

Thomasson family leaves a mark

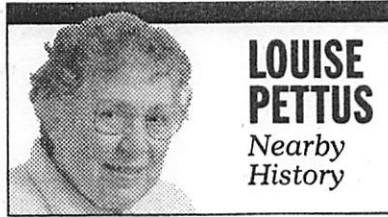
In 1790, a Revolutionary War veteran named William Pollard Thomasson brought his family to York County.

A Virginia native, Thomasson brought his wife and three children from Granville County, N.C., to what is now Rock Hill. They settled in the Catawba Indian Land near Ebenezer Presbyterian Church.

It was not many miles from where Thomasson and his fellow N.C. soldiers had fought in the battles of Camden, Rocky Mount and Hanging Rock.

The Catawba Indians leased Thomasson several tracts of land totaling between 500 and 600 acres.

Six more children were born after the Thomassons settled here. The boys attended Ebenezer Acad-



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*Nearby
History*

emy. When the youngest child was 13 years of age, William Thomasson died without a will.

S.C. law required that when a person died intestate the court would appoint administrators to settle the estate. It also required that the administrators be bonded by two or three other people at a rate double the estimated value of the estate. In addition, the state also appointed at least three ap-

praisers to determine the value of the goods and chattels of the deceased.

The law required that the estate could not be distributed to heirs until all of the debts of the deceased had been paid. Basically, that requirement has not changed since 1818, the year Thomasson died. However, there are a lot of differences between then and now.

For instance, Thomasson had no bank account. There wasn't a single bank in York County. There was little money in circulation. As a farmer, Thomasson lived mostly on credit. When he made a profit on his crops he paid off his debts to the storekeepers and neighbors and invested the surplus in slave labor and perhaps more land.

Thomasson's leased land was

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on Rock Hill before moving on

evaluated at more than \$4,000. Several slaves were listed with their total value (\$4,500) exceeding the value of the land. When the sale of the estate took place, the slaves, named as Paul, Julia and infant along with four boys and one girl, were sold to six different buyers.

Only Julia and the infant were not separated. The separation of families in the process of settling estates was one of the great tragedies of the institution of slavery.

At the sale, the widow, Mary Reeves Thomasson, purchased the slave girl Betty, 202 acres (undoubtedly including the homestead), all of the bedroom furniture, five large hogs, 15 pigs, four horses, most of the household furniture, three cows, one calf, one

steer, eight sheep, the flax and spinning wheels and a good deal of the kitchen and farming utensils.

Mary Thomasson also bought the family Bible. In 1846, then living in Walker County, Ga., she tore two pages from the Bible and sent them to Washington in order to prove that she deserved a pension as the widow of a veteran of the Revolution. (Her application was saved along with the Bible pages, and copies are available today from the National Archives.)

Her pension granted her an initial payment of \$100 and an additional \$20 per year. She died in 1850 at the age of 86 and is buried in Carrollton, Ga.

Even though they had inherited more than 500 acres from their father, eight of the nine children of

William P. Thomasson left York County for Georgia, where new land was available. The migration pattern of the Thomassons — from Virginia, through the Carolinas, on to Georgia and farther west — was typical of the time and place.

On June 29, 1980, Thomasson descendants from across the nation met at Ebenezer Cemetery in Rock Hill to dedicate a monument, with the assistance of the local Daughters of the American Revolution chapter, to their Revolutionary War ancestor William Pollard Thomasson (1763-1818).

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