

Original Pettus Brothers Came Here From Virginia

BY LOUISE PETTUS

Two Pettus brothers, George and William, came down from Hanover County, Va. and settled on Steel Creek around the year 1788. Capt. George Pettus (1753 - 1816) came first and married Jane Knox (1766 - 1847), daughter of Samuel and Mary Knox of Mecklenburg County's Steel Creek community. William (1768 - 1818) married Jane Knox's sister, Mary (1770 - 1855), in 1790.

Samuel Knox, who came to the area in 1763 and died in 1800, had three daughters and no sons. The third daughter, Sarah, married Alexander Candlish. Knox had extensive land holdings — at least 7000 acres — in Mecklenburg County and in Catawba Indian leases.

In March of 1783, Samuel Knox leased from the Catawbas a large tract on Steel Creek ("including all the low grounds") adjoining Thomas Spratt and Walter Davis. It was the first lease recorded in Charles Miller's lease book according to testimony of William E. White. The lease was paid up for 25 years. As rent, Knox gave the head men of the Catawba tribe ten silver dollars, a black horse, a black mare, one rifle gun, one bay mare, and the promise of ten silver dollars to be paid annually.

The Pettus brothers and Candlish, who was also a merchant, farmed and subleased the land. In 1808, William Pettus was elected as the first representative from the Catawba Indian Land to the S. C. General Assembly. The Assembly refused to seat him because he was not a freeholder, but the settlers of the area protested so loudly that Pettus was seated in the next session

(2) Mary E. Person; Rebecca; Sarah who married Nathaniel Harris; Cynthia who married James Knox; Susannah who married John Cheek Smith; John DOK who married Violet Wilson; Ann Dillard who married (1) Dr. William H. Clawson and (2) John Kimbrell; Stephen who married Eliza J.; Mary who married William McKee Burton; Jane who married William Goodrich and Elizabeth who married William G. Harris.

William Pettus, whose 1803 home on Gold Hill Road burned just a few years ago, had the following children; Samuel Knox, said to be a graduate of Oxford University, who married Elizabeth Marable and moved to Dyer Co., Tennessee; George who married Mary Taggart; Stephen Bulloch who married Susan Reed and moved to Tennessee; Rebecca W. who married Browning Duncan of Kentucky; Mariah who married (1) Capt. Peter Campbell of Harrisburg who was a teacher at Ebenezer Academy and (2) Stephen Partlow Sutton, a cousin; William Wadkins who married (1) Eliza Ann Burton and (2) Sarah E. Fuller Sutton and moved to Tennessee; and Thomas Newton who married (1) Adaline Burton, a sister of Eliza Ann Burton, and (2) Marianna —

The Pettuses of Fort Mill and Indian Land all trace their ancestry back to William Pettus through his youngest child, Thomas Newton Pettus and wife Adaline Burton, whose only child was William Thomas Pettus (1837 - 1908).

Bailes (1839 - 1907) and moved to the Pleasant Valley section of Lancaster County. Their children were: James Lawrence "Lon" Pettus (1861 - 1939), Mary Adeline (1863 - 1882), Joseph S. (1866 - 1889), John Walter (1869 - 1937), Nancy Jane (1871 - 1898), David W. (1874 - 1894), Newton Thomas (1876 - 1954), and William Lee (1879 - 1941).

Among other Fort Mill descendants of William Pettus (1768 - 1818) are some of the Suttons and Epps whose line come down through Maria Pettus and Stephen Partlow Sutton. Their children were Alexander Candlish Sutton (1843 - 1885), John Davis M. I. Sutton (born 1846) and Mary Pettus Sutton who married James P. Epps.



A SON of William Thomas Pettus was James Lawrence "Lon" Pettus, who is shown in this picture made around 1928 with his wife, Carrie Lee Hall Pettus. (Photo furnished by Louise Pettus)

