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Thu, 9 Oct 1997 21:00:56 -0700 (PDT)
Resent-Date: Thu, 9 Oct 1997 21:00:56 -0700 (PDT)
Message-ID: <343DA987.5C3D@nac.net>
Date: Fri, 10 Oct 1997 00:05:27 -0400
From: Tom Riley <marissa-r@nac.net>
X-Mailer: Mozilla 2.02E-KIT (Win95; U)
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To: Romine-L@rootsweb.com
Subject: Blount Conspiracy
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=us-ascii
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Resent-Message-ID: <" 1rwYC.A.dLE.2haP0"@bl-14.rootsweb.com>
Resent-From: ROMINE-L@rootsweb.com
X-Mailing-List: <ROMINE-L@rootsweb.com> archive/latest/288
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A little slow this week on the "Romine Line"! Anyone interested in a little Romayne "shady" business?

On Sept. 7, Joan Kraus sent us an article about Dr. Nicholas Romayne (1756-1817) from "Who Was Who In America." It mentioned that the good doctor left the country for a while "conceiving that his countrymen looked upon him with suspicion" after his involvement in the "Blount Conspiracy of 1797."

I finally found some time to look it up, so here it is:

As usual, don't let the spelling throw you off. All of you Romines, Romaines, Romans, etc. out there can't "disown" him, he is one of ours. His father was John Romeyn, a New York City silversmith. It seems he got mixed up with William Blount through his "speculation in western lands." The "West", of course, at that time being Kentucky and Tennessee. As it turns out William Blount ends up being an interesting, if little known figure in American History. In spite of being one of the only Senators expelled from the United States Congress and put on trial to be impeached, he had some substantial credentials.

William Blount:

Served as a soldier and paymaster in the Continental Army during the Am. Revolution.

He was a member of the North Carolina Legislature.

Represented North Carolina in the Continental Congress.

Served as Speaker of the Continental Congress twice, 1782-83 & 1786-87.

He helped write the Constitution of the United States by representing North Carolina at the Constitutional Convention.

Was one of the first two U.S. Senators from the state of North Carolina.

He was the founder of the City of Knoxville, Tennessee. (His home in Knoxville, "Blount Mansion" is a registered National Historic Landmark.)

Blount County in Southeast Tennessee is named after him.

He has at least one High School named after him (they have a home page on the Net).

And, this is where he got into hot water, he was appointed by George Washington in 1790 to be the Governor of the "Territory of the United States South of the River Ohio."

Evidently, William Blount, Dr. Nicholas Romaine and others conspired with representatives of the British Government to seize New Orleans and the Floridas from the Spanish. In the summer of 1797 Spain and Britain were at war and Blount was charged with using his influence with the Cherokee and Creek Indians to provoke a war that would lead to the overthrow of the Spanish. When the plot was discovered Dr. Romaine thought it best to take his extended vacation in Europe and Senator Blount was charged with a "high misdemeanor inconsistent with his public trust and duty." It ended up being a international incident that caused "much excitement at the time," real front page news. Blount was impeached on July 7, 1797 and expelled from the US Senate. His trial lasted from Dec. 17, 1798 to Jan. 14, 1799. The charges were dropped for "lack of jurisdiction" because Blount was no longer a member of the Senate. That makes sense, they had kicked him out! Soon after his expulsion from Congress he was elected to the state senate of Tennessee, over which he later presided. Still a hero to the folks at home I guess. Too bad, we might have seen Blount/Romaine Golden Arch concessions or something, throughout the South if they had pulled it off. Anyway, Doc Romaine was invited home in 1806 "by a sudden and singular change of sentiment."

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