

TAX DOCUMENTS SHOW DUNNING IN MECKLENBURG

Research by Wanda Tucker, 7 February 2023

Some of the documents collected by Essie May show taxes paid by Dunning in 1778, 1779, and 1782 in Mecklenburg County, NC.

One of the tax collectors is James Bradshaw. I don't find information on a James Bradshaw in Lancaster, SC. But I do find a James Bradshaw in Mecklenburg in that time period.

Another of the tax collectors is Adam Alexander, who was the commander of the Clear Creek militia where both Dunning Keziah, Sr. and Sandifer Keziah served. He was one of the signers of the Mecklenburg Declaration in 1775.

"Adam also served as a delegate to the Catawba Indians. He owned a store and a mill, as well as a home in another location. Justice of the Peace, member of the Mecklenburg County Court and Elder of Clear Creek Presbyterian Church were just some of the titles given him during his lifetime."

<https://www.geni.com/people/Colonel-Adam-Alexander/6000000002642436884>

It's very hard to decipher, but I'm pretty sure the third tax record was collected by John White. John White's name also appears on the Clear Creek Militia list.

Dunning was definitely taxed in MECKLENBURG, from 1766 to 1782. The land record on Cane Creek in 1785 is further south than Clear Creek. I don't think he moved one inch in 1790 for the census, to be in Lancaster, SC. I think he was enumerated there, but was in NC the whole time. I believe he died in Mecklenburg prior to the 1800 census.

THE MECKLENBURG DECLARATION

I just tied a couple of things together that have blown me away.

The Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence is a legendary document supposed to have been signed a full year before the Declaration of Independence was signed on 4 July 1776. It is controversial, in that no copy exists. But there is evidence that it did.

I have read enough and studied enough of the material surrounding it that I absolutely believe it was real, and was signed in Mecklenburg, NC on 20 May, 1775.

There is a list of the signers, which can be found at the link below, along with the story of how the Meck Dec, as it is known, came to be signed and known.

Dunning and Sandifer Keziah, while in the Clear Creek Militia, were serving with *numerous* signers of the Meck Dec. Here are the names of the militia who were also signers:

Adam Alexander, Commander of the Militia

John Foard, Sergeant

John Queary

James Harris

Robert Harris

Some sources name Lieutenant Charles Polk, on the militia list, as a signer of the Meck Dec, while others don't, but his brother Thomas certainly signed it.

On a side note, another family member of mine on different line entirely, Henry Downs, was also a signer.

The list of signers can be found at this link:

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mecklenburg_Declaration_of_Independence

The Keziah boys were in the center of Revolutionary sentiment when they were in Mecklenburg. They called it the "Hornet's Nest" the fervor for independence was so high there before the War.

ANOTHER KEZIAH CONNECTION TO THE CLEAR CREEK MILITIA FAMILIES AND THE MECK DEC

Thomas Allison Keziah b. 1837, the son of John Keziah and Hester Hargett, and great-grandson of Dunning Keziah, Sr., married Elizabeth A. Shelby, the daughter of Coleman Shelby and Monica Fowler.

Proof of the marriage of John Keziah and Esther Hargett can be found in the marriage record of Thomas Keziah and Eliza Medlin at the link below (caution here; Esther Hargett's name has been mis-transcribed by Ancestry as 'Lillie,' but a careful look at the document shows Esther):

https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/60548/images/42091_333001-01259?pId=7233066

Proof of Coleman Shelby/Monica Fowler marriage can be found in the death certificate of William P. Shelby, which names his parents, C.C. Shelby and Monica Fowler:

<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/600540499:1121>

Elizabeth A. Shelby is found with her parents on the 1850 census in Union County, NC, two houses away from her future in-laws, John and Esther Keziah:

https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/8054/images/4204426_00091?treeid=&personid=&usePUB=true&_phsrc=mNs1194&_phstart=successSource&pId=13040257

Thomas A. Keziah's marriage to Elizabeth Shelby was recorded by the State of North Carolina in Union County on 22 May 1756 (right-hand page, second from the top):

<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C9TN-K2BC?i=38&cc=1726957>

The name Shelby rang a bell, so I started to dig. I was sure I had seen the name in another context.

Capt. Adam Alexander of the Clear Creek Militia, and signer of the Mecklenburg Declaration, married **Mary Shelby**, daughter of Evan Shelby, Sr. She had a brother, Reese Shelby, Sr.

<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Shelby-8>

It is notable that Reese Shelby, Sr. married Mary Blair. Sergeant William Blair appears on the Clear Creek Militia list. Reese Shelby is also found on the Clear Creek militia list.

The many Shelbys in Mecklenburg and Union, NC, and Chesterfield, SC from the 1760s to 1830 are all clearly related. The lineage traces back to Reese Shelby's arrival in the area in 1762. He bought land on Clear Creek. Later, he and his family went to Chesterfield, SC, but by 1820, they were back in the Clear Creek area.

Elizabeth Trull reportedly married William Shelby in 1814, and Coleman Shelby was born in 1815. In 1820, Elizabeth Shelby is found alone on the 1820 census in Anson, with a boy and a girl both under ten years old. She is next door to Moses Shelby and his family, and a Widow Shelby. This comports with the Findagrave listing for William Shelby, which states he died in Edwards County, IL in 1817. He had left his family behind.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/65664462/william-shelby>

There is some evidence that William Shelby may have served in the militia in the War of 1812:

Name:	William Shelby
Company:	CAPT. LANIER'S CO., NORTH CAROLINA MILITIA.
Rank - Induction:	PRIVATE
Rank - Discharge:	PRIVATE
Roll Box:	187
Microfilm Publication:	M602

Direct Data Capture, comp. *U.S., War of 1812 Service Records, 1812-1815* [database on-line].
Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 1999.

An image of his service record can be found at Familysearch.com:

<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33S7-95Z6-GFR?i=1527&cc=1916219&personaUrl=%2Fark%3A%2F61903%2F1%3A1%3AQ29K-R6VX>

A William Shelby is found on the list of the 1814 Muster - 6th Regiment - 8th Company, detached from the 2nd Mecklenburg Regiment of NC Militia. There are Alexanders, Helms, Hargetts, Starns, and a Tomberlin on the list, too:

https://carolana.com/NC/1800s/antebellum/war_of_1812_1814_6R_8th_Company.html

Bounty land was offered in Illinois after the War of 1812. Perhaps William went there to settle, and died in the attempt.

BACK TO COLEMAN SHELBY IN ANSON

There is only one possible entry on the 1830 Anson County, NC census who could be Coleman Shelby. He is in the household of Holden Wade Shelby. Mary Shelby, the widow of Moses Shelby who died in 1826 is on the census in Anson, but the people with her are accounted for as her children. The only other Shelby is Nancy, age 60-70, next door to Holden Wade, alone in her household.

Holden Wade Shelby was born in 1802, and thus was not old enough to be the father of Coleman Shelby, born 1815.

SPECULATION: It appears that Elizabeth Trull Shelby “may” have left NC before 1825, and went to Livingston County, KY, where other Shelbys, including Moses and Isaac, already lived. She was not on the census in North Carolina in 1830. This Elizabeth married George Trayley 24 March 1825:

Name: Elizabeth Shelby
Sex: F

Household	Role	Sex	Age	Birthplace
George D. Trayley	Husband	M		

GS Film Number: 318176
Digital Folder Number: 004261143
Indexing Project (Batch) Number: M01946-2
System Origin: ODM

Citing this Record
"Kentucky Marriages, 1785-1979", database, *FamilySearch*
(<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:F44P-LM4> : 11 May 2022), Elizabeth Shelby in entry for George D. Trayley, 1825.

In 1840, Holden Wade Shelby appears in Hickman County, KY. Hickman County was formed from what was originally Livingston County. He remains there in 1850 with a seven-year-old son named Coleman after his grand-nephew left behind in NC, although his part of Hickman County had now become Fulton County.

MEANWHILE, BACK IN NORTH CAROLINA

On the 1830 census, the following names appear on same page of the census in Anson, NC:

John Tomberlin
Isaac Price
John Presley
David Hargett
John Preslar, Jr.
Holden W. Shelby
Nancy Shelby
Dempsey Tomberlin
Jonathan Trull
William Trull

All of these names are familiar, and tie to the Keziahs or Shelbys in one way or another:

- Martha Ann **Tomberlin** married John Calvin Keziah

Above images found at:

<https://nclandgrants.com/grant/?mars=12.14.27.7301&qid=865810&rn=1>

Based on all of the above, I am inclined to believe Coleman's parents were William Shelby and Elizabeth Trull, even without a direct birth record.

SANDIFER KEZIAH REMAINED NEAR EVAN SHELBY, JR., UNTIL 1774

I also found this on Evan Shelby, Sr.'s findagrave:

"Evan [Shelby] Jr. became a fur trader, was in Braddock's Campaign (1755), served as first lieutenant to Capt. Alexander BEALL in 1767-8, and later held commissions in both Maryland and Pennsylvania. **About 1773, he removed to Sapling Grove where he erected Shelby's Fort in what was then Fincastle County, Virginia, and later Washington County, Virginia, but is today Bristol, Sullivan County, Tennessee.** In 1774, he commanded the Fincastle Company in Dunmore's War, and was at the battle of Point Pleasant on 10 Oct of that year. In 1776, Virginia Governor Patrick Henry appointed him Major in the troops commanded by Col. William Christian against the Cherokees. On December 21, of that same year, he was appointed colonel of the militia of newly-created county of Washington, and in 1779, he led an expedition against the Chickamauga Indian towns on the lower Tennessee River."

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/65634181/evan-shelby>

This is the info from Sandifer's Wiki:

"Sandifer moved on from Edgefield, and by 1776 he was in Washington/Fincastle Co. Tennessee, NC/VA thus becoming one of the "Overmountain Men". A careful reading of the original payroll makes it apparent that his son John was there with him. Son John Kizziar (sic) was 21 years old at this point.

Pay Roll for Captain Womack's Company of Militia stationed at **Womack's Fort in Fincastle County 1776.**"

Then I found this page. Check out the top two forts, Shelby's and Womacks:

<https://www.northamericanforts.com/East/tn.html#shelby>

I located the forts on Google Maps. They were 13 miles apart. Sandifer and Evan Shelby served close by each other even after the Clear Creek militia.