

Skinner, William ^[1]

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25 Dec. 1728–29–26 Jan. 1798

William Skinner, colonial official and planter, was born at Berkeley in Perquimans County ^[2], the son of Richard (ca. 1690–1752) and Sarah Creecy Skinner, who were married about 1714. William Skinner represented Perquimans ^[2] in the Assembly ^[3] in 1761 and 1762, the Provincial Congress ^[4] in 1775 and 1776, the North Carolina Senate in 1777 and 1785, and the constitutional convention of 1788. He served as judge of the Admiralty Court ^[5] from an unknown date until his resignation on 24 Sept. 1789. From 1777 to 1779 he was treasurer for the Northern District and from 1779 to 1784 for the Edenton ^[6] District. He also served as a commissioner to settle the accounts of North Carolina with the general government and as commissioner of loans for the United States in North Carolina.

After serving as lieutenant colonel of the North Carolina militia for Perquimans, he was elected brigadier general of the North Carolina militia for the District of Edenton on 20 Dec. 1777. On 10 May 1779, before the General Assembly in session at Smithfield in Johnston County ^[7], he resigned his commission with this statement: "As my experience in military matters is very small, my continuing in that office might, perhaps, be a public injury, as well as fatal to those whose lives might in a manner depend on my conduct. For these reasons I take the liberty at this time of resigning that appointment which I heretofore with reluctance accepted."

Skinner also served as commissioner or "Director" of the town of Hertford (tradition says that he helped lay out the town), as clerk of court (was serving in 1754), and as sheriff of Perquimans County (was serving in 1759).

He was married first, on 28 May 1752, to Mrs. Sarah Gale Corprew (2 Aug. 1729–29 Mar. 1795), widow of Thomas Corprew. She was the daughter of Miles Gale and the granddaughter of Christopher Gale ^[8] and Mrs. Sarah Laker Harvey, widow of Governor Thomas Harvey ^[9]. To this union were born four children: William Gale (died young), Penelope (m. first Joseph Creecy and second Lemuel Creecy), Elizabeth (m. Josiah Cotton), and Lavinia (m. John Harvey). Skinner's second wife was Mrs. Dorothy Black McDonald, widow of William McDonald and daughter of Samuel and Frances Glass Black, widow of James Glass. They had two children: William (b. ca. 1796) and Caroline (b. ca. 1797). After his death, Dorothy Skinner married John Mushrow Roberts.

Skinner owned several farms and in the 1790 census was listed as the enslaver of forty-seven people. Prior to his second marriage at age sixty-seven, the principal part of his estate was conveyed by deed to his daughters. He was buried in the Yeopim section of Perquimans County on a farm four or five miles from the town of Hertford where a marble slab marks his grave.

References:

Samuel A. Ashe, ed., *Biographical History of North Carolina* ^[10], vol. 5 (1906).

John L. Cheney, Jr., ed., *North Carolina Government, 1585–1974* (1975).

William W. Hinshaw, ed., *Encyclopedia of American Quaker Genealogy*, vol. 1 (1969).

Edgar Perry Maupin, *The Skinner Family of North Carolina* ^[11] (no date, mimeographed copy in State Library, Raleigh).

Perquimans County records (North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh).

Additional Resources:

CSR Documents by Skinner, William, 1729-1798. UNC Libraries, Documenting the American South:
<https://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/index.html/creators/csr11025> ^[12]

Subjects:

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Authors:

Skinner, Sue Dossett ^[16]

Origin - location:

Perquimans County ^[17]

From:

Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press.^[18]

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