

YAUHANNAH HISTORY



Saukee Bluff - Brittons Ferry

A Pee Dee River Bluff

Saukee Bluff--Brittons Ferry is located on the southwest side of the Great Pee Dee River, exactly 52 miles upriver from the mouth of Sampit River at Georgetown and 24 miles above the ferry at present day Yauhannah. It is now located on the boundary line between Georgetown and Williamsburg Counties.

SAUKEE BLUFF

William Waties, Sr., on Monday 16 Jul 1716 appeared before the Board of Commissioners of Indian Trade and proposed that Saukey be chosen for settling a factory and trading house - it being a more convenient place for trade with the Pedea and Wackamaw Indians as opposed to the old Caseka's site on Black River. The Board agreed with this decision and appointed William Waties, Sr. as the Factor to officiate there (at a salary of £100 per year) and allowed £50 to build a log house at Saukey 25' long and 14' wide. It also included an assistant's salary of £50 per year for Mr. Henry Farewell if he would accept. At the board meeting of 21 Sept. 1716, William Waties, Sr. apparently had a change of heart and represented to the Board that Uauenee (present day Yauhannah) was the safest and most convenient settlement for a trading house with the Indians. His reasons given were:

1. The vicinity of Uauenee to the English plantations would afford news at all times by land within 3 - 4 days (Saukee being much more remote)
2. That Saukee was covered only by the Pedecas and thus exposed to the insults of the Charraws.
3. Uauenee was contiguous to the Wackamaws (a people of greater consequence than the Pedecas) making it doubly fortified against any foreign attempt.
4. It was the preferred site as a place of commerce by the Wackamaws, the most populous of the two nations.

The Board agreed with this decision and ordered that William Waties build a trading house at Uauanee.

From this information we learn that Saukey was inhabited by the Pedea Indians. In 1737 this tribe, now spelled Pedee Indians, along with a band of Notchees, who originated from Mississippi, petitioned the colonial government to provide them with a piece of land on which to live. James Coachman, a planter from Berkeley Co., offered 100 acres of his land on the waters of the Edisto River in Berkeley Co., at a price of £100, for the resettlement of the two tribes. Gabriel Manigault, Public Treasurer of SC, took title to the 100 acres in trust for the Notchee and Pedee Indians on 27/28 March 1738. The descendants of the Pedee Indians have since moved from this 100 acres and many of their descendants presently live on the waters of the Edisto in Orangeburg Co. They are currently seeking federal recognition as the Beaver Creek Band of the Pedee Indians.

The first reference to a grant of the Saukee Ferry tract is at the 11 Aug. 1737 meeting of the SC Council. Col. Benjamin Waring, son-in-law of Landgrave Thomas Smith II, requested the Council to issue a warrant of re-survey of a tract of land of 500 acres upon Sawkee Bluff on Pedee River that was conveyed and made over to

him by Landgrave Thomas Smith. A warrant of re-survey was issued but no plat was ever recorded. Abraham Staples had 500 acres platted to him on 10 Nov. 1735 bounding north on William Shackelford, northeast on a lake, southwest on Mr. Leander's land and southeast on lands belonging to Mr. Waring. It was discovered that this land included part of Benjamin Waring's land and Abraham Staples' land was re-surveyed by Peter Lane, D.S., on 29 Dec. 1739 and included 498 acres joining Col. Waring on the East, Sawho Lake, Staples Lake today, William Shackelford and lands laid out to Thomas Charnock. Benjamin Waring willed the 500 acre Sawkee tract to Thomas Waring and both were deceased by 1747 when Richard Waring, executor of the two estates registered a memorial in the Auditor's office on 15 Oct. 1747 describing the descent of title from Col. Benjamin Waring to Thomas Waring.

BRITTON'S FERRY

On 13 June 1747, Gov. James Glen and the SC Council passed Act #757 which appointed Commissioners of the Highways in the upper settlements on Pedee, Waccamaw and Black Rivers with full power to create ferries and set fees as they deemed appropriate. Commissioners appointed for District 1, which today covers Woodberry and Brittons Neck in Marion District northward to Catfish Creek on the Pedee, were Francis Breton (sic), Isaac Secare, and John Jordan.

To follow the descent of title of the Sawkee/Brittons Ferry tract we have to do a genealogical study of Francis Britton II. This study tells us in part that Francis Britton II married Ann Hyrne, daughter of Edward Hyrne and Barbara Smith. Barbara Smith was the daughter of Landgrave Thomas Smith II and sister-in-law to Benjamin Waring who had married Barbara Smith's sister, Anne. How Francis Britton came into possession of the Sawkee tract is up for conjecture - he could have received it as a gift from his cousins, the Waring's, or purchased it outright (there is nothing on record to show the type of conveyance) but proof of his ownership is offered in his will, dated 14 May 1766. He bequeathed the Sawhee tract to his son Francis Britton III. Records on Francis Britton III are almost non-existent, but we know he married an Anne, as proved by his uncle Joseph Britton's will (dated 25 June 1773). Joseph Britton leaves an inheritance to Anne, the wife of Francis Britton. We also know that he died intestate prior to December 1785, when Matthew Irvine signed a promissory note to George Skinner and Thomas Britton, administrators of Francis Britton, deceased, for 14 1/4 guineas. As a general rule, nearest of kin were appointed administrators in the absence of a will. George Skinner (Born Oct. 1764, died 21 Apr. 1801) married Elizabeth Britton (born 23 Mar. 1769, died 7 Feb. 1836). George Skinner was also the trustee in the marriage of Ann Britton of Georgetown to William Magill on 12 May 1790. This strongly suggests that Francis Britton III had two daughters, Elizabeth and Ann, and perhaps a son, Thomas Britton. George Skinner received a re-grant to Francis Britton's Sawkee/Brittons Ferry tract in 1786 (plat dated 10 Oct 1786) described as 650 acres in the District of Georgetown on the south side of Bigg (sic) Pee Dee River bounding on Pee Dee, Sockee Lake, George Skinner, William Snow, William Murray and vacant.

After George Skinner's death on 21 April 1801, Timothy Britton apparently purchased the Britton's ferry tract from the Skinner estate. In 1801, Timothy Britton petitioned the SC Senate for a license to run Brittons Ferry stating that he was then in possession of the ferry across Big Pee Dee River long known by the name of Brittons and that the time for which the said ferry was formerly established had expired. There is no date on this document but the SC Department of Archives and History states that it is circa 1801.

From here it is unclear as to the succession of title of the ferry tract. All records prior to 1862 in Georgetown Co. were destroyed during the War of Northern Aggression and I have very little information on this Timothy Britton. Title to the Brittons Ferry tract becomes vested in Dr. Thomas G. Britton prior to 28 July 1821 when he received a warrant to have 940 acres adjacent to the Brittons Ferry tract surveyed. The 940 acre plat shows the Brittons Ferry tract as belonging to Thomas G. Britton. He could have inherited this tract from the estate of Timothy Britton or he could have purchased it. Perhaps in time this information will surface.

Title to the ferry tract next became vested in Mary Ann Britton Eaddy (daughter of Thomas G. Britton) and on 10 Aug. 1860 she conveyed it to her son, C. W. Martin (son of James Martin, Mary Ann's first husband). On 5 June 1869, C. W. Martin conveyed the property to George North, one of the partners in the Smiths Mill enterprise. Due to financial difficulties the Smiths Mill tract (formerly Sawkee/Brittons Ferry) was sold on 7

Sept. 1885 by E. M. Boykin, US Marshall, to Thomas R. McGahan. The description of the tract is as follows: All that tract of land known by the general appellation of "Brittons Ferry" with the buildings and improvements thereon (except the steam sawmill, with engines, boilers and all appurtenances belonging thereto, known as "Smiths Mill" which was not sold) containing 500 acres more or less situate, lying and being partly in Williamsburg Co. and partly in Georgetown Co. the boundaries of the said tract described in a deed from Mary A. Eddy (sic) to C. W. Martin being as follows - on the north by lands of E. H. Britton, on the east by Pee Dee River, on the south by lands of L. J. White, and on the west by lands of W. H. Larramow (sic). The land today is owned by International Paper Co. and is known as the T. R. McGahan/Smith tract.

SOURCES

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3. Indian Trade Commission Journal, 1716 - 1718, page 111
4. SC Deed abstracts 1719 - 1772; Vol. 1, pages 317 - 318 abstracted by Clara Langley. Deed Book S, page 190, 27/28 March 1738, James Coachman to Gabriel Manigault, Lease and Release in trust for the Notchee and Pedee Indians.
5. Conversation with Barry J. Chavis, Chief of the Beaver Creek Band of the Pedee Indians, and Michelle Schohn, tribal historian and researcher, Columbia, SC.
6. Petitions for Land from SC Council Journals Vol. I, 1734/5 - 1748, page 95, by Brent Holcomb.
7. Colonial plats, SC Dept. of Archives and History.
8. Colonial plats, SC Dept. of Archives and History.
9. Richard Waring Memorial, 15 Oct. 1747, SC Memorials, SC Dept. of Archives and History.
10. Statutes at Large, Vol. IX, edited by David J. McCord, page 144 - 145.
11. Will of Francis Britton, Charleston Wills, Vol. 12, 1767 - 1771, page 379.
12. Register of Christ Church Parish.
13. George Skinner and Thomas Britton, administrators of the estate of Francis Britton vs. Matthew Irvine, Judgement Rolls, No. 360A, SC Dept. of Archives and History.
14. Skinner Bible Records, Family Bible Records, by Melda Morris, page 35 - 36.
15. Ann Britton/William Magill Marriage Settlement; SC Dept. of Archives and History.
16. George Skinner, state plats, SC Dept. of Archives and History.
17. Petition of Timothy Britton, Journals of the General Assembly and House of Representatives, SC Dept. of Archives and History.
18. Thomas G. Britton plat, Williamsburg Co. Courthouse, Plat Book 1C, page 62.
19. E. M. Boykin to T. R. McGahan, Georgetown Co. Courthouse, Deed Book I, page 362 - 364.

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