

THE CAROLINA BACKCOUNTRY ON THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION

The Journal and Other Writings of Charles Woodmason, Anglican Itinerant  
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Editor- Richard J. Hooker

Pg. 17 "From this place I went upwards to Cane Creek where I had wrote to the Church People for to assemble—But when I came I found that all my Letters and Advertisements had been intercepted. I trac'd them into the hands of one John Gaston, an Irish Presbyterian Justice of Peace on Fishing Creek, on other Side of River. However, at a Days Notice, about 80 Church People were brought together on Sunday the 27th who behav'd very decently and orderly. One Elderly Gentleman stood Clerk—He brought 6 Sons and 4 Daughters with Him, all excellent Singers, so that the Service was regularly perform'd—Baptiz'd 27 Children."

Pg. 40 "I have unravelled the Mystery of the Advertisement set up at the Waxaws. Twas done by one John Gaston a Justice of Peace among these Presbyterians, to have a laugh at the Church People. He has also set up to marry People, and has actually married Several Couple, tho' his own Pastor lives but a few Miles from Him—There is a strict Law against all this—And altho' I have got Depositions against this wretch, I can find none to serve. And We are so far from the Supream Court, as not to be able to obtain Writs from thence, and make Return, within the Time prescrib'd."

NOTE—In 1770 Woodmason finally wrote to Justice Rawlins Lawndes to complain that John Gaston "formerly a Justice of Peace" had created disorder by performing marriages. With his complaint he submitted an affidavit of one James Adams who had attended such marriage ceremonies. The letter was brought to Council by Lieutenant-Governor Bull, who was advised "to referr the Papers to the Attorney General to form such a Prosecution on them against the said John Gaston as might be proper on this Occasion. Council Journal, Sept. 4, 1770. There is nothing to show the outcome of this referral.

Pg. 200 "Clergy deceas'd since my last Letters March 26, 1771."  
Mr. Gaston (Dis) Waterees (Rev. Hugh Gaston)

Pg. 13 The Waxaws

"This is a very fruitful fine Spot, thro' which the dividing Line between North and South Carolina runs—The Heads of P.D. (Peedee) River, Lynch's Creek, and many other Creeks take their Rise in this Quarter—so that a finer Body of Land is no where to be seen—But it is occupied by a Sett of the most lowest vilest Crew breathing—Scotch Irish Presbyterians from the North of Ireland—They have built a Meeting House and have a Pastor, a Scots Man among them (Rev. William Richardson)—A good Sort of Man—He once was of the Church of England, and solicited for Orders, but was refus'd—whereon he went to Pensylvania, and got ordained by the



Presbytery there, who allow him a Sipend to preach to these People, who (in his Breast) he heartily contemns—They will not suffer him to use the Lords Prayer. He wants to introduce Watt's Psalms in place of the barbarous Scotch Version—but they will not admit it."

Pg. 41 "As to Itinerant Ministers) You must understand that all (or greatest part) of this Part of the Province where I am, has been settled within these 5 years by Irish Presbyterians from Belfast, or Pensylvania and they imagin'd that they could secure this large Tract of fine Country to themselves and their Sect. Hereon, they built Meeting Houses, and got Pastors from Ireland, and Scotland.

(With such emissaries about it is little wonder that Justice John wished to throw off the English yoke.—My note.)

Presbyter there, who allow him a 25p to preach to these  
People, who (in his breast) he heartily condemns—they will  
not suffer him to use the Lord's Prayer. He wants to intro-  
duce Watt's Psalm in place of the barbarous Scotch Version—  
but they will not admit it."

Ps. 41 "As to Limerick Ministers) You must understand that  
all (or greatest part) of this part of the Province where I  
am, has been settled within these 5 years by Irish Presbyterians  
from Belfast, or Pennsylvania and they imagine that they could  
secure this large tract of fine Country to themselves and  
their sect. Heretofore, they built Meeting Houses, and got Pastors  
from Ireland, and Scotland.

(With such emissaries about it is little wonder that Justice  
John wished to throw off the English yoke.—ivy note.)