

RESEARCH NOTES AND EXTRACTS FROM
WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA, WESTERN VIRGINIA
AND TENNESSEE

by Thomas F. Norris Jr.¹

Washington Co. VA

Records of settlers living in old Washington Co. VA and in what later became Sullivan and Hawkins Counties, TN, may be found in the following records:

1738-1769 Augusta Co. VA
1769-1772 Botetourt Co. VA
1772-1777 Fincastle Co. VA
1777-1779 Washington Co. VA
1779-1790 Sullivan Co. NC

Also many early records of these areas may be found in the State Archives of NC (Raleigh), and the State Archives of Tennessee (Nashville). Other helpful information relating to these areas include the higher court records of Washington and Hamilton Districts of NC and the Jonesboro, Greenville and Knoxville in TN.

Migration and Settlement in TN and SW VA

The pivotal westward route in NC was Watauga Valley through which Virginians and North Carolinians moved into what became eastern Tennessee, settling there from 1769 through 1772. Next followed the occupation of the valleys of the Holston and Clinch Rivers as well as the French Broad River. The Knoxville area was settled about 1786.

The State of Franklin (then NC) was temporarily set up in 1784 but failed to get recognition by Congress. Instead, Congress recognized the new State of Tennessee as the 16th state in 1796.

The earliest permanent settlement in the present area of Tennessee was 1769, by settlers coming mainly from the back country of VA and NC. The four earliest areas of settlement were:

North of the Holston near Bristol
Along the Watauga River near Elizabethton
West of the Holston near Rogersville
Along the Nolichucky River near Erwin

Early Fletcher References in Public Records

Records of Washington Co. VA include Judgement Book #1, 1783, Judgements of March Term: "Aaron Lewis vs. William Fletcher," an indication that a William Fletcher claimed lands in old Washington Co. as early as 1783.

¹Thomas F. Norris Jr. is researching the line of Isaac Fletcher (b 7 Jul 1808 NC), great-great-grandfather of his wife Margaret Nan Fletcher. These notes were collected as he diligently searched for clues to the parentage of Isaac. He has very generously shared his research efforts with the hope that he might in return receive further clues to Isaac's line from our readers. Please write him at Rt. 2 Box 156, Hardy, Virginia 24101. (Isaac Fletcher m 2 Oct 1831 Elizabeth Lankford in Scott Co. VA; he d 12 Jul 1862 in Scott Co. Isaac and Elizabeth had thirteen children, all born in Scott Co. VA, between 1832 and 1858.)

Records taken from the NC Archives ref. Militia Service Accounts: 1777 Capt. Jacob Womack's payroll for service of men stationed at Womack's fort, Fincastle Co. VA for 15 July to 12 Oct 1777 included Thomas Fletcher, 90 days, and William Fletcher, 90 days (Drummer boy). Each were paid 6.0.0 lbs.

1786 Russell Co. VA was taken from old Washington Co. Fletchers were among the settlers there in the mid-Clinch River valley. Tax lists of Russell Co. for 1792-1793 (Upper District) included William Fletcher (150 acres) and in the Lower District was Ambrose Fletcher.

1790 Tazewell Co. VA was erected from Wythe and Russell. William Fletcher Sr., a resident in Wythe, married Mary Milam 29 Jan 1791. Issue included James (1792), Rowland (1799), Elias, Daniel, Joseph, William and Aaron.

Wilkes Co. NC

The Wilkes County Genealogical Society collection in the County Library at North Wilkesboro keeps a Member's Family Group Sheet File. During a visit to the Library on 28 Apr 1983, I found the following sheet:

Enoch Fletcher, b 15 Dec 1776 Fauquier Co. VA;
m Mary _____, b 14 Jan 1780 Culpeper Co. VA.

The will of James Fletcher of Wilkes Co., made in July 1805, names among others "Enoch and John Fletcher, sons of Benjamin Fletcher."

In the year 1788 Benjamin Fletcher was a tithing man in Wilkes Co. NC, with one poll (tax payer) and no land. In 1799 Enoch Fletcher was shown as a tithing man, also with one poll and no land.

In 1810 Enoch Fletcher was listed in the census enumeration for Wilkes Co., with 4 males and 2 females, plus himself and wife. Again in 1820, Enoch's name appears in the census index for Wilkes Co. The group sheet on file for his family recorded his death in 1836.

Other persons related to Enoch, as named in the will of James Fletcher, Esquire, included:

William Fletcher, son of James Fletcher Jr.
John Fletcher Sr., son of Thomas Fletcher
James Fletcher Sr., (Esq) and wife Susannah

The Rev. War record of Thomas A. Fletcher, who died in Hawkins Co. TN on 18 Feb 1843, stated that he had brothers named Benjamin and William, for whom he substituted during the War. For many years this Thomas Fletcher resided in Scott Co. VA.

Marriage records in Wilkes Co. NC show a bond "William Fletcher to Peggy Cargile, 6 Oct 1779."

William Fletcher of Wilkes Co. NC

Abstracts from public records include:

- 1798 James Roberts, age 9 years, bound to William Fletcher, Book I (see p. 479).
- 1805 Elizabeth Fletcher, wife of William Fletcher, decd., Book II.
- 1808 William Fletcher, decd., Inventory of estate of, Book II (see p. 159-Oct. Term of Court).

(continued)

- 1808 Elizabeth Fletcher, widow of William Fletcher, decd., allowance to (Book II (see p. 292)).
- 1809 William Fletcher, decd., sale of estate of. Named as purchasers: Elizabeth Fletcher, William Fletcher and John Jean (husband of Effereilla Fletcher; m 7 Dec 1796), Book II (see p. 267-May Term of Court).
- 1810 William Fletcher, decd., inventory of estate of, Book---(see p. 280-Jan. Term of Court).
- 1812 William Fletcher, Bill of sale for slaves, William Fletcher to Archibald Tomlinson, Book---(see p. 18).
- 1814 Thena Carter, orphan, bound to William Fletcher, Book---(see May Term of Court).

Marriages:

- 06 Oct 1779 William Fletcher/Peggy Cargile
- 12 Aug 1811 William Fletcher/Mariah Pratt
- 15 Aug 1817 William Fletcher/Lovina Tucker
- 10 Oct 1818 William Fletcher/Elizabeth Kilby
- Before 1811 William Fletcher/Sarah Burcham

NOTE: Will of John Burcham, made 4 Sep 1811, proved 1813, names "...daughter Sarah Fletcher...My son-in-law William Fletcher..." There was also a William Fletcher, veteran of the Revolutionary War, born 1758 in Stafford Co. VA, but resident in Wilkes Co. NC for a time after the War. This William Fletcher died in Jackson Co. AL on 27 Nov 1837 and left there a widow named Patsey.

Thomas Fletcher of Wilkes Co. NC

Abstracts from wills and other public records include:

- 1832 Thomas Fletcher made an affidavit that he was born in Ware Parish, Gloucester Co., VA, on 2 Feb 1762. He served in the Revolutionary War at the siege of Yorktown and settled in Wilkes Co. NC in the year 1802, serving as an Itinerant Methodist minister. He died in Wilkes Co. on 18 Mar 1835. (Pension Application #SF 84830)
- 1835 Thomas Fletcher's will proved May Term of Court. Names heirs as wife Sarah, son J.W. Fletcher, granddaughter Martha E. White, also Rachael H. Jones, Richard Gordon and wife Betsey Goodman(?) (Gordon). See W.B. IV, p. 189.
- 1835 Thomas Fletcher estate, inventory of, Aug. Term of Court. See W.B. IV, p. 194).
- 1835 Thomas Fletcher estate, account of sale of, Aug. Term of Court. See ibid., p. 200.
- 1839 Thomas Fletcher estate, accounting of, July Term of Court. See ibid., p. 238.
- 1840 Sarah Fletcher, widow of Thomas Fletcher, will of. Proved Nov. Term of Court. Names heirs of. Children including Rachael White and husband Lanty White, Mary Martin, Pamela Jones & her husband Russell H. Jones, Joseph W. Dugan(sic), W. Fletcher, Mary Stone, Elizabeth Gordon, Elizabeth Vannoy. W.B.---p. 324.

- 1841 Thomas Fletcher estate, account of administration, Fall Term of Court. See W.B.---p. 258.

Marriages (Wilkes Co. NC):

- 1802 Thomas Fletcher & Sarah Dogan (widow of Sam Dogan) nee Hundon. Bondsman William B. Lenoir, Rowan Co. Witness, James Fletcher. See Bond #000165156, dated 2 December.
- 1790 Samuel Dogan & Sarah Hundon, dated 10 June (1st marriage). Bondsman, John Robins. Witness, Charles Gordon, C.C.
- 1818 Richard Gordon & Betsy Fletcher, 15 February.
- 1825 Lanty R. White & Rebecca Fletcher, 03 June.
- 1826 Russell H. Jones & Parmellia Fletcher, 14 September.
- 1803 Sarah Fletcher, deed of gift to James Fletcher, D.B. F, p. 12, dated 22 December.

Ownership of Property: *

Thos Fletcher of Wilkes Co. NC purchased 411 acres on the North Fork of the Lewis Fork from John Shepherd Jr. on 08 Oct 1803 for 500 lbs. tobacco. See Book F, p. 01.

Thomas Fletcher of Wilkes Co. NC sold 480 acres on both sides of Middle Fork Reddies River, near Gap of Mtn., to John Shepherd on 08 Oct 1803 for \$1000. Includes plantation where David Owen now lives. See Book F, p. 91.

Thomas Fletcher and Sarah Fletcher, his wife, of Wilkes Co. NC sold one negro slave - by name "Charles" ; also another by name "Harry" to James Fletcher on 22 Dec 1803. See Book F, p. 93.

* Source: Absher, Mrs. W.O. (Abstracter & Compiler), Deed Book F-1, Wilkes County, North Carolina 1778-1807, published by the Genealogical Society of the "Original" Wilkes County.

Fletchers in Censuses of Scott Co. VA

1820	FLETCHER	000100	
	James	000000	
	FLETCHER	200010	
	Thos, Jr	100100100	
	FLETCHER	000001	
	Thos, Sr	111110100	
1830	FLETCHER	00000000000000	Page 11
	Peggy	00011100000000	3 Line 02
	FLETCHER	00100010000000	Page 11
	Thomas	00100010000000	4 Line 03
	FLETCHER	00000010000000	Page 11
	William	10000100000000	2(sic) Line 10
	"FLECHER"	02001000000000	Page 11
	Abram	30001000000000	7 Line 13
	FLETCHER	0000000000100	Page 12
	Thos, A.	0000100001000	3 Line 01
	FLETCHER	10001000000000	Page 13
	John	11000100000000	5 Line 08

(continued)

1840	FLETCHER	22000100000000	Page 286
	Isaac	00001000000000	6 Line 25
	FLETCHER	21100100000000	Page 298
	John	02110100000000	10 Line 09
	FLETCHER	10000000000000	Page 303
	Sarah	02000101000000	5 Line 23

Marriages In Scott Co. VA

06 Aug 1822	Anthony Smith/Elizabeth Fletcher
13 May 1826	Peter Eiler/Frances Fletcher
02 Oct 1831	Isaac Fletcher/Elizabeth Lankford
23 Dec 1831	Obadiah Castell/Malinda Fletcher
? 1836	Aaron Fletcher/Seney Jarvis

Fletchers In Censuses & Tax Lists of Wilks Co. NC

1782	James Filscher, tax list, 6830 acres, 6 mules/horses, 15 cattle (Nathaniel Gordons List).
1782	William Fletcher, tax list, 900 acres, 1 mule/horse, 1 cow (Alex. Gordons List)
1800	Elizabeth Fletcher 01200 11010
	James Fletcher 31010 30010
	James Fletcher (Esq) 00201 10101
	John Fletcher 20010 30010
	William Fletcher 01001 01001
1810	James Fletcher 02201 00201
	James Fletcher (Esq) 11110 23010
	Enoch Fletcher 40010 20010
	Thomas Fletcher (Esq) 10001 32010

Thomas Fletcher

Several individuals bearing this name are of considerable interest to us. The eldest, identified as Thomas (A) Fletcher, was born in Virginia about the year 1845. The place of his birth has not been preserved nor have the names of his parents been found in any records available to us.

He gave military service in support of the State of Virginia during the Revolutionary War at which time he resided in the County of Pittsylvania (1776). He campaigned in Eastern Virginia, and at Gwyn's Island on the Chesapeake Bay. He also fought in the Battle of Guilford Courthouse, NC, under the command of General Nathaniel Greene. A deposition made for his pension as a veteran of that war mentions two brothers, Benjamin and William Fletcher. Marriage Bonds and Ministers Returns of Pittsylvania Co. VA 1767-1805, by Catherine L. Knorr, has the following entry (p. 12): "18 June 1790, Thomas FLETCHER and Keziah FARRIS, dau. of Joseph Farris, who consents. Surety, Joshua Short. Married by the Rev. James Hunt."

Landon C. Bell, in his work entitled Sunlight on the Southside, a list of tithes and titheholders in Lunenburg Co. VA 1748-1783, provides the following Fletcher entries:

Tithes 1748 - Lewis Deloney's list (pp. 64/66)
John Fletcher - 1 tithe
Same 1750 - Cornelius' list (pp. 129/134)
John Fletcher - XXXXXXX
Same 1752 - Field Jefferson's list (p. 197)
John Fletcher - 1 tithe

There is no evidence to connect this John Fletcher with Thomas Fletcher or his brothers William and Benjamin, but it is obvious that families of

this surname were among residents of that area prior to 1750, which was about the time of Thomas' birth. The original Pittsylvania Co. was erected from Old Lunenburg in 1767 and contained the present day counties of Henry and Patrick. Mr. Bell states that "...many original settlers remained and became permanent inhabitants. Others paused for a time, then passed into the South and Southwest, part of a great migration rolling southward into NC, both the present state, and what is now TN, etc."

It is hard to separate and clearly identify the several Thomas Fletchers of Patrick Co. VA and Surry, Wilkes, Rowan and other northwestern NC counties. Persons bearing the same given names are found contemporaneously in both states.

By the year 1830, the surname Fletcher was represented in Scott Co. VA by six households, an increase of three over the year 1820. Thomas Jr. and Thomas A. Sr. were both reported, each with a living wife and at least one child residing in the home. Missing from the earlier list was a James Fletcher. Among those reported living in Scott Co. for the first time was Peggy Fletcher, very probably a widow, with two females and no males in the home. Another new resident was William Fletcher, age 40/50, with a wife and one daughter. Also a John Fletcher was reported, who with his wife were both natives of NC. These all seem to have followed others of their kinsmen from NC to settle in the valleys of the Holston and Clinch Rivers in southwestern VA.

Kyles Ford

Thomas A. Fletcher applied for a pension as a Rev. War veteran, in the County Court at Estillville (now Gate City), on 13 Feb 1833. In his deposition we discover that his middle initial was "A", and also that Benjamin and William were his brothers. Unfortunately for us, he did not state the date or place of his birth nor did he identify the names of his parents.

By 4 Mar 1839, this Thomas Fletcher Sr. had removed from Scott Co. to Hawkins Co. TN, where he went to live with his son-in-law Anthony Smith. Anthony Smith and Elizabeth Fletcher were married in Scott Co. by the Rev. Samuel Helton on the 6th day of Aug 1822. His minister's return reads: "A list of marriages solemnized in the year 1822 up to the 12th of September to-wit etc". In addition to Anthony and Elizabeth's marriage, that same list included the marriage of James Fletcher and Anny Sandige, on the 2nd February 1822. Thomas Fletcher's stated reason for moving to Hawkins Co. TN was "...he has a daughter residing in Hawkins Co. and he is getting old. He wishes to be with her family to take care of them." He died there on 18 Feb 1843, in the 98th year of his life. These facts were all given in the pension record, obtained from the National Archives by Michael Fletcher in 1983.

In a will dated 30 Nov 1841, this same Thomas Fletcher identified as heirs: sons John P., William, Thomas and James, and daughters Jiney Herrin, Polly O'Daniel, Peggy Fletcher, Franky Etter and Elizabeth Smith. See Hawkins Co. W.B. #17/189.

Thomas Fletcher Jr. of Scott Co. died sometime between 1830 and 1840. His family is recorded in the 1840 enumeration as Sarah Fletcher, age 50/60, with one male under 5, plus 4 females under 20. The tender ages of these children suggest that they might be grandchildren or perhaps step-children.
