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**REPORT TO:** Dr. Robert Harper; 303 Arkansas Street, Ruston, LA 71270

**REPORT NO:** 10

**SUBJECT:** Solomon Harper of Gooch's American Regiment, ca.1742

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### **BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY**

As part of our ongoing work to establish the lineage of Solomon Harper (d. 1801, Colleton District, South Carolina), Client wishes to investigate a man of the name who served in Capt. Coltrain's Company of Gooch's Regiment in 1741. As with the Cobrin militia list studied in the previous project, the Gooch document provides no direct genealogical, and limited historical, information. The starting point, therefore, is to understand the history of the regiment. Uncovering the circumstances that prompted Solomon to join will provide clues to his identity and origin. The next step will be to pursue his captain and his comrades to place as many of them as possible into a specific community at a specific time. Once those tasks are complete, work can proceed on other Harpers nearby to place Solomon among them and to determine if he belongs in Client's lineage.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Among other findings, this report:

- Outlines the history of Gooch's Regiment and its impact on Solomon.
- Fully identifies Solomon's captain, David Coltrain and puts him into specific communities—essential accomplishments for evaluating Solomon's identity.
- Puts Coltrain in the same part of old Edgecombe County as Barachias Harper, possible kinsman of Solomon of Colleton.

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

The following document identifies Solomon Harper as part of a Captain Coltrain's company of Gooch's American Regiment. The muster list is not in standard form and members of companies are spread across the list; deaths and discharges are noted.

FIGURE 1

Solomon Harper, Coltrain's Soldiers, Aboard the *Norfolk*, 1741<sup>1</sup>

GOOCH'S AMERICAN REGIMENT, 1739-1741			
His Majesty's Ship Norfolk Muster Book: (Cont'd)			
A List of Soldiers belonging to the American Regiment borne by order of Sir Chaloner Ogle, dated 14 March 1740 through October 1741			
Nr	Rank	Name	Remarks
35	Soldier	Carey, Hen:y	D, 22 May 1741
36	"	Dayless, Sim:n	D, 6 Apr 1741
37	"	Crooker, Job	" " " "
38	"	Jonas, John	D, 19 Mar 1740
39	"	Cumberford, James	D, 22 May 1741
[Captain Bishop]			
40	Ensign	Marshall, W:m	D, 18 Jun 1741, Pr of Orange
[Captain Clark]			
41	Corporal	Page, Nath:l	R, 13 Jun 1741, Port Royal Harb.
42	Soldier	Cox, W:m	D, 22 May 1741
43	"	Campbell, Alex:r	DD, 13 May 1741, at sea
44	"	Troy, Dan:l	D, 22 May 1741
45	"	Floyd, Jos:h	D, 6 Apr 1741
46	"	Burn, Pat:k	D, 22 May 1741
[Captain Gordon]			
47	Soldier	Kenny, And:w	D, 18 Jun 1741, Pr of Orange
48	"	McCormack, Hugh	DD, 3 May 1741, Carthagena
[Captain Coltrain]			
49	Serjeant	Pearcy, Pet:r	D, 16 Jun 1741, Dunkirk
50	Soldier	Kennedy, Mich:l	DD, 6 May 1741, Carthagena Harb.
51	"	Crouson, Rob:t	D, 22 May 1741
52	"	Harper, Solom:	" " " "
53	"	Moor, James	" " " "
54	"	Watson, Tho:s	" " " "
55	"	Jackson, Edw:d	D, 6 Apr 1741
56	Corporal	Foy, Tho:s	D, 22 May 1741
57	Soldier	FitzPatrick, Ja:s	D, 6 Apr 1741
58	"	Marman, W:m	" " " "
59	"	Norton, W:m	D, 16 Jun 1741, Dunkirk
60	"	McDonough, And:w	" " " "
61	"	Matthews, Jn:o	D, 22 May 1741
62	"	Armstrong, Jn:o	DD, 25 Apr 1741, Carthagena Harb.
63	Drummer	Hall, Jn:o	D, 16 Jun 1741, Dunkirk
64	Soldier	Paul, Matt:w	D, 6 Apr 1741
65	"	Weaver, Cha:s	D, 16 Jun 1741, Dunkirk
66	"	McNeal, Geo:	" " " "
67	Serjeant	Rice, Dav:d	D, 18 Jun 1741, Pr of Orange
68	"	Winslow, James	" " " "
69	"	Coffin, Jn:o	D, 22 May 1741
70	Soldier	Taylor, Geo:	D, 6 Apr 1741
71	"	Kelley, W:m	DD, 11 May 1741, at sea
72	Drummer	Dunning, Jn:o	D, 22 May 1741
73	Soldier	Curtis, Jn:o	D, 6 Apr 1741

Some of Coltrain's men appear separately on the previous page, as per Figure 2.

<sup>1</sup> Murtie June Clark, *Colonial Soldiers of the South, 1732-1774* (Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1983), 181.

**FIGURE 2****Separate Listing of Capt. Coltrain's Company<sup>2</sup>**

His Majesty's Ship Norfolk Muster Book:  
A List of Soldiers belonging to the American Regiment borne by  
order of Sir Chaloner Ogle, dated 14 March 1740 through October  
1741  
[Captain Coltrane's Company]

Nr	Rank	Name	Remarks
1	Ensign	Jenkins, Mart:n	D, 16 Jun 1742, Dunkirk
2	Corporal	Bolt, Hen:y	DD, 1 May 1741, Carthagen
3	Drummer	Gallaher, Neal	D, 22 May 1741
4	Soldier	Connelly, Matt:w	" " " "
5	"	Duke, W:m	D, 6 Apr 1741
6	"	Jordan, Jn:o	" " " "

These lists provide three facts as a springboard for research:

- Solomon Harper was a part of "Gooch's American Regiment" aboard a royal navy ship, the *Norfolk*, in the Caribbean (based on references to "Carthagen" and Port Royal).
- His captain was surnamed Coltrain, no first name given.
- He was discharged 22 May 1741.

Let us first consider the context of the expedition in which Solomon participated.

### *Gooch's Regiment and the Cartagena Expedition*

American history has largely forgotten the tragedy surrounding Gooch's Regiment. Solomon Harper and some 3,600 other North American colonists of the "Cartagena Expedition" (1740–42) endured one of the most disastrous military campaigns in British naval history—an exotic campaign that wrought death and pain upon thousands of American families.

The eighteenth-century trade in precious metals, sugar, and slaves ensnared most of South America as European powers battled for control over her wealth and her people. Spain and England, ancient enemies, were the most bitter of the rivals. North America became embroiled when Britain escalated the largely privateering approach into formal war. In April 1731, a Capt. Juan Francisco had intercepted the British brig *Rebecca* and cut off the ear of its captain. This incident was later used to foster enough outrage among the British government to support a formal declaration of war in October 1739. The "War of Jenkins Ear" was underway. The American colonists who responded to Britain's call for help in attacking Spanish holdings in South America formed Gooch's Regiment—America's "First Marines."

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 180.

In March 1740, Virginia governor Alexander Spotswood was commissioned to raise 3000 men for the campaign. He immediately raised 400 Virginians and sent them at Williamsburg for training. He then died, and William Gooch replaced him as head of the newly designated 43<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of Foot. He raised four battalions from across the colonies – with the exception of New Hampshire, Georgia, and South Carolina. Evidence (to be developed in this paper) shows Solomon Harper belonged to one of the North Carolina companies that sailed from Wilmington in November 1740 to rendezvous with other colonial troops and British regulars in Jamaica.<sup>3</sup> They would not return for two years, and the survivors were few. Poorly planned and executed, the campaign ended in disaster. Historians have described the expedition as a “shamefully mismanaged” fiasco with brave troops suffering the incompetence of their officers, the abuse of the royal military, and the ravages of the climate.<sup>4</sup> Numbers tell the story.

In January 1741, Gooch’s men were on board ships in the harbor of Kingston, Jamaica. Two months later, they were firing cannons at the mighty Cartagena de Indies (on the coast of modern Colombia)—one of the most formidable Spanish fortresses in the Caribbean. After a two-month siege, the out-manned and out-gunned British retreated. On their return to Jamaica, they attempted an attack on Cuba in August. It also failed, and the depleted British fleet limped back to Jamaica in early December. The navy regrouped early the next year for assaults against Cuba and Panama, during which hundreds more Americans died.<sup>5</sup> By March 1742, too ravaged and weak to carry on, Gooch’s Regiment was disbanded.

Roughly 85% of Gooch’s men died during the two-year campaign.<sup>6</sup> The final muster of the survivors preparing to return home, dated 24 October 1742, reported only 17 officers and 398 enlisted men still in service. It was not just the military defeats that decimated them. Tropical disease did most of the killing. At a war council held in April 1741 during the Cartagena siege, it was reported that

“the troops were by sickness and loss reduced to three thousand five hundred and sixty nine men; and many of these feeble and worn out with fatigue, as scarcely to be fit for the ordinary duty. In the number above is included one thousand and one hundred and forty American soldiers.”<sup>7</sup>

Lawrence Washington, the future president’s brother, commanded one of the Virginia

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<sup>3</sup> See R. D. W Connor, *History of North Carolina*, vol. 1 (Chicago: the Lewis Publishing Co, 1919), 262. The British fleet that left England in October 1740 was composed 120 vessels carrying 15,000 sailors and 12,000 land troops.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>5</sup> For a comprehensive study on Gooch’s Regiment and the Cartagena Campaign, see Lee G. Offen, *America’s First Marines: Gooch’s American Regiment, 1740-1742* (N.P.: History Reconsidered, 2011).

<sup>6</sup> Offen, *America’s First Marines*, 60. These numbers vary slightly. See also René Chartrand, *Colonial American Troops, 1610-1774* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2002), 19.

<sup>7</sup> Offen, *America’s First Marines*, 33-34; citing Robertson, *Naval and Military Memoirs of Great Britain from 1727 to 1783*.

companies. He reported on the situation after the failed assault:

“The enemy killed of ours about six hundred and some wounded and the Climate killed us in greater numbers vast changes we have in each Regiment some as so Weak as to be reduced to a third of their men.”<sup>8</sup>

Gooch’s regimental return of his four battalions later that month, still in Cartagena Harbor, counted 163 men who had stayed behind sick in Jamaica. Of the men on the expedition, 444 were sick on board and 105 had been killed. Of these, the Second Battalion to which Solomon’s company belonged suffered 98 sick, 23 dead, and 17 wounded.<sup>9</sup>

The *Boston Weekly Newsletter* reported two months later, in June 1741:

“General Wentworth, with his land forces, have left off the siege of Carthagena, on account of great sickness and mortality among their men, and are arrived at Jamaica. While they lay in their trenches before Carthagena, it rained ten days together, during which time there died (it’s said) Above one thousand of their men. . . . The officers and soldiers from North America behaved themselves with much bravery, but many of them are dead.”<sup>10</sup>

Governor Gooch had been wounded during the siege on Cartagena and left for home in May 1741.<sup>11</sup> His departure worsened the situation of his men. But, had he not left, Solomon Harper likely would have vanished into the shadows of history.

The British Navy lost some 6000 men during the two-month expedition against Cartagena. To replenish their ranks, they began impressing American soldiers – taking them against their will from their companies and putting them on royal warships to serve as sailors. Hundreds of Americans fell prey to this practice after Gooch left, despite the strong and repeated objections of the remaining colonial officers. Solomon’s presence on the *Norfolk* in October 1741 shows he was among the impressed Americans. Capt. Lawrence Washington had tried vainly for months to get them back before successfully doing so that fall:

9 October 1741  
Cumberland Harbor  
Vice Admiral Vernon to Major General Wentworth: “Capt. Washington, who was here from Col. Cope, to have an account of the particular disposal of Americans on board our ships had from me a particular account of them, as he desired. . .”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Stephen Saunders Webb, *Marlborough’s America* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2013), 397.

<sup>9</sup> Offen, *America’s First Marines*, 34.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 36. Gooch continued to serve as acting governor (official title Lieutenant Governor) until 1749. He was made a Baronet in 1746. See William Betham, *The Baronetage of England: Or The History of the English Baronets and the Baronets of Scotland*, Volume 3 (London, 1803), 238.

<sup>12</sup> “Vice Admiral Vernon on the HMS Boyne in Cumberland Harbor to Major General Wentworth,” as quoted in Offen, *America’s First Marines*, 43.



This “account” is the above list (Figures 1 and 2) on which Solomon appears. Had he not been impressed, his participation in the Cartagena Expedition – and perhaps his very presence in North Carolina – would have been lost to history. The British government did not keep regular regimental returns before 1760, so no muster of the Americans was ever created. The only known accounting of them is the one resulting from Washington’s persistence in identifying them and getting them back.

As noted in Figure 1, the list includes dates and locations, accompanied by a “D” or “DD” notation – signifying death or discharge, respectively. The discharges do not indicate that the men were free to return home. After Capt. Washington’s complaints, Admiral Vernon was commanded to

"order the soldiers above mentioned, and all others of the American Regiment, that may have been impressed on board any of His Majesty’s ships, to be immediately **discharged and sent back to their Regiment.**"<sup>13</sup>

Therefore, we know that Solomon had been serving on the warship *Norfolk* and had been discharged on 22 May 1741 to rejoin his original campaign. What happened to him after that point is unclear. If he survived, he faced several options. The last regimental return, dated 17 October 1742, reported:

- 314 men discharged in September as aged or infirm
- troops “now bound for North America”
- troops still impressed on board warships under Vernon’s command
- 203 Americans in the Roatan Garrison<sup>14</sup>

Consider the evidence to be drawn from each piece of information:

- 314 men discharged in September as aged or infirm. . .  
Nothing further was found about these men. It is also unclear whether “discharge” meant an immediate return home.
- He was among the troops “now bound for North America”  
In late September 1742, Major General Wentworth and the Vice Admiral received orders to return to England, taking most of their foot and marine regiments with them. As part of the withdrawal, Wentworth reported on 15 October:

“The Regiment commanded by Co. Gooch, should be immediately reduced, and that I should send back to North America all such soldiers of the Regiment, as do not choose to remain here in the plantations, or to serve in companies on board the fleet; I have taken the best measures in my

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<sup>13</sup> Offen, *America’s First Marines*, 43 and 45; cites Leach “Roots of Conflict,” 58. Emphasis added.

<sup>14</sup> Webb, *Marlborough’s America*, 403.

power for executing the above orders, and accordingly have dispatched transports to the ports, from whence the soldiers may be most conveniently dispersed to their respective habitations.”<sup>15</sup>

According to the above report, Wentworth had only “dispatched transports” to the ports from which the soldiers would be leaving, but he did not say any had already left. Likely, these specific troops were those who had been discharged and intended to leave (i. e., “bound for”) for home. Actual transports began within a few days.

A possibility for the referenced homeward-bound Americans does not involve a direct voyage home. In September 1742, sixty-four men from Gooch's 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion were dispatched to Charles Town, South Carolina, as part of a 500-man expedition to help defend that city during the “Spanish Alarm.”<sup>16</sup> They stayed a month and saw no action. They could therefore be the troops bound for North America if they had not returned to Jamaica in time for the 17 October return.

- He was among the troops still impressed on board . . .

Capt. Lawrence Washington's retrieval of the impressed troops the previous year did not end the practice. Admiral Vernon continued to pilfer the American ranks as needed. Unfortunately, there are no lists of the Americans still serving on the warships when the regiment was disbanded. It may be assumed that they were returned to their companies and sailed for home if they chose not to stay in the royal navy.

- He was among the “203 Americans in the Roatan Garrison” . . .

Admiral Vernon had been advocating a multi-prong strategy during the War of Jenkins Ear, of which the Cartagena Expedition was part. One of his ideas was the establishment of a fortress and town on modern Roatan Island in Honduras Bay. He was supported by the royal governor of Jamaica, Edward Trelawny. Both men believed the Americans still serving on the island could be induced to volunteer for the endeavor if promised “a suitable property to every officer and soldier, who should continue in the pay and subsistence of the Crown, till they could effectually settle themselves in the lands hereafter to be made over to them [on Roatan].”<sup>17</sup>

As indicated, about 200 American were so induced, and, along with 50 British marines and support and two engineers, set sail for the island in August 1742. Reportedly, their construction of two forts and a town progressed smoothly until a group of “Papist” (Catholics) among them rose up on Christmas Day, attacking

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<sup>15</sup> Wentworth of Gov. Ward of Rhode Island, 15 October 1742, as quoted in Offen, *America's First Marines*, 55.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 53-4. Chartrand, *Colonial American Troops*, 20.

<sup>17</sup> Robert Beatson, *Naval and Military Memoirs of Great Britain, from 1727 to 1783*, vol. 1 (London: Adament Media Corporation, 2001), 144. Chartrand, *Colonial American Troops*, 20; cites PRO/CO 5/42 and F. L. Petre, “The Royal Berkshire Regiment,” vol. 1 (Reading, England.: The Barracks, 1925). Trelawny was governor of Jamaica from 1739 to 1752.

one of the forts. They were quickly beaten back, and the survivors punished, after which “the settlement went on with all imaginable success.”<sup>18</sup> The American soldiers were folded into Trelawyne’s 63<sup>rd</sup> Regiment (later the 49<sup>th</sup>) and remained on the island until it was captured by the Spanish in 1782.<sup>19</sup> Ergo, if Solomon was among these settlers, he likely never returned to his home.

Very few details remain to document the return of the survivors at the end of 1742. No official colonial documents were created for the event, and few southern colonial newspapers have survived (not all extant ones have been consulted). However, northern papers like the *Pennsylvanis Gazette* noted their return:

4 January 1743

By Capt. Howland, from Jamaica, we are informed that General Wentworth had received Orders from his Majesty to return to Great Britain . . . and to reduce the Americans Regiment under Col. Gooch, which he has accordingly done, and sent away all such as refused to take their Discharges at Jamaica (Except a Detachment remaining at Ratan) in four companies, viz. one to New York, two to Virginia, and one to North Carolina. Each Man is paid to the 24<sup>th</sup> of October last, and allowed to keep his Firelock, and the Clothing he was possessed of at the Time of his Reduction.<sup>20</sup>

Historians are uncertain how many transports back to America were made, but general references to the return of Gooch’s men appear in published material over several months. A Scottish newspaper identified one ship that made it back to North Carolina:

May 2, 1743

*Caledonian Mercury* (Edinburgh)

By a Letter from North Carolina we hear, that the Mary Transport is arrived at Wil[m]ington in that Colony from Jamaica, with only 25 Men, reduced from 100; which Letter farther adds, that a large Fort was building on the Island Ratan, in order to secure the American Trade to the Musqueto Shore and the Bay of Honduras, and that 300 Men were inlisted to garrison the same.<sup>21</sup>

It is impossible at this point to speculate on which of these fates Solomon likely met. It had been a deadly campaign, and the odds were stacked against him. Two centuries later, historian Walter Clark paid tribute to their forgotten sacrifice and service:

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<sup>18</sup> Beatson, *Naval and Military Memoirs*, 145.

<sup>19</sup> Trelawyne served as governor from 1739 until 1752. His regiment reached only about 500 men. Nicolas Tindal, *The Continuation of Mr. Rapin’s History of England, From the Revolution to the Present Times*, vol. 11 (London: Nabu Press, 2011), 585.

<sup>20</sup> Transcribed in “King George’s War (1739–1748,” *North Carolina Office of Archives and History* (<https://www.ncpublications.com/colonial/Newspapers/subjects/KGW.htm>).

<sup>21</sup> Transcribed in “The Colonial Records Project,” *North Carolina Office of History and Archives* (<https://www.ncpublications.com/colonial/Newspapers/subjects/KGW.htm#1743>).



“ . . . North Carolina came to the front. She responded to the King's call for aid, with men and means to the full of her ability. Her soldiers served, as they have always done since, faithfully, aye, brilliantly. Beneath the tropical sun, in the sea fight, at the carrying of the passage of Boca Chica, in the deadly assault upon San Lazaro, amid the more deadly pestilence that walketh by noonday, North Carolinians knew how to do their duty and to die. The merest handful returned home. But their State has preserved no memento of their deeds. The historian has barely mentioned them. Possibly the names of three of our soldiers have been preserved. The recollection of so much heroism should not be allowed to die.”<sup>22</sup>

Against this background, research focused upon identifying the probable residence of the North Carolina Solomon. The most productive way to do this is to identify his captain and *his* place of residence.

### *Captain Coltrain*

The 1742 impressment list (see Figs. 1 & 2) does not fully identify Solomon's captain. However, another document in the same publication does:

List of the Officers of Colonel Gooch's late regiment of Americans, with their particular pretensions and the station each served in before he belonged to the said regiment. . . . [includes] **Captain David Coltrain**: “still abroad in North America.”<sup>23</sup>

Identifying Coltrain is central to pursuing Solomon Harper. Captains were responsible for finding recruits to fill their companies. They began by canvassing their own neighborhoods and counties, and then moved into surrounding areas if necessary.<sup>24</sup> Understanding Coltrain and locating his neighborhood, therefore, is the key to locating Solomon when he enlisted.

Several resources identify Coltrain's company as one of four companies were raised in North Carolina: three from the Albemarle region in the northeast and one from around Cape Fear in the south. The other Carolina captains were Robert Halton, James Innes, and Jonathan Pratt.<sup>25</sup> Halton plays a central role in this project because he is linked to Capt. Coltrain in North Carolina records and thereby helps to locate Coltrain in that colony.

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<sup>22</sup> Walter Cark, “North Carolina's Troops in South America: The Lost Battalion,” *The North Carolina Booklet* 5 (June 1904), 17.

<sup>23</sup> Clark, *Colonial Soldiers of the South*, 249.

<sup>24</sup> Clark, in *Colonial Soldiers of the South*, p. 14, writes “The companies were raised chiefly by the interest and at the charge of their respective captains; of whom some were members of the Assembly in the province where they resided; other lived upon their own plantations and had commands in the militia: and some few had been concerned in traffic.”

<sup>25</sup> Offen, *America's First Marines*, 8 & 62. Conner, *History of North Carolina*, 1: 262. A fifth officer, James Stafford, was put under the 3<sup>rd</sup> Pennsylvania battalion. He apparently was not one of the four commissioned North Carolina officers. Rather, he raised forty men on his own account and transported them himself to Cartagena, where he was given “the first vacant company,” which was under the 3<sup>rd</sup> Pennsylvania Battalion. See Clark, *Colonial Soldiers of the South*, 172 and 251.

Considerable confusion and contradiction exist among researchers about David Coltrain. Descendants believe he was born in Scotland to minor nobility in 1711, orphaned as a child, and came to North Carolina with two older brothers in the mid-to-late-1730s. They disagree after this point, misinterpreting much of the historical record and forcing scanty evidence into unfounded conclusions and assertions. As his death has not been adequately documented, numerous dates exist. Some say he died during the expedition, some assert that he died after the war while returning to Scotland, and still others claim he died before the expedition began.<sup>26</sup>

The name David Coltrain/Coltrane appears simultaneously in two North Carolina counties—Chowan and Edgecombe—in the 1730s and 1740s. The records are confusing and often contradictory. However, careful assessment of all data from both counties, coupled with information gathered on his associates, shows the “two men” were one and the same. Because the process through which this conclusion was made is complicated, I will walk through it in detail.

The first piece of evidence linking Captain David Coltrain to North Carolina comes through his association with Capt. Robert Halton, which was briefly mentioned by an early twentieth-century writer: “The name of one officer in this American Regiment has come down, is that of Captain **Robert Halton**, who appointed James Craven, of **Edenton (Chowan County)**, North Carolina, as the administrator of his estate.”<sup>27</sup>

Published abstracts of colonial North Carolina wills provide additional context:

30 March 1743

Chowan County

Will of William Smith. Legatees: **Robert Halton**, Benjamin Hill, **David Coletrane**, James Craven, Joseph Anderson, Joseph Harren, Dr. William Cathcart, Dr. Abraham Blackhall, Thomas Jones, Gabriel Johnston, and James Trotter. Executors: Gabriel Johnston and Robert Halton.<sup>28</sup>

21 April 1743

Chowan County

Will of William Smith of **Edenton**. Mentions Peter Payne, Col. McRora Scarborough, **Robert Halton**, and **David Coltrane**.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Delbert W. Argyle, “The Coltrane Lineage,” *Ancestry Message Boards* (<http://boards.ancestry.com/localities.northam.usa.states.northcarolina.counties.randolph/1420/mb.ashx>). Jason Knowles, “David Coletrane,” *My Knowles Family History* (<https://www.jasonknowles.org>). Catherine Ellingson, “Descendants of Patrick Coltrain,” *Catherine Taylor Ellingson Page* (<http://www.genealogy.com/users/e/1/1/Catherine-T-Ellingson/GENE4-0004.html>).

<sup>27</sup> E. Alfred Jones, “The American Regiment in the Cartagena Expedition,” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 30 (Jan. 1922), 18–19. Halton died in Edenton even though he was still a resident of New Hanover.

<sup>28</sup> J. Bryan Grimes, *Abstracts of North Carolina Wills, Compiled from Original and Recorded Wills in the Office of the Secretary of State* (Raleigh, North Carolina: E. M. Uzzell, 1910), 348.

<sup>29</sup> *The North Carolina Genealogical and Historical Register*, 1 (July 1900): 382.

The Cartagena Expedition was over by the spring of 1743. Clearly, both captains Robert Halton and David Coltrain survived to return home. Coltrain was reportedly in Chowan before the expedition, as descendants repeatedly claim he married there, about 1738 or 1739, to a Mary Trotter, daughter of Edenton tavern keeper James Trotter — referenced above as a Halton–Coltrain associate in 1740.<sup>30</sup> North Carolina marriage records have not survived for that period, so documenting their union is not possible via that resource. However, two other Chowan records support the marriage claim and seem to provide a time frame for David's death:

4 May 1742

Chowan County

"We the under written being chosen on part of Mr. Theophilus Pugh, plaintiff, and Ms. Mary Coaltrain attorney of Capt. David, administrator of the goods and chattels of Mr. James Milliken, dec'd, to value what was delivered to us by the sheriff[;] we have valued nine negroes, two horses, and one cow as follows . . . a man named Jack at £250; a man Dick at the home at £240; a woman named Floran at £200; one Negro woman named Bentus [?] and two children at £400; negro girls Poll and Hannah at £480; two horses at 45." Signed Thos. Blount, John Poug [?], and \_\_\_\_.<sup>31</sup>

January 1747

Chowan County

"On the petition of *James Trotter* praying to be appointed Guardian to William Coltraine orphan of **David Coltraine, decd.** Granted. The court orders that he give security in the sum of two hundred pounds proclamation money, with Joseph Blount and Jas. Wallace his sureties."<sup>32</sup>

The first record is the only known one that identifies David of Chowan as a captain. It, together with the second abstract, supports claims that he was married to the daughter of James Trotter. Further, the second document is the only known one referencing his death. Consequently, researchers routinely use it to date his demise. However, the document — whose details we know only from the published abstract — may not be all that it appears to be.

The abstract of 4 May 1742 links David and Mary to the estate of James Milikin. As the following discussion shows, Milikin was not from Chowan County. He lived and died in Edgecombe — where David Coltrain earlier served as his administrator:

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<sup>30</sup> See, for example, "David Coltrane," *The Syiek Family Tree* (<http://worldconnect.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=syroots&id=I2035>).

<sup>31</sup> James Millikin's estate file is digitized in "North Carolina, U. S., Wills and Probate Records, 1665–1998," *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/9061>) > Not Stated > Colonial Estate Papers, Linsay, Robert-Sanderson, Richard, 1699–1759 > images 454–525.

<sup>32</sup> Margaret Edwards, "James Trotter," *RootsWeb* (<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~trotter/jastrotnorthcarolina.htm>).

No date [1737 or 1738]

Edgecombe County

Inventory of goods and chattels of the estate of Col. James Milikin that has not been administered by Rev. John Boyd, dec'd, administrator, "that are come to the hands or possession" of David Coltrane, administrator. His extensive estate included "the plantation whereon David Coltrain lives with five Negroes, a flat Canoe, one Syder mill & grindstone for 230 bills." Other plantations are listed, on which were living Nicholas Joyner, William Williams, George Robinson, and an unnamed Smith. "Notes of Hand agreements Bonds" includes a note of James Trotter for 135 bushels of salt."<sup>33</sup>

Not only did Coltrain assume the duties of administrator after the death of John Boyd (the first administrator), but he lived on a Milikin plantation.

James Milikin was an Edgecombe County justice of the peace, Indian trader, and merchant, who had settled during the 1720s along the Morratock (later Roanoke) River that separated Edgecombe and Bertie Precincts.<sup>34</sup> He, James Castellaw of Bertie, and Henry Guston of Edgecombe and Edenton were partners in a mercantile business headquartered in Cashy, a now-defunct community located at the headwaters of the Kashia River in Bertie County. During the 1740s, it was a bustling and promising town. The Bertie courthouse, prison, several river landings, warehouses, and other public buildings were built there during that decade. Many of the original landowners around the town were wealthy men from Edenton, many of whom were absentee. However, most of the property in and surrounding Cashy was owned by Milikin's partner, James Castellaw, who had built a private landing and warehouses to serve his homes and business during the 1720 and 1730s.<sup>35</sup> These locations are noted landmarks on a 1733 map in Figure 3.

Capt. David Coltrane, therefore, lived in this area—on Milikin land—in 1737 when Milikin died. His apparent father-in-law, James Trotter, was indebted to the estate. The dates asserted for David's marriage to James's daughter coincide with a move out of Edgecombe, likely into Chowan where the Trotters lived:

14 November 1738

Edgecombe & Chowan

Estate of James Milikin. General Court. **David Coltraine**, merchant, late of

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<sup>33</sup> Edgecombe Estate Records, 1730–1747: 8–11, imaged in "North Carolina Probate Records, 1735–1970," *Family Search* (<http://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1867501>).

<sup>34</sup> Margaret M. Hofmann, *Chowan Precinct, North Carolina, 1693 to 1723: Genealogical Abstracts of Deed Books* (Weldon, N. C.: The Roanoke News Co., 1976), 2; cites Deeds 1: 8. For his identification as an Indian trader, see the abstracts found on "George Anderson of Granville, d.1757," *Andersons of Colonial N. Carolina* (<http://www.andersonnc.wordpress.com/page/2>).

<sup>35</sup> For a convenient essay on Cashy, see Harry Lewis Thompson, "The Lost Town of Cashy," *My Gen* ([http://www.mygen.com/users/outlaw/Lost\\_Town\\_of\\_Cashy.htm](http://www.mygen.com/users/outlaw/Lost_Town_of_Cashy.htm)). Also, "James Castellaw," *Prouty and Heiken Genealogy* (<http://www.sonic.net/~prouty/prouty/b230.htm>). The compilations are somewhat documented.

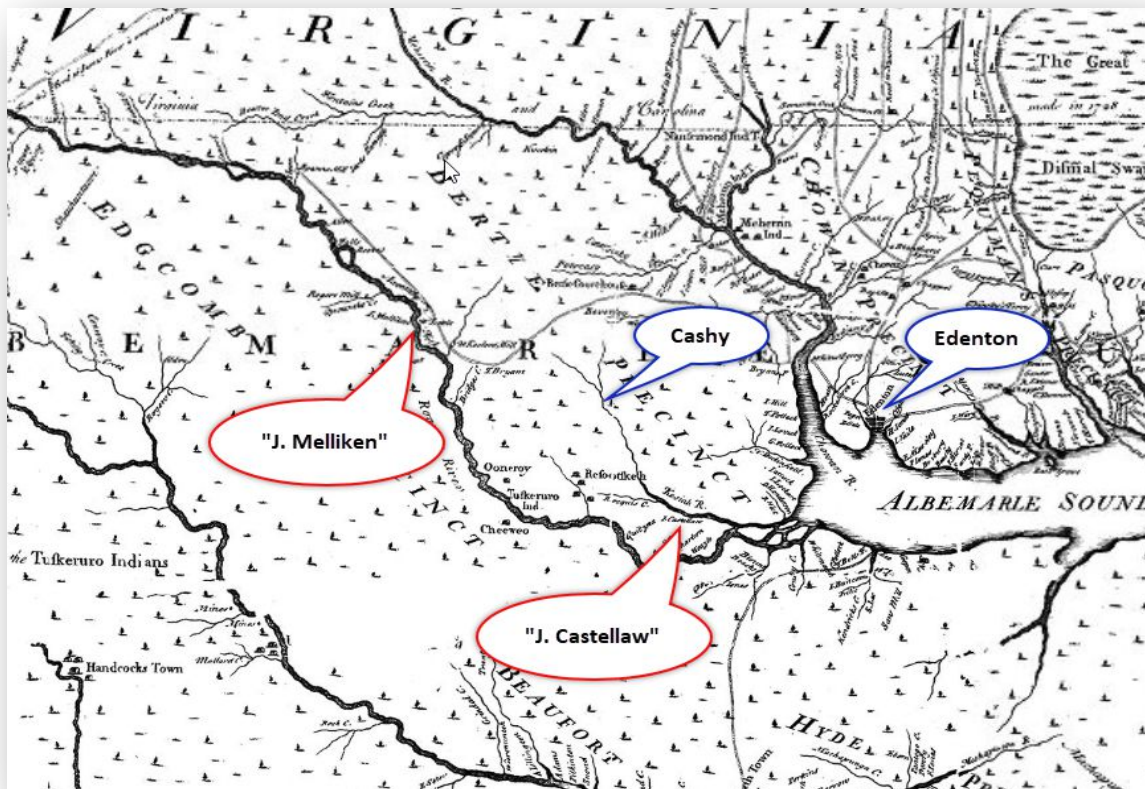
**Edgecombe County**, admr. of James Millikin, who died intestate, which were at the time of his death not administered by John Boyd, dec'd, admr. of sd. Millikin, was attached to answer Thomas Barker and wife Fairabe, exr. of Francis Pugh, dec'd, and Robert West, co-executor with sd. Farrabe . . . complained that James did on 29 Nov. 1735 at Edenton became indebted to Francis in amount of 1800 pounds of pork for goods and merchandise.<sup>36</sup>

March 1739

Edgecombe & Chowan

**David Coltraine**, merchant, **late of Edgecombe Precinct**, as administrator of James Millikin, dec'd, not administered by John Boyd, dec'd, was attached to answer Theophilus Pugh, merchant. He complains that James did on 6 November 1736 at Edenton became obligated to Theophilus in sum of £97.5.2.<sup>37</sup>

**FIGURE 3**  
Residences and Businesses of David Coltrain Associates<sup>38</sup>  
(Edgecombe, Bertie, and Chowan)



<sup>36</sup> James Millikin estate file (see fn. 31).

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> "A New and Correct Map of the Province of North Carolina by Edward Moseley, Late Surveyor General of the Said Province [London], 1733," *East Carolina University Digital Collections* (<https://digital.lib.ecu.edu/62316>).



David was back in Edgecombe a few months later and soon after bought his first known piece of land there:

May 1739

Edgecombe County

David Coltrane registered his stock mark "'DC on ye near buttock."<sup>39</sup>

1 December 1739

Edgecombe Precinct

Robert Forster to **David Coltraine**, both of Edgecombe, Gentlemen, 300: 640 acres southerly of Morratock River in the woods and in the prongs of Fishing Creek on the west side of Conway Creek and opposite the lands of Thomas Bryant, joining Col William Little and the Creek. Witnesses: James Craven and Jas. Arthand.<sup>40</sup>

He moved back and forth, to and from Chowan, several more times, all the while attending to Milikin's estate – which duty cause him continued legal headaches.

March 1740

Edenton and Edgecombe

James Milikin estate. David Coltrane, late of Edgecombe County, administrator of James Millikin, dec'd, not administered by John Boyd, clerk, dec'd, was attached to answer John Hodgson, attorney. Said Boyd complained that Millikin on \_\_\_\_ at Edenton became indebted to said Hodgson in sum of \_\_\_\_ for defending divers suits in law.<sup>41</sup>

July 1740

Edgecombe

General Court. David Coltrane, late of Chowan Co., as administrator of James Milikin, merchant, dec'd "(lately called James Millikin of Edgecombe Precinct)" not administered by the Rev. John Boyd, clerk, dec'd, adm. of sd. James Milikin, was summoned to answer Robert Halton provost marshal to render to said Robert 100 sterling, sd. Robert by his attorney John Hodgson complained the sd. James did 25 Sept. 1732 at Edenton become indebted bound with Alexander \_\_\_\_ and James Thompson of Edgecombe in a bond of £100.<sup>42</sup>

11 October 1740

Edgecombe & Chowan

Order issued to sheriff of Chowan Co. to summon David Coltrane, late of Chowan Co., administrator of James Milikin, dec'd of Edgecombe, not administered by the late . . . to appear in General Court at Edenton the last Tuesday in October to answer Robert Halton late provost marshal, in a plea of 1000 sterling and 50 damages. On back is written "Chowan Copy Left Thos Luten Sff [sheriff]."<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> "David Coltrane," *The Syiek Family Tree*.

<sup>40</sup> Hofmann, *Chowan Precinct, North Carolina, 1693 to 1723*, 24; cites Deeds 1: 273.

<sup>41</sup> James Millikin estate file (see fn. 31).

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

At this point, war intervened. The same month as the last abstract, October 1740, David received his commission as captain and began raising his company. Perhaps as part of those preparations, he sold the land he had purchased the previous year:

28 October 1740

Edgecombe

David Coltrane to Robert Foster, both of Edgecombe: 640 acres south side of Morratock River in prongs of Fishing Creek and on west side of Conway Creek; adjacent to Col. William Little. Witnesses: Peter Payne and Edward Buxton.<sup>44</sup>

Presumably, David sailed for Jamaica with his company and the three other North Carolina units several weeks later. He is silent in North Carolina records for another year. His name appears several more times back home during the expedition, but we cannot assume he was actually there:

14 November 1741

Edgecombe

Estate of James Milikin. Order to the sheriff of Northumberland County to summon Rowland William, planter, to appear in General Court at Edenton the last Tuesday in March next to answer David Coltrane, admr. of James Millikin, dec'd, unadministered by John Boyd, in a plea for 4800 pounds of tobacco. On back: Jose Anderson atty.<sup>45</sup>

March 1742

Estate of James Milikin. General Court. Rowland Williams of Northampton County was attached to answer David Coletrain, admr. of James Millikin. The said David, by Joseph Anderson his attorney, complained that Rowland did on 12 January 1737 at Edgecombe become indebted to Milikin in the amount of four hogsheads of tobacco in cast.<sup>46</sup>

We do not know when David instigated this suit against Williams. These documents only reveal that his attorney, Joseph Anderson, was in Court in November 1741 and March 1742 prosecuting the suit for David. Indeed, the fact that his attorney appeared rather than David himself suggests David was not present. That absence is likely reflected in the May 1742 document in which Mary Coltrane was acting as his agent:

4 May 1742

Chowan County

We the under written being chosen on part of Mr. Theophilus Pugh, plaintiff, and Ms. Mary Coaltrain attorney of Capt. David, admin. of the goods and chattels of Mr. James Millikin, dec'd, to value what was delivered to us by the sheriff [:] we

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<sup>44</sup> Jane Murtishaw Lindsey, "Selected Anson Co. Abstracts - 1815 to 1836," *The Little Legend* (<http://users.hal-pc.org/~happy/little/ansdeed3.html>). This deed was not recorded in Hofmann's publications of Edgecombe deeds, even though the deed through which he bought the land does appear there.

<sup>45</sup> James Millikin estate file (see fn. 31)

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

have valued nine negroes, two horses, and one cow as follows . . . a man named Jack at £250; a man Dick at the home at £240; a woman named Floran at £200; one Negro woman named Bentus [?] and two children at £400; negro girls Poll and Hannah at £480; two horses at £45. Signed Thos. Blount, John Poug [?], and \_\_\_\_.<sup>47</sup>

The first time David surfaced with certainty in North Carolina was after Gooch's Regiment returned home:

18 August 1744

Edgecombe County

Eleaxander Randall to Joseph Howell, both of Edgecombe: 230 acres on south side of Tarr River joining John Creel and Howell. Witnesses: R Forster and **David Coltrane**.<sup>48</sup>

November 1744

Edgecombe County

County Court justices present: **Mr. Coltrane**, Mr. Kenre, Mr. Speir, and Mr. Howell, Esquires.<sup>49</sup>

David is last on record in Edgecombe three years later:

20 August 1747

Edgecombe County

Joseph Lane, planter to William Cathcart, **David Coltrane**, John Hardy, Joseph John Alston, *James Speir*, Samuel Williams, Thomas Kearney, Joseph Howell, John Haywood, William Kinchen, James Conner, William Taylor, John Pope, John Lane, William West, and Aquilla Suggs, Esquires Justices assigned to keep the peace in the County of Edgecombe, and to their successors, for 10 shillings: two acres, beginning at a small poplar on the south side of Burntcoat, for the use of the public of Edgecombe County.<sup>50</sup>

The published abstract clearly uses the designation "dec'd." However, whether David was actually dead cannot be proven. The above abstract of 20 August 1747 asserts he was still alive, but he is not found in Edgecombe or Chowan thereafter. Indeed, two years earlier a marriage bond had been taken out in Chowan for a Mary Coltrain:

27 June 1745

Chowan County

Marriage bond for **Mary Coletrain** and Laws Preddy; bondsmen Thomas and Charles Blount; witnesses Jno. Lovick and Sam Hatch.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> James Millikin estate file (see fn. 31).

<sup>48</sup> Edgecombe Co., Deed Book 5: 202.

<sup>49</sup> Weynette Parks Haun, *Edgecombe County, North Carolina, Court Minutes 1742-1662*, vol. 1 (Durham, N. C.: Privately Published, 1985), 8; citing orig. p. 2.

<sup>50</sup> Edgecombe Co., Deed Book 3: 159.

<sup>51</sup> "North Carolina Marriages 1759-1979," *Family Search* (<http://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1675514>). Preddy was dead by early 1750, when Mary petitioned the Chowan County Court to sell his "large house" in

Descendants assume this was David's widow. However, the 1744 court record naming him a justice of the peace contradicts the hypothesis. This Mary (who might be David's daughter rather than his widow) remained in Chowan County and married twice more.<sup>52</sup>

### *Barachias Harper*

The time expended in documenting Capt. David Coltrain and locating his residences was central to this project. It is a necessary step toward the final determination of whether the Solomon Harper who served under him could belong to Client's lineage. The evidence also puts Coltrain near another Harper: Barachias of Edgecombe who moved to Colleton District, South Carolina, near Client's Solomon. The following points (introduced and documented above) highlight the connection.

- In 1737, Coltrain lived on James Milikin land below Chockoyotte Creek of Roanoke River, on the northeast edge of the proposed Barachias Harper neighborhood as I earlier defined it.
- In 1739, Coltrain bought land on Conway Creek of Fishing Creek, on the southwest edge of the proposed Barachias Harper neighborhood.

In short, Captain Coltrain can be placed in a Harper neighborhood when he would have recruited his company for the expedition. Odds are good therefore that the soldier Solomon lived in or close to that community – and, by extension, near Barachias Harper.

A final component of this phase concerning Solomon's residence was a study of his comrades, who likely lived in his same community or in nearby ones. Given the scarcity of records, the names of most of Coltrain's men are unknown: the only known ones are the thirty-one men were impressed with Solomon in 1742:

Martin Jenkins (ensign)	Thos. Watson	Chas. Weaver
Henry Bolt (corp.)	Edwd. Jackson	Geo. McNeal
Neal Gallaher (drum)	Thos. Foy (corp.)	Davd. Rice (srgt.)
Matthew Connelly	Jas. Fitzpatrick	James Winslow (srgt.)
Wm Duke	Wm. Marman	Jno Coffin (srgt.)
Jno. Jordan	Wm. Norton	Geo. Taylor
Peter Percy (srgt.)	Andw. McDonough	Wm. Kelley
Michl. Kennedy	Jno. Matthews	Jno. Dunning (drum)
Robt. Crouson	Jno. Armstrong	Jno. Curtis
Solom. Harper	Jno. Hall	
James Moor	Matthew Paul (drum)	

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Edenton. Although that petition was not dated, his estate sale occurred on 4 March 1750. James "Trotar" was a major purchaser. See folder of "Preddy, Laws, 1750" imaged in "North Carolina Estate Files, 1663-1979," *FamilySearch* (<http://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1911121>).

<sup>52</sup> She married Fred Messhenger in January 1752 and Robert Wallace in August 1754. For both marriages, see "North Carolina Marriages, 1741-2004," *Ancestry* (<http://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8909>).

A considerable amount of time was spent searching for these men in available print and electronic resources. Yet, none could be placed with certainty in a pre- or post-war residence. This is due in large part to limited immediate access to pertinent county and colonial records. Continued research must strive to identify a residential cluster for these men to which Solomon likely belonged, and therefore cement current indications of a connection to Barachias Harper.

### CONCLUSION

Is Solomon Harper of Coltrain's company Client's ancestor? It is impossible to determine at this early stage. However, connecting him to the Barachias Harper neighborhood is significant – and the connection calls attention again to Edgecombe County.

Previous Lennon projects delved into Edgecombe in relation to Barachias and his associates. Work must expand there – and into Bertie and Chowan counties – focusing on the Coltrain communities and any Harpers found living there. The most efficient way to cover all counties and all available resources is to work the holdings at the North Carolina Archives in Raleigh. Although some records are available on microfilm and in published forms, the unprocessed original documents at the Archives are critical in projects such as this one, where convenient records have not produced genealogical answers. This is particularly relevant for Chowan and Bertie Counties because most of their early records are not available off-site. Equally important, the Archives has a sizeable collection of British Admiralty records dealing specifically with the Cartagena Expedition that must be viewed.

Rachal Mills Lennon, CG



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