well known family played out important parts in the life of their family on the banks of Marrowbone Creek.

Anne Redd, born *circa* 1717, was the daughter of Thomas Redd of King and Queen and his wife, Sarah, daughter of John Farguson of Essex County, as proved by Farguson's will. Very likely, it was Anne Redd's brother, Thomas Redd who in 1735 married Sarah, daughter of John Taliaferro of Orange County, Virginia. It may also have been Anne Redd's nephew, John Redd, who lived for many years in Henry County and left a historical Journal of his experience in the "west country." Anne Redd probably married Samuel Dalton soon after he purchased a 400 acre tract of land from John Dowell in June 1734. The young couple built their home between Wolf Trap Creek and Priddys Creek in Goochland and lived here for nearly thirty-five years. All nine of their children were born while they lived on Priddys Creek.

..... Five of nine Dalton children married in a house on Marrowbone Creek in the part of Pittsylvania County that became Henry County in 1777.....

During her years as a young Mother, Anne Redd Dalton's Goochland became Louisa County in 1742, then Albemarle County in 1761. John Redd was a near neighbor on Priddys Creek and both John Redd and Thomas Redd, as well as the Daltons, owned land adjacent to one another on Buck Mountain in Albemarle County. The Daltons lived for a few years near Marrowbone Creek in Henry County in 1767-70 where their children found spouses. Three daughters married in a six month period in 1769. During 1770, the elder Daltons moved to their new plantation on Paw Paw Creek of Mayo River in Rockingham County, North Carolina.

While Ann Redd was still playing with her doll or splashing through cool tidal streams in King and Queen County, Virginia, Marrowbone Creek Valley was a very different place from the landscape where her children married forty years later. In fact, few white men had ever seen this valley. Listen as William Byrd describes the Marrowbone Creek landscape in 1728.

. . . . Still half a mile further we saw a small mountain, above five miles to the north-west of us, which we called the Wart, because it appeared no bigger than a wart, in comparison of the great mountains which hid their haughty heads in the clouds. We were not able to extend the line farther than five miles and one hundred and thirty five poles, notwithstanding we began our march early in the morning, and did not encamp till it was almost dark. We made it the later by endeavoring to quarter in some convenient situation, either for grass or canes. But night surprising us, we were obliged to lodge at last upon high and uneven ground, which was so overgrown with shrubs and saplings, that we could hardly see ten yards around us. The most melancholy part of the story was that our horses had short commons. The poore creatures were now grown so weak that they staggered when we mounted them. Nor would our own fare have been at all more plentiful, had we not been so provident as to carry a load of meat along with us. Indeed, the woods were too thick to show us any sort of game but one wild turkey, which helped to enrich our soup. To make us amends, we found abundance of very sweet grapes, which, with the help of bread, might have furnished out a good Italian repast, in the absence of more savory food. The men's mouths watered at the sight of a prodigious flight of wild pigeons, which flew high over our heads to the south-ward. The flocks of these birds of passage are so amazingly great, sometimes, that they darken the sky; nor it is uncommon for them to light in such numbers in the larger limbs of mulberry trees and oaks as to break them down.

. . . . *History of the Dividing Line*, William Byrd

Forty years later, our ancestors were avidly moving south to tame this wild and dense valley. In haste, they left a familiar life on streams and byways made comfortable by their parents and grandparents and sought out a new life for their families on this "high and uneven ground . . . so overgrown with shrubs and saplings."

Richard Randolph led the way to the south, marching acre by acre down the banks of the Smith River. By 1756 he owned, by himself or in company with others, well over 50,000 acres south of the Roanoke River. The trail going south on the east side of Smith River was known as "Randolph's Road." As early as 1752, John Perrin was Surveyor of Randolph's Road, pledged to maintain it along with help from neighbors. Everyone who reached the Marrowbone valley probably followed Randolph's Road.

The name of the creek, Marrowbone, appears in a 1747 survey made by Robert Wallen for Thomas Mann Randolph, John Harmon and Walter King, "on Marrowbone Creek and Irvin River." This would become a choice property that included part of the main creek, several miles of the North Fork and South Fork "extending to the spurs of Wart Mountain," and the important land at the confluence of Marrowbone and Irvin River. In addition a number of smaller contiguous tracts were added on both sides of the Irvin River south of Marrowbone Creek to the point where the river narrows for the channel through the highlands. New settlers who arrived twenty years after Byrd named "the Wart," changed its name to the more genteel "Chestnut Knob." At about the same time, Irvin River became Smith River.

All did not go well for this first grant of Marrowbone land. In 1779 a number of inquisitions were called in Henry County concerning land owned by British Loyalists. John Harmon, once the Mayor of Williamsburg, and partner of Thomas Mann Randolph and Walter King, was found guilty of British loyalty. 2,300 acres belonging to him on Marrowbone Creek and Horsepasture Creek were confiscated by a jury of Henry County men, including a number Marrowbone residents: John Marr (Foreman), Andrew Ray, George Rowland, Dillion Blevins, Samuel Lanier, John Hardiman, Thomas Cooper, James Taylor, Philip Ryan, Phillip Thomas, James Meredith and John Manning,

Two years after the 1747 survey for Thomas Mann Randolph and Company, on 24 October 1749 a tract of 4,750 acres was surveyed for "Richard Taliaferro, Deceased." His land was on both sides of the South Fork of Marrowbone Creek. References are made to Wart Mountain, Beaver Creek and Randolph's corner. The elevation of this tract rises fairly rapidly from about 300 feet to 1200 feet as the land approaches the "haughty heads" of the Sauratown Mountains. This will be the tract of land settled soon after 1770.

"Richard Taliaferro, Deceased" lived in Caroline County, Virginia. He drowned in the Potomac in 1748. Initially, his wife, formerly Rose Berryman, handled his estate. Security for her administration was Benjamin Robinson and Benjamin Hubbard. When she died in 1751, administration of the estate and management of the Guardianships for the younger children were assigned to the brilliant Edmund Pendleton, neighbor and friend of the Taliaferros. James Taylor signed on as Security. Agreeable with the will of Richard Taliaferro, specific land, including the Marrowbone Creek land, was sold. On September 12, 1751, Zachary Taliaferro, son of Richard and Rose Taliaferro, acknowledged his deed to Edmond Pendleton; and on June 26, 1755 Pendleton and Edmond Taylor were issued a Virginia patent for "4,750 acres in Halifax County on both sides of the South Fork of Marrow Bone Cr. to the Wart Mountain. Adj. Randolph & Company." None of the land originally patented by Richard Taliaferro had been sub-divided and sold to settlers during the intervening years.

Dr. John Taliaferro, son of Richard and Rose Berryman Taliaferro, lived briefly on the South Fork of the Marrowbone. It is possible that he inherited other land there owned by his father. He shows up in records as an adjacent land owner of other Marrowbone residents.

In 1749, the same year Richard Taliaferro was issued a patent to his Marrowbone Creek land, his associate Benjamin Hubbard also had several surveys completed for himself and in company of others. Among these grants, on March 21, 1748, Hubbard, Edmund Gray, James Gray and James Penn had surveyed 1,142 acres on both sides of the North Fork of Marrowbone Creek; and in 1749, Hubbard (or a son) had a personal tract surveyed for 374 acres on both sides of Marrowbone Creek. A younger Benjamin Hubbard and one or two Hall cousins from Caroline County, were among early settlers of the area.

By way of explanation, the Benjamin Hubbard who moved to Marrowbone Creek is the child or grandchild of Benjamin Hubbard, the Mattaponi River merchant. In the first half of the 1700s, the Mattaponi was navigable for ocean going vessels as far west as Aylett, a small town now, but once an important shipping center. One of the daughters of merchant Benjamin Hubbard married a son of Richard Taliaferro of Caroline. Another Hubbard daughter, Mary, was the wife of Robert Hall of Caroline County. As they matured near the Mattaponi in 1730 or 1740, young couples found no vacant land to succor their own families. Relocation to counties west of the fall line and south side of the James River were accepted migrations them. Several Hubbards and their Hall cousins (children of Robert and Mary Hubbard Hall) turn up later near the Marrowbone.

Back to the Marrowbone landscape. . . . A few people moved to the lower Smith River area during the 1750s and early 1760s. Most seemed to be satisfied with land on the east side of Smith River inasmuch as most of the land on the west side was already committed to early grantees who seemed to be in no rush to divide it into smaller tracts for sale. In the 1760s, Chestnut Mountain was still "the Wart," the name bestowed on this solitary spike in the landscape forty years ago.

In 1758, Antrim Parish of Halifax County instructed Miles Jennings, Thomas Harbour and John Payne to procession the "bounds of every Particular persons Land beginning where the Cuntry line [i.e. North Carolina boundary line] Crosses smiths River Encluding all between the line and Maribone Creek all the waters of the horse Pasture & the Mayo River unto the Ridge." This included the entire southwestern corner of present Henry County and all of Patrick County, an indication of how few people actually lived here in 1758. By 1770, when the first tax list of Henry County was made, only ninety-five households are listed west of Smith River.

In the late 1760s, the first settlers began moving to the Marrowbone. Some lived on land that appears to belong to one of the above early owners; but possession during this period is murky. Discovery of Marrowbone families takes more than a little ferreting out. They often did not record their deeds at the local Court House.

Within the precincts of their memories, too many Court Houses had burned or been flooded out. They relied on themselves to maintain evidence of ownership, knowing also that a survey was filed at the Court House and they paid their annual land tax. Also, there was the reality that if a document was not recorded at the County Court House, the settler did not waste his valuable time going to and fro, often a trip of several days, nor did he have to pay the recording fee.

Often we do not see these Marrowbone settlers until they turn up as witnesses to their neighbors' wills, are present when the bounds were walked periodically to insure that boundary markers were intact, or were recorded as adjacent property owners when a deed was registered at the Court House.

Early among them were Taliaferro related families. For instance, by 1770, and probably some years before, Mark Foster operated a school near Marrowbone Creek. Not much has been learned about his school; but he referred to himself as "Schoolmaster" in at least one record. He appears to be a descendant of Robert Foster, the immigrant, and grandson of Anthony Foster and Martha Taliaferro who were living in Essex County VA in 1702.

A surprise while searching for Foster records In Spotsylvania County, on September 1, 1729 Lawrence Franklin, father of Bernard Franklin and grandfather of Jesse Franklin and his brothers, sold 100 acres of his land on the south side of the River Po to Thomas Salmon. This land, near the boundary of King and Queen County, was adjacent to the lands of Robert King, Anthony Foster and John Foster. Witnesses of the conveyance were Thomas Chew, James Taylor, and Nicholas Hawkins.

Brothers John Rowland and George Rowland, appear in the Marrowbone area around 1767. John Rowland was granted an Ordinary License in 1768. In 1771, he qualified as a Captain of the Militia. In time, it became apparent that he held about 1,000 valuable acres bordering Smith River. Here, there was an important early ford, Rowland's Ford, which served as the Smith River crossing. One of the Rowlands owned the local grist mill. This land must have become an important way stop for many of the people who settled on both sides of the river. Rowland's Ford was a few miles north of the point where modern Highway 220 crosses Smith River.

George Rowland became active in local church and county politics. He was a County Justice and Captain of the Militia. As a Vestryman of Camden Parish, created in 1767, he was appointed to supervise the building of new chapels to serve a growing population. In 1768, at the direction of the Vestry, his home became the "meeting house" until a chapel was constructed some years later. The "Reader" for this congregation was George Britain. Other early Vestrymen were John Pigg, Crispin Shelton, John Wilson, Peter Perkins, Thomas Dillard, Hugh Innes, Theodoric Lacy, Abram Shelton, and William Witcher.

On July 14, 1769 from the Vestry Minutes of Camden Parish, we learn that one church had been built in the past year, per the supervision of George Rowland and Robert Chandler. It was "24' x 32', a frame house with clapboard roof, plank floor, with pulpit desk, 2 doors and 5 windows, roof with 12' pitch, with a small table and benches."

Five of the nine children of Samuel and Anne Redd Dalton married at the home of George Rowland which was the "meeting house" during the years the Dalton children were marrying. Samuel Dalton Jr. married George Rowland's step daughter, Charlotte Gallahue. Marriage bonds for five children of Samuel and Anne Redd Dalton were recorded in Pittsylvania County before Henry County was formed.

1767: SAMUEL DALTON, JR married Charlotte Gallahue, the daughter of William Gallahue and Ann Kenner of Prince William County. Her mother's second husband was George Rowland of Marrowbone Creek. Charlotte Gallahue Dalton married second, her brother in law Adonajah Harbour.
-- The marriage bond dated (?) 1767 is recorded in Pittsylvania County.

SARAH MATILDA "SALLY" DALTON b. maybe 1750? She married Capt. Jonathan Hanby of Henry/Patrick County
-- The marriage bond dated 24 Mar 1769 in Pittsylvania County.

MARY (MOLLY) DALTON b. abt 1748, d. 22 Feb 1841. She married Archelaus Hughes of Henry County.
-- The marriage bond dated 20 Aug 1769 in Pittsylvania County.

ANNE "NANCY" DALTON, b. maybe 1749, d. before 1796. She married Adonijah Harbour of Henry County.
-- The marriage bond 25 Aug 1769 in Pittsylvania County.

JANE DALTON, b. maybe 1752 she married David Hanby of Henry County and Rockingham County NC
-- The marriage bond dated 12 February 1771 in Pittsylvania County

Another marriage important to the writer is the 1769 marriage of Elizabeth Gallahue, step daughter of George Rowland, to Rodeham Moore. No marriage bond has been found; but it is known that each of them lived in the area of Marrowbone Creek at the time of their marriage. It is possible that Rodeham Moore was an operator of the grist mill owned by either John Rowland or George Rowland. Moore's family was acquainted with the Rowlands before both families left Prince William County in 1767. By 1781 Rodeham Moore owned the grist mill that served the northeast corner of Surry County, North Carolina.

George Lumpkin became a major player in the development of the Marrowbone area. He moved to a 400-acre tract on Sandy Fork, east of the Smith River in the 1760s. Child of a Hanover County family, Lumpkin had settled in Amelia County around 1745. Perhaps his neighbor, Richard Randolph, inspired him to acquire two small Virginia patents on both sides of Sandy River, tributary on the east side of Smiths River near present Danville.

* * * * **THEN DISASTER STRIKES** * * * *

September 19, 1769

Last Thursday night came on the Severest hurricane of wind and rain, that has happened here in the memory of man, which lasted the great part of Friday. The damage it has done is inconceivable. Vast number of houses are blown down, and mills carried away, trees of all sizes torn up by the roots, and cattle, hogs, &c. crushed by their fall; the corn laid level with the ground, and the tobacco ruined in many places, and much hurt in almost all. In short, such a dreadful scene of devastation presents itself in every part of the colony we have yet heard from, as beggars all description. Add to this, the damage sustained by water which it is impossible yet to form any idea of.

. *Virginia Gazette, Williamsburg, Virginia*

But nature was not yet done with these robust ancestors of ours

In May, 1771, a great fresh [i.e. flood] occurred in Virginia, the James in three days rising twenty feet higher than ever was known before. The low grounds were inundated, standing crops destroyed, corn, fences, chattels, merchandise, cattle, and houses carried off, and ships forced from their moorings. Many of the inhabitants, masters and slaves, in endeavoring to rescue property, or to escape from danger, were drowned. Houses were seen drifting down the current, and people clinging to them, uttering fruitless cries for succor. Fertile fields were covered with a thick deposit of sand; islands were torn to pieces, bars accumulated, the channel diverted, and the fact of nature altered.

. *History of the Colony and Ancient Dominion of Virginia*
Charles Campbell, 1860

Thus did nature, with marked determination, instigate the flight of our ancestors from the established farms of their parents and grandparents. These were marker floods by which all future Virginia floods are measured and they impacted all of Virginia's tidal rivers. If these two devastating milestones of nature were not enough to drive sturdy homesteaders away from their homes, they soon had another disaster to confront, one of even more frightening in its implications.

On February 21, 1774 near Petersburg, Prince George County, Va.
A sharp earthquake that was felt over much of Virginia displaced houses "considerably off their foundations: at Blandford and Petersburg. Although the shock was severe at Richmond and terrified residents about 80 km north of Richmond at Fredericksburg, it caused no damage at those towns. Several "smart shocks" were reported in parts of Virginia from Feb. 20th to the 22nd. The main tremor rang bells at Salem (now Winston Salem), N.C.

. Seismicity of the United States, 156
Carl W. Stover and Jerry L. Coffman

Soon after the 1769 flood, George Lumpkin purchased the full 4,750 acres, still unoccupied, which had been surveyed in 1749 for Richard Taliaferro and owned for the last fifteen years by partners Edmund Pendleton and Edmund Taylor of Caroline County. To make this purchase, Lumpkin conveyed Deeds of Trust to John Rowland and Andrew Paulson. It comes as no surprise that Lumpkin looked to former James River neighbors as buyers of homestead stakes on this large tract of land. One Marrowbone branch was named Hurricane Creek, perhaps a reminder of the almost total devastation they left behind them. Though no specific action is found, it is evident is that before too many years had passed, Rowland owned 1,000 acres of land at the mouth of the Marrowbone. When he died in 1780, he bequeathed to his brother, George Rowland, "the land I got of George Lumpkin on Marrowbone Creek."

As George Lumpkin continued selling his land along the South Fork of Marrowbone Creek, his buyers were often people who lived near him and each other in earlier years on the south side of the James River, the area so devastated by the floods of 1769 and 1771.

As an example of this observation: In 1732, Joel Chandler of Goochland County (later Cumberland County) conveyed 400 acres to William Chandler. This land was adjacent to Bartholomew Stovall and Thomas Randolph, and witnesses were John Hamilton and William Moseley. The names of every one of these people become relevant to the Marrowbone story in later years.

Robert Chandler, probably of Cumberland County, Virginia, moved south to the Marrowbone in the 1760s. He became a leading citizen, carrying out numerous civic responsibilities including collector of taxes for this area in 1770.

Another example . . . In Prince Edward County, Alexander Joyce married Jane Hamilton in 1758. He later owned former Lumpkin land on the South Fork of Marrowbone Creek that was adjacent to land purchased by his brother in law, Thomas Hamilton. The elder Alexander Joyce and his wife may have lived there for a few years; but their son, also named Alexander, lived there at the time of his death. His parents moved to the part of Guilford County that became Rockingham County by about 1770.

Many of George Lumpkin's deeds of conveyance are not found. There was a definite air of independence among our ancestors in these years. They had known people who lost their right to land when court houses burned and deed registrations were lost. With this in mind, many preferred to carefully protect their legal documents at home, and not record them. In addition, the task of making ready a new homestead, clearing the land, planting the crop and harvesting it were demanding and unremitting; plus, if he did not record his deed, the settler paid no recording fee.

One often learns of the presence of an ancestor in these remote hills and valleys in processioning records, vestry records, county court orders, tithing lists, and deeds that were registered which named adjacent land owners.

The banks of the Marrowbone began to fill up in 1770, many of the new settlers living on land acquired from George Lumpkin. Familiar names appear on the 1770 tax list in Pittsylvania County seven years before Henry County was formed. By 1780, all of the component families were neighbors.

In recognition of the growth of this area by 1773, the Vestry of Camden Parish purchased 585 acres of land for a Glebe from Richard Chamberlain of New Kent County, Virginia. Vestrymen were: John Donelson, John Pigg, Crispin Shelton, John Wilson, Peter Perkins, Thomas Dillard, Hugh Innes, Theops. Lacy, Abraham Shelton, George Rowland, Robert Chandler, and Wm. Witcher.

In 1770, much of the Marrowbone landscape was probably the landscape observed by William Byrd in 1728 - "high and uneven ground . . . so overgrown with shrubs and saplings, that we could hardly see ten yards around us." Watch as the 4,750 acres of land, originally surveyed for Richard Taliaferro, then owned by Edmond Pendleton and Edmond Taylor, then by George Lumpkin, change hands.

-- 1771 - George Lumpkin sold 319 acres on Marrowbone Creek to James Taylor, the first of several Taylors who lived on Marrowbone Creek.

-- 1771 - George Lumpkin sold 147 acres on the east side of Marrowbone Creek to Alexander McKain. Adj. Robert Chandler

-- 1772 - George Lumpkin sold 272 acres on the north side of Marrowbone to David Lanier of Brunswick County adjacent to Benjamin Hicks.

-- 1772 - George Lumpkin sold 168 acres on the north side of Marrowbone Creek to Lemuell Lanier of Brunswick County adjacent to John Hardiman, Alexander and the old Station line.

The Virginia Laniers are an interesting family whose European ancestry is different from that of most of these settlers. Some of the Lanier saga was inadvertently passed down through generations as oral history of the Virginia Taliaferro family.

It was believed and widely reported that the London patriarch of the Taliaferros of Virginia was "Musician to Queen Elizabeth." In fact, it was the family of his wife who bore this distinction. In 1554, Bartholomew Taliaferro immigrated to London under sponsorship of the Doge of Venice. He identified himself as a Merchant. Soon he married Joanne/Jeanne Lanyere or Laniere. This was clearly a "good" marriage for him since the Lanyeres were court favorites and owners of several tenements on Hart Street in old London Town. The Lanyere/Laniere family name was generally spelled Lanier before they left England.

John Lanyere and his sons, an Italian family, were summoned to London by the Queen after building a reputation in Rouan, France, capital of upper Normandy. A grandson, Nicholas Lanier, is credited with acquiring much of the Medieval art now owned by the Royal family. He fled to France with Charles Stuart and lived there after the English Civil War of the 1640s. When Charles Stuart returned to England as King Charles II in 1660, Lanier became his advisor in the arts. He traveled throughout France and Italy purchasing paintings to grace the King's palaces. It comes as no surprise to find both Taliaferros and Laniers living near on or near Marrowbone Creek. They had been neighbors and in-laws on Hart Street in Medieval London.

Between 1771 and 1774, John Taliaferro and his son Richard received patents for over 1,000 acres on Little Marrowbone Creek near White Oak Creek. In 1772, a Marrowbone Creek deed recorded that John Taliaferro was the adjacent land owner. In March 1772, John Taliaferro used a tract of 562 acres to secure a debt to James and Robert Donald & Company, merchants of Glasgow. Francis Taliaferro also makes an appearance in the area.

It is evident that early settler, Robert Chandler owned land he purchased of Lumpkin. He purchased 530 acres in 1771, and in several deeds in May 1773, conveyances from Chandler are recorded for 110 Marrowbone acres sold to Henry Mayes and 220 acres on Mayes Branch of Marrowbone Creek to Stephen Mayes, and others.

- - - In May 1773 John Witt sold 243 acres adjacent to Taliaferro's line on Marrowbone Creek to Elisha Harbour.

- - - At the same time John Witt Sr. purchased 200 acres from Adonijah Harbour down on the Mayo River, the other part of this land having been given by Thomas Harbour Sr. to David Witt and Palatiah Shelton. David Witt was married to a daughter of Thomas Harbour.

- - 26 May 1773 - Robert Chandler conveyed 220 acres to Stephen Meirs, it being the plantation that John Major settled adjacent to Mayes Branch and a branch of Marrowbone Creek.

- - 25 November 1773 - John Hardman or Hardiman conveyed 100 acres to his son William. This tract began at the corner of Lemuel Lanier on the west side of Marrowbone Creek. Hardiman also gave 50 acres in the same location to Elenor Talbourn, no relationship stated.

- - 27 March 1773 - George Lumpkin and his wife Mary conveyed 100 acres on Long Branch of Marrowbone Creek and Hurricane Creek to Hugh McCain. Hugh McCain moved later to Rockingham County, North Carolina.

Hugh McCain, often called Hughey, became the ancestor of U.S. Senator John McCain of Arizona when his son or grandson, Joseph McCain married Mary Scales, daughter of Nathaniel Scales of Rockingham County. As of this date, it is uncertain to me where this McCain family came from. A number of "supposes" can be found if one searches; but it is probable that Hugh McCain is an early eastern Pennsylvania name. In 1830 a later Hugh McCain was a witness to the will of a later Joseph Caldwell in Washington County, Pennsylvania. This certainly suggests that an earlier McCain may have been part of the Caldwell Presbyterian group who began emigrating in the early 1740s from the border counties between Pennsylvania and West Jersey to southern Virginia. These Scotch-Irish Presbyterians settled principally in the area of Cubb Creek, Charlotte County, but others are found scattered through neighboring counties.

- - 27 May 1773 - George Lumpkin and wife Mary conveyed an additional 100 acres to Thomas Hamilton on the branches of Marrowbone Creek in Hick's and Lanier's back line, the old order line, and James Taylor's line.

- - November 1773 - A survey for James Smith for 400 acres on Marrowbone Cr. was completed adjacent to his own line and Meredith. A second survey was completed on the same date for 90 acres. On Marrowbone, adjacent Ray(?); and a third survey, same date, for 372 acres on branches of Marrowbone, adj. his new line, Meredith, Burns, Randolph.

- - 24 Mar 1774 - Another surprise . . . Mathew Moore and his wife Letitia Dalton, may have lived for a few years on the Marrowbone. Perhaps it should not be so surprising since so many of Letitia Dalton Moore's siblings married during the years when the local Anglican congregation was meeting at the home of George Rowland. In March 1774 Mathew Moore of Stokes County, North Carolina, sold to Thomas Hamilton a 420 acre tract of land adjacent to Jesse Chandler. On the same date, Hamilton conveyed 150 acres of his purchase to his son George Hamilton.

A few years later, in 1779, George Hamilton sold his 150 acres to William Moore "of the State of North Carolina and County of Guilford for my son Alexander Moore." Alexander Moore seems to have left no apparent records in the county. However, in 1785 William Moore, perhaps the brother of Alexander Moore, moved onto this land. At present his identity remains uncertain; but it seems highly likely that Alexander and William Moore were sons of an earlier William Moore who married Margaret Hudspeth, daughter of Ralph Hudspeth of Amelia County, Virginia. This couple lived on McFee's Creek near the Yadkin River in Surry County, North Carolina. Deep research has produced no certainties; but does show that William and Margaret Moore had sons named Alexander, William, and Aaron. When William Moore of Marrowbone Creek, had children of his own, he named sons Alexander, William and Aaron.

The third William Moore (actually William F. Moore) married Elizabeth, the daughter of William Carter. They moved across the line to Beaver Island Creek in Stokes County.

- - In 1774 William Hall purchased 277 acres on Marrowbone Creek adjacent to James Ray, Blevins and Randolph. Also in 1774 Thomas Joneygin or Journikin or Johnykin (probably Jernigan) purchased 134 acres on Marrowbone creek adjacent to Abner Harbour.

Hall's tract was near the mountains, on the south fork of the Marrowbone. As noted earlier, William Hall was most likely another Taliaferro-Hubbard cousin from Caroline County. His ancestors appear to be Robert and Mary Hubbard Hall of Caroline County (d. 1752). She was the daughter of Benjamin Hubbard, the Mattaponi merchant. In the Marrowbone area, William Hall married Elizabeth Choice, daughter of Tully Choice, a Marrowbone resident. He was probably the son or grandson of an earlier Tully Choice of Northern Virginia who is believed to have been the husband of Sarah Rodham, daughter of Mathew Rodham of Northumberland County. To this writer's knowledge, no proof of the Choice/Rodham marriage has been found, but it is a widely held belief.

During these early years, much of the social order in Virginia and in the Marrowbone Creek area relied on the leadership of Anglican Vestries. From its founding colonial Virginians adapted activities of the English Church to suit the distinctive needs and realities of colonial Virginia. The *Book of Common Prayer* molded their character, pervaded their language, and provided a framework for the daily lives of our Virginia ancestors. For instance, the regular activity of Processioning - literally walking the bounds of the land to confirm that boundary markers were in place - is still observed ceremoniously today in some parts of England. Some years ago, the writer was invited to "Walk the Bounds" in County Cambridge, England.

By 1776 when Camden Parish initiated the process of identifying and renewing the bounds, Robert Chandler, David Lanier, George Rowland, Thomas Hamilton, and Stephen Maires were instructed to procession from "where the Cuntry line crosses Smith River up both sides to Randolph's Order and to the ridges."

But changes were coming to the valley of the Marrowbone.

Samuel Harris, born into a Hanover County VA family of old Fork Church, was a soldier during the French and Indian War and served in the House of Burgesses. Around 1766, he fervently embraced the Baptist faith, at that time in its infant years in Virginia. By 1770 he had brought the Baptist faith to homesteads all across the southern Virginia boundary. The area was later designated Strawberry Association, and is so identified today.

Our Marrowbone ancestors may have been married by the rites of the Anglican Church and their lives may have been regulated by the customs of the Anglican Vestries; but their children were married in a Baptist ceremony. During or at the close of the Revolutionary War, the Anglican Church was officially disbanded. The old *Book of Common Prayer* became just another book gathering dust on the book shelf.

For nearly fifty years, the rituals of the *Book of Common Prayer* remained untouched on the top shelf. An old saying describes the timing of the rise of these denominations in the Southern United States:

The Baptist came on foot,
The Methodist came by horse.
The Episcopalians waited for the train.

When hoping to find the wills that define these Marrowbone families, we often come up empty handed and disappointed. These flood-ravaged early settlers soon moved on - again for good reason.

They were able to grow tobacco, the principle cash crop of this time and place, for only about twenty years, that is until the land showed signs of weakening through decreased tobacco harvest. They grew a special brand of tobacco that came to be known as bright leaf tobacco. In 1860, 95% of the North Carolina tobacco manufacturers were in six counties that bordered Virginia. Forsyth, Rockingham, Stokes, and Surry were the most active. Bright leaf tobacco was so famous that, when I was young, a movie, "Bright Leaf," was made starring some of the greatest actors of the 1950s, among them Gary Cooper and Lauren Bacall. The World Premier of the film took place at the old Ambassador Theater on Fayetteville Street within a block of the State Capitol.

When land became nonproductive in the 1700s due to lack of present farm management practices, it was often time to move again to new, fresh land. Or, as children matured, they needed to find land of their own to support and raise their families.

As it turned out, these Marrowbone residents soon discovered that they a unique advantage.

It so happened in 1763, that Lord Granville died in England. He was the sole owner of all vacant land in the northern one third of North Carolina. At about the same time, a partially conflicting grant of huge proportions was awarded by King George II to his friend and supporter, Henry McCulloh of County Kent in England. Immediately, McCulloh began to aggressively settle new residents on his land and sent his son, also named Henry, to oversee operations in North Carolina. In the face of these two events, the Granville land office closed its doors.

Land along the North Carolina/Virginia border was now open for settlement without the new owner having to buy his land from either Granville or a colonial land office. A new settler could identify the land he wanted by consulting neighboring land owners to insure that it was not committed to someone else. Then he blazed the corner trees with a hatchet. Having informally declared his right to the land, the new owner submitted a survey order to the county. When the land was surveyed, the Surveyor registered the plat in the new owner's name at the county courthouse. Done!

Those of us who search for our families in North Carolina counties along the Virginia border often find that their grants to land were issued in or after 1778. But the fact is that our ancestor may have been living on that grant for ten or more years before an official land office grant was issued. When the infant State of North Carolina became operable, a State Land Grant Office was created. Surveyors and County Justices in these old Granville counties rushed to organize and transmit documentation to the state so that grants could be issued.

And so nearly all of our Marrowbone Creek ancestors moved on to the places where many of us were born and many continue to live in harmony with the weather and landscape

Author's Note: This review is only the beginning of telling the stories of some of these families who lived on Marrowbone Creek during the era of America's War for Independence. Sources consulted are extensive and will be gladly shared upon request. Almost without exception, all are original records or published court house and parish record abstracts. The author will be interested in discussion or partnering in an attempt to expand the story of these families, many of whom found a home in Surry County. Contact: Joyce Browning, 1951-523 Sagewood Lane, Reston, VA 20191 or JBROWN7169@aol.com