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In the Chester County Court House, Book X of Records and Deeds, page 354 will be found a deed in which William Worthy, Sr. deeds to his son Thomas Worthy three Negroes for love, good will and affection. This proves Thomas a brother to William, Jr. (Buck) and Martin. I found in Book Y, page 152 a deed in which Ferdinand Hopkins deeded William Worthy, son of William Worthy, Sr. 104 ½ acres of land. This seals conclusively that Buck was the son of William, Sr. and the brother of Martin. I believe that these records would stand up in any court in the land.

We had to be very careful when we got to this part of our search, since Martin Worthy of Charlotte County Virginia (the son of Thomas Worthy, the first one we know about) moved to Chester County about 1807. In his family he had children and grandchildren with the same names as those of Ann and John Worthy. This part of the search made the work slow and tedious. I am indeed grateful to the many people who even tried to help me with this work. It was lots of fun and yet there are many little things I would like to clear.

Since I believe everybody who was instrumental in helping me knows the family from Martin down, I am going to say the verifications for much of this is in the Probate Judge's Office in Chester or in Bible Records scattered here and there. I am using b. for born, d. for died, and m. for married.

John Gaston

By Dr. Chalmers Gaston Davidson
"News and Reporter"
Historical Issue

It was a long road, in more ways than mileage, from the Charleston low country to Catawba River piedmont in colonial South Carolina. The low country was dominated by rice planters who worshipped their Anglican God in St. Michael's and St. Philip's amused themselves at the Dock Street Theatre, the Hockey Club Races and St. Cecilia concerts and had their portraits painted by the flattering brush of Jeremiah Theus. The backcountry boasted no such diversions yet it had also its mores and aspirations. Its farmers worked their hills and valleys with few slaves. They took their Calvinistic God from their meeting houses to the log and rock dwellings. And they were animated by a compelling passion for the teachings of John Knox, for individual liberty and for education. If they had an aristocracy, it consisted of their Presbyterian preachers and their lawgivers, the justices of the peace.

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Gaston

With respect to European origins there was perhaps less difference between those of the low country and up-country than their descendants are aware and they need not concern us long. They certainly concerned neither section 200 years ago.

The Gastons of upper South Carolina came of Huguenot ancestry with vague claims, as early as the Revolution, to descent from Gaston de Foix of France. Like the Pickens, the Brevards, the Caldwelles and the Peggigrews they had thrown in their lot with the Scotch-Irish. The immediate European progenitor was one William Gaston of Cloughwater, County Antrim, Ireland. No evidence exists to prove him a name of position or influence, and nothing contrariwise, to suggest that he was not an upright and praiseworthy citizen of his adopted island. His American claim to remembrance (and he never saw these shores) is the large family of sons and daughters with which he helped to populate the colony of South Carolina. His descendants are thousands. From the Catawba River they have branched out and taken root, perhaps in every state in the union. But the taproot has survived in its original American location and kept its name green for 200 years in a single county.

The five sons and four daughters of William Gaston of Cloughwater, Ireland, came to upper South Carolina before the Revolution. The first head of the family was the eldest son John, whose earliest land grant of Fishing Creek in Craven County (now Chester) is dated 1760. His sons born in the 1750's give Ireland as their birthplace in the Revolutionary records and his children born in the '60's claim Fishing Creek. They must have arrived around 1760 when John was already past 50 years of age. He farmed, surveyed land for the King and fellow immigrants, and rose to be Justice of the Peace and the leading citizen of his locality. His wife Esther Waugh, notable, in addition to her prodigious maternity, was instructress for the first known school in the backcountry. It was indeed, no mean accomplishment for womankind of her time and place to be able to read and write at all, as is amply evident from the Craven County records.

The first distinction for the family came on June 6, 1764, when, according to the South Carolina Council Journal "John Gaston having been recommended as a magistrate for Craven County his name was inserted in the Commission of the Peace and it was reseal'd by his Honor." As the only courts outside of Charleston were those of the justices of the peace, the appointment carried great prestige. John continued in the office for many years and was known as "Justice Gaston" to the end of his life.

John Gaston's plantation was called "Cedar Shoals", tradition says so named by him. While never an estate in the low-country sense, it was increased by successive grants from the King and was large for the piedmont section. Slaves were few and luxuries fewer. Outdoor labor was performed by the sons and indoor by the daughters of the household, but the community looked for intellectual leadership to the home of Justice Gaston and that of the Reverend William Richardson of Fishing Creek Church.

Of the Revolutionary services of Justice John Gaston and his family in Chester County there is much in Mrs. Elizabeth Ellet's "Women of the Revolution" (1852). In 1906 another northern authoress, Adele E. Thompson, used Cedar Shoals as the setting and the John Gastons as principal characters in her historical novel of the Revolution, "Polly of the Pines." The old Justice was in his 70's when the war for independence broke out but he used his influence to

secure the allegiance of his wide connection and acquaintance. All nine of his sons fought in the American armies, most of them in the Rangers of "Old Danger" William Thompson or in the partisan corps of the Gamecock. Of the nine, four were killed and youngest, Joseph wore a scar in his face for the rest of his life.

So great was British and Tory hatred of Justice Gaston that he lost all his possessions but his bare home and his land. He died during the war, in 1782, when past 80.

Few families paid a greater price for American liberty.

Roddey Bridge built in 1913
Collapses after 1916 flood.

By Louise Pettus
October 8, 2008

There is a road called River Road that takes one in the direction of the Catawba River. The name is a recent one applied to what was once a wagon road. In earlier days, the road might have been appropriately named Turkey Point Road, Ivy Mill Road or Roddey Bridge Road.

Turkey Point was the name used by early settlers to designate a Catawba Indian village in the Kings Bottoms. The name shows on some early lease plats. In the early 1850's four Indian Land planters: Adam Ivy, John M. Doby, Benjamin S. Massey and James Stewart erected the Turkey Point Merchant Mills, a large grist mill that operated until 1916, when it was swept away by a great flood.

In 1910, Rock Hill Mayor John T. Roddey began planning for an iron bridge over the Catawba. There had never been a bridge over the river that connected Rock Hill with Charlotte. There were only ferries and a railroad trestle. Roddey and state Sen. J. H. Stewart visited the closing of the Pleasant Valley School to whip up enthusiasm for the project.

Roddey told the crowd (school closing had big crowds in those days) that Rock Hill would soon to have an electric trolley system and he was no reason that it couldn't be extended "to the Panhandle via the new iron bridge." That never happened, but the state Legislature did appropriate \$5,000, if Rock Hill would raise \$4,000 for the bridge. Roddey got pledges for several hundred dollars and wrote a check for remainder.

In 1912, Roddey proposed that Lancaster County contribute \$3,500 and York County \$15,000 or more to the project.

one room school where Benj. Russell taught

Kerry Miller, Thompson, Glenn
Gastons, all
attended

