

Evans, Richard ^[1]

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by Claiborne T. Smith, Jr., 1986

ca. 1735–ca. 1774

Richard Evans, planter, legislator, and town founder, was born in Bath, [Beaufort County](#) ^[2], the son of Richard Evans, "Mariner," and Mary Lillington Evans. In 1758 Evans and his brother, [George](#) ^[3], sold their property in Bath and bought several tracts of land on the Tar River in the part of Beaufort that became [Pitt County](#) ^[4] in 1760. Richard was a captain in the Pitt County militia in 1764 and represented Pitt in the colonial Assembly in 1769. In 1771, the Assembly passed an act authorizing him to lay out a town on his one hundred acres on the south side of Tar River in the county of Pitt. For the town, called Martinborough, commissioners were also appointed in the act. In addition to Richard Evans, Wyriot Ormond, Charles Forbes, Henry Ellis, and George Evans were named. Richard Evans died before the Assembly passed a special act in 1774 confirming the lot holders in their titles. The act also moved the courthouse of Pitt County to Martinborough. In 1787, the name of Martinborough was changed to Greenville.

Evans was buried in the Evans family cemetery on Evans Street in Greenville. His will has been lost, but from deeds and other sources he appears to have had sons Benjamin, Richard, Michael Coutanche, and George and daughters whose names are not known. The name of his wife is not known. In 1769 Evans had acquired from his first cousins, James and Lillington Lockhart, the fine plantation known as Scotch Hall in [Bertie County](#) ^[5]. His son Michael resided there and left a will in Bertie in 1796. On Michael's death Scotch Hall was sold to the Jacocks family, which has owned it since that time. Among the prominent descendants of Richard Evans were Colonel [Fred Olds](#) ^[6], of the Hall of History in Raleigh, whose mother was Pauline Evans; and Dr. [Augustus Coutanche Evans](#) ^[7], who was a special agent for the Confederate government in Europe.

References:

Walter Clark, ed., *State Records of North Carolina*, vols. 23 (1904), 24 (1905).

Deeds and wills of the counties of Beaufort and Bertie, deeds of Pitt County (North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh).

William L. Saunders, ed., *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, vol. 4 (1886).

Tombstone inscriptions, Evans cemetery (Greenville).

Additional Resources:

"An Act for laying out a town on the lands of Richard Evans, in Pitt county, by the name of Martinsborough." *Collection of the private acts of the General Assembly of the state of North Carolina: from the year 1715, to the year 1790, inclusive, now in force and use*. Newbern [N.C.]: Francois-Xavier Martin. 1794. 64-65.

<https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/collection-of-the-private-acts-of-the-general-assembly-of-the-state-of-north-carolina-from-the-year-1715-to-the-year-1790-inclusive-now-in-force-and-use/1955551?item=2075674> ^[8] (accessed February 21, 2014).

King, Henry T. (Henry Thomas). *Sketches of Pitt County, a brief history of the county, 1704-1910; illustrations and maps*. Raleigh, Edwards. 1911. <https://archive.org/details/sketchesofpittco00king> ^[9] (accessed February 21, 2014).

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[Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press](#).^[18]

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