

# THOMAS HUTCHINS, SR., PIONEER AND PATRIOT

Yeltons, Beatys, Waters, Johnsons, Guffeys Few  
of Numerous Rutherford County Descen-  
dants of Revolutionary Patriot.

By CLARENCE GRIFFIN

Among the early North Carolina settlers who risked their all for the cause of liberty during the uncertain days of the American Revolution, was numbered Thomas Hutchins, Sr., whose descendants today in Rutherford county alone number several hundred. Descendants of this intrepid soldier are also found in Wake, Mitchell, Cleveland, Buncombe and other counties in North Carolina, as well as a few in other states.

Born in Augusta county, Virginia, Thomas Hutchins removed at an early age to Wake county, North Carolina, and was residing in that county at the time of the Revolution. After the war he removed to Rutherford county, where he died. He came of staunch, pioneer stock, and there was nothing in particular to identify him from the hundreds of other pioneers whose strong arms pushed back a wilderness, and whose unerring aim with the rifle protected the home from prowling beasts, and provided sustenance for the family. This sketch is written not so much for the edification of those interested in North Carolina history as for the information of those scattered hundreds of descendants of this Revolutionary patriot, who are interested in the preservation of family history.

Thomas Hutchins, Sr., was born in Augusta county, Virginia, January 22, 1753. His educational advantages were limited, his entire schooling being confined to that given him under the tutelage of his parents. He removed from Virginia to Wake county, North Carolina, about 1770, where he followed agricultural pursuits. A few years later the first clouds that presaged the storm of the Revolution broke. Life on a farm, remote from neighbors, had wrought a spirit of independence within him, and he, in common with hundreds of others of his adopted county, resented any attempt of any government to place upon them laws that would restrict them in their simple pioneer life, regardless of how remotely those laws would touch them. The hot blood of adventure, too, stirred in the veins of young Tom Hutchins, and beckoned him to cast his lot with the American colonists. In the first excitement of war he immediately left the peaceful pursuits of farming, and volunteered as a private in the militia. His first actual experience, perhaps, came when his company went into action at Moore's Creek Bridge, near Wilmington, on February 27, 1776, when 1,600 Scotch-Loyalists were defeated by 1,100 Minute Men under Colonels Caswell and Lillington. His war experience thereafter was varied. He served throughout as a private. We can imagine him going into service, on call, for a tour of two or three or four months, and

upon completion of the tour returning to his farm where he spent his time until the next call. He served one and one-half months under Captain James Hinton and Col. John Hinton; five months in 1778 under Capt. Woodson Daniel; two months under Captain Matthew McCulloch and Col. James Hinton; three months under Captain Dread Jones and three months under Captain Martin Lain and Col. John Humphreys. He also participated in the battle of Eutaw Springs, in the present county of Orangeburg, South Carolina, on September 8, 1781, when Nathaniel Green with 2,000 men defeated a like force of British under Lieutenant-Colonel Stuart.

After the war he returned to his Wake county farm and resumed his much interrupted agricultural work. In May, 1786, he was married to Sarah Proctor, of Wake county, a daughter of Thomas Proctor, Sr. The Proctors had also been active in the Revolution, several members of her immediate family having taken an active part in the behalf of the colonists. Her father died in 1797 in Wake county, and his will mentions John, Thomas, Jr., Susannah, Sarah, Rebecca Moody and Hannah as children.

Thomas Hutchins came to Rutherford county sometime after 1790. The census of that year shows him as a resident of Wake county. The deed books of Rutherford county does not show that he ever purchased land in Rutherford, however, on July 8, 1801, he sold to Thomas Nunally a large tract of land, and deeds for two other sales are recorded. A tract of land on Camp Creek, Rutherford county, is mentioned in his will. It is probable that the land he owned was purchased or granted to him, and he failed to have the transactions recorded.

After removing to Rutherford county he resumed his farming operations, and occupation he followed until his death. He settled on Camp Creek, where he died.

In 1832 the United States Congress passed an act providing for pensions for soldiers of the Revolution, who furnished satisfactory evidence of their service. At the September, 1832 term of probate of the Rutherford county court of pleas and quarter sessions Thomas Hutchins appeared before the court and made declaration of his services. At the same time more than thirty other Revolutionary soldiers appeared for the same purpose. The proceedings of the court in reference to Thomas Hutchins are as follows, and are copied from the minutes of the court of Pleas and Quarter sessions of Rutherford county for September, 1832, page 125:

"September Ct, 1832

"State of North Carolina, S. S.  
"At a Court of Probate which was begun and held for the county of Rutherford at the Court House at Rutherford on the 2nd Monday (10th day) of September, A. D., 1832, the following proceedings were had to wit:

"The declaration of Thomas Hutchins, Senr, Setting forth his age (79 years) and his Services as a Revolutionary Soldier in order to obtain the benefit of the provisions of the Act of Congress passed the 7th June 1832 was exhibited by him and sworn to in open Court. The Certificate of William Carson and James W. Carson of their opinion as to the report and belief in his neighborhood of his having been a soldier of the Revolution, of his age, and of their concurrence in that opinion was also sworn to by them in open Court:—

"And the Court do hereby declare their opinion to be after investigating the matter and after putting the Interrogations prescribed by the War Department, that the Applicant was a Revolutionary soldier and served as he states; and the Court further Certify that it appears to them that the persons who have signed the preceding Certificate are residents in the county of Rutherford and State of North Carolina are both credible persons and that their statement is entitled to credit."

In due time the War Department allowed the claim of Thomas Hutchins and he drew the pension until his death on December 7, 1843. The following letter from the Bureau of Pensions, Washington, D.

C., gives additional information in regard to his services:

"You are advised that it appears from the papers in the Revolutionary War pension Claim, W. 7836, that Thomas Hutchins was born January 22, 1753, in Augusta county, Virginia.

"While residing in Wake county, North Carolina, he enlisted and served as private with the North Carolina Troops as follows:

"In 1775, one and one half months under Captain James Hinton and Colonel John Hinton; in 1778, five months under Captain Woodson Daniel; afterwards, two months under Captain Matthew McCulloch and Colonel James Hinton; three months under Captain Martin Lain and Colonel John Humphries. He was in the battles of Moores Bridge and Eutaw Springs.

"He was allowed pension on his application executed September 10, 1832, while a resident of Rutherford County, North Carolina.

"He died in Rutherford County, December 7, 1843.

"Soldier married in May, 1786, in Wake county, North Carolina, Sarah Proctor.

"Pension was allowed on her application executed April 27, 1844, while a resident of Rutherford county, North Carolina, aged seventy-six years.

"She died in Rutherford county, January 10, 1845, leaving the following children: Young Hutchins, Elizabeth (Hutchins) Watters; Martha (Hutchins) Beaty; William Hutchins, who was born June 15, 1794, and was in the War of 1812; Sarah (Hutchins) Early; Thomas Hutchins; Polly Weaver, who was born January 16, 1801; John Hutchins; Isaac Hutchins, who was born April 14, 1806; Moses Hutchins."

Of the above children, a large number of descendants reside in Rutherford and adjoining counties. The Beatys, Earleys, Watters and their kin are found in several localities of Cleveland and Rutherford counties, and in the state of Kentucky. No attempt will be made to follow up any of the descendants of these children other than those of William Hutchins, mentioned as a soldier in the War of 1812.

Both Thomas Hutchins and his wife sleep in unmarked graves in the Camp Creek Baptist cemetery. His will was made December 9, 1836 and was filed for probate at the February, 1844, term of court. His son, Isaac Hutchins, was named by the court as administrator. In compliance with the law, he filed an inventory of the chattels and goods of his father on April 30, 1844. The list, as filed, is too long to repeat here, but shows that the family were in fairly good financial circumstances, as estates went in those days.

### William Hutchins.

William Hutchins, born June 15, 1794, was a soldier in the War of 1812, and served as a private in the First Regiment of Detached Militia, of Rutherford county. He was familiarly known among his numerous friends and kindred as "Uncle Billy." He resided near his father's farm on Camp Creek, Rutherford county, North Carolina, where he died. He drew a pension for his services in the War of 1812. He married in 1815 Mary Weaver. She was called "Aunt Polly" by all who were fortunate enough to know her.

To William and Mary Hutchins were born eleven children. The eldest of these was John, born February 8, 1816. He married Mary Jane Price, and he died in 1868. A number of their descendants yet reside in the Duncans' Creek and Golden Valley Townships of Rutherford county.

William P., second son, was born October 25, 1818. He married Polly Yelton, of Rutherford county, and shortly afterwards removed to Mitchell county, N. C., where he died at an advanced age. Many of their descendants reside in Mitchell and adjoining counties.

Wright, the third son, was born October 10, 1820, and married Martha Smiley. He answered his country's call in 1861 and gave his life for the Confederacy. He has a number of descendants residing in Rutherford county.

Thomas Hutchins married Betty Smart. They spent their lives in Rutherford county, where their descendants reside today. He was also a soldier in the Confederate army.

Elijah Hutchins was born November 11, 1829 and died February 28, 1910. He married Susannah Smart and Adaline Brackett. He was a private in Company F, 62nd Regiment, N. C. T., during the War Between the States. Among his many descendants should especially be mentioned Joseph Hutchins, a son, who, at an advanced age, resides near the home place of his great grandfather, and is regarded as one of the

outstanding citizens of Logan Store township, Rutherford county. His home, one of the oldest buildings in the county, is situated on a knoll overlooking many broad acres, while several of his sons reside in close proximity to the old home.

James Hutchins was never married, he died young.

Bert Hutchins married Polly Smiley, of Rutherford county and they had three children.

Elizabeth Hutchins, the eldest daughter, married Hezekiah Johnson, a prosperous farmer, who gave his life for the cause of the Confederacy May 30, 1862, while a member of Company G, 50th Regiment, North Carolina Troops. She was born in 1827 and died in August 1863. Only three children were born to this union, William Henderson Johnson, Julia Horton and Mary Dyer. All three are dead, and only the first two left descendants. The writer is one of the few grandsons of W. H. Johnson, while descendants of Julia Horton are found in Rutherford county and in South Carolina.

Polly Hutchins married Rufus Guffey, of Rutherford county, and have a large number of descendants.

Katy Hutchins married Henry Smiley and Patsy Hutchins the youngest daughter, married John Yelton.

A large number of their descendants reside in this and other counties.

Shortly after the marriage of William Hutchins and Mary Weaver they joined the immigrants to Kentucky. Upon her arrival at their destination, "Aunt Polly" was so homesick, or, as she termed it, "thoroughly disgusted" with the then frontier state that she vowed she would return to Rutherford county at her first opportunity. She begun collecting herbs and roots, and within a few months their humble Kentucky cabin was completely filled with the varied collection. Shortly afterwards fortune favored her and she disposed of her herbs and secured sufficient money to finance the trip back to Rutherford county. Her husband protested vigorously against the removal, but in the end she prevailed, and the entire family returned to their old home county after spending a year in Kentucky.

Another interesting incident is preserved in the family of the strong force of character and the determination of "Aunt Polly" Hutchins. She was a member of the Methodist church until after the death of her husband. She then later decided to join the Baptist church, and was accordingly accepted into membership

at Camp Creek Baptist church, at the age of 83 years. It was proposed to her that the baptizing be postponed until spring or summer, it then being in the dead of winter. She refused, and preparations were made for the baptizing. The ice was broken on a nearby mill pond, and the minister, shivering with cold, dipped her in the icy water. After coming out of the water she scorned assistance, and walked two miles to her home, in the bitter cold winter wind, before changing into dry clothing. She, apparently, suffered no ill effects from the experience.

William Hutchins died in August, 1853, and was buried at Camp Creek Baptist church, of which he was a member. His wife survived him many years, and long after passing her allotted three score and ten years, went to her last rest, and was placed beside him in the Camp Creek cemetery.

A mixture of oats and vetch on the farm of R. L. Batts, Rocky Point, Pender county, yielded 4083 pounds of cured hay an acre while a mixture of oats and Austrian winter peas yielded 4,661 pounds of cured hay.

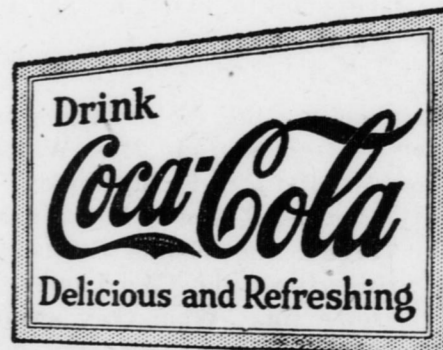
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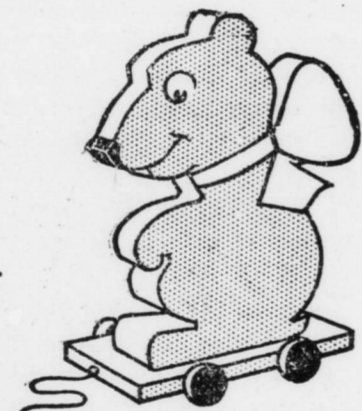
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