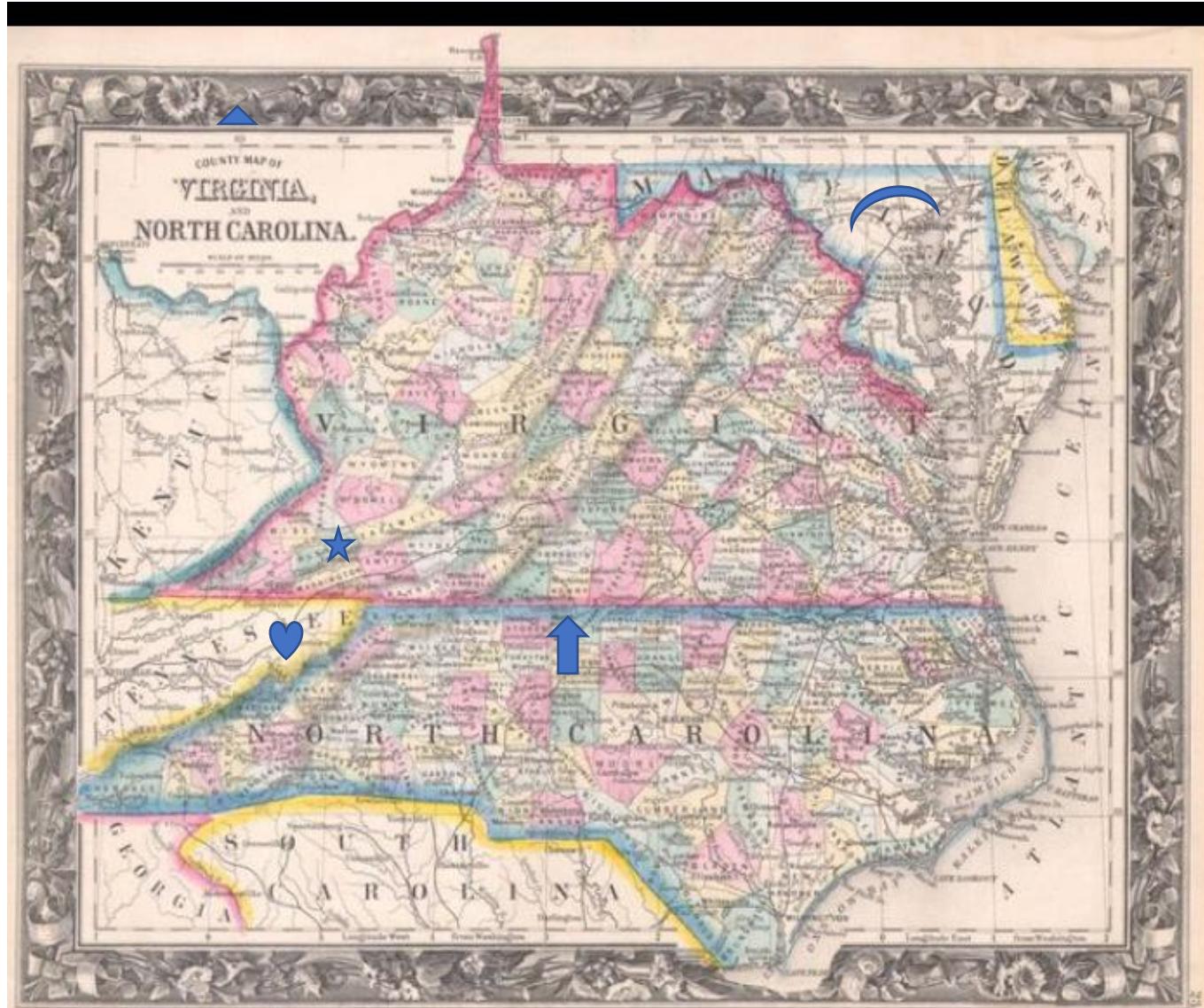


Mark Whitaker (1760-1812), Ancestors 94¹
By their great great great granddaughter, Linda R. Horton, 17 January 2022



Mark Whitaker (1760-1812) was a leading Methodist circuit-riding minister at a time when this denomination was booming, especially in frontier areas. He was born in Frederick County, Maryland (crescent on the map below) and moved with his parents to Surry County, North Carolina (at arrow).¹ Mark's career as a minister began in about 1780 in Castlewood in Russell County, Virginia (at star), where he later lived from 1802 until his death in 1812.² Mark's calling to spread God's word took him to many localities in Virginia, the Carolinas, and Tennessee. In Jonesborough (at heart), in what today is east Tennessee, he met and married Martha "Patsy" Harvey (1772-1840). After several years there,



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in about 1802 he and his family migrated to Castlewood, where he bought land and preached the next 10 years. The Russell County Court Orders show that Mark Whitaker presented papers to show his ordination into the ministry at the May 1803 term of the court.³ He was granted the right to perform marriages in Virginia. After Mark's death in 1812, Martha remained in Castlewood for several years and then moved to Kentucky (at the triangle).

This biography includes an appendix that places Mark Whitaker in our family tree and describes his ancestry, back to Thornhill, Dewsbury in West Riding, Yorkshire, England.

Methodism in Mark Whitaker's era

This family's story is not only the story of pioneer life in a rugged four-state region of Appalachia, but also of how the Methodist faith penetrated, and likely helped tame, a wild frontier. Through the efforts of early Methodist evangelists like Mark Whitaker, America's Methodist population grew from 1,000 adherents in 1770 to 250,000 in 1820.⁴

Many challenges confronted the earliest Methodist evangelists in western Virginia and nearby areas in neighboring states when the United States was a young country:⁵

The country, at the time, was new and thinly settled. They met with many privations and sufferings and made but little progress. The most of the country through which they traveled was very mountainous and rough, and the people ignorant and uncultivated, and the greater part a frontier exposed to Indian depredations. [The first two Methodist evangelists] were followed by Mark Whitaker and Mark Moore, who were zealous, plain, old-fashioned Methodist preachers, and calculated to make an impression. Their labors were successful, and they were instrumental in

The illustration shows American Methodists proceeding to their Camp Meeting.⁶



raising up many societies. Mark Whitaker, in particular, was a strong man, and maintained Methodist doctrine in opposition to Calvinism, which was the prevailing doctrine of that time. He laid a good foundation for his successors...Under God these men planted the standard of the cross in the frontier settlements, and numerous societies were raised up, so that in 1791 the societies numbered upward of one thousand.

The word “societies” in this context meant congregations. It is used in place of “churches,” which often connotes a bricks-and-mortar building. Early Methodists often met in homes or out-of-doors until funds could be collected for the construction of church buildings. In regard to the Methodists’ theological dispute with Presbyterians and other Calvinists, the Methodists focused on the gospel of the new birth, the message that all people are sinners but could find forgiveness through the grace of Christ.⁷

...the Methodists argued against longtime Calvinist teachings such as predestination, or the idea that God alone chose those who would be saved from hell. Beginning with John Wesley, the Methodists argued that people had the power to choose salvation themselves. Salvation still came by God’s grace, but the Methodists taught that God did not condemn people to hell without giving them the opportunity to accept forgiveness through Christ.⁸

The Methodist message that Christians had the ability to choose whether to have a heavenly afterlife was more appealing than a doctrine that certain individuals are predestined for salvation and others not. The Presbyterian defense is that a God who is all-knowing will surely know who is destined for salvation, and who is not. The Methodists’ style also was more expressive than other denominations and, at least during the time period covered by this biography, emphasized fervent religious experiences, “including trances, revelatory dreams, visions, and a variety of involuntary bodily motions and shaking.”⁹ These participatory aspects of worship were appealing to some who joined the Methodist faith.

Virginia proved to be a seedbed for Methodist and evangelical awakenings on the frontier, but the Methodists in Virginia also continued to experience their own revivals, especially between 1803 and 1805. During this era, the Virginia Methodists perfected the “camp meeting,” a relatively new revival setting inaugurated in Kentucky and Tennessee, in which people would come from the surrounding regions to camp on the grounds of a church for several days at a time. These spiritual festivals became both social occasions and times of intense piety that often ran late into the evenings. Less expressive Christians, including some of the Baptists and Presbyterians, mocked the camp meetings as uncouth, and in Virginia these events became almost exclusively associated with the Methodists.¹⁰

Camp meetings often lasted eight to ten days, or longer. Families pitched tents on the grounds. Preaching, Bible readings, hymn singing, and classes continued all day and into the evening.¹¹ Mark Whitaker was personally responsible for certain innovations associated with Methodist camp meetings, according to our cousin Robert “Bob” Whittaker, a leading Whitaker family researcher.¹²

Methodism in the Horton Family in the 20th Century

Our father, Raymond Horton (1914-1987), recalled the magnetic attraction of Methodist camp meetings for his mother, our grandmother Ethel McCoun Horton Shuck (1896-1985). She insisted that the family move from the country into Campton, Wolfe County, Kentucky, so that she could more participate in camp meetings when circuit riding preachers came to town. As a boy, Raymond had preferred living in the country and was unhappy with the move into town.

Below: Methodist itinerant minister speaking in Campton on court day, in 1940.¹³



When Ethel moved to Louisville after the 1931 death of her husband, she found the Methodist Churches too stuffy compared to the ones in the mountains. In her quest for a church in Louisville similar to the Methodist churches of her youth, she joined a Nazarene Church in her new hometown.

Mark Whitaker Memorial in Castlewood, Virginia

Bob Whittaker arranged for several granite memorial stones to be erected in honor of Mark Whitaker in the Temple Hill Cemetery in Castlewood, Virginia near the ancestor's church. Counterpart memorials were established in Magoffin County, Kentucky to honor Mark's wife, Martha "Patsy;" in Surry County, North Carolina to honor Mark's parents; and in Harford County, Maryland, to honor Mark's grandparents. On 16 April 2006, Bob Whittaker spoke at the dedication of the memorial stones for Mark Whitaker at the Temple Hill Cemetery.¹⁴

Mark Whitaker began his ministry in Castle's Woods, Virginia in about 1780 to a small congregation. Francis Asbury admitted him as an itinerant preacher in 1783 and he later served [a broad territory in the upper south]. During the period 1783 to 1793 he established many churches; included in these churches was one at Bickley's Mill in 1786. It is today the Fort Gibson United Methodist Church in present Castlewood, Virginia...

Francis Asbury knew the life of a circuit riding minister was a hard life, with long rides on a mule or horse with another in tow to carry supplies. The cold nights sleeping on the ground if a bed at someone's home as not to be, sparse food and the Indian dangers made the body and spirits weaken. Asbury was not in the practice of appointing married men as his circuit riders for all these reasons.

Mark Whitaker rode this circuit with a conviction to his ministry and was “on trial” from 1783 and appointed by Asbury to full “Connection” in 1786. It could be he was appointed at the Charleston, South Carolina Conference in January 1786, as Mark is credited with establishing the first Methodist Church in South Carolina in January 1786. During the time 1791-1793 Mark...introduced innovations in Camp Meetings that would last three to five days, comprised of preaching, prayer, singing, and fellowship, and that were adopted by other denominations in the late 1790s and that continue today.¹⁵

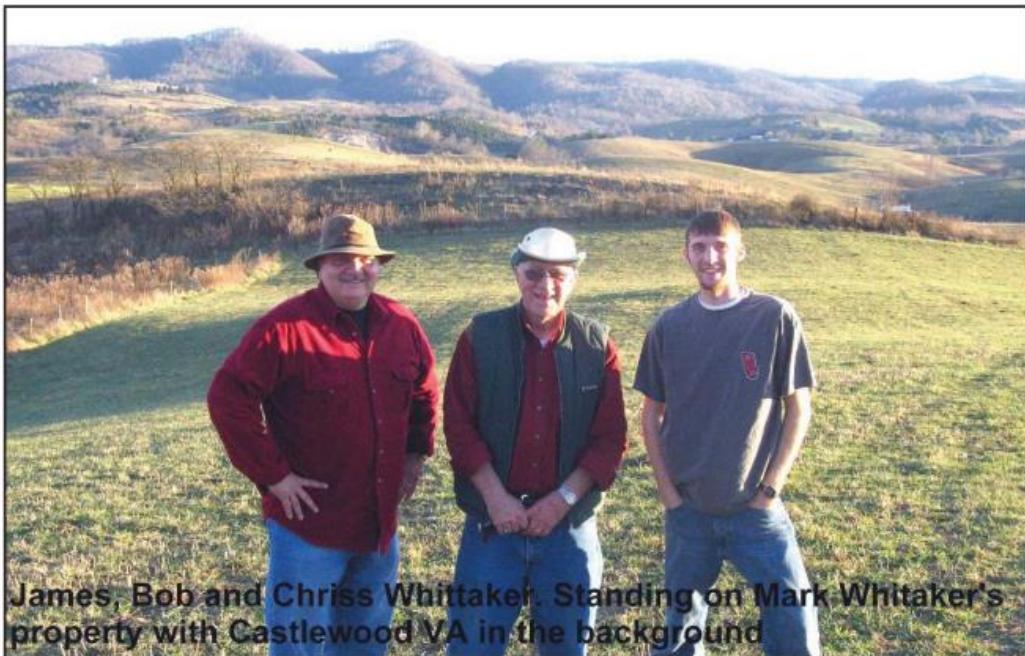


Mark Whitaker purchased a 100-acre tract of land on the south side of the Clinch River in what was known as his beloved Castle’s Woods. Mark Whitaker married the love of his life Martha “Patsy” sometime between 1793 and 1795. Asbury wrote of Martha “Patsy” in one of his journals that he wished “she didn’t not love him to death.” It is assumed at this time Mark had “located,” a term used by Asbury when a preacher married and stopped riding the circuit to become a minister at a local church.

Mark and Martha began their family in Tennessee and moved to Castle’s Woods on the Clinch River and this union gave seven children. They farmed with the benefit of a spring nearby to give them water for their gardens and animals. In Mark’s will were items left from the loom room, and a loom would indicate that the couple raised sheep from which yarn was woven for clothing.

In 2005, with my son James and grandson Chris, we walked the land that Mark once owned and felt the presence of Mark Whitaker, my third great grandfather. The choice for him to locate in his beloved Castle’s Woods was an easy one. Watching the waterfall break across the rocks and hearing the water rushing down the Clinch River, imagining

the site where he made their home, I say give him peace. I honor and admire this man Mark Whitaker and am proud to call him grandfather. I suspect he would want to be buried on that land.

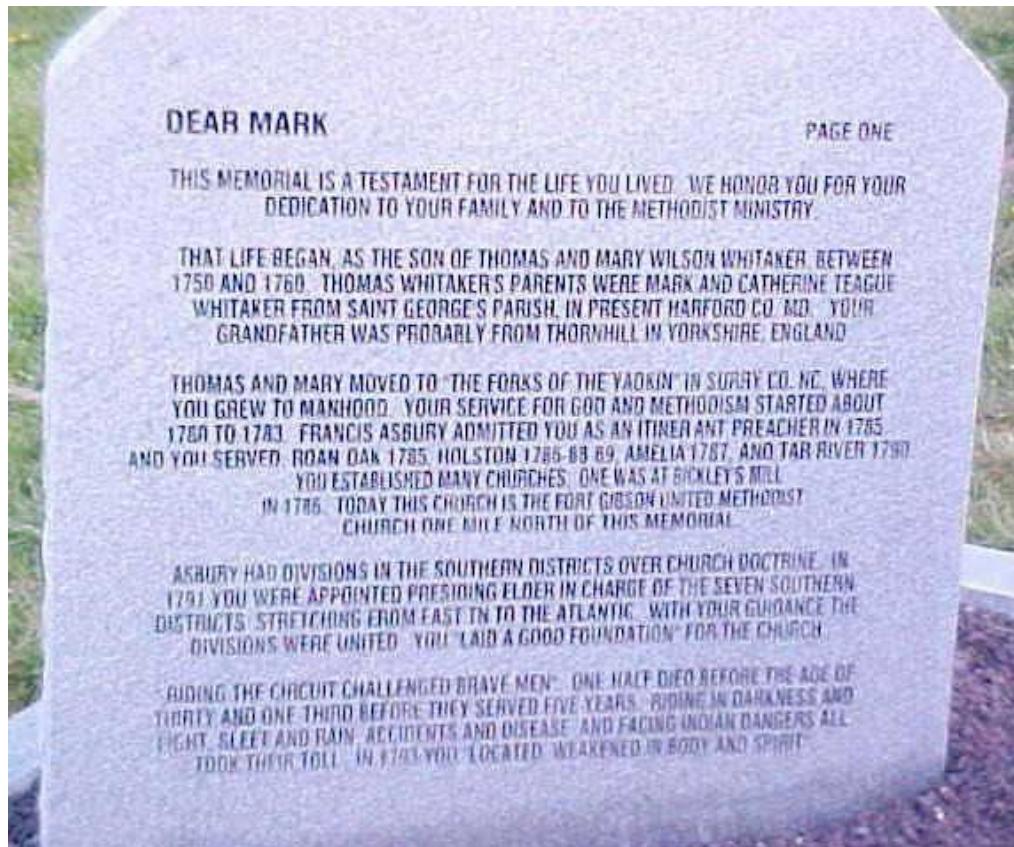


James, Bob and Chriss Whittaker. Standing on Mark Whitaker's property with Castlewood VA in the background

With Bob Whittaker's permission, this biography includes images of the stones that comprise the memorials he placed in Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, and Maryland. This biography includes images of the stones set in the Mark Whitaker memorial in Castlewood, Virginia as well as transcriptions of the messages on the stones. An appendix provides images and transcriptions of stones honoring Mark Whitaker's parents in Surry County, North Carolina, and his grandparents in Harford County, Maryland. Martha Harvey's biography includes images and information about the memorial in her honor in Magoffin County, Kentucky, where she died in 1840, 28 years after Mark's death.

Bob Whittaker's granite memorials preserve and disseminate ancestral biographies. As someone who is, more prosaically, composing biographies that will, I hope, survive in the electronic form in which I am writing them, along with paper printouts, I give our cousin Bob Whittaker credit for finding an unusually durable way to pass down ancestral stories through the generations.

Memorial to Mark Whitaker: a “zealous, plain, old-fashioned Methodist preacher”



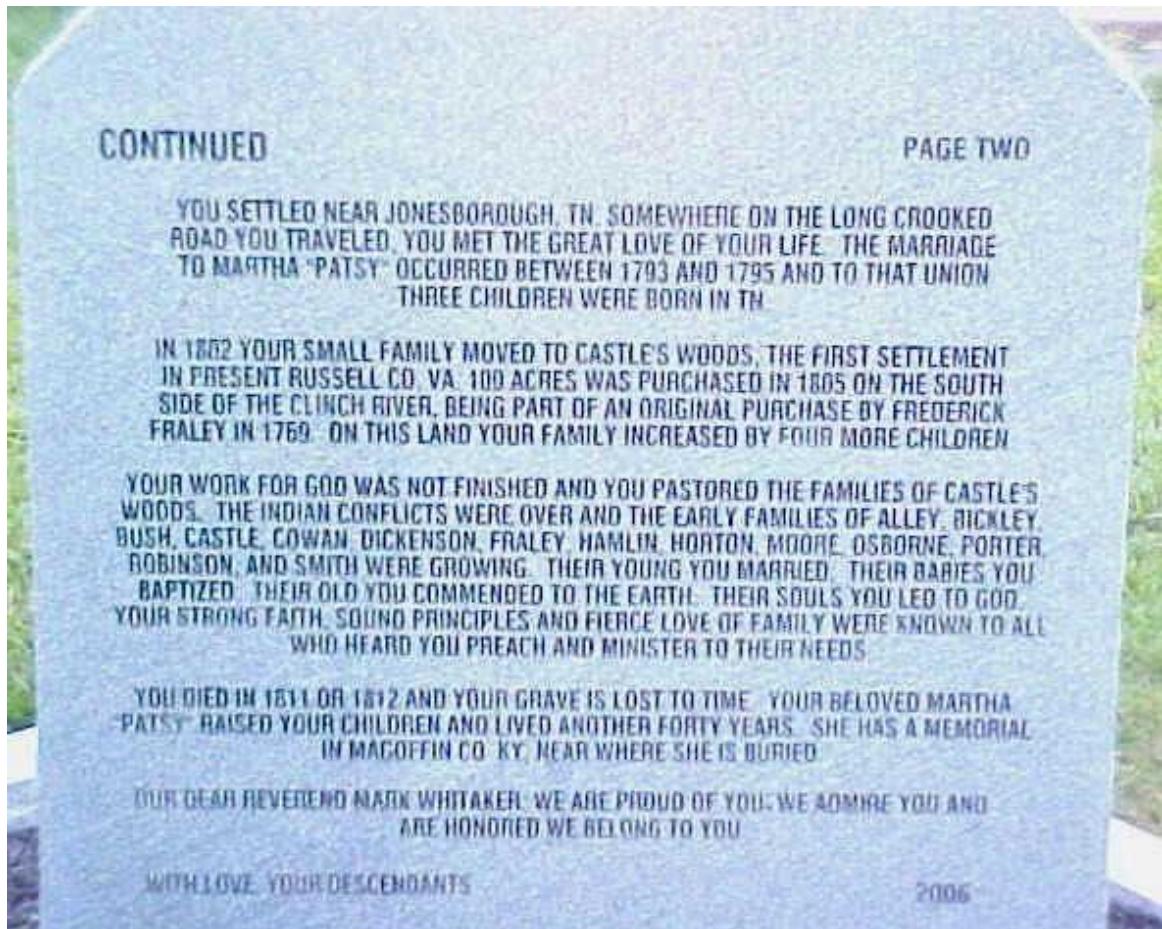
This Memorial is a testament for the life you lived. We honor you for your dedication to your family and to the Methodist ministry.

That life began as the son of Thomas and Mary Wilson Whitaker between 1750 and 1760. Thomas Whitaker's parents were Mark and Catherine Teague Whitaker from Saint George's Parish in present Harford [County, Maryland]. Your grandfather was probably from Thornhill in Yorkshire, England.

Thomas and Mary moved to the forks of the Yadkin in Surry [County, North Carolina] where you grew to manhood. Your service for God and Methodism started about 1780 to 1783. Francis Asbury admitted you as an itinerant preacher in 1785 and you served Roan Oak 1785, Holston 1785-88, 89, Amelia 1787 and Tar River 1790. You established churches. One was at Bickley's Mill in 1786, Today this church is the Fort Gibson United Methodist Church one mile north of this memorial.

Asbury had divisions in the southern district over church doctrine. In 1791 you were appointed presiding elder in charge of the seven southern districts stretching from east in the Atlantic. With your guidance the divisions were united. You "laid a good foundation" for the church.

Riding the circuit challenged brave men. One half died before the age of thirty and one third before they served five years. Riding in darkness and light sleep and rain, accidents, and disease and facing Indian dangers all took their toll. In 1791 you located, weakened in body and spirit



Continued

Page Two

You settled near Jonesborough, [Tennessee]. In somewhere on the long crooked road you traveled, you met the great love of your life. The marriage to Martha "Patsy" occurred between 1793 and 1795 and to that union three children were born in [Tennessee].

In 1802 your small family moved to Castle's Woods, the first settlement in present Russell [County, Virginia]. 100 acres was purchased in 1805 on the south side of the Clinch River being part of an original purchase by Frederick Fraley in 1789. On this land your family increased by four more children.

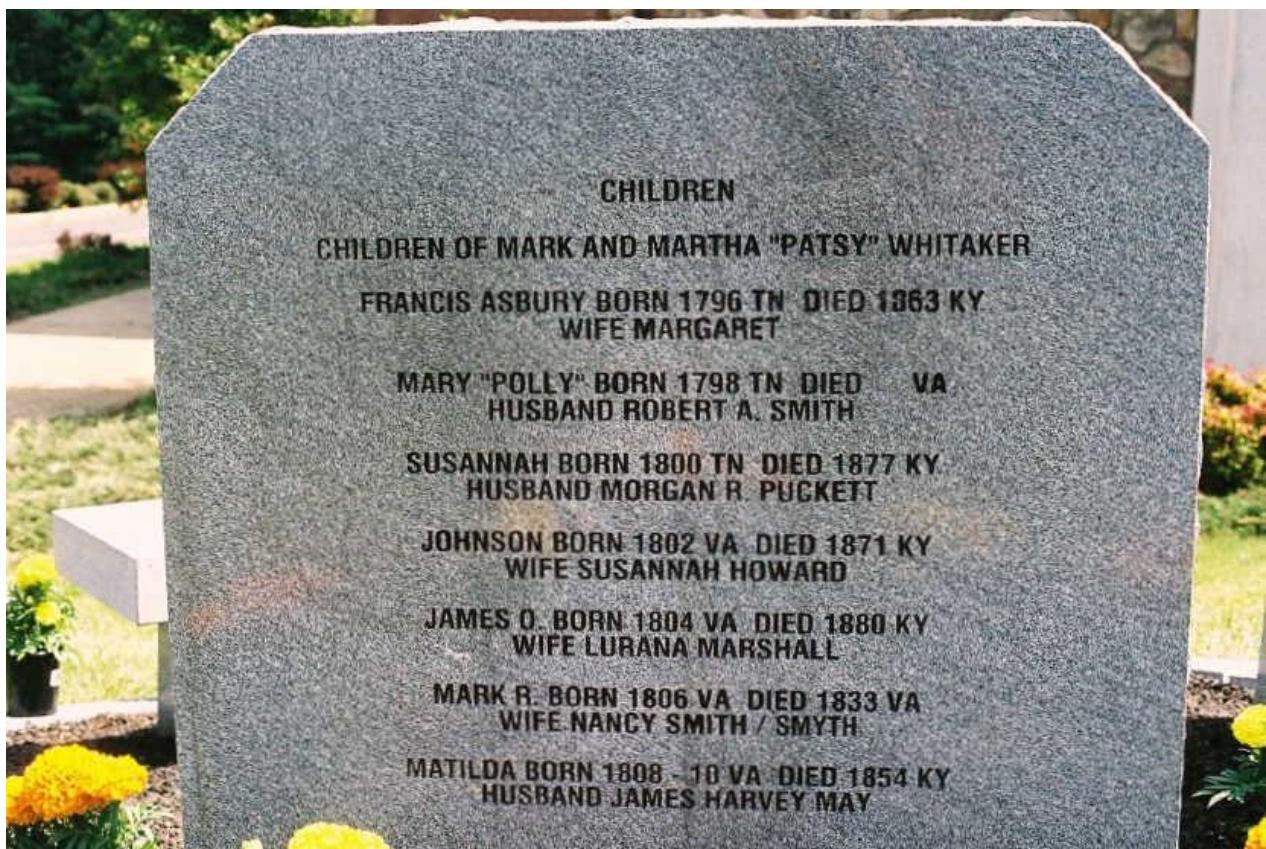
Your work for God was not finished and you pastored the families of Castle's Woods. The Indian conflicts were over, and the early families of Alley, Bickley, Bush, Castle, Cowan, Dickenson, Fraley, Hamlin, Horton, Moore, Osborne, Porter, Robinson, and Smith were growing. Their young you married, their babies you baptized, their old you commended to the earth, their souls you led to God. Your strong faith, sound principles and fierce love of family were known to all who heard you preach and minister to their needs.

You died in 1811 or 1812¹⁶ and your grave is lost to time. Your beloved Martha "Patsy" raised your children and lived another forty years. She has a memorial in Magoffin [County, Kentucky], near where she is buried.

Our dear Reverend Mark Whitaker, we are proud of you, we admire you and are honored we belong to you.

With love, your descendants

2006



Usefully for family history researchers, a stone at the Temple Hills Cemetery lists his children.

Children of Mark and Martha “Patsy” Whitaker

*Francis Asbury born 1796 Tennessee, died 1863 Kentucky
Wife Margaret*

*Mary “Polly” born 1798 Tennessee, died Virginia.
Husband Robert A. Smith*

*Susannah born 1800 Tennessee, died 1877 Kentucky
Husband Morgan R. Puckett*

*Johnson born 1802 Virginia, died 1871 Kentucky
Wife Susannah Howard*

*James O. born 1804 Virginia, died 1880 Kentucky
Wife Lurana Marshall*

*Mark R. born 1806 Virginia, died 1833 Virginia
Wife Nancy Smith/Smyth*

*Matilda born 1808-10 Virginia, died 1854 Kentucky
Husband James Harvey May*

Mounted on the wall of the Fort Gibson United Methodist Church is a plaque, shown on the next page, about the founding of the church by the Reverend Mark Whitaker.

Founding of Fort Gibson United Methodist Church by the Rev. Mark Whitaker

Fort Gibson was established in 1786 by Mark Whitaker, a circuit riding Methodist preacher. In 1787 the church thrived with 100 members. Bickley’s Mill served as the first meeting house. The original name is lost to time. The church is in the 4th location and 3rd name. Many descendants of founding family have loved and guided the church over two centuries.

Mark Whitaker was admitted by Francis Asbury as an itinerant preacher in 1785. Mark served as pastor of the church from 1786 to 1789 while riding the Holston District. In 1791 Mark was made a presiding officer in charge of all seven districts in the south. Rev. James B. Finley said “Mark Whitaker was a strong man. He laid a good foundation for his successors.” Mark left a legacy of spiritual values that has served untold members and descendants in the service of God and our fellow man for these 220 years. Mark died near his beloved Castle’s Woods.

***Enter to Worship Depart to Serve
Dedicated by Members and Descendants—2006***

FORT GIBSON
UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH
FOUNDED 1786



MARK WHITAKER
PREACHER
BORN CA 1760
DIED CA 1811

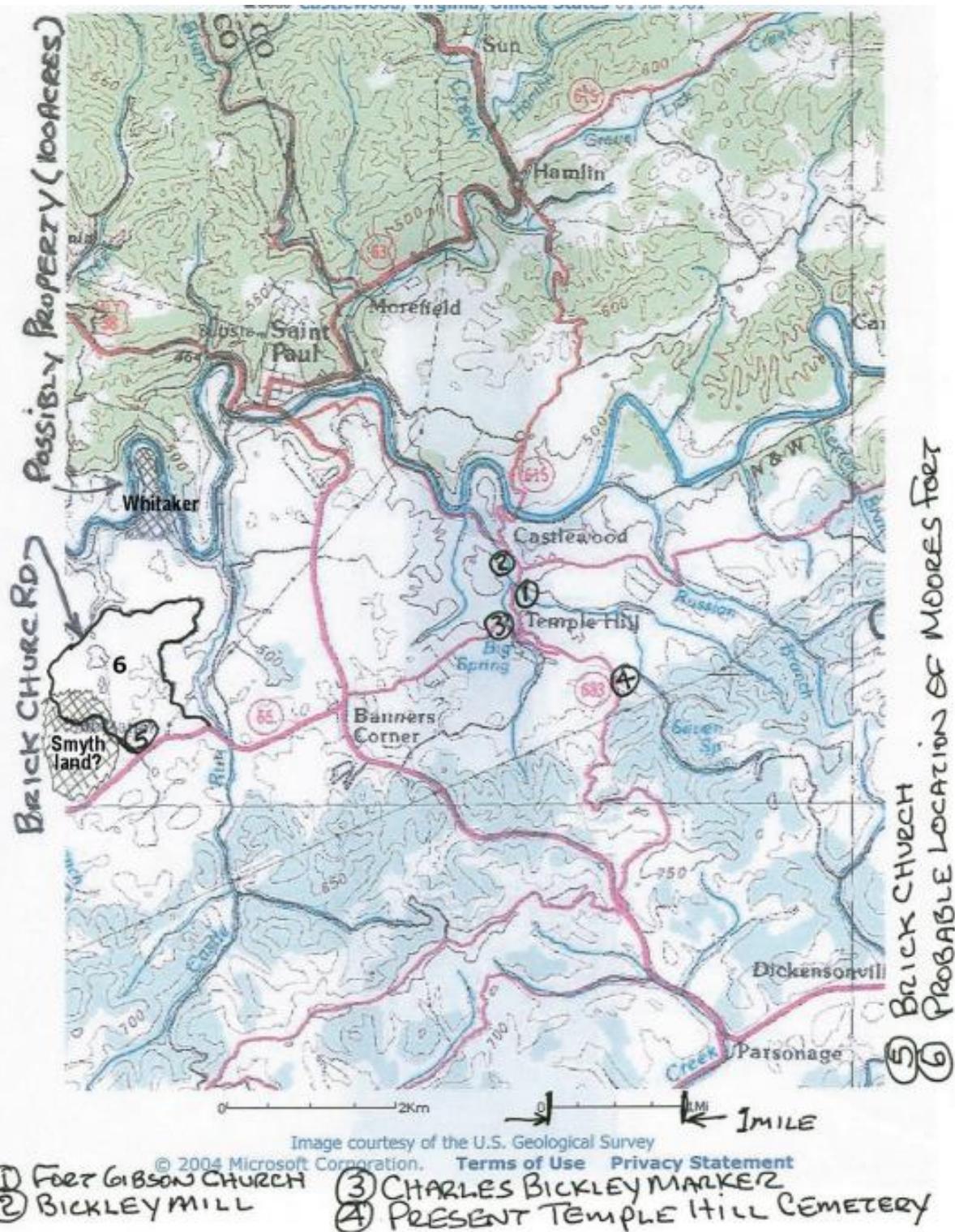
FORT GIBSON WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1786 BY MARK WHITAKER, A CIRCUIT RIDING METHODIST PREACHER. IN 1787 THE CHURCH THRIVED WITH 100 MEMBERS. BICKLEY'S MILL SERVED AS THE FIRST MEETING HOUSE. THE ORIGINAL NAME IS LOST TO TIME. THE CHURCH IS IN THE 4TH LOCATION AND 3RD NAME. MANY DESCENDANTS OF FOUNDING FAMILIES HAVE LOVED AND GUIDED THE CHURCH FOR OVER TWO CENTURIES.

MARK WHITAKER WAS ADMITTED BY FRANCIS ASBURY AS AN ITINERANT PREACHER IN 1785. MARK SERVED AS PASTOR OF THE CHURCH FROM 1786 TO 1789 WHILE RIDING THE HOLSTON DISTRICT. IN 1791 MARK WAS MADE A PRESIDING ELDER IN CHARGE OF ALL SEVEN DISTRICTS IN THE SOUTH. REV. JAMES B. FINLEY SAID "MARK WHITAKER WAS A STRONG MAN. HE LAID A GOOD FOUNDATION FOR HIS SUCCESSORS".

MARK LEFT A LEGACY OF SPIRITUAL VALUES THAT HAS SERVED UNTOLD MEMBERS AND DESCENDANTS IN THE SERVICE OF GOD AND OUR FELLOW MAN FOR THESE 220 YEARS. MARK DIED NEAR HIS BELOVED CASTLE'S WOODS.

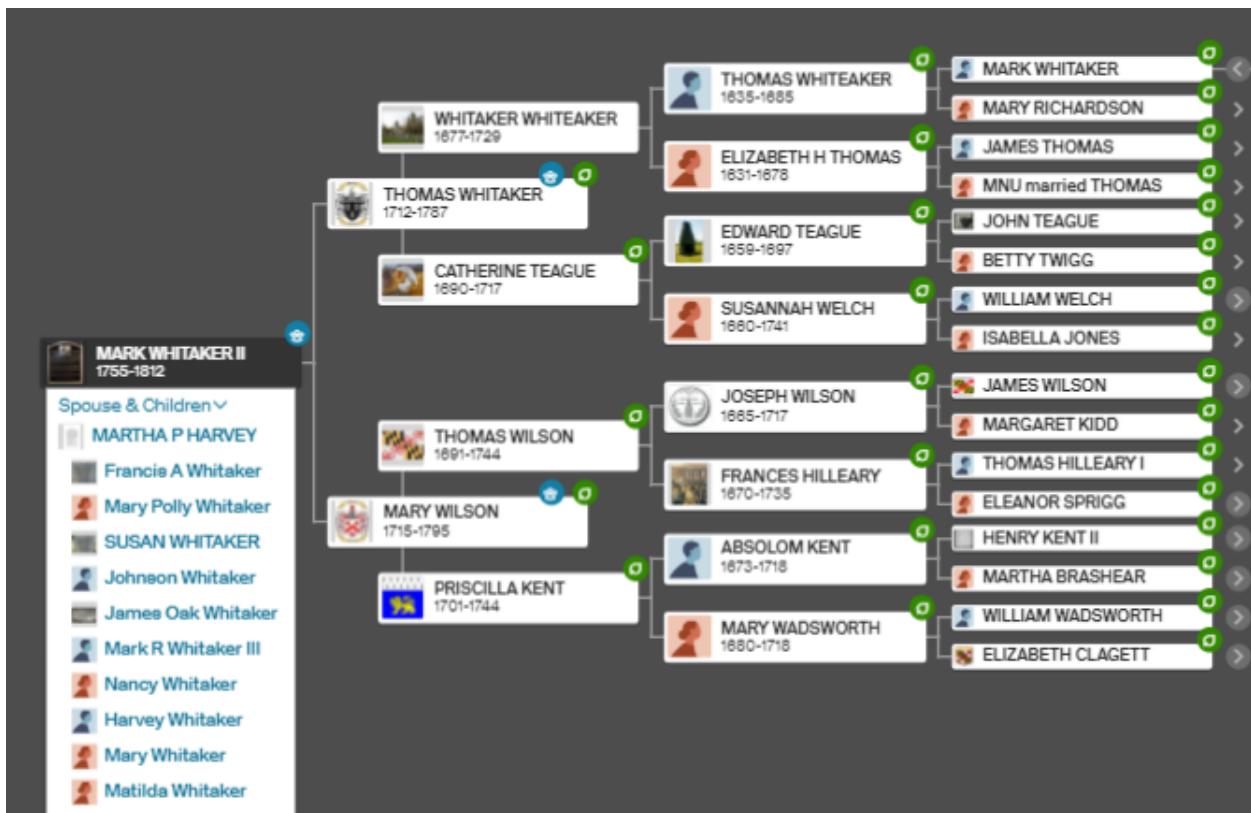
ENTER TO WORSHIP DEPART TO SERVE
DEDICATED BY MEMBERS AND DESCENDANTS-2006

Anyone planning a trip to Castlewood, Virginia, to view the Mark Whitaker memorial will want to pack the 2012 map¹⁷ that was prepared by Bob Whittaker:



Appendix: Mark Whitaker in our family tree

Mark Whitaker was the author's great great great (four times great) grandfather. He is in the McCoun quartile of our family tree. The other three quartiles—each represented by a grandparent—are Horton, Bryan, and Sprowl. Our Whitakers migrated from Thornhill in Yorkshire, England. In America they moved from Maryland to North Carolina to Virginia to Tennessee, then back to Virginia and on to eastern Kentucky. See the map on page one.



Thomas Whitaker (1712-1787) & Mary Wilson (1715-1795):¹⁸ Maryland to North Carolina

Mark's parents were Thomas Whitaker (1712-1787) and Mary Wilson (1715-1795) of Maryland. They married in 1735 and had seven children.



By 1733, Thomas left the area of Northern Maryland where he grew up between Bush River & Deer Creek and moved west to the Spoolsville area.



The road fr Annapolis passed just south of later Middletown & near the later Spoolsville on Catoctin Creek where Thomas & bro. Mark (Jr) had land c1740



Pictures by Bob Whittaker

Taken on Thomas and Mary Wilson Whitaker's land looking NW. The tree line is the Little Catoctin Creek. It is 3 miles west of Middletown, Frederick County MD. It is near the intersection of Old Hagerstown RD and US At 40 [National Pike].



Thomas and Mary Wilson Whitaker lived here at Spoolsville Frederick County MD. It is about 3 miles west of Middletown MD. To the left is Catoctin Creek and left is the Little Catoctin Creek. I am standing on my land.

Updated: Sept 2011

**Thomas and Mary Wilson Land at Spoolsville 3 miles west of Middletown
Looking up the Little Catoctin Creek from Old Hagerstown RD.**

In the 1770s, when Mark was a boy, Thomas and Mary Wilson Whitaker migrated to Surry County, North Carolina, another beautiful location.



On Double Creek near Thomas' land

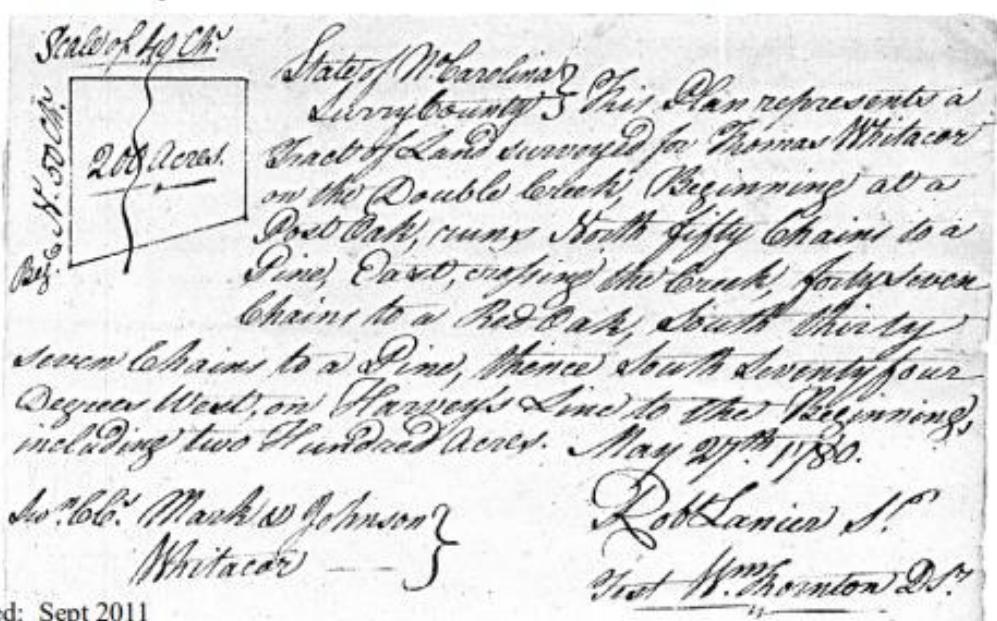


In the early 1770's. Thomas had moved to Surry County North Carolina near Rockford on Double Creek [the lower one near Rockford].



Thomas' Double Creek
land survey

Above Pictures by Bob Whittaker



Updated: Sept 2011

Thomas Whitaker's wife, Mary Wilson, was a fourth generation Marylander. She was the daughter of Thomas Wilson (1691-1744) and Priscilla Kent (1701-1744).

Mary's Ancestors



Mary's great-grandfather, James Wilsone was in
1 Calvert Co. 1655 at the Cliffs when Joseph was born (& stayed)

Mary's great-grandfather, Thomas Hilleary, patented 1050 acres, "Three Sisters" in
2. Calvert Co. (Prince George's Co.) near Hyattsville 1683 (See picture below)

2. The Three Sisters
dwelling, erected
soon after 1683.
Land granted to
Thomas Hilleary L
Picture 1934 (right)
(Picture from Tidewater MD)



Indicated- 2011

Bob Whittaker's memorial to Thomas and Mary Wilson Whitaker is located in Rockford, Surry County, North Carolina, in front of a historic tavern once owned by their grandson, Mark York. What follows on pages 17 through 22 is excerpted from Bob Whittaker's account, *The Thomas and Mary Wilson Whitaker Memorial Story*. The memorial was dedicated on 8 September 2012.



Three hundred years after Thomas Whitaker was born we gathered on September 8, 2012 to dedicate his memorial. I thank Thomas and Mary Wilson Whitaker for the lives you lived and the life and values you passed on to your descendants. It is upon the backs of such men and women, like Thomas and Mary, that a nation was built. I hope that you are pleased that your life, your work and your contributions to us are remembered. May God bless us with the strength and will that He gave you. May you rest in peace Thomas Whitaker and Mary Wilson Whitaker. You are not forgotten.

Robert W. Whittaker

Thomas and Mary Wilson Whitaker are both my 4th and 6th great grandparents. I am descended from two children of their son Mark Whitaker. The son Mark Whitaker's widow, Martha "Patsy" Whitaker and [5] of her children, moved to present Magoffin County KY. They are Francis Asbury married Margaret, Susannah married Morgan R. Puckett, Johnson married Susannah Howard, James O. married Lurana Marshall and Matilda married James Harvey May.

Thomas was born in 1712 in Eastern Maryland, 5-6 miles north of Aberdeen MD. He was the son of Mark Whitaker/Marke Whiteaker and Catherine Teague. In 2008 a granite memorial was placed in the church cemetery of the Spesutia Church, Saint George's Parish near Aberdeen MD for Mark Whitaker. Thomas Whitaker's mother Catherine Teague Whitaker died in 1717 when Thomas Whitaker was [5] five years old. Thomas' father Mark Whitaker remarried in 1718 to Elizabeth Emson/Empson. Mark Whitaker the father died 1 May 1729. Thomas was 17 years old. The widow Elizabeth Emson Whitaker remarried later in 1729 to Francis Taylor. That same year Thomas Whitaker petitioned the court, one month later, to be allowed to live with Thomas and Ann Teague Mitchell. Ann was Thomas Whitaker's mother's sister. Francis and Elizabeth Emson Taylor were fined by the court for failure to provide for Mark Whitaker's children.



In 1733 at the age of 21 Thomas Whitaker is in Western MD on a tax list of the Monocacy One Hundred. This later became Frederick County MD. We believe the last record of Thomas Whitaker in Frederick County MD is in 1770 when Thomas and his brother Mark Whitaker Jr. served as Grand Jurors. Thomas was 58 years old and had been in Frederick County MD for nearly 40 years.

No marriage record of Thomas Whitaker and Mary Wilson has been found. Mary Wilson's father Thomas Wilson's will was filed in 1744. He provided and named his children. Thomas Wilson instructed his wife to "make over to Thomas Whitaker 100 acres called prevention". This was done in 1745. The daughter Mary Wilson was only left a personal estate. This would suggest Mary Wilson was unmarried in 1744. We speculate Thomas Whitaker and Mary Wilson were betrothed in 1744 and married in late 1744 or more probable in 1745. Mary Wilson's parents were Thomas and Priscilla Kent Wilson married about 1715 and Mary Wilson was their first born daughter born about 1722. When Mary Wilson and Thomas Whitaker married she was about 23 years old and Thomas was 33 years old.



Thomas and Mary Wilson Whitaker land Prevention near Catoctin Creek at Spoolerville and about 3 miles NW of Middleton, Frederick County MD.

The first record of Thomas Whitaker in North Carolina is 1771. Thomas Whitaker and his brother Mark Whitaker Jr. registered a livestock brand in Rowan County NC. Brands were very important to newly arriving inhabitants. Their livestock would range free until such time as fences could be built. Even then the split rail fences of the time rarely held in cattle over time. Ten years before in 1761 the brother James Whitaker patented land in Rowan County NC, in present day Davie County NC. In 1771 Thomas Whitaker was 59 years old, Mary his wife was about 49 years old and their children were about 9 to 24 years old.

...

The move of the Whitakers to North Carolina was in search of new land and opportunities. It was not without its taxes and its own problems. The Province of Carolina was chartered in 1629. This charter was ruled invalid and a new charter was issued to eight Proprietors in 1663. In effect these were private owners investing in hopes of a future profit. Conflicts developed both between the Proprietors' descendants and the Crown. In 1729 the Crown paid off descendants of seven of the original Proprietors. The eighth Proprietor was Sir George Carteret. The great g. grandson of Sir George Carteret was John Carteret the Second Earl of Granville and he refused settlement with the Crown. John Carteret sued the Crown in the English Court and won, thus keeping ownership. His land was a 60 mile swath across northern North Carolina and bordering on Virginia. John Carteret never was in the Colonies. He set up agents to sell land in the 1740s and in 1746 opened a land office. While technically the huge Granville District was under the Royal Governor of North Carolina, in practice the agents of Lord John Carteret, the Earl of Granville was the Civil Government. These agents levied outrageous taxes [but lower than the eastern shore], often collected twice, reneged on public acts, granted [sold] the same land to more than one party, sued for almost anything and won because they controlled the courts.

The procedure to secure land was to get an "Entry Permit" from the Granville Land office. Then they had to move onto the land, make improvements, within six months get a "Warrant for Survey" and then survey the land. Only then could a deed be obtained by submitting the survey and paying for the property in the capital of NC at New Bern. In the meantime the prospective land owner would pay 8 shillings per 100 acres per year. In effect, this was an early version of a "lease with an option to purchase" of excellent farm land, at a reasonable price, for a poor man without funds. In practice many times it took years for the man to get a clear deed. In the meantime he lived on the land and would pay 8 shillings per 100 acres. John Carteret died in 1763. The land office was closed for the next two years.

Land hungry people [and land speculators] from MD, PA, VA, NY, Ireland, Scotland and Germany began flocking to the Granville District. Rowan County was created included everything west of Raleigh NC. Then Orange County was split off Rowan in 1753 and included everything west of Raleigh and east of present day Greensboro NC. Guilford County was formed from parts of Rowan and Orange Counties in 1771. The American Revolution came in 1776 and it would be into the mid 1780s before land and deeds were sorted out. In the meantime, some men had died and others had moved on to other areas.



Thomas and Mary Wilson Whitaker would have, without doubt, traveled down the Great Wagon Road. They would have used Conestoga Wagons pulled by 4-6 horses or oxen. The distance was about 350 miles and would have taken 6-8 weeks depending on weather, sickness and breakdowns. In most cases they would have traveled in a caravan of 4-12 families for protection. Each family probably had 1-3 wagons, depending on the size of the family. The Conestoga Wagons held a load of 2-3 tons and were extremely rugged. The bottom was curved so goods would not slide when going up and down hills. The wheels were large to better go over logs, boulders and crossing streams. Most families could pack a goodly amount of household items. Farm tools, hand tools and crop seeds were necessities. Food and animal feed were less necessary as these could be secured along the way.

Thomas Whitaker made his will in March 1787. He was 74 years old. In part he said "though in a weak lingering state of health". He named his wife and children and made provisions for each. In the August term of Court of Surry County NC in 1787 his will was filed. He had turned 75 years old.



Thomas and Mary Wilson Whitaker 200 acre original land grant near the forks of East and West Double Creek in Surry County NC

Thomas and Mary Wilson Whitaker had [7] seven known living children from Thomas Whitaker's will. The dates and sequence of birth are unproven and are inferred by known dates and records.

Margaret "Peggy" Whitaker - Born 1747-1750

Nothing is known or proven of her. I found a record of an elderly Margaret Whitaker in the early 1820s living in Davie County NC and moving to Surry County NC. No marriage or death record has been found. It is possible she never married.

Mark Whitaker- Born 1748-1751

He was possibly in Russell County VA, then Augusta County VA, as early as 1777. In December 1784 he was in Baltimore MD. He was appointed by Francis Asbury as a circuit riding Methodist preacher. In January 1785 he is with Francis Asbury in Charleston SC when the first SC Methodist Church was established. He served [8] eight years or more as a circuit rider and resigned in 1793, married in TN and started a family. In 1799 he probated the will of his brother Johnson Whitaker in TN. In 1802 Mark Whitaker moved to Castlewood VA. He died in 1811 or early 1812.

Nancy Whitaker- Born 1749-1752

Nancy married James York in Surry or Rowan County NC about 1770-71 [Surry County was formed in December 1770 from Rowan County]. Nancy Whitaker York died about 1820. Her will was dated 7 Jul 1820 and entered into the August 1820 court. She outlived her husband James York by [6] six years. One of her sons is Mark York. A granite memorial for Thomas and Mary Wilson Whitaker was placed and dedicated 8 Sep 2012 on the property of the Mark York Tavern in the village Rockford, Surry County NC.

Johnson Whitaker- Born 1750-1753

Johnson Whitaker married Sarah Stafford 7 Sep 1782 in Surry County NC. He was in the 1790 census in Surry County NC. Sarah was born abt 1765 and died abt 1829. Johnson Whitaker sold the 100 acres he inherited in Surry County NC in 1797 and filed the deed. He died 24 Oct 1799 in TN.

Elizabeth Whitaker- Born 1751-1754

Nothing is known or proven of her. An Elizabeth Whitaker sold 250 acres in Surry County NC in 1782 and made her mark. No marriage or death record has been found.

Mary Whitaker- Born 1759- 1762

It is believed this is the Mary Whitaker that married James Osborne the son of Caleb and Hannah Howard Osborne. James Osborne died 4 Dec 1821. The brothers of Thomas Whitaker named James and Mark Whitaker owned land adjoining Caleb Osborne in present Davie County NC [old Rowan Co.]. This was about 30-35 miles from Thomas and Mary Wilson Whitaker. Hope Osborne Dickinson told me, several years ago, that she was a descendant of James and Mary Whitaker Osborne and Mary Whitaker was a sister of Mark Whitaker who founded the church she attended in Castlewood VA. Hope was a past Russell County Historical Society president. Jane Whitaker Osborne died abt 1821-22

Jane Whitaker- Born 1760- 1763

Nothing is known or proven of her. Lyman Draper recorded and it was published by Emory L Hamilton that in 1777 in present Russell County VA a girl named Polly Ally was captured by Indians at Osborne's Ford. The Indians continued up the Clinch River and captured a girl named Jane Whitaker/Whittaker at Castlewood VA. It is known James and Mary Whitaker Osborne lived at Castlewood in 1777. Jane Whitaker was a sister of Mary Whitaker Osborne. The girls escaped and returned home. If this is the daughter of Thomas and Mary Wilson Whitaker she was age 14-17.

...
Thomas Whitaker's will gave 100 acres of his 200 acres of land to his son Mark Whitaker. However, Mark was not to take possession until after the death of Thomas' widow Mary Wilson Whitaker. Mark Whitaker sold his 100 acres on 16 Jan 1795. Mary Whitaker was in the 1790 census in Surry county NC. We only know she died after the census and before January 1795. Thomas and Mary Wilson Whitaker were probably buried on their land. Any grave markers are lost to time.

...



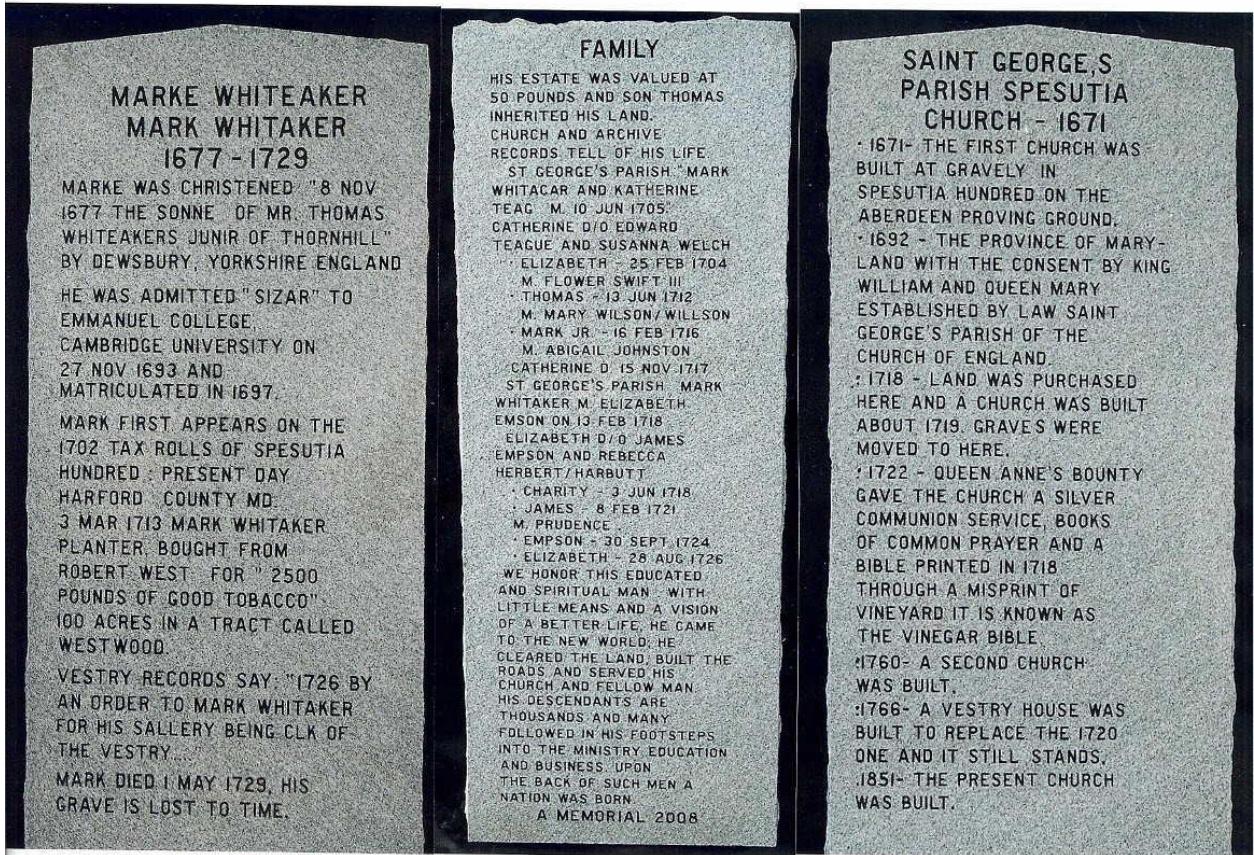
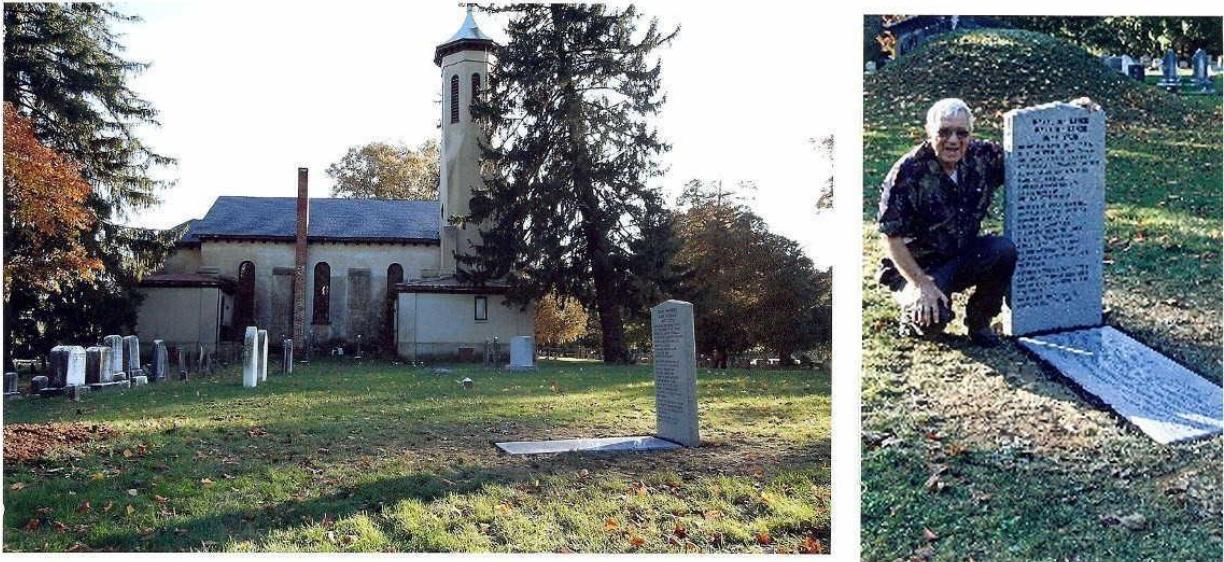
Mark York is the grandson of Thomas and Mary Wilson Whitaker. The Mark York Tavern was built by Mark York about 1830. It was operated as a tavern and boarding place serving travelers and court patrons visiting the village of Rockford NC. Rockford was the county seat of Surry County NC from 1789 to 1850.

In July 2012 we installed iron hand rails on the wide steps leading from the road level to the building level. The iron railings gave a finished and inviting look to the property.

It was our desire to mark the graves of Thomas and Mary Wilson Whitaker. We had little hope the actual graves could be found. A memorial/historical granite marker was placed on the front of the Mark York Tavern. It seemed fitting to be on their grandson's property.

Memorial to Mark Whitaker (1677-1729), the Immigrant, in Harford County, Maryland

Bob Whittaker, shown in the photos on pages 23 and 24, arranged for stones to be placed in the Saint George's Episcopal Church Cemetery in Perryman, Harford County, Maryland,¹⁹ in honor of Mark Whitaker's grandparents, the immigrant ancestor Mark Whitaker (1677-1729),²⁰ and his wife, Catherine Teague (1690-1717). The stones were placed and dedicated on 22 March 2008.



The first two stones were set as shown below. Following the image is a transcription.



**Marke Whiteaker
Mark Whitaker
1677-1729**

Marke was christened 18 Nov 1677 the sonne of Mr. Thomas Whieakers Junr of Thornhill by Dewsbury Yorkshire England. He was admitted "sizar" to Emmanuel College, Cambridge University²¹ on 27 Nov 1693 and matriculated in 1697. Mark first appears on the 1702 tax rolls of Spesutia Hundred present day Harford County [Maryland]. 3 Mar 1713 Mark Whitaker Planter bought from Robert West for "2500 pounds of good tobacco" 100 acres in a tract called West Wood.

Vestry records say "1726 by an order to Mark Whitaker for his sallery being clk of he vestry."

Mark died 1 May 1729. His grave is lost to time.

Figure 1 Robert Whittaker at Dedication



Family

His estate was valued at 60 pounds and son Thomas inherited his land. Church and archive records tell of his life at St. George's Parish. Mark Witaker and Catherine Teage m. 10 June 1705. Catherine [daughter of] Edward Teague and Susannah Welch

[Children of Mark Whitaker and Catherine Teague]

Elizabeth—25 Feb 1704 m. Flower Swift III

Thomas—12 Jun 1715 m. Mary Wilson/Willson

Mark Jr.—18 Feb 1712 m. Abigail Johnston

Catherine 15 Nov 1717

St. George's Parish, Mark Whitaker m. Elizabeth Emson on 13 Feb 1718.

Elizabeth [daughter of] James Empson and Rebecca Herbert/Harbutt

Charity—3 Jun 1718

James—8 Feb 1721

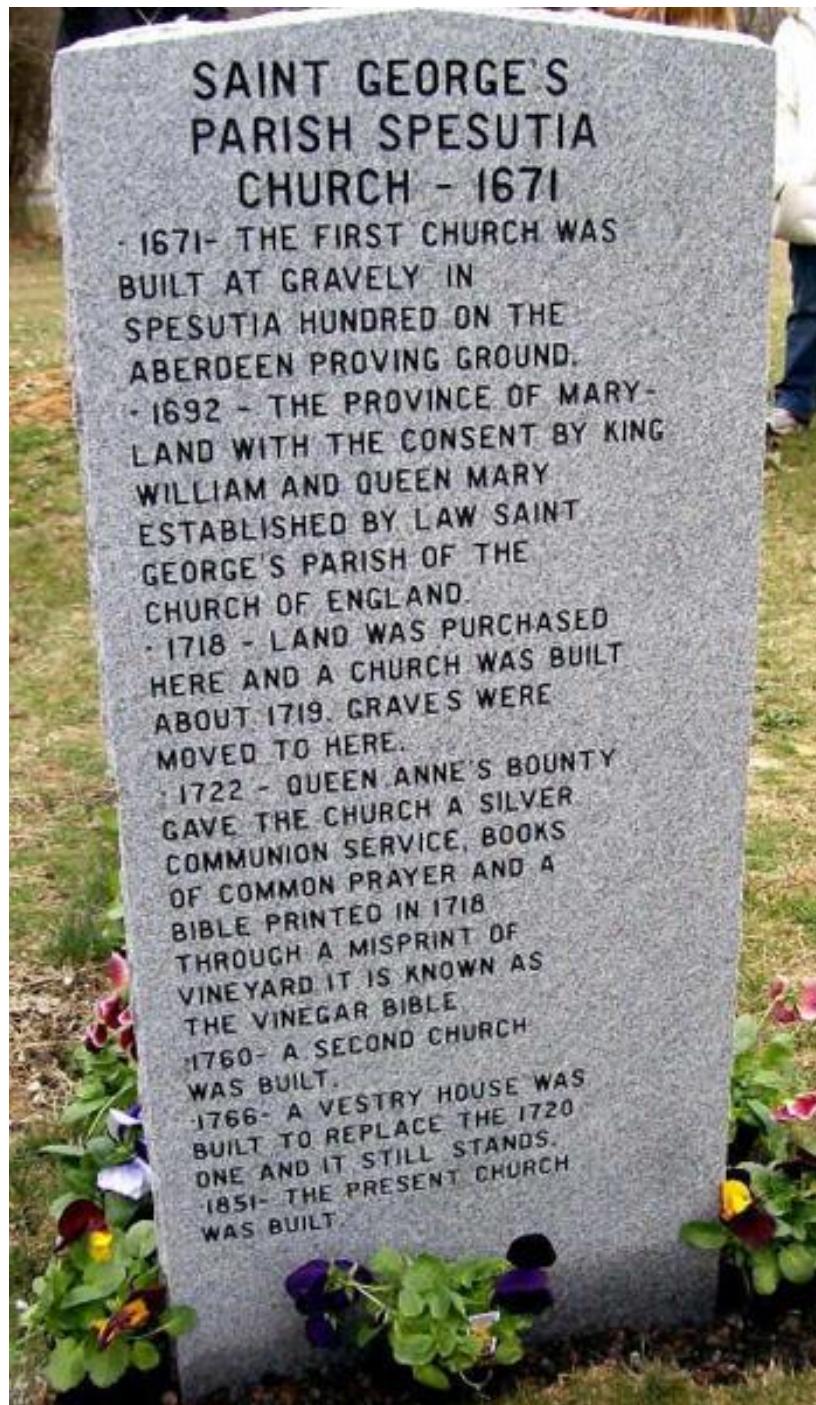
M. Prudence Empson—30 Sept 1724

We honor this educated and spiritual man, with little means and a vision of a better life, he came to the New World, he cleared the land, built the roads, and served his church and fellow man.

His descendants are thousands, and many followed in his footsteps into the ministry, education, and business. Upon the back of such men a nation was born.

A Memorial 2008

The third stone recounts the history of the Saint George's Parish Church.



*Saint George's
Parish Spesutia ²²
Church—1671*

1671—The first church was built at Gravely in Spesutia Hundred on the Aberdeen Proving Ground.

1692—The province of Maryland with the consent by King William and Queen Mary established by law Saint George's Parish of the Church of England.

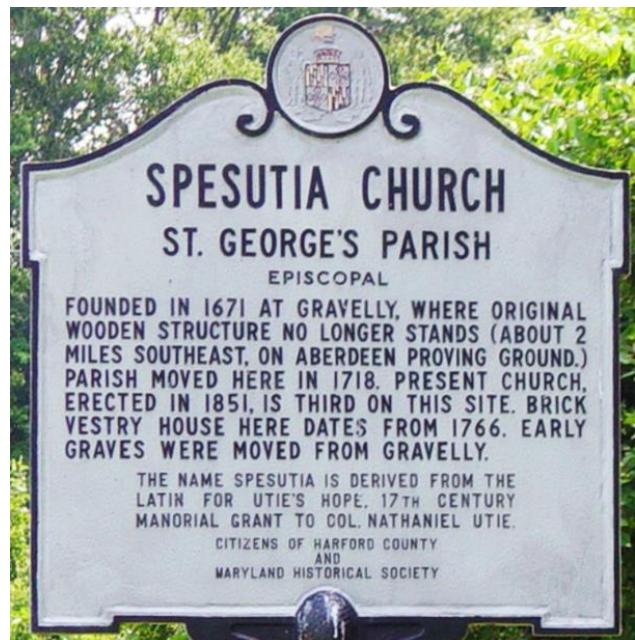
1718—Land was purchased here, and a church was built about 1719. Graves were moved to here.

1722—Queen Anne's bounty gave the church a silver communion service, Books of Common Prayer, and a Bible printed in 1718. Through a misprint of Vineyard, it is known as the Vinegar Bible.

1760—A second church was built.

1766—A vestry house was built to replace the 1720 one and it still stands.

1851—The present church was built.



What follows is Bob Whittaker's address at the dedication ceremony in Maryland.

On March 22, 2008 at the Saint Georges Parish Church near Aberdeen Maryland we dedicated a Memorial Marker in the church cemetery. I spoke these words;

We are here to honor our immigrant ancestor Mark Whitaker. Our first record of Mark in the Colonies was in the tax rolls of Spesutia Hundred, present Harford County Maryland in 1702. Saint Georges Parish Church records record his marriages, the birth of his children and his death.

So who was this man Mark Whitaker? For many years descendants have researched the origins of Mark. About 2003 a Barbara Whitaker Brown contacted me about doing DNA testing to help her connect her early 1800s Kentucky Whitakers into my Mark Whitaker of Maryland. The results showed we were connected and from the same Whitaker line.

We had a record of a Mark Whitaker born in 1677 in England. We were never able to tie him to our Mark Whitaker. In 2005 I located a Peter David Whitaker in England that traced his Whitakers back to the Thornhill village near Dewsbury in West Yorkshire, England.

DNA testing is a new, exciting and valuable way of supplementing traditional genealogy research. We have no document of proof that these two Marks are the same man. We can say with about 99 % certainty that the same Mark Whitaker born in 1677 in Thornhill by Dewsbury, West Riding, Yorkshire, England is our Mark Whitaker in the Colony of Maryland in 1702. We are fortunate that the given name MARK was not a commonly used name. If the name had been Thomas we would have great difficulty identifying which Thomas Whitaker was ours.

English records show our Mark Whitaker came from an old line of Whitaker families in the Yorkshire England area. They were both “landed gentry” and Church of England officials. English Monarchs had learned that economic incentives were necessary to build an Empire and maintain loyalty to the Crown. Beginning with the Charter of Liberties in 1100 AD and culminating in the Magna Carta in 1515 AD a whole class of land owners evolved. These land owners employed workers and paid taxes.

The Church of England severed ties with the Catholic Papal authority in 1534 AD. Again, loyalty was of great concern to the Crown. Church of England Parish records show many Whitakers involved with various church responsibilities.

English Church and Cambridge University records say our Mark was christened “8 Nov 1677 the Sonne of Mr. Thomas Whiteakers Junor of Thornhill”. He was admitted to Emmanuel College of Cambridge University in 1693. He formally entered Cambridge University in 1697. We have never found he graduated. This doesn’t mean he did not. I find no other record of Mark in England. The archives of Cambridge University now know where this student lived his life and died.

So why did Mark come to the Colonies? We do not know. On “23 May 1678 Elizabeth the wife of Thomas Whitaker was buried”. “2 Jul 1678 Mr. Thomas Whitaker married Margaret Mutter”. Was this the mother of our six month old Mark and did his father remarry two months later? Or were these the grandparents of our Mark? Rest assured all future Whitaker descendants and researchers, you will have many blank pages to fill of our Whitaker family history. I encourage them to do so.

In the 1670-1700 time period the Colonial Parish Church was both the church and the local government. The vestry house was used to hold civil trials, as a jail, record wills and deeds and keep records of business transactions with England. England was desperate to secure educated and church trained immigrants to the Colonies. This was difficult as the educated and religious class in England had a pretty good life and had little desire to leave that life for one of danger and struggle. Many did immigrate and perhaps this is in part the story of the birth of America. It was this class in the Colonies that demanded freedom and independence.

We have never found a ships record for Mark Whitaker. It is possible a record was lost. Ships records were kept because someone owed someone money. If mark was sent or came by the church, there would be no record. DNA indicates Mark was not related to an earlier immigrant named John Whitaker of Maryland and Jabez Whitaker of Virginia.

Mark began his new life in Maryland. Church records show he was a Vestryman. Crops were harvested [mainly tobacco] and shipped to England. The merchant would pay the church and the funds would be dispersed to the farmers after debts were settled. This position required an educated and a trusted man by the inhabitants. Many deed and wills were witnessed by Mark: another indication of trust in the man.

Records show many different spellings of Whitaker. The pattern for Mark tended to be WHITEAKERS in England, WHITEAKER in the early Colony and WHITAKER in his later life.

NOVEMBER 8, 1677- Mark Whitaker was born. This was 331 years ago.

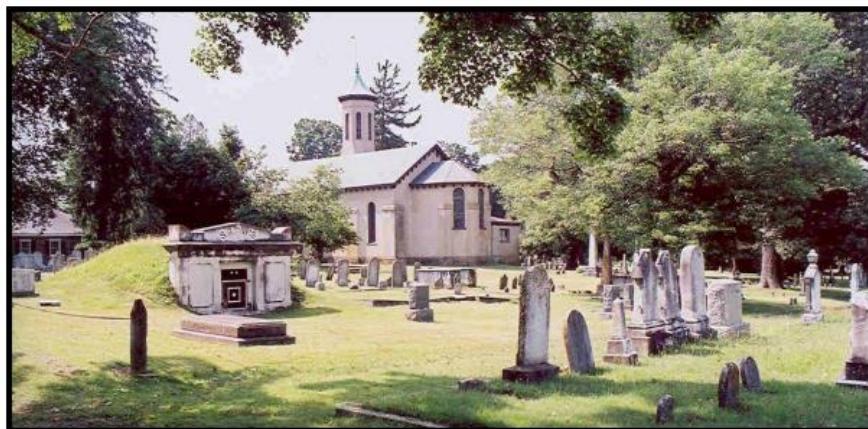
JUNE 10, 1705- Mark married Katherine Teague. Children of this union were Elizabeth, Thomas and Mark Jr. This was 303 years ago. Mark was 27 years old.

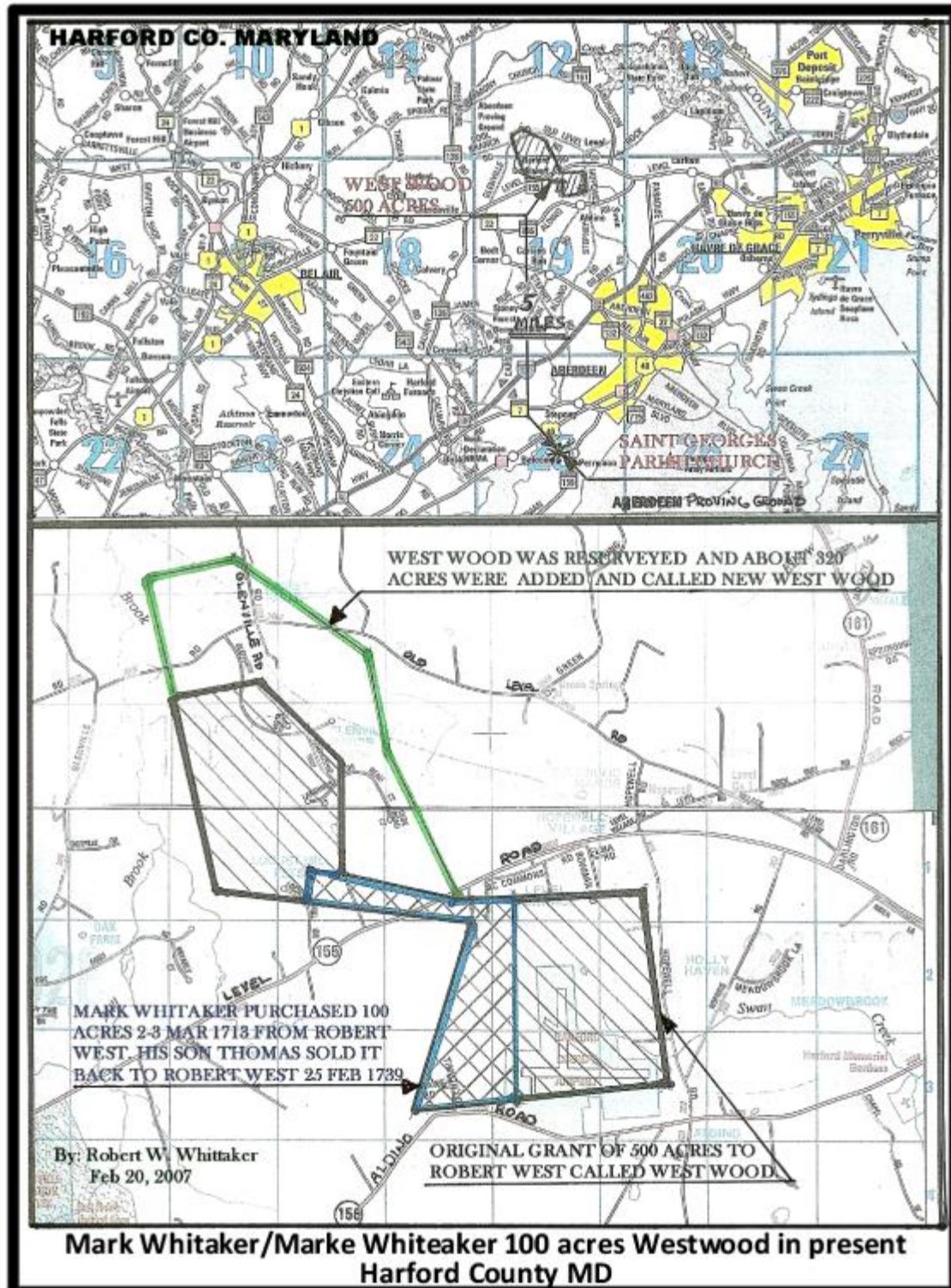
MARCH 3, 1713- Mark bought 100 acres of land from Robert West. This is part of an original grant to Robert West called Westwood. It is five miles north of the church. This was 295 years ago. Mark was 35 years old.

NOVEMBER 15, 1717- Mark's wife Catherine died. We know not why. This was 291 years ago. Mark had just turned 40 years old.

February 13, 1718- Mark married Elizabeth Emson/Empson. Children of this union were Charity, James, Empson and Elizabeth [the second child so named]. Mark was still 40 years old.

May 1, 1729- Mark Whitaker died. We know not why. He left a widow with seven children ages 25 [married], 17, 13, 10, 8, 5, and 3. The 17 year old Thomas petitioned the court one month later to live with Thomas and Ann Mitchell. Ann was his mother's sister. This was 279 years ago. Mark was 51 years old,





The above map, prepared by Bob Whittaker, shows Mark Whitaker's land holdings in Maryland. On the next page is a photograph of what once was the property of Mark Whitaker (1677-1729) in Maryland.



Whitakers in England

Mark Whitaker the immigrant (1677-1729) and his forebears lived in Thornhill, Dewsbury, West Riding, Yorkshire, England. Thornhill is on the Calder River and was significant during the Roman period because ships could be sailed up the Calder River only as far as today's Thornhill. The Romans established a fort and stayed for two to three centuries. From that location, they controlled and taxed the central and northern parts of England. The fort was constructed from two-feet-thick granite sourced from a quarry in the area.

Later the Roman fort became an English fort and was destroyed during the English Civil War. The fort's blocks of granite were used to build a church, St. Michael and All Angels.²³ In 1661, a vicarage called Combs Hall was built on a low hill near the church. A tunnel built at the same time connects the church and Combs Hall. Combs Hall was built in 1661. Today Combs Hall is still standing and is occupied. It is possible that the immigrant, Mark Whitaker, was born in this house in 1677, considering that his father had a position in the church.

American Whitaker males in our family are YDNA matches of Whitaker-surnamed men in Yorkshire, England who have robust pedigrees demonstrating they are part of the Whitaker family of Thornhill. Those test results, and a 1677 baptismal record for a child who appears to be our immigrant, Mark Whitaker, support my belief that the lineage shown on the second family tree image on page 13 is correct.

In any case, our Whitaker descendants are notable for including several individuals who served God as ministers or as church officials. There also seems to be a spirit of adventure, a willingness to pack up and move to a new locale. I am indebted to Bob Whittaker and other cousins for their substantial research on this branch of our family tree as well as his permission to incorporate his research in this biography.

Linda R. Horton, Rockville, Maryland, lrhorton@comcast.net

¹ Mitchell, S. Augustus, *County Map of Virginia and North Carolina*, published S.A. Mitchell c. 1860. Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/resource/glva01.1va00076/>

² The year 1812 as the date of death for Mark Whitaker is given by family historian Robert “Bob” Whittaker in a letter to the editor of the *Jessee Family Newsletter*, Issue 40 Winter 2012 Vol. XXI No. 1 at 5. At an earlier date, when the memorial stone shown on page eight was inscribed, the date of death was given as 1811 or 1812. Bob descends from two of Mark Whitaker’s children, his son James O. and his daughter Susan who married Morgan Whitaker. The newsletter is found at <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5af9e7da9772aec3b054d1aa/t/5afef26c352f5344a4612983/1526657676058/Jessee+Newsletter+40.pdf>

³ Shepard, C.E., “Some Notes on the Whitaker Family,” pub. In *The Journal of the Magoffin County Historical Society*, Vol. 12, No.2, Summer 1990, at 74.

⁴ Id.

⁵ Summers, Lewis P., *Annals of Southwest Virginia*, 1769-1800, Vol. II, The Overmountain Press, Johnson City, Tennessee, 1929, at 1628.

⁶ Jacques Gérard Milbert (1766-1840), artist, and M. Dubourg, engraver, engraving: *American Methodists proceeding to their Camp Meeting*, 1819, Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/pga.05966/>

⁷ Methodists in Early Virginia, *Encyclopedia of Virginia* <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/methodists-in-early-virginia/>

⁸ Id. See also, Methodism, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Methodism>

⁹ Id.

¹⁰ Methodists in Early Virginia, *Encyclopedia of Virginia* <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/methodists-in-early-virginia/>

¹¹ <https://www.umc.org/en/content/fishing-with-a-large-net-united-methodist-camp-meetings>

¹² Robert Whittaker, Robert.whittaker@charter.net

¹³ Wolcott, Marion Post, photographer, 1940; Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/resource/cph.3c30596/>

¹⁴ *Jessee Family Newsletter* at 7, supra note two. The author of this biography has made minor editorial changes in conformity with style used in her biographies.

¹⁵ Jacques Gérard Milbert (1766-1840), artist, and M. Dubourg, engraver, engraving: *Methodist camp meeting*, 1819, Library of Congress <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/98508274/>

¹⁶ *Jessee Family Newsletter* at 5, supra note two.

¹⁷ Id at 6.

¹⁸ The images on pages 14 through 16 are courtesy of Roberta Himebrook and Robert Whittaker.

¹⁹ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/180624886/mark-whitaker>

²⁰ Another family researcher provided this information about Mark Whitaker, the immigrant:

WHITAKER, MARK, d. 1 May 1729; m. 1st, on 13 May 1705, Katherine Teague who d. 15 Nov. 1717; m. 2nd, on 13 Feb. 1717/8, Elizabeth Emson; d. by 4 June 1729 when admin. bond was posted by Elizabeth Whitaker with John White and Gregory Farmer; est. was admin. 6 May 1732 by Elizabeth now w. of Francis Taylor; in June 1733 Francis Taylor was ind. for not taking care of Whitaker's orphans; Mark was the father of: ELIZABETH, b. 25 Feb. (1704?), m. Flower Swift on 13 May 1725; THOMAS, b. 13 June 1712 (in June 1729, at age 17 pet., the court that he had left his mother-in-law, i.e., step-mother, and would like to live with his uncle Thomas Mitchell); MARK, b. 15 Feb. 1715/6; (by 2nd w.): CHARITY, b. 8 dec. 1718; JAMES, b. 8 Feb. 1720/1; EMPSON, b. 30 Sept. 1724; ELIZABETH, b. 28 Aug. 1726 (3:117; 14:45; 28:151; 30:2; 128:22, 35, 36, 38, 44, 62; 129:215, 234, 254).

Barnes, Robert W., *Baltimore County Families, 1659-1759* (2008 ed.).

<https://archive.org/details/baltimorecountyf0000barn/page/n5/mode/2up>

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/48162/>

Mark and his second wife, Elizabeth, bought a 500-acre tract in Baltimore County that went by the name Ellerton. See Coldham, Peter Wilson, *Settlers of Maryland, 1679-1783*. Consolidated Edition. Baltimore, Maryland; Genealogical Publishing Co., 2002, at 718:

Whittaker, Mark & Elizabeth his wife:	Bal	Ellerton	500	1 Nov 1725	PL6/143;ILA/636
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The last column in the excerpt above provides References to official records.

https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/102378:49058?tid=31832383&pid=19237006086&hid=1035762982623&_phsrc=SWn9842&_phstart=default

²¹ A sizar is an undergraduate at Cambridge University or Trinity College, Dublin, receiving financial help from the college in exchange for certain menial responsibilities. Today we would call this a work-study program. One source indicates that a sizar “originally acted as a servant to other students in return for this allowance.” *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sizar>

²² The name Spesutia is derived from the Latin for Utie’s Hope, a seventeenth century manorial land grant to Colonel Nathaniel Utie. *The Historical Marker Database*, <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=146952>

²³ <https://www.thornhillparishchurch.org.uk/AboutUs.htm>