

BENJAMIN PUTMAN of North Carolina

Benjamin Putman was born about the year 1750 in Culpeper County, Virginia. He was first mentioned as a minor on a tax list for Bute County, North Carolina in 1766. He is mentioned along with Thomas Putman as his father, so this relationship is well established.

By the latter part of 1766, Benjamin's signature is found as a witness on a deed. This indicates that by 1766 he was over the legal age of sixteen. This would place his birth about 1750. He was married sometime in the latter part of the 1760s.

His wife was named Elizabeth. It is my feeling she was Elizabeth Griggs, daughter of John and Mary Griggs who lived nearby (William Putman, Benjamin's son, had witnessed a deed of John Griggs in 1788). Benjamin named a son Griggs.

In 1770, Benjamin and his wife Elizabeth sold 100 acres of land in Bute County. This was a part of the 310 acres that his father, Thomas, had originally purchased in 1754.

Benjamin is mentioned in many land transactions and tax lists in Bute County, North Carolina through the year 1778. In 1779, Franklin County was formed out of Bute, and Benjamin's lands were in the new Franklin County. This was typical of the times; the land remained the same, but the County boundaries and names changed as population expansion forced counties to divide into more manageable units.

The 1784 and the 1786 census both show Benjamin and Elizabeth with seven sons and two daughters. In the 1790 Census, Benjamin is shown as living alone in the Tar River District of Granville County. The writing on the original report is unclear. Benjamin did have children still living with him and more than likely Elizabeth was still alive at that time. However, the 1790 census also shows a Benjamin Portman with seven males and four females. This is undoubtedly our Benjamin. There was also a William Portman in Burke County and this was most likely William Putman, his son, who was also listed in the 1790 census under the proper spelling.

In 1789 both Benjamin Putman and William Putman were listed on a list of insolvent debts in the estate of General Thomas Person. This was listed in the Warren County Will Book 12. Warren County was formed when Bute County was discontinued in 1779. They were probably listed as insolvent as they had moved by that time to Rutherford County in the southern part of the state.

In the 1800 Census, Benjamin is living in Rutherford County with Elizabeth and five others, two males and three females.

Benjamin is listed in the 1810 North Carolina Census as still living in Rutherford County. Elizabeth was still listed. Only the two of them were living at home. They both seem to have died before 1820 as they are not listed in that census. However, they may have moved with one of their children. I have no dates for the deaths of either Benjamin or Elizabeth.

Benjamin Putman had seven sons and at least three daughters. The children would all have been born in Bute County and then they moved as a family to Rutherford County by 1790. I am positive about Elias, Willis, John and Thomas. I feel that William, Wilson and Griggs were the other of his children. The first five named sons all remained in North Carolina, Wilson and Griggs went into Tennessee and then into northeast Alabama in the early 1800s.

There was a North Carolina Census made from tax data during the period 1784 to 1787. In this report, Benjamin listed seven sons and two daughters. The aforementioned seven sons tie in nicely.