

# THOMAS SLADE I

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Thomas Slade (first in Caswell) came to what was then Orange in 1765 and settled on the North Prong of Rattlesnake Creek. Son Nathaniel left record of this and affirmed "my father settled themselves with their family" and "spent the remainder of their lives in this county." He might have added that "their family" included his grandfather, Thomas Miles, sometimes called Esquire, and his sons and daughters. One of those sons, Abraham Miles, m. Elizabeth Tolbert, sister of Joseph Tolbert of Edgefield County, S.C. Abraham was in this county by at least 1763, the Tolberts even earlier by land grant from Lord Granville. Thomas Miles I, father of Hannah Miles (m. Thomas Slade in 1748), therefore, brought quite a party when he came to our County, we believe, in 1765. Unfortunately he died in 1766 leaving will in Orange.

A most interesting letter which is vital to the understanding of the life and times of Thomas Slade I is quoted from the xerox of S.C. Archives:

"N.C. August 1783 Dear Brother and Sister: [Aquilla Miles, Hannah's brother, and wife Henrietta of Edgefield] I received your letter by [illegible — may be John Lea but more probably J.T. as in Joseph Talbert] dated May 18 which gave me grate satisfaction to here from you all likewise. Our son William am glad to here of his welfare ["his" probably means Billy Miles, Aquilla's son who, along with William, Thomas Jr. and Nathaniel Slade, had just served in the Revolution]. Our fammaly all well at present only our son Nathan just come home from camp at Charles Towne. He is very poorly, hardly can walk aboute any. He was taking [taken] on the Rode so bade that he could not get any further he lyed about for three days and nights by himself on the rode nothing to eate nor drink, but as luck would have it sum good body came to him and took him home Till our son Thomas went for him about a hundred and sixty miles. You may tell Billey he was as poorely as he was when he was in camp in the South. I am sorry to ac-

quainte you of this bade news all most with Tears in my eyes that we shan't be able to send you any Brandy this year However if you would be so good as to give yourself the trouble to come and see us this Fall I will endeavor to git some good Whiskey to make your harts merry and to be shore to fitch Billey with you as the young ladies make grate inquire after him this little Parrish. The Paul's sayes that she longs to be doing for him [the Paul family lived nearby]. They are all afraid that he is married. You must indeaver to keep him in bounds and not let him ball aboute like a young Buck. My daughter Betsey Lea very poorely and is cripled yit [this is the only known reference]. My children all well only them as I have mentioned. Tell Billey that Jesse Talbert and Fammaly agoing to Georgia to live very soon [Susannah Talbert is named in the wills and she and Jesse executed deed in 1784]. Fine crops here this year. I made oute last year Better far Better than I thought. Bought aboute four Barrels of Corn very dear, goods agitting cheap, salt at 8 and 10 shillings per bushel Iron at six pence. I have heard nothing from our friends from Maryland a long time. You must come and make merry with your old Mother-in-law [or step-mother]. She is a-going to try for her Negroes that she sayes Peter Miles stole from her. Thos. Simmons setts off tomorrow after them, but I am in hopes she [crossed out] he never will git them. [actually, lady alluded to was Hannah Whitaker McComas Miles, second wife of Thomas Miles I; they were married in Baltimore County in 1761 and Peter was her step-son]. So must conclude with giving our loves to you and yours and Billey [William Miles is named in will of father Aquilla Miles in 1801 but Henrietta was not his mother, having married Aquilla in 1771] Thomas Slade"

Recently Susan DeGroot of Rockville, Md., a Slade descendant, had a professional to search the court records there and official record of Thomas Slade's age was uncovered, as well as an unexpected first wife. In 1742 Thomas, then "about 25," wife Ann Besson "about 18," and daughter Margaret about "one year old" executed a Lease in solemn form to the agent for Lord Baltimore's estate. In effect they agreed to till the Baltimore soil for an annual rental of 900 lbs. of tobacco. In 1744 they took on an adjoining tract for 300 lbs. This could have been a year of calamity for Thomas; wife Ann could have died with her second child and Margaret could have been adopted by relatives, but this is speculation. It is not speculation that Thomas and his brother Josiah lost the tract known as Slayde's Camp in a court suit. However, Thomas married again in 1748 and eventually sold the lease in 1765 for 215 lb. gold.

Following is an updated table of the children of Thomas and Hannah Slade: (1) Nancy, b. ca. 1749, sometimes known as Ann Tolbert (Talbert) but called Nancy Graves in the settlement of Thomas' estate, m. John Herndon Graves 1770, d. 1807; (2) Susannah, b. ca. 1751, m. Jesse Talbert ca. 1775, d. after 1813 (mother's estate); (3) Thomas Jr., b. ca. 1753, Revolutionary soldier, m. first Mary Williams in 1779, second Isabella Graves in

1782, d. 1830; (4) William, b. ca. 1756, Revolutionary soldier, m. Martha Kerr 1786, d. 1836; (5) Nathaniel, b. 1761, Revolutionary soldier, m. Elizabeth Perry Yancey 1792, d. 1846; (6) Betsy, b. ca. 1763 m. a Lea, d. ca. 1785 leaving orphan Nicey Lea mentioned in Thomas' will; (7) Catherine, b. ca. 1765 (may have been n. for grandmother Catherine Miles, first wife of Thomas I), m. a Lea, d. after 1813; (8) Hannah, b. 1767, m. John C. (Canebrake) Lea, d. after 1850; (9) Delilah, b. ca. 1769, m. Joshua Hightower 1793, d. ca. 1795 leaving orphan Devereux mentioned in Thomas' will; (10) Ezekiel, b. ca. 1771, m. Mary Hubbard 1798, d. Jan. 1850; (11) Josiah b. ca. 1773, marr. bond to Jane Gomer 1815, d. or moved ca. 1830 according to County Road Docket.

Both Thomas and Hannah left wills of record in Caswell. Archives has Thomas' original written shortly before his death in 1798. Concerned with the equal distribution of his 8 Negroes and over 500 acres of the same land located near the present junction of the Slade road with the County Home Road, the patriarch still saw to it that his Hannah had 200 acres including the house and orchard, three of the slaves, a sufficiency of stock, including "choice sheep" and the management of the estate. Tobacco had been a way of life for the Slades, both white and black, and he directed that his crop go to Jesse Carter, storekeeper, to pay his debt, with the balance, if any to be divided among the other creditors. Hannah's will probated at October Court, 1813, was also concerned with equal distribution. Josiah continued to live at the old home with Ezekiel's place adjoining. Ezekiel's sons were to become well-known for their bright-leaf tobacco.

Sources: N.C., S.C., Md. Archives and Court Records, Marriage Bonds; Louise Graves, DAR Records, Library of Congress.

— Sallie P. Anderson

## THE GENERATIONS OF WILLIAM SLADE

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When the first William Slade came to America from Wales ca. 1660 he took lands on the Patapsco River near the City of Baltimore, Md. When he died in 1675 he willed a gun to his only son William, the father of the Thomas Slade who came to Caswell Co. in 1765. The second William set the policy of leaving the gun to the eldest son when he died and left will in 1731. That gun may still be somewhere up in Maryland because descendants of Josiah, the eldest, are still in circulation.

Although Thomas and his son Ezekiel used the old family names, there was no other heirloom to hand down until the family of William Slade, the fourth of that name in America, came along. William, the brother of Abisha and Elias, born in 1806, assisted materially in perfecting the bright-tobacco curing process with charcoal. He and Abisha also had a grist mill on the South Fork of Rattlesnake Creek near the present Max Smith farm on the County Home Rd. Max is a descendant of Hannah, William's daughter, and the sixth generation of