



Copyright © 2025 Flagon & Trencher.

Provided for research purposes.

All rights reserved.

Proper citation for this document  
is as follows:

*Flagon & Trencher: Taverner and Innkeeper  
Biographies (2025), at  
[www.FlagonAndTrencher.org](http://www.FlagonAndTrencher.org), all rights reserved.*

Ordinary keeper, Chatham Court House, N.C., 1774-1781

Major Mial Scurlock, son of Thomas, was born in Virginia, probably in North Farnham Parish, Richmond County, where his father died in 1767. He may have been married in Virginia before he moved to North Carolina. He died in Chatham in June of 1781. His wife, perhaps a second wife, was possibly Sarah Howard. She died in Chatham County in April of 1801.

The act establishing Chatham County and St. Bartholomew Parish from the southern part of Orange County was ratified by the Colonial Assembly in January of 1771. The new seat of government was located on Mial Scurlock's farm, and was called Chatham Court House. It continued as the county seat until 1787 when the town of Pittsborough was founded for that purpose.

At the County Court of Pleas and Quarter Session, 12 May 1774 an ordinary license was granted to Mial Scurlock. Likely, he kept an ordinary from the first court days in 1771 as his was the only dwelling in the vicinity of Chatham Court House. The records prior to May of 1774 are missing.

In the court term of November 1774 Scurlock was granted permission to build a public water grist mill on Roberson Creek on his land near the court house. At the same court session he and Richard Kennon were appointed to lay off the prison bounds for the county. The old jail was located about 75 yards southwest of Scurlock's house.

Mial Scurlock served on the Committee of Safety in Hillsborough Military District and on 9 September 1775 he was appointed first major in the Chatham County Militia, which had two companies. His other public offices were: member of the Provincial Congress at Halifax in November of 1776, representative to the General

Assembly from Chatham County in 1777 and 1780, county clerk of court from 1776 to 1780 and justice of peace in 1775 and 1776.

A story printed in a history of Chatham County states that Lord Cornwallis, soon after the Battle of Guilford Court House, 15 March 1781, marched to Chatham Court House and made his headquarters at Maj. Mial Scurlock's house. The tradition is that Cornwallis treated Mrs. Scurlock and her children with great consideration, though she was an outspoken patriot, the mother of a soldier in the Continental Army and the widow of an officer of the State Militia. She could not have been a widow in March 1781 as Mial Scurlock did not write his will until 28 May 1781, more than two months after Cornwallis' stay in Chatham County.

In equity proceedings in Superior Court of Chatham County, 1808, is a list of the real and personal estate of Mial Scurlock. At his death he owned nearly 1,000 acres of land; a mill on Roberson Creek, one-half interest in a mill and land on Haw River, horses, cattle, hogs, a riding chair, plantation tools, two mill picks, a set of surveying instruments, books and other goods. His wife, Sarah, one of the executors, managed the plantation and the ordinary after Maj. Mial Scurlock's death. She survived him by 20 years.

- Mary Brewer Gamble  
78-56

#### REFERENCES

- Richmond County, Va. Will Book 6, pages 109-111  
Abstracts of Court Minutes - Pleas and Quarter Sessions of Chatham County, N.C. in North Carolina Genealogical Society Journal III:1:56, 2:128, 131, 3:187; IV:1:51, 2:92  
Chatham County, N.C. 1771-1971, Wade Hampton, Doris Goerch  
Horton, Nell Craig Strowd, eds. 2nd ed. 1976, Pages 7, 9, 16, 22, 23, 436, 440  
Equity Proceedings of Superior Court of Chatham Co., N.C., 1808  
Colonial Records of North Carolina, Wm. L. Sanders, ed.  
Raleigh 1886-1890. X:204 ff.  
Chatham County, N.C. Deeds and Wills, Book B, p. 403