

No Carrilina. I u tuare a complaint hath I. unquaid
 Withs County to me James Fletcher Justice ~~for~~
 Do County by John quarey of the County aforesaid
 that heard Wm Crain, say that he wished that
~~the~~ the King and all his forces was there
 at the General andister and sider by his on aker he
 Liked them, signifying he would Join With them
 Therefore these are in the name of the State to
 Regular you ^{to} Case the said Wm Crain to appear be
 fore me or sum Justice of Do County to answer the
 above Complaint given under my hand and seal
 This 23 Day of april 1778 ————— James Fletcher
 To any Low full officer
 To execute and Return

William Crain was arrested in 1778 for supporting the King of England.

56

On June 10, 1779, the sheriff was directed to apprehend James Crain, laborer, on the charge of assaulting a slave named Phill, the property of Hugh Montgomery. He was to appear at the September 1779 term of court.

James Crain was likely the brother of William Crain who professed his affection for the British King. James filed an entry for 150 acres on Fish Dam Creek in 1784, and he might have already been living there prior to that since there was an improvement, or cabin, on the land. This was two miles north of the upper Moravian tract that Hugh Montgomery bought from the Moravians on July 22, 1778. Together, both the upper and lower tracts totaled 8,773 acres, and Montgomery was by far the wealthiest landowner in this part of the state. In 1777, he was listed with ten slaves, 70 horses, and 135 cattle. Perhaps one of these slaves was Phill. Hugh Montgomery died on

December 23, 1779, and his daughters Rachael and Rebecca eventually inherited his Wilkes County land.

57

At the February 1779 court, Alexander Poor, Joseph Suell, and William Adams Sr. were all bound to the sheriff so that Alexander Poor would appear at the next term of court for profane swearing.

Alexander Poor lived on the North Fork of Lewis Fork where he entered 200 acres of land on November 15, 1779. He was issued this land in 1785 (file #708). When he sold the property in May 1790 to Nathaniel Vannoy, he was listed as Alexander Poor of Lincoln County. (DB B1, p84).

58

On February 20, 1779, Joseph Porter was accused of profane swearing. He and his surety Benjamin Cleveland were bound to the sheriff to appear at the next court.

59

Morris Baker was summoned to attend court at the courthouse in December 1778 as a juror, but he failed to appear. In March 1779, the sheriff was ordered to inform him to appear at the next June court. The order was given to Baker in the presence of George Morris Esq. and Joseph Younger.

Morris Baker lived far from the Wilkes County courthouse in 1778, and that might have contributed to why he missed his appearance as a juror. The 1778 tax list shows him in Andrew Baker's district near West Jefferson. Morris Baker owned three horses, 13 cattle, and had an improvement even though he did not yet own any land.

60

In December 20, 1779, the sheriff was directed to apprehend William Laws Jr. on the charge of getting drunk. He was to appear at the March 1780 term of court.

61

Harris Standley was ordered to appear at the June 1781 term of Wilkes court. He was out on bail through a bond with sureties Reuben Standley and John Standley. However, he failed to appear, and additional orders were given for him to appear at the September and December courts. He continued to be absent. Finally, a note on the back from sheriff Richard Allen says that “the man lives in Burk”, out of his jurisdiction.

The Wilkes court minutes for June 1779 show that Harris Standley had been apprehended on suspicion of being a vagrant, and the sheriff was ordered to hold him until “discharged by due course of law”. In 1783, Harris Stanley was a witness to at least two surveys on Lower Creek in Burke County.

62

On April 2, 1781, Joshua Towson and Thomas Towson signed a bond promising that Joshua would appear at the June term of court on a charge of trespass, assault, and battery.

63

On May 18, 1781, William Combs complained that Thomas Towson came to his plantation and robbed him of his __ife (knife?) and some other property of his”. Judy Combs, Biddy Combs, and John Combs were summoned as witnesses.

On May 20, 1781, Thomas Towson complained that last Saturday, George Combs came to his plantation twice "and threatened much to abuse him and his family, and the said Towson further sayeth that he is really afraid that the said George Combs will beat and abuse him or some of his family." John Combs and Hannah Combs were summoned as witnesses.

The May 20, 1781, complaint by Thomas Towson says that George Combs came to his plantation twice and abused and threatened him and his family.

To summarize these three documents, in April 1781, Joshua Towson was released on bail for an unknown crime of trespass and assault. His relative Thomas Towson paid the bail. A month later, Thomas robbed William Combs. Two days after that, Thomas reported that George Combs threatened him and his family.

The Combs and Towson/Touson/Townsend families were closely related. There is a Wilkes marriage bond for William Combs and Hannah Towson dated December 18, 1780, with John Combs as the

bondsman. It seems likely that this Hannah and John were two of the witnesses mentioned in the court documents. Depending on the family relationships, one possibility is that William Combs was robbed by his wife's brother Thomas Towson just five months after they married. In retaliation, George Combs threatened Thomas. Perhaps these documents will help researchers sort out these two early Wilkes County families.

65

On December 11, 1778, John Townzen was ordered to appear in court to answer the charge by the grand jury for unlawful gaming.

There is a Wilkes marriage bond between John Townzen and Nancy Denney (or, Denny) dated September 7, 1780, and the sheriff, Richard Allen, was the bondsman. John Townzen (or, Towson) is consistently found on Wilkes County tax lists from 1784 through 1799 living in districts that included part of Roaring River.

The last name of this family is spelled many different ways in the records including Townson, Townsend, Towson, and other similar variants. Online family trees show John Townzen born in 1765 and died in 1855 in Arkansas. However, there was another man by the same name in neighboring Burke County in the 1770s and 1780s.

66

On March 22 (year not given), Ensign George Combs stated that he heard Job Cole "speak words very defamatory and reproachful of sundry justices, that Ben. Cleveland Esq. and others were rogues and scoundrels and many other reproachful words".

67

On September 9, 1782, John Holden was ordered to appear at the October term of court "to answer such matters or things as may be