

THE HERITAGE OF YADKIN COUNTY

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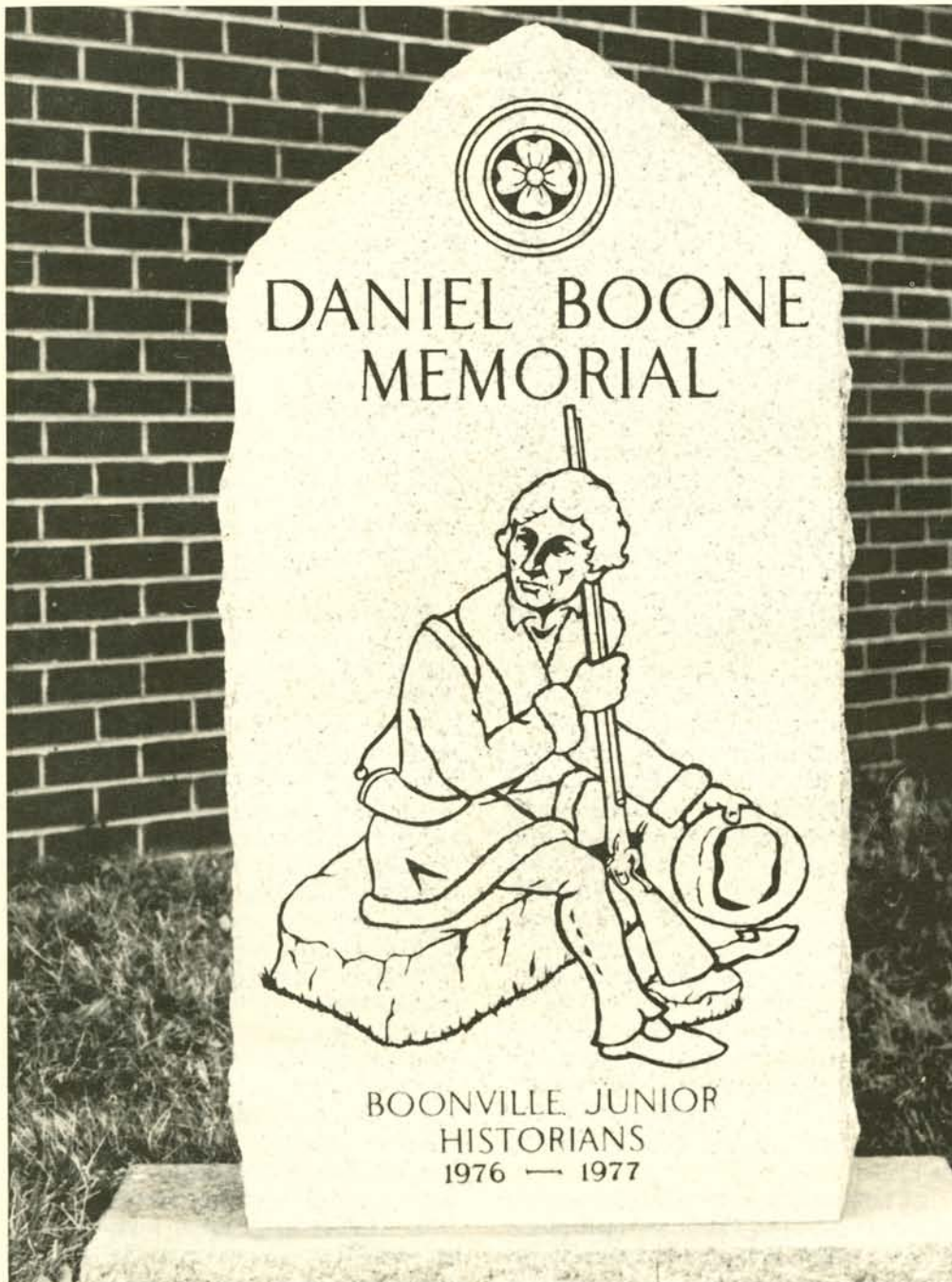
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Frances Harding Casstevens, Editor

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This is a photograph of the Yadkin County Courthouse built in 1850 by William White on the Courthouse square in Yadkinville. Note the chimnies which were used to heat the building. The building was replaced in the late 1950's.



Daniel Boone Memorial, located at the intersection of Highways 601 and 421, placed by the Boonville Junior Historians, 1976-77. The Town of Boonville is named for Daniel Boone, who passed through the area on his trips into Tennessee and Kentucky.

Daniel Boone

Daniel Boone was a frequent visitor to the area. The Mecklenburg Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, placed a marker on the courthouse square October 29, 1913, marking the trail Daniel Boone and his party took on their way from Rowan County to Kentucky in 1769.¹²

Other early settlers, as can be seen on a map compiled by Fred Hughes known as "The Yadkin County Historical Land Grant Map." Some of them are: William Montgomery (1759), Roger Turner (1755), William Churton (1762), Elijah Stewart (1765), Edward Underhill (1757), John Thomas (1753), Thomas Yates (1763), John Howard (1762), Thomas Frohock (1760), Silas Enyart (1762), John Greene (1753), John Locke (1765), Patrick Logan (1754), Joseph Gross (1768), Peter Pearson (1762), James Glenn (1767), Sarah Pilcher (1753), Nathaniel Wiltshire (1756).

Marmaduke Kimbrough (1756), Benjamin Pettit (1763), John Dills (1762), James Carson (1763), John Wagoner (1753), Ralph Hudspeth (1761), Isaac Ferree (1752), Robert Turner (1769), Thomas Turner (1761).¹³

In the decade of the 1770's some of the land grants and purchases were by Thomas Poindexter (1774), Samuel Shin (1779), Thomas Holcomb (1779), Greenberry Patterson (1779), James Smith (1779), Moses Keen (1779), Josiah Keen (1779), David Green (1779), Samuel Hinds (1778), Salathiel Martin (1779), and Nathaniel Woodruff (1779).¹⁴

Sources: 1William Thornton Whitsett, *Landmarks and Pioneers* (Whitsett, N.C.: Saber and Song, 1925), p. 243.
2William Byrd, *Histories of the Dividing Line Betwixt Virginia and North Carolina* (1929, rpt. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1967), p. 300.

3Rowan County Records, Deed Book 3, page 143.
4Robert W. Ramsey, *Carolina Cradle* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of N.C. Press, 1964), p. 31.
5Ibid., p. 79.
6Ibid., p. 76.
7Ibid., p. 33.

8Bill Sharpe, *A. New Geography of North Carolina, IV*

(Raleigh: Sharpe Publishing Co., 1965), pp. 2229-2248.

9U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, *Soil Survey — Yadkin County, North Carolina* (Washington: U.S. Govt. Printing Office, 1962), p. 69.

10Ibid.

11Sharpe, p. 2229.

12"Daniel Boone Marker Unveiled Here," *Yadkin Ripple* (Oct. 29, 1913; rpt. 15 September 1966, p. 4, cols. 1-2).

13"Yadkin County North Carolina Historical Documentation" Fred Hughes, *The Custom House, Jamestown, N.C.*, 1979.

14Ibid.

— Frances H. Casstevens

REV. GEORGE SOELLE VISITS EARLY YADKIN SETTLERS

4

George Soelle, an ordained minister of the Unity of Brethren, who lived in the Moravian village near the Yadkin River, made frequent visits to families across the river in what is now Yadkin County during the years 1771 to 1773.

Soelle was on good terms with settlers who were not of the Moravian faith. He frequently met and talked with them when they came to the Moravian villages to trade or to seek shelter from Indian attacks.

Rev. Soelle was attuned to the needs of the people. He believed they were hungry for the word of God and that they longed to lead Godly lives. He frequently visited among them, delivering God's message wherever he traveled.

By foot or on horseback, Rev. Soelle made his way to Deep Creek, to Dutchman's Creek, and up and down the Yadkin River. He would spend the night with some of the families and continue his journey the next day, holding meetings wherever he went. Sometimes he traveled alone, and sometimes in the company of others. But, everywhere he traveled, he noted in the diary that he kept the weather, the names of streams, and the names of people he visited.

He had difficulty finding his way and he seldom went the same way twice. Frequently, he would miss the path and had to wander for hours, probably the only living person for miles around as the settlers were few and far between at that time. If he was lucky, he might meet another traveler or come upon a cabin where he could spend the night.

His Diary

Reverend Soelle's diary on his pastoral tours begins March 23, 1771, and ends April 12, 1773, just before his death. In it, of interest to the historian and genealogist, are the approximate locations of the homes he visited. These comments are interwoven with his religious comments, as well as bits of family history. Some of the locations he gives can be definitely determined from deeds recorded in Surry County.

The following are excerpts from Soelle's diary:

1777 — Went from Salem to Yadkin River and spent the night with Martin Houser (Hauser). Held services in the home of Joseph Phillips who lived near the Yadkin. Baptized the child of George Loesch whose farm was not far away. Visited three other families

Preached at Mr. Morphies (Murphy's) meeting house who lived in the neighborhood. (Mr. Murphy often entertained Soelle in his home). Spent the night at home of Abraham Crisson (Creason or Creson). He was a good natured man, well-liked by his neighbors.

Visited Roger Turner, Jr. His wife was the daughter of Mrs. Robert Elrod by her first marriage, and his father, Roger Turner, Sr., is the oldest man in the neighborhood. He is 94 years old and blind.

(Roger Turner, Sr., had grants from Lord Granville dated 1755. Roger Turner, Jr., also had a Granville grant dated 1761 for land some miles west of the Yadkin River near Deep Creek. The will of Roger Turner, Sr., dated February 2, 1775, mentions his wife Elizabeth, sons Elias, Robert, Thomas, and Roger, and daughters Hannah and Mary, and grandson Roger, son of Thomas. Soelle's diary mentions the children of Robert Turner but does not give their names.)

Spent the night with Robert Elrod. They were elderly people. Mrs. Elrod was a sister of the wife of John Douthit, Sr. They were from Pennsylvania. She was a widow when she married Elrod and her eldest daughter married Roger Turner, Jr. The youngest daughter married John Jones.

The following night was spent with Abraham Wilson. (Nothing was said about his family other than he had a brother named James, and a neighbor named Robert Wilson whose wife was Elizabeth.)

Went from there to visit with Jonathan Boone whose wife was Mary Carter. Not far from James Wilson's home lived Andrew Hunt, a son of Col. Hunt.

Two miles west of Robert Elrod's lived John Johns (Jones), a young Englishman who married Mrs. Elrod's youngest daughter. The young people were eager to hear the Gospel.

Further up Deep Creek lived John Herrmann (Hartman) (who appears on a map of 1771). Herrmann had several sons. His house was built near the road and many people stopped there every day.

Across Deep Creek

Crossed Deep Creek and visited with the Reeces (on 1771 map, Ries (Reece) is shown as living five miles from John Herrman). Ries and his family had taken refuge in Bethania during the Indian War. Old father Ries was in poor health, but rejoiced to have services held in his home. (Ries died in 1772. One of his sons, Valentine, lived nearby.)

Left Ries home and went to home of George Lang (Long) for the night. (Long lived on what was known as the Miller settlement on Deep Creek. The plantation of Christian Miller can also be seen on the 1771 map some miles above the Reece land. Long was a staunch friend of Rev. Soelle.)

From George Long's home it was five miles to William Grant's, who was generally referred to as "Billy" Grant. He lived in what was called the Hunting Creek neighborhood, and there is mention of a Grant's Mill where Temple Cole came to collect taxes in 1771. In the Grant household, which numbered 23 persons, lived

his wife, children, his mother, and several other persons.

A 1772 Trip

In 1772 Soelle made a trip to Frederick Long's. He stated that "they were both young people and, therefore, still very poor." Long lived on the road to Fox Nobbs (Fox Knob, later Star Peak), on a 600-acre tract of land at the headwaters of Deep Creek, (adjoining Moses Woodruff, Samuel Gentry, and John Swim (Swaim). Gentry's daughter, Polly, married John Ridings.)

September, 1771, Soelle went from William Grant's to the home of John Boone, and then set out for Morgan Bryan's to spend the night. (Morgan Bryan, along with James and George Forbush, (Forbis, Forbes), are said to be the first white men to have crossed and settled west of the "Atkin" (Yadkin) River. Morgan was a large landowner, and a deed from Lord Granville recorded in Rowan County describes his 2,200 acres. Two of Morgan Bryan's grants gave him 810 acres on Deep Creek. Morgan Bryan settled first near Huntsville.)

The next night, Soelle spent with William Bryan whose land lay along the Yadkin. (It was possible to go from William Bryan's up the bank of the Yadkin River to Shallow Ford by passing Robert Lanier's Store on the road to Salem near the river.)

Soelle also followed another road that led from William Bryan's to David Jones'; an unmarried man who owned land. David Jones, Sr., had secured 220 acres on the Yadkin River which was later divided between sons John and David. In 1777 David Jones sold his part to Stephen Riddle.)

In June of 1772, Soelle visited Joseph Hughes, a young man and storekeeper who had only one arm. From there it was ten miles to Morgan Bryan's, where Soelle met "Old Col. Hunt." (James Bryan is mentioned as being a son of Morgan's.)

Child Baptized

At William Bryan's he saw "old Mother Boone," a Quaker. At Robert Elrod's, Soelle baptized the child of Henry and Rachel Speer who were from the Bryan Settlement.

Rev. Soelle died May 4, 1773, and on July 23 of that same year, Richard Utley set out to visit many of the same homes visited by Soelle. At every home Utley visited, he read the Memories of Brother Soelle, which was customary in the Moravian religion.

Some of the families Utley visited were: Daniel Smith, Morgan Bryan, James Bryan, John Bryan, George Long, Frederick Long, Valentine Reese, John Jones, Robert Elrod, Roger Turner, Thomas Bryan, William Bryan, James Forbush, George Boone, William Williams, Samuel Bryan, and the widow Goslin.

Reference: *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina*, VOL. II, translated and edited by Adelaide Fries from the Moravian Diary entries.

— Lucille Vernon

MISCELLANEOUS EARLY SURRY COUNTY LAND GRANTS

5

The following is a listing of some Surry County land grants of Yadkin County interest: December 10, 1778, State to Robert Lanier, 542 acres, adjoining Kimbrough estate and Thomas Johnson, lying on both sides of the Shallow Ford on Ellen's Branch.

April 3, 1780, State to Christopher Stanton, 50 acres on Forbush Creek, line agreement with John Williams.

April 3, 1780, State to Jacob Gallion, 320 acres (no description).

April 3, 1780, State to J.W. Long, 300 acres on Haw Branch of North Deep Creek.

April 3, 1780, State to John Roberts, 450 acres, agreed line with McCullum and Henry Speer.

October 24, 1782, State to George Holcomb, 480 acres, North Deep Creek, at Henry Speer's line, and John Williams, crossing Haw Creek.

October 24, 1782, State to Micayah Lewis, 250 acres, on the waters of Deep Creek, on Fox Knobb.

October 24, 1782, State to John Lyons, 200 acres on waters of Deep Creek next to Jacob Gallion's line.

October 13, 1783, State to John Williams, 340 acres, North Fork of Deep Creek, agreed line with John Petty, Henry Speer, and Samuel Chinn.

November 3, 1784, State to William Hill, 350 acres, ash camp, James Hampton's old line.

November 6, 1788, John Blalock to Joseph Hill, 100 acres on Miller Creek.

December 20, 1791, State to Abijah Elmore, 200 acres on Forbush Creek, adjoining Elmore, Barnes, Williams, Ramey, and Pilcher.

— Lucille Vernon

EARLY RELIGIOUS GROUPS, CHURCHES, ORDERS

6

Some notations found in *Materials Toward a History of the Baptist in the Province of North Carolina, Vol. IV* by Morgan Edwards, written about 1800, indicate that the Baptist were active in the Yadkin County area in the years preceding the American Revolution. The following is of interest.

Shallow-Fords

"So called from the fords of the Atkin-river, near to which the meeting house stands, in the county of Surrey, 300 miles W of Newburn, and 660 SSW from Philadelphia. The church consists of 3 branches; one near the Fords where is a meeting house, 30 feet by 26, built in 1769 and another branch in the forks of the Atkin, the third in the Mulberry-fields in each of which places is also a meeting-house. Ruling elders and deaconesses admitted, and 6 of the 9 christian rites. No estate. No salary,

5