

PREFACE

Census records show his grandson, Samuel (008), as having been born in North Carolina. The Samuel in North Carolina paid land taxes up until 1782; the Samuel in Virginia paid land taxes beginning in 1783. If I could find the marriage record for Samuel and Missiniah, or for their oldest son, I would be totally convinced. As it stands, I have about a 1% doubt. I hope that's good enough. If I am wrong, the only other possibility I can come up with would be that Samuel (006) was the son of Joseph, the brother of Samuel (004) and son of Alexander (003). This may be the same Joseph who bought land in Bedford (later Franklin) Co. Va., in 1764., but there is no record of his children except for one son, John, and a daughter, Elisabeth.

I had heard stories about one of our ancestors being a Cherokee. I was proud to think that I had Indian blood in my veins, even if it was only a small percentage. My research indicates that the Indian ancestor was named Missiniah, my great-great-great-great-great-grandmother. (One could be tempted to make a pun and say, "that's really great!, but I won't.) In a correspondence with Mrs. Irene V. Funston of Sierra Vista, Ariz., she states,

"The legend in my family has also been that there was a Cherokee Indian ancestor, and I still have high cheekbones and a 'Roman' nose, although am light complected, or complexioned." Since Mrs. Funston has traced her ancestry back to Jesse Underwood, the son of Samuel and Missiniah, that makes Missiniah our nearest common ancestor. And since I can document that there are no Indian ancestors farther back than Missiniah, that leaves her as the only possibility.

I would like to give credit here to the many relatives who provided information to me about their families, and to my wife, Mildred F. Underwood (Mickey), and my daughter, Sandra Underwood Weidner (Sandy), who were a great help during the research phase of this project. Together we spent many hours staring at the dimly lit microfilm readers at the National Archives Building and scanning through hundreds of volumes in the Library of Congress. We also visited dozens of county courthouses in Virginia and North Carolina. I would also like to give credit to Mrs. Pauline Smith, of Eden North Carolina, for the wealth of information she has given me regarding her grandmother, Sarah Underwood Boulding. She was able to locate the