

## **Blount (Blunt), Thomas** <sup>[1]</sup>

### **Blount (Blunt), Thomas**

by Mattie Erma E. Parker, 1979

**d. ca. Mar. 1706**

Thomas Blount (Blunt), colonial official, was the son of [Captain James Blount](#) <sup>[2]</sup> and his first wife, whose name is not known. The elder Blounts moved to [Albemarle](#) <sup>[3]</sup> from Isle of Wight County, Va., between 1660 and 1669. Apparently Thomas and a brother, James, Jr., remained in Virginia for a time or returned there after their family's removal to Albemarle. Both Thomas and James, Jr., proved their own [headrights](#) <sup>[4]</sup> and were granted land in Albemarle in 1680.

Like his father, Thomas Blount was called captain by his contemporaries, which presumably indicated rank in the militia of either Virginia or North Carolina, or both. Also like his father, he held civil office, including a seat on the council, in North Carolina. Blount's first known office was justice of Chowan Precinct court, of which he was the presiding judge in 1694. The almost total loss of the seventeenth-century records of that court renders it impossible to determine the length of his service.

In 1696, Blount was a member of the North Carolina council and was ex officio justice of the general court, then held by the council. From 1698 through 1701 he was justice of the general court by commission from the council but no longer a council member. In about 1696 and 1703 he was a member of the assembly, but the exact dates of his legislative service are not known. In 1699 he was member of a commission to investigate a charge of murder brought against a group of Indians, which was found to be false.

At some date subsequent to October 1701, the general court disqualified Blount for holding civil or military office in the colony during the remainder of his life. That action was taken because of the marriage of Blount's son James to Mary Tyler, sister of James's deceased wife, Katherine. Such a marriage, though admittedly outside the jurisdiction of the court, was prohibited by the Anglican church. As both Blount and Nicholas Tyler, the father of the bride, were alleged to have promoted the marriage, the court barred them from holding any office or trust in the colony. Although Blount's alleged offense was against the Anglican church, it seems not to have affected his standing in the church itself. He was on the vestry of St. Paul's Parish from the establishment of the parish, in 1701, until his death.

Blount lived in Chowan Precinct until about 1696, when he moved to Perquimans. Meetings of the assembly, council, general court, and court of chancery were held at his house in Perquimans in February 1696/97. He later resumed residence in Chowan and in September 1701 lived at the mouth of Kendrick's Creek in what is now [Washington County](#) <sup>[5]</sup>. He made his home there for the remainder of his life.

Blount was married twice. His first wife probably was the Christian Blount named without identification among Blount's headrights in 1680, although possibly the "transport" was their daughter Christian. Five of the ten children who survived Blount appear to have been born of the first marriage. They were James, John, Sarah, Christian, and Ann. By the time Blount made his will, in 1701, the three daughters of the first wife were married and were noted in the will as Sarah Peirce, Christian Ludford, and Ann Wilson. Blount's second wife was Mary Scott, widow of Joshua Scott of Perquimans Precinct. That marriage took place in 1686, probably in April. The children born of it included sons Thomas, Benjamin, and Jacob and daughters Bithay (also called Billah) and Zilphia. Bithay married Kellem Tyler; Zilphia married John Edwards. In addition to his own children, Blount was responsible for at least two wards: his brother John, who was a minor when his father died, and Grace Scott, Blount's stepdaughter. It is not known whether he also was guardian for Grace's sister, Sarah.

Blount's will was proved 28 Mar. 1706. His widow became the wife of Captain Thomas Lee. Several of his children settled in the County of Bath, to the development of which they and their descendants made significant contributions. Among these was his son Thomas, who married Ann Reading, daughter of Lionel Reading, a prominent resident of the County of Bath.

Most writers on the Blount family have confused three individuals bearing the name Thomas Blount. The three are (1) the subject of this sketch, (2) his son Thomas, and (3) a putative uncle of the subject of this sketch, said to have been brother to the first James Blount and to have settled in North Carolina in the 1670s, but of whom this writer finds no trace in North Carolina records.

#### **References:**

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**Subjects:**

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Biographies<sup>[12]</sup>

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