

# The Life and Travels of Aaron Burleson

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## PART TWO

### Down the Great Wagon Road From Lunenburg County VA to North Carolina

Rocky River seems to be the original or temporarily home of all of the first Burleson Family in North Carolina at some time in history. Aaron of the Washington Co. NC Will, David of Rutherford Co. TN, Isaac of Montgomery Co NC, Moses of Mecklenburg Co. NC, James of Anson Co., another Aaron of Anson Co, the widow Burlison, and "where Burlison lives" of Montgomery Co, were all documented on Rocky River between 1763 to 1779. These Burleson's represent all of the Southern branch of the early Burleson Family except the John and Jonathan in Lunenburg Co, Aaron of Georgia and Isaac of Monroe Co. TN. We know nothing more of John and Jonathan of Lunenburg and Aaron of GA is documented but we do not know where he came from. Isaac of Monroe Co. TN b. 1769 was probably born on the Rocky because his unnamed Burlison father married Agnes Weatherford who was probably a sister to Mrs. David Burlison that lived on Clear Creek of Rocky River.

The reason we can not document these early Burlesons movements better is that Rocky River was in Anson Co. from 1748 till 1779. In 1865 Gen. Sherman destroyed many Anson Co. records and a Court house fire in 1868 destroyed the rest. Montgomery Co. was created in 1779 from Anson Co, a similar fire in 1839 burned all of Montgomery Co. Court records. There are no public records for the Rocky River settlers other then Land Entries and Grants that were kept by the state and a few Militia list, church records and private held records for the years 1748 thru 1868.

The Clark family moved south in 1751 to Anson Co. NC where we find Nathaniel and Ichabod Clark in the 1756

muster roll of the **Clear Creek Militia** with Captain Adam Alexander commanding. Henry Clark and Ryderus Clark were each granted 100 acres on Camp Creek 20 miles south of Clear Creek in the Waxhaws area. This militia district became part of Mecklenburg Co. NC at its creation in 1762. By February 1776 Captain Charles Polk was the commanding officer, with Private Isaac Burlison on the muster roll. Clear Creek is a tributary of the Rocky River.

The Burleson improvement on Burleson Fork of Turkey Creek is not listed on a deed until Feb. 1766; but it had to be established prior to that date. Burleson Fork is on the Great Wagon Road and the road only extended that far until after 1752. Abraham Kuykendall and wife Elizabeth (some researchers say she was Elizabeth Burleson from Virginia) settled on Fishing Creek that is next to Turkey Creek. Turkey Creek is a branch on the east side of the Broad River, the mouth is about ten miles south of the present North Carolina and South Carolina state line. It is very possible that Aaron Burleson or some of the other Burleson family to have settled on the Wagon Road at Rocky River or pushed on another fifty miles to Turkey Creek that was the limit of the road at that time. In 1759, the Cherokees went on the warpath and most of the settlers on the frontier retreated east of the Yadkin River. They returned to their homes in 1761 thru 1763 after the Cherokee were defeated. To me that is the most logical reason why Aaron shows up in Cumberland Co. from 1761 to 1763.

In 1759 and 1760 the Cherokee uprising kills dozens of families along the frontier in Anson and Rowan Counties. At that time they were North Carolina's most

western Counties. Survivors are forced to fort up or move east of the Yadkin River. The Militias were raised from Anson and Rowan Counties and for the protection of the frontier and a line of forts were built, Ft. Dobbs served Rowan County. In 1759 Daniel Boone removed his family from Rowan to Virginia then he returned to Ft. Dobbs where the fort withstood a attack from the Cherokees later that year. Colonel Martin Phifer built a fort on Buffalo Creek of the Rocky River, for Anson County. It's location would be in today's Cabarrus County NC. Most of the men of Anson and Rowan Counties served in the Cherokee campaign. They took the war to the Lower Towns Cherokees on the east side of the Blue Ridge and to the Middle Towns Cherokees in the mountains. The Militiamen of Anson and Rowan Counties were exposed for the first time to the rich lands and new hunting grounds in the Blue Ridge mountains of the Cherokee Nation.

In 1761 Aaron Burlison purchased a tract of land on Dunham Creek and a tract on Richland Creek, close to the Abel Lee family, in Cumberland Co. NC 40 miles east of the Yadkin River. In my opinion Aaron probably moved his family out of danger and then joined in the Cherokee Campaign. Making an Entry would have been the most common and cheapest way by far, to obtain property but he would have had to be present to clear the new ground. Purchasing land from someone already living there would have been quicker and the land would be immediately ready for cultivation. By

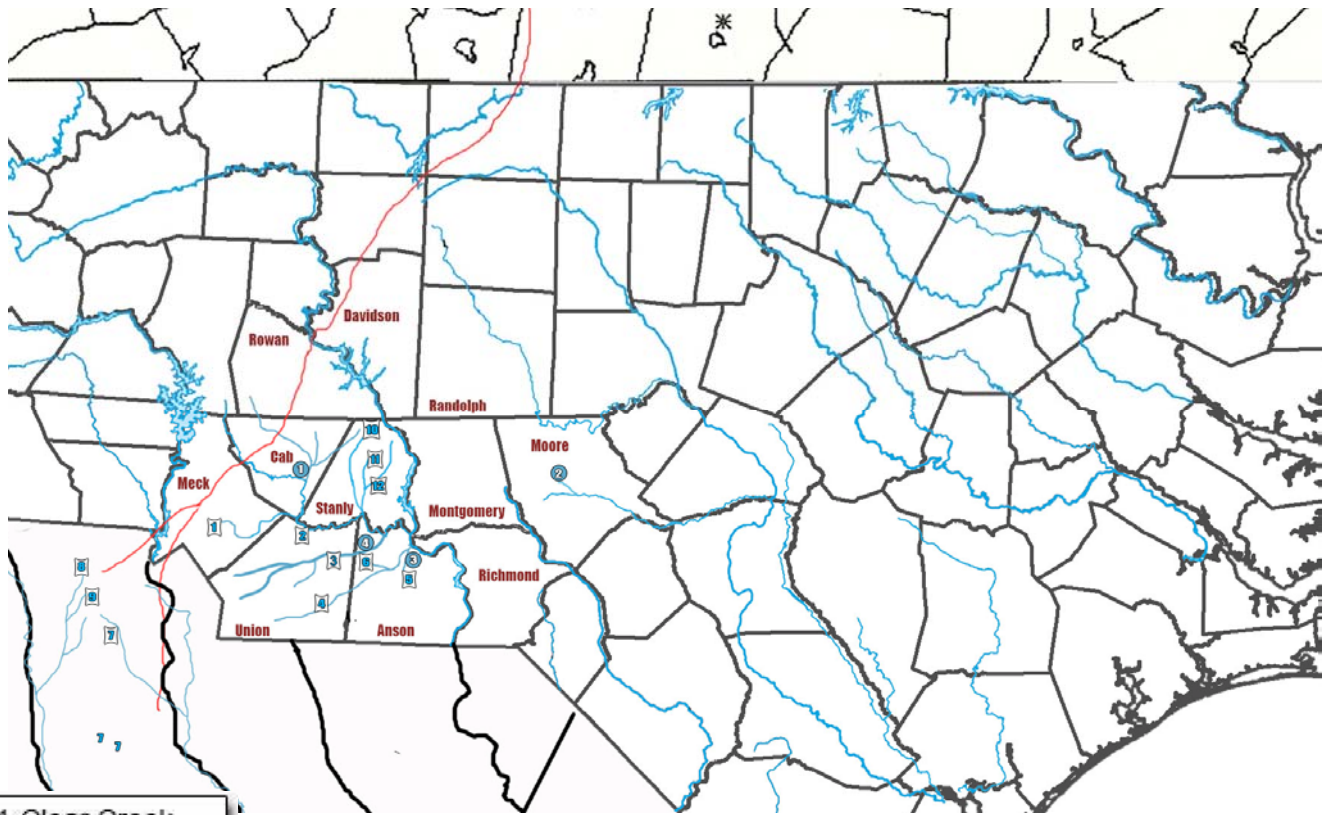
purchasing the land, he could use it for the benefit of his family and could have resold it to recover his purchasing price which he did in 1763, then he moved west again. Aaron's land in Cumberland County was in the Sand Hills section of NC that is flat, all sand, scrub oaks, short leaf pines and swamps. This area is a completely foreign and a different surrounding than Lunenburg or any of the lands along the Great Wagon Road that is rolling hills, red clay soil, tall hardwoods and clear streams.

Cumberland Co. was settled in the 1730's and 40's by people moving inland from the coastal area of NC. I can understand why Aaron would move there temporally for the safety of his young family, but no settler seeking free land would move 200 miles south down the Great Wagon Road and then travel 50 miles east to the Sandhills where 95 percent of the land was already taken.

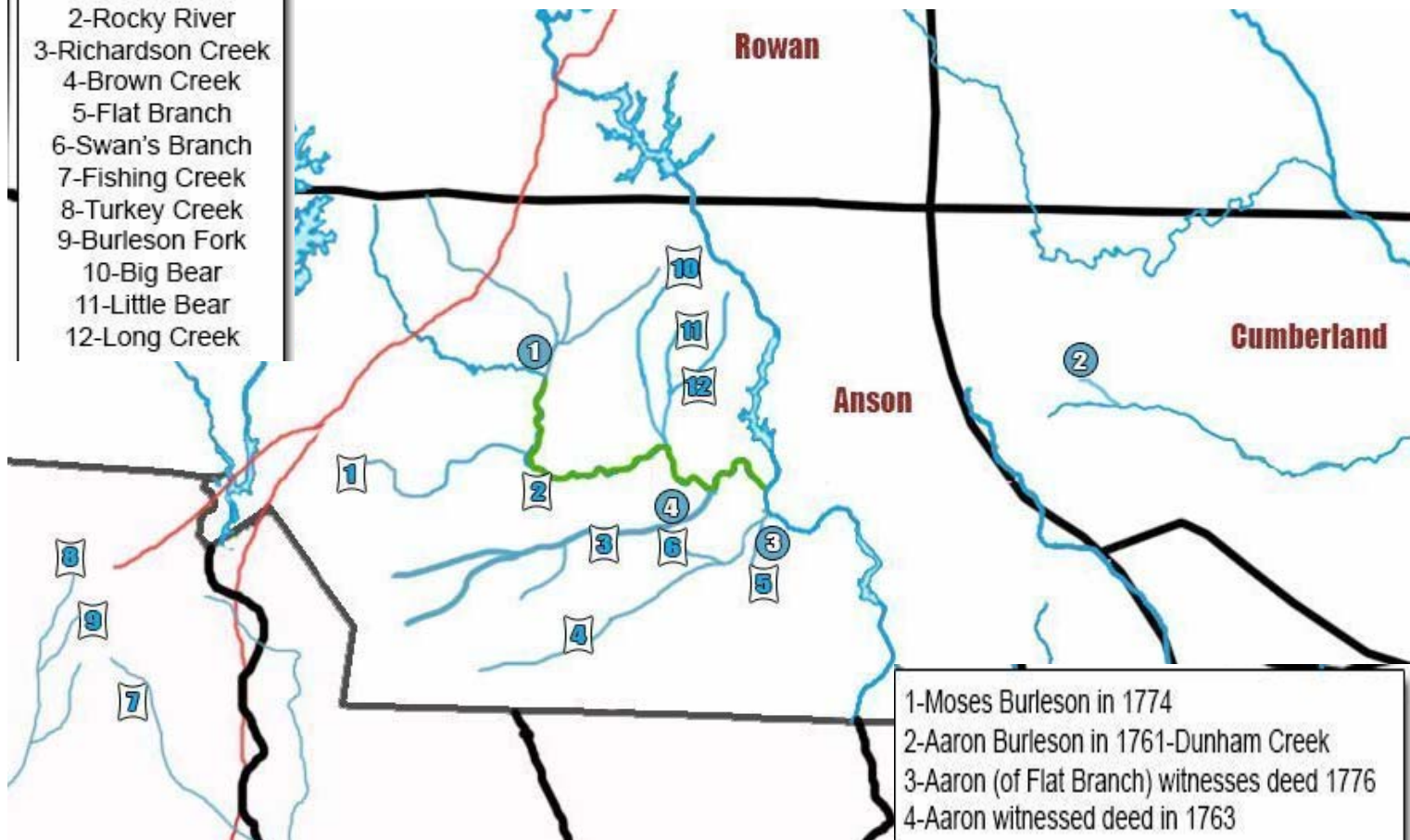
Aaron Burlison sold his Cumberland Co property by 1763. On Jan 24 1763 we have a record of Aaron Burlison witnessing a deed from John Brooks to John Culpepper on the south side of Rocky River on Richardson Creek, Anson Co. NC. Aaron must to have been known well enough to the people of Anson Co. to accept his name on the document. Later from 1772 to 1779 David Burlison, Jesse Burlison, James Burlison and another Aaron Burlison will appear on Richardson Creek. Moses Burlison, the widow Burlison, "Where Burlison lives" and Isaac Burlison would appear upstream on Rocky River.

Down the Great Wagon Road from Lunenburg County Virginia

Great Wagon Road



- 1-Clear Creek
- 2-Rocky River
- 3-Richardson Creek
- 4-Brown Creek
- 5-Flat Branch
- 6-Swan's Branch
- 7-Fishing Creek
- 8-Turkey Creek
- 9-Burleson Fork
- 10-Big Bear
- 11-Little Bear
- 12-Long Creek



- 1-Moses Burleson in 1774
- 2-Aaron Burleson in 1761-Dunham Creek
- 3-Aaron (of Flat Branch) witnesses deed 1776
- 4-Aaron witnessed deed in 1763