

Biographical Notes and Lineage for THOMAS PRESLEY, SR.

A WORK IN PROGRESS...

Thomas Preslar/Presley born 1730 was the third son of **Andreas/Andrew Preslar/Presley** and **Antje Wills**. He was two years older than youngest brother, Andrew Preslar/Presley, Jr.. The children of Andrew and Antje were baptized at St. Stephen's Parish in Cecil Country, Maryland. Though their places of birth are not yet known to us, they could have been born in three places: New York, Pennsylvania, or Maryland.

We know that the brothers John, Thomas, and Andrew, along with their father, settled in Anson County, North Carolina. Of the eldest brother, Christian, very little, if anything is known, but he is not mentioned in the records of North Carolina counties in the areas where the Presley family lived.

The Presley brothers were large landowners and both Thomas and Andrew, Jr., like their father, were blacksmiths by trade. Their names appear on many land deeds in and around Anson County, and both men, along with their father, were involved in the American Revolution, both Thomas and John having been members of the Regulators who signed the petition which prompted the actual first battle of that war, the Battle of Alamance. Currently, records are being looked into to see if any of the brothers had taken part in the French & Indian War from 1755 - 1758. They would have been perfect in age to serve.

Thomas Presley has been a mystery to his descendants, and we seem to know little about him, even his marriage. We know that he married a *Culpepper* whose first name is missing from the U.S. and International Marriage Records 1560 - 1900, and who is listed as "Culpetter." It is assumed that either of the names *Sarah* or *Elizabeth* Culpepper may have applied. The marriage may have been ca. 1758, at the close of the French & Indian war, since their first child, Susannah, was born in 1759. So what do we know about Thomas Presley and "Culpepper?" We know for a fact, according to his Last Will and Testament, dated 1808, the year he died, Thomas listed his wife as "Sarah." Whether or not Thomas was married only once, or, perhaps, twice, still remains to be investigated.

A Sarah Culpepper, daughter of Joseph Culpepper of Edgecombe County, NC, sister of Benjamin Culpepper is a likely candidate. Apparently, the Culpepper archives show a marriage for Sarah to her cousin, with children, but then states that they have no record for this marriage and that they are not certain who her husband was which leaves a fair opening.

A Sarah Lee, not Sarah Lee Culpepper, was married to William Crittendon, a close and trusted friend of Thomas Presley. William Crittendon is mentioned in Presley's Will dated 6 March 1808, as one of his executors. Sarah Lee married to William Crittendon is mentioned in the will of her father, Robert Lee, as Sarah Crittendon. Sarah Lee Crittendon's mother was also Sarah Lee. Robert Lee died in 1766. Thomas Presley had

purchased goods from the Estate of Robert Culpepper, as cited in David Duncan's Brooks Family History, so it is obvious he knew this family. In his Last Will and Testament, Thomas shows four more children who seem to be separated from the earlier children, all girls; to wit: Rebecca Pool, Jean Presley, Mary Thomas, and Nancy Pool. The separation of the six older children and the four younger children could indicate a separation of family unit and two different wives. Family researchers have long thought that Thomas married an Elizabeth Culpepper that has yet to be proven. The investigation into this mystery is ongoing.

The children of Thomas Presley, Sr. and ? Culpepper are:

1. **Susannah Presley** b. ca. 1754. She married John "Blackhead" Helms b. 1756 in Anson County, North Carolina.</p>

2. Sarah Presley b. ca. 1756. She married George Helms, Jr., brother of John Helms.
3. Richard Presley b. 15 March 1760. He married Mary Helms, niece of John Helms and daughter of Tilman Helms, Jr.
4. Elizabeth Presley b. 1764 m. ? Helms
5. Thomas Presley, Jr. b. 25 February 1766 d. 10 April 1849 in Chester, South Carolina. He married (1) Jennea "Jane" Jenkins b. 9 Apr. 1769 in NC d. 12 Jun. 1844 in Chester, SC. (source of marriage: US and International Marriage Records 1560 -1900.) Thomas, Jr. continued the family trade of blacksmithing.

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6. Anna Presley b. ca. 1774. According to her father's will, she married a Helms.
7. **Mary Presley** b. 1779 in Anson County, NC and d. 1 Nov 1836 in Chester, SC. She married **David Thomas, Sr.**

The Children of Mary Presley and David Thomas, Sr. are: Richard Thomas; David Thomas, Jr.; Ananias Thomas; Presley Thomas; Sarah Thomas