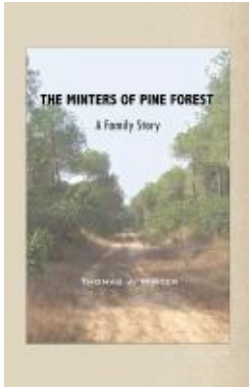
A photograph of a dirt road winding through a pine forest. The road is light brown and leads into the distance, flanked by tall pine trees and some lower green shrubs. The sky is a pale blue. The text is overlaid on the upper and lower portions of the image.

THE MINTERS OF PINE FOREST

A Family Story

THOMAS J. MINTER



The story of a people with traces to Wales. It is told in the context of how they lived their lives - occupations, tragedies, births, deaths, recreation, and the times in which they lived. In their 20th American generation, the descendants of this family are ingrained with what Frederick Jackson Turner, in his frontier thesis, called the "uniquely American character." Helping tell the story are ancestral charts, DNA information, and over 125 pictures and illustrations.

The Minters of Pine Forest

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The Minters of Pine Forest

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IV. Chatham County

Several members of Anthony Minter's family migrated from Virginia south to Chatham County, North Carolina. They were in the County before 1772, for that was the first mention of the name "Minter" in public records. Jeremiah Minter (?-1805), a brother of John Oliver appeared in the court records where he sold land to John.¹

The chain of ownership of this land has been traced: William Julius Riddle (abt 1708-abt 1770), husband of Elizabeth "Nancy" Minter (1713-1787), bought 500 acres of land on the north side of Deep River about 1758 from John Brantley. In 1769 he sold this 500 acres to Jeremiah Minter. The Riddle family had moved to the area about 1755 from Caroline County, Virginia.²

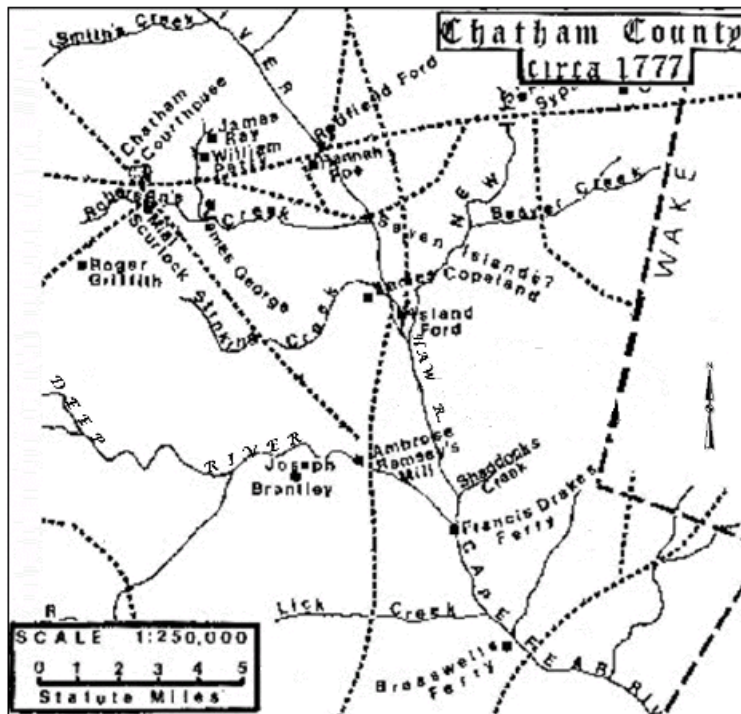
In 1772 Jeremiah sold this same 500 acres to his uncle John Minter of Bedford County, Virginia. So it stands to reason that Jeremiah would have been in Chatham County earlier than 1772 to have purchased this land. Over time, Jeremiah accumulated much land in Chatham County, some by purchase and some by land grants.³

This Indenture made the first day of February in the year
of our Lord One Thousand seven hundred and seventy two, Between Jer-
emiah Minter, he of the County of Chatham of the one part and John Minter
of the County of Bedford in Virginia of the other part, It is shewed that the
said Jeremiah Minter, for and in consideration of the sum of two hun-
- dred and twenty three Pounds Proclamation Money to him in hand
paid, at or before the sealing and delivery of these Presents, the
Receipt whereof hereby acknowledged, and the said Jeremiah Minter
the said John Minter, with hereby quiet and discharged, hath Grant
Bargained, Sold, Released and Conferred unto the said John Minter
his Heirs and Assigns forever, a certain, Tract or Parcel of Land
lying and being in the County of Chatham, on the North side of Deep
River, Beginning at a white ash at the Mouth of a Branch then
up the said Branch Northward to a Gum at the fork, then up the
middle branch to the back line to a corner Pine from thence west a
long the said line to the corner to a pine, then South forty Chain to
a Hickory on the River Bank, then down the River to the first sta-
- tion, it being a part or parcel of Land of seven Hundred Acres, Grants
by and Lord Granville, to John Brantley, Together with all Houses and
and Buildings thereon and all by Right, and then by Deed of Conveyance

A portion of the original deed of land from Jeremiah Minter to John Minter,
dated February 1, 1772. The document shows John as being from Bedford
County, Virginia. A copy of the original deed from which this is taken
Courtesy Kathy Williams.

There is indication in family notes that Anthony Minter Jr. (1715-1812), a brother to John Oliver and his sister Nancy Minter, was in Chatham County maybe earlier than they and acquired extensive land holdings, which he later sold and returned to Virginia. Evidence of such transactions were not recorded, except later in 1772. His son Richard (1745-1780) died in the County.

As has been mentioned, John Oliver Minter (1718-1797) , and his wife, and all their children and other family members moved to North Carolina sometime before 1772. Altogether, there were thirteen Minters (heads of families) in Chatham County, North Carolina, for the first Federal census of 1790.⁴ John Oliver's family accounted for four of these heads of family. In addition, there were two widows named Margaret. And



A partial map⁵ of Chatham County, North Carolina, that shows the area where the Minters settled. To be exact it was in what is now the Haw River Township near Haywood, NC, above the fork where Haw River joins Deep River to form Cape Fear River. Minters had land transactions with the Brantleys and Ramseys. Jeremiah Minter owned land on the north side of Lick Creek.

from another family line, there was: Anthony Morgan Minter Jr. (1715-1812) and his son; William (1763-1838); Jeremiah Minter (?-1805) and his son, Cary (1748-1782); Philip (1748-1796), son of John Oliver; and Richard (1722-1785), brother of John Oliver Minter.

One of the two widows named Margaret was the wife of Richard Minter, who died before the 1790 Census. The other widow is believed to be that of Cary Minter, who in making his will stated: "all I possess to my beloved wife, Margaret, to try to raise my children." The will was admitted to probate at the February term of court 1782, which was before the 1790 Census.

Why did the Minters emigrate from Virginia to North Carolina? Some have speculated that it was a result of "The War of the Regulation"⁶ (or the "Regulator Movement"), which caused people to leave the area, resulting in low land prices, which appealed to the Minters.

This "War," a North Carolina citizens uprising, lasted from approximately 1764 to 1771, was a Militia expedition against the Tories, waged against corrupt colonial officials. The only true battle of this movement was the Battle of Alamance on May 16, 1771. Several people were killed in the clash.⁷

Minters played an active role in the Regulator Movement. Richard Minter, one of John's brothers, furnished supplies to American troops in 1780. He also

was an Ensign of Chatham County Militia on an expedition against the Tories.⁸ John Oliver himself contributed 2,169 £ , which was no small amount, to the cause.⁹ At the time 1£ would buy 4 barrels of flour; 5£ would purchase a milk cow; 35£ would get 100 bushels of wheat; and 2£ would bring home a dining table for the house.¹⁰

John's daughter Jane married William Riddle Sr. in 1779. He was one of the seven sons of William Julius Riddle who had sold land to Jeremiah Minter earlier in 1769. The seven Riddle boys, there were no girls in the family, all served with distinction on the American side in the Revolutionary War. They were said to be men of great size and extraordinary strength.¹¹

Another reason for the Minters migration to Chatham County could have been their independent streak and disdain for too much government and taxation. And Virginia being a colony of England, was probably a model of the British attitude and ways of doing things, which irked many of those who migrated to the New World in the first place. The Revolutionary War (1775-1783) was a testament to such discontent.

The old wills of Minters¹² are interesting, and one can gain some insight as to family members; what they valued, their living circumstances, and who they favored.

John Oliver, the patriarch of the Chatham County Minters, was apparently a successful man. In the Fed-

eral census of 1790 he owned 12 slaves. For some reason in his will he left about everything he owned to his son Joseph. In it he mentioned a fishery on his plantation:

My will is that my fishery be divided between my wife, Elizabeth, and my son Joseph during said wife's life, and at her death the whole belong to my son Joseph and his heirs forever.

John's fishery was probably on the north side of Deep River. He almost certainly controlled access to it. And from it fish were seined and sold. The fish would have been Hickory Shad, River Herring, and Short nosed Sturgeon.

Philip, who never married, was a tailor This is his will:

Will of Philip Minter, dated 23 March 1796, proved Mary Court 1706 Chatham County NC Record of Estates, Vol. 2, pg. 80 NC State Archives film # C.022.50001 - 1782-1799

In the name of God amen I Philip Minter, Tayler (tailor) of Chatham County and State of North Carolina being of perfect mind & memory and of a disposing mind do make and ordain this my last Will & Testament in manner & form as follows (to wit)
first that my Body shall be Buried in Decent like Manner & that my funeral expences shall be paid out of my Property & the Rest shall be divided as follows:

I give and bequeath unto James Minter of Chatham County and State aforesaid one Black west Coat (what they called a weskit?) and Breaches and one Black pair of Stockings one fine shirt Doubled hem'd Ruffled; I give to John Evans one fine shirt Ruffled Trim'd with Lace one pair of strip'd silk stockings one spotted Vest casimer (cashmere) Jacket, I give to Charles Evans one fine Ruffles Shirt hem stich, one strip'd (striped) Jacket, one Cravat; I give and bequeath unto Abner Hill (or Hile ?) Minter my watch Two shirts

one pair shoe & New Buckles, I give unto John Minter of Chatham county one Hatt. I give unto John Riddle Jun. one Lin'd Colour'd Casimere Colour'd Coat, one yellow silk & cotton Vest & Breaches and my will and desire is that the rest of my cloths shall be sold to help pay of my debts & also my will and desire is that all my acc'ts shall be collected & the money arising from the acc'ts and the Money I have shall be equally divided between Celah Minter, Susanna Evans & Elizabeth Michaur? Minter all of Chatham County and my will & desire that Joseph Minter of Chatham County to be my Executer, and do appoint the said Joseph Minter executer to this My last Will & Testament. In the year one thousand seven Hundred & ninety six.

Philip (his X mark) Minter {Seal}
Sign'd Seal'd & Deliv'd

Joseph, a son of John Oliver, married Frances “Fanny” Hill in 1784. Frances was a daughter of Abner Hill (1715-?). Her great great grandfather was Robert Hill (1620-1678), who came from England and settled in Surry County, Virginia.¹³

Joseph and Frances had eight children, all of which were born in Chatham County:

Abner Hill 1785-1847
John Morgan 1792-1856
Thomas Sr. 1794-1825
Mary 1797-1877
Elizabeth 1799-1823
Sarah Bef. 1803-?
Frances ?-?
Hannah 1804-1843

Joseph’s will gives some indication where these early Minters was buried when they died:

The Will of Joseph Minter dated 25 September 1822, (Will Book B-108), refers to "the graveyard where my father and mother are buried with others of the family, which is one eighth of an acre." Deed dated 4 November 1828, by John Farrar, Executor of Joseph Minter, deceased, to Charles J. Williams, gives the metes and bounds of 1,005 acres on the north side of Deep River "with the exception of the grave yard which occupies and is limited to one quarter of an acre," (Deed Book AB-401). Deed dated 31 December 1839, from Charles J. Williams to John A. Williams, gives the metes and bounds of 800 acres on the north side of Deep River "with the exception of the grave yard which occupies and is limited to one quarter of an acre," (Deed Book AE-464).

This first burial plot of an eighth acre mentioned above was on the family plantation and consisted of only two graves, that of John Oliver and his wife, Elizabeth.

Over the years descendants of John Morgan Minter and his brother Abner Hill Minter have attempted to locate the grave sites in Chatham County where Minters were buried. In the 1940s and 1950s they questioned locals going back three generations. All to no avail.

Back in those days people were not immune to son-in-law problems. In Joseph's will where he made provisions for his daughter Hannah, he showed a loathing for her husband:

... for my daughter Hannah who intermarried* with John H. Farrah of Crunville County North Carolina who I think is a scoundrel and is not to have any claims or demands against my estate in no shape, matter, or form whatever. It is my will and wish

*"Intermarried" here most likely refers to either religion, ethnicity, or family social standings rather than race.

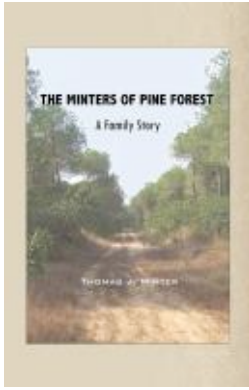
that my daughter be divorced from the said Farrah before she has any issue [child] by him, if she should and remain so, it is my will she shall have an equal portion with her brothers and sisters above named, if she thinks and does still remain the wife of the said John Farrah, its my will and desire my two friends Archelase Carlous and Phillip Alston or if they should fail or refuse to act in trust for my said daughter Hannah, then its my will and desire my executer shall appoint some good and discrete person to act for her, its my will and desire if my daughter Hannah, be divorced from the said John Farrah or if he should die, which I hope and trust he may,

In 1804 Jeremiah Minter was declared insane by the court on the evidence of Margaret Minter and Matthew Davis, Sr. He died in 1805.

With the death of Joseph in 1823, Minters were practically extinct in Chatham County. Phillip, Richard, Carey, and Jeremiah were all dead. Joseph and Fanny's children had grown up and migrated to other states, notably Alabama and Georgia.

However, there may still be Minter descendants living in the area. John Oliver's daughter Jane (1761-1817), and her husband William Riddle Sr. (1745/46-1811) bought land, when they were first married, on Robinson (or Roberson) Creek near Pittsboro, the county seat of Chatham County. They lived their lives there and were buried nearby. They had eight children—six boys and two girls. One of the boys, John, who was a nephew of Philip Minter, was mentioned in his will.

Jane and her husband, William, were first cousins. William's mother, Elizabeth "Nancy" (Minter) Riddle and Jane's father, John Oliver, were brother and sister.



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