

BDATA.011 INFORMATION ON THOMAS WOODWARD

Entered in September 1987 by Robert R. Hill Sr. Updated in October of 1993.

Source of information: A lot of this information was obtained from a publication entitled "Thomas Woodward, Champion of Justice" by Mary D. Boulware and was obtained from the Fairfield County (S.C.) Museum in Winnsboro S.C.

(NOTE: Before reading this information, it is important to point out that data from Fairfax County, Virginia & Parish records from Maryland, shows that the genealogy of the parents of Thomas (Regulator) Woodward's 2/ family is wrong, i.e. his parents names, and is explained at the end of the document).

First off, to clear up the birth date for Thomas Woodward: In a book entitled "S.C. Provincial Troops," by S.A. Salley, on page 159, shows a 1775 Muster Roll Call for the 8th Company Rangers, commanded by Col. William Thomson. It shows:

Captain Thomas Woodward, age 46, born in Virginia.
Lt. John Woodward, age 28, born in Virginia.

This clearly shows that Thomas Woodward was born in 1729 and his son, John Woodward, was born in 1747, not 1745, as often stated by many.

THE FOLLOWING IS PARTLY WRONG!

In the book "Thomas Woodward, Champion of Justice," by Mary D. Boulware and starting on page 63...."Thomas Woodward, father of the Regulator, was born and reared near Annapolis, Maryland. (This usually refers to a Thomas Woodward, son of Abraham Woodward. If so, this is wrong! This Thomas Woodward was born in 1732 or just three years after the Regulator was born in 1729 and makes it impossible for him to be the father)! He married in Maryland and he and his first wife had several children. After her death he went to Fairfax County, Virginia where he married Elizabeth Simpson (Note: This is wrong!). They had one son, THOMAS WOODWARD, (The Regulator). (This too is partly wrong! They also had a daughter named Ann Woodward 2/)! (Reference to Will of Thomas Simpson). After the death of the supposed father, Thomas Woodward Sr., his widow married John Robertson and had three sons, William, John and Henry, and several daughters. (The daughters are unknown of).

Thomas Woodward (the Regulator), married at an early age, to Jemima Collins. He was a father at 18 when his first son, John Woodward was born on the 13th of July 1745.

Thomas & Jemima Woodward had two sons, John and William Woodward and four daughters, Margaret; Priscilla; Rebecca & Nancy Woodward.

Thomas Woodward Jr. (the Regulator) was a soldier, serving in the French Wars (French-Indian War). His wife died while he was in service. Sometime before 1760 he came to South Carolina. (MY NOTE: Again, as usual someone has got things mixed up! There was no Thomas Woodward Jr.! It was Thomas (Regulator) Woodward 2/, the son of a John Woodward 1/ & Mary Simpson, not Elizabeth Simpson. Also the son William was born in 1762 in Virginia).

At this time Fairfield (County) has been described as being fertile, with very little undergrowth. Wild peas grew in abundance, affording natural pasturage. The settlers engaged chiefly in stock raising.

When the Cherokee Indian War ended (in S.C.) and peace was restored to the Back County of S.C., there was an influx of settlers coming down from Pennsylvania, western Virginia and North Carolina (as well as Maryland). With this wave of immigration also came an undesirable element, composed of 7horse thieves, Indian traders, drunkards, and immoral men. These outlaws banded together, maintained contact with their own kind in other colonies, and congregated into communities, terrorizing the scattered settlers, and becoming a scourge to the Back Country (of S.C.). They dwelled in their own settlements with their women and children. Often times young girls of respected families were abducted. In the summer of 1767, a wave of crime swept the back country (of S.C.).

The following was carried in the (newspaper of Charleston) GAZETTE of July 27, 1767- "The gang of villains from Virginia and North Carolina, who have for some years past in small parties under particular leaders, infested the back parts of the Southern provinces, stealing horses from one and selling them to the next, notwithstanding the late public example made of several of them, we hear are more formidable then ever as to numbers, and more audacious and cruel in their outrages. Tis reported that they consist of more than 200, for a chain of communication with each other, and have places of general meeting, where in imitation of councils of war, they form plans of operation and defense, and alluding to their severecy and fidelity to each other, call their places "free mason lodges." Instances of their cruelty to the people in the back settlements where they rob or otherwise abuse, are so numerous and shocking that a narrative of them would fill a whole Gazette, and every reader with horror. They at present range in the forks between the Broad, Saluda and Savannah Rivers. Two of the gang were hanged last week at Savannah, viz, Lundy Hart and Obadiah Greenage. Two others, James Ferguson and James Hambersam were killed when these were taken."

Travel from the back country to Charleston was difficult. A trip from Fairfield County on the rough roads and trails required a week's ride on horse back, or from two to three weeks by wagon. Thus the time and trouble involved in making a trip from the interior to the capitol left the back country virtually without courts or law enforcement. County Courts were non-existent. Justices of the Peace had only slight judicial power, criminal trials were held in Charleston.

Out of desperation, respected, law abiding men of the Back Country organized a "Regulation" (and became known as Regulators). Small planters and leading men alike joined the movement to rid the country of the lawless. Between the Broad and Catawba Rivers, the Regulators were activated by Thomas Woodward, Barnaby Pope, and Edward McGraw.

Thomas Woodward was a large man of commanding presence, was very active, and possessed great physical strength, as verified by an incident related by his grandson, the Honorable Joseph A. (Addison) Woodward (CONGRESSMAN).

Captain Woodward, together with a part of his company, were in pursuit of a band of Tories, who took refuge in a stoutly built cabin on Little River. This presented a problem as to how to dislodge them. The Captain, after consulting with his men as to the best plan of attack, ordered them to be ready. He rushed for the door, and with one powerful kick, broke it from its hinges, sending it into the middle of the floor. Shots were fired from outside and within. The affray ended with the surrender of the Tories.

Tradition says it was here that the old Regulator received his only wound, prior to his death. His weapon was a rifle with the barrel sawed off, so that it could be wielded with one hand. As he charged the door, he was holding it in front of his chest, a bullet fired from inside split on the barrel, sending bits of lead into his chest.

Another demonstration of his daring courage and physical stamina- Thomas Woodward led five Regulator-Rangers on a grueling, fast paced scout, beginning in late December (1767) He and his men reached Bethabara, North Carolina on January 17, 1768. There they aided in the siege of the outlaws in the Hollow, crossed the border into Virginia, proceeded to Augusta County and took custody of four Negroes stolen in South Carolina. On February 29th, (1768) after riding hundreds of miles, the Woodward party arrived in Charleston with the Negroes and two horse thieves.

Thomas Woodward's first house built in Fairfield County was at a place called the Muster Field Spring, the remains of which could still be seen in 1866. There was a race track near the old homesite. Major Benoni Robertson and Billy

Simpson were the race riders.

Captain Woodward moved out on the public road near Anvil Rock. Here he constructed a frame house, which presented an imposing appearance in the days of log cabin. People came from miles around to view it. It withstood the passage of Cornwallis and his troops through the county, but was laid to waste by Sherman's torch.

He is said to have been the first subscriber to a newspaper in the District. Upon its arrival, his neighbors would gather to hear the news read.

At the start of the Revolution, as he had done with the Regulators, he rallied the patriots of the Little River-Cedar Creek area, and was their leader. He and his men took part in the "Snow Campaign" against the Tories in 1775. He was elected to the 1st Provincial Congress of 1775.

Nearing the age of 60, he resigned his commission in January of 1776, but later that year led volunteers against Indians and Tories. He was "a terror to evil-doers and the dry bones of Tories shook at the very name of Woodward." During the war (Revolution) he served as a Justice of the Peace.

On his final campaign, he had gathered together some men of his company who were at home, and was in hot pursuit of a band of Tories. In the Tory party were some he was very anxious to catch. He ordered his men not to fire, but to strive to capture the entire party that they were following very closely. The old Captain rode at the head of his company, and had crossed Little Dutchman's Creek when a Tory turned in his saddle and fired. The bullet struck Thomas Woodward in the chest, and he fell from his horse, dead. (My Note: Another source states he broke his neck in the fall). He died as he had lived-a champion of justice.

At his death, his step son, Benjamin May, took command of his old company. His sons John Woodward and William Woodward, served their country in the Revolution.

The body of the gallant old Regulator rests in the Woodward family cemetery, near the Anvil Rock. His headstone is inscribed, "THOMAS WOODWARD, the Regulator, killed by Tories, May 12, 1779."

References: "The South Carolina Regulators" by Richard M. Brown

"History of the Old Cheraws" by Rev. Alexander Gregg, D.D.

"A History of South Carolina Baptist by Joe M. King

"Thomas Woodward, the Regulator" by R. Means
Davis

NOTE by Robert Hill Sr....Reference to a man named Barnaby Pope, who was also a Regulator, I read where a Barnaby Pope was located in Edgecombe County, North Carolina, exactly where and when I cannot remember or find, but I suspect he was from N.C.

Reference to the parents of Thomas (The Regulator) Woodward: Mrs. Ann B. Willis of Maryland has found evidence that clearly shows that the mother of Thomas Woodward and who later married John Robertson (Robinson), was MARY SIMPSON WOODWARD and not Elizabeth Simpson.

Elizabeth Simpson is suspected by Simpson descendants to be the mother of Mary Simpson instead. This also clearly shows that the father of Thomas (The Regulator) Woodward was not the Thomas Woodward (son of Abraham Woodward) who was married to Margaret Izams. Besides, this Thomas Woodward was born too late to be the father. We suspect that the father was named JOHN WOODWARD, who was a Blacksmith in Prince William County, Virginia but no actual proof linking him to Mary Simpson, has yet been found.

The Regulator named his first son John, creating additional thoughts to think maybe his father was John Woodward.

END OF DATA