

Symons (or Simons, Symonds), Thomas ^[1]

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ca. 1649–18 Apr. 1706

Thomas Symons (or Simons, Symonds), justice, Council member, Assembly member ^[2], and prominent Quaker ^[3], settled in the North Carolina colony before 21 Apr. 1669. His earlier history is unknown.

By 6 Jan. 1689/90 Symons was a justice of Pasquotank Precinct Court, on which he also sat in 1694 and probably in the intervening years. He apparently was a member of the lower house of the Assembly in 1695, for in November of that year and through the following October he held one of the Council seats that the lower house filled by election, usually choosing its own members. As a Council member, Symons was ex officio justice of the General Court ^[4], which was then held by the Council. In December 1698 he was appointed to the General Court, which at that time was held by justices commissioned by the Council. He remained on the court through October 1704. He also sat on the Admiralty Court ^[5] in October 1704, when that court was composed of the justices of the General Court. He was again a member of the Assembly about 1705.

Symons lived on Little River in Pasquotank Precinct, where he owned at least four hundred acres of land and enslaved a number of people. He was a devout Quaker and one of the earliest known members of the Pasquotank Monthly Meeting, later known as the Symons Creek Monthly Meeting. He entertained Thomas Story in his home during the missionary's tour of the colony in 1698.

Symons and his wife, Rebecca, had six children: John (b. 1678), Frances, Thomas, Peter, Mary, and Elizabeth. Several of the children died in childhood. John, the eldest, married Damaris White, the daughter of Henry White, on 8 Aug. 1700. No record of the marriage of the others has been located.

Symons died at age fifty-seven or fifty-eight. He left his estate to his wife and sons John and Peter, who may have been the only surviving children. Peter died in 1731 and John in 1741.

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