

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

MY WALKER FAMILY

By Fred Coffey

DEAR READER: If you're looking at an ".HTM" version of this report, be aware there is a ".PDF" version with better format control and better printing capability. See:

<http://www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/FamilyNotes/AboutRobertWalkerEsq.pdf>

This paper is mostly about Robert Walker, Esquire, my oldest known Walker ancestor. First, a quick introduction to my ancestry:

MY FAMILY LINE:

Robert WALKER Esq. (Abt 1717/20 - bef Aug 1786) & (Unknown? Ann??)
Robert WALKER Jr. (1 Sep 1748 -) & Mary JONES (1 Nov 1758 - 9 Jun 1853)
William WALKER* (27 Mar 1790 - Jun 1855) & Catharine KIMBREL (abt 1790 - 13 Aug 1835)
Bartlett Yancy WALKER (Oct 1819 - aft 1906) & Frances Nixon MAXEY (7 Apr 1827 - 19 Apr 1891)
Cyrus WALKER (7 Jan 1847 - Sep 1926) & Laura Etta MYERS (4 Jul 1853 - 28 May 1902)
Everett Elmer WALKER (6 Feb 1882 - 1948) & Linnie Ellen MACHLAN (30 Sep 1884 - 7 May 1974)
Elsie Maureen WALKER (20 Nov 1903 - 12 Mar 1983) & Leo Newton COFFEY (1901 - 1998)
Leo Frederick Coffey (That's me!)

ADDITIONAL SOURCES:

Over time, I've developed and written about several topics that are related to Robert, but are too much to fully cover in this single document. Most of these have reference elsewhere in this report, but are listed here for "quick reference":

There is a DNA study,

<http://www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/FamilyNotes/WalkerDNA2.pdf>

And the DNA Study stirred up some questions about Robert's brother David:

www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/FamilyNotes/WalkerDNA2Appendix.pdf

Which in turn stirred up discussion of a multitude of confusing descendants named "David":

<http://www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/FamilyNotes/Walker7Davids.pdf>

This next item is a hodge-podge of stuff, which includes full details on Surry court notes, etc

<http://www.coffey.ws/familytree/familynotes/A3WalkerCoffeyConnections.htm>

There is a paper about a "Coffey" relative that lived in Surry, that offers Surry background:

<http://www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/FamilyNotes/JamesCoffee.pdf>

And there are two articles about Robert's relationships with the Moravians:

www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/FamilyNotes/RobWalkerAndTheMoravians.pdf

www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/FamilyNotes/MoravianRoads.pdf

And after Robert is gone, I wrote about his wife Mary, son Robert, and grandson William.

www.coffey.ws/familytree/familynotes/MaryWifeOfRobert.pdf

[http://www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/Docs/WALKERRobertJr\(W\).pdf](http://www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/Docs/WALKERRobertJr(W).pdf)

[http://www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/Docs/WALKERWilliam\(W\).pdf](http://www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/Docs/WALKERWilliam(W).pdf)

ROBERT WALKER ESQUIRE:

We're ready to discuss Robert Walker, Esq. But first, let me give credit where it is due: I have had a lot of correspondence with another researcher, Randy Walker. I also owe a debt to Craig and Kathy Walker, who are also researching Walker roots. You will read more about them in a

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

separate paper on this Robert's son, Robert Walker Jr. And I have also exchanged a large volume of notes with researcher Betty Hicks.

Robert Walker is the patriarch of my own family line. And as a quick introduction, this is a tabulation of his marriages and children.

ROBERT'S MARRIAGES AND CHILDREN:

Robert WALKER Esq. (Abt 1717/20 - bef Aug 1786) & (Ann??)

Robert WALKER Jr. (1 Sep 1748 -) & Mary JONES (1 Nov 1758 - 9 Jun 1853)

William WALKER (1750 - Aug 1814)

John WALKER

David WALKER (a minor in 1786, per Robert's will)

James WALKER (a minor in 1786, per Robert's will)

Elizabeth (married Miller)

Mary WALKER (married Thomas Sylvanus "Silley" Wright)

Hannah WALKER

Robert WALKER Esq. (Abt 1717/20 - bef Aug 1786) & Mary

Polly WALKER

Elizabeth "Betsey" WALKER (12 Dec 1785 - 24 Mar 1859) & Benjamin Franklin HOWARD Jr.

THE BIG PICTURE: ORIGINS AND EARLY LIFE:

A big contributor to our understanding of the origins and early life of Robert has been greatly aided by a DNA study of 14 men, who show a solid genetic connection to Robert. These 14 "cousins" proved to be a diverse group, with a variety of origins, and all were willing to share information and sources. A working paper, with full details of our analysis, can be found here:

<http://www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/FamilyNotes/WalkerDNA2.pdf>

Some of the tested group's ancestors were relatively recent immigrants to America, who knew full well their national origins. Based on this, we now have full confidence that the original origin of our Walker family was Scotland.

However we also know that at least one line came to America by way of Northern Ireland. Many Scots were invited to settle in Northern Ireland in the 17th century, on confiscated Irish lands. They are sometimes called "Ulster Scots", or "Scots Irish". And, particularly given when and where Robert first entered America, it is highly likely that he was also "Scots Irish".

We believe that Robert, and a brother David, first came to Pennsylvania, probably in the early or mid 1700's. We believe they were in Pennsylvania until after 1765, because a descendant "David" born in 1765 survived until after 1850, and he reported in the 1850 census that he was born in Pennsylvania. THIS David was apparently a descendant of Robert's brother David. And it is evidence the family was in Pennsylvania no later than 1765.

Before the American Revolution some 200,000 people emigrated from Ulster to America, with the largest numbers going to Pennsylvania. From there, many went South into Virginia and the Carolinas, with Robert and brother David likely among them. Robert was closely associated

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

with the Moravians in North Carolina, and they also came from Pennsylvania and pioneered the roads. Robert strategically placed his Tavern on one of the Moravian routes, and his location was even marked on a Moravian map! He may have even travelled with the Moravians?

At several points in this report, we will reference Robert's relations with the Moravians. If I say something below that doesn't make sense, you might want to come back and examine the following:

www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/FamilyNotes/RobWalkerAndTheMoravians.pdf
www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/FamilyNotes/MoravianRoads.pdf

We will shortly introduce evidence that Robert was in North Carolina by 1768. So most likely he made the move south between 1765 and 1768.

ROBERT'S BROTHER, ROBERT'S WIFE:

Robert's brother David died in Surry County, North Carolina in about 1775, leaving orphan children David, Lillias (Lillian?) and Hannah. There are several records in the Surry Will Abstracts involving Robert Walker and an "Ann Walker" settling the estate of David, and arranging guardianships for the orphan children.

Given the context, it is not obvious whether "Ann Walker" is Robert's wife, or David's widow. I personally think "Ann" is Robert's first wife, based on limited supporting evidence:

There is a Scottish naming convention, which proposes that the first daughter in a family should be named after its maternal grandmother, the second daughter should be named after its paternal grandmother, and the third daughter should be named after its mother.

When we look at the family of Robert Walker Jr. (the son of Robert Walker Esq.) we find his first daughter is named Jamina, and we know that was the name of her maternal grandmother. The third daughter was named Mary, and that was the name of her mother. Sounds like Robert Jr. was following the convention!

And Robert Junior's second daughter, who should therefore have been named after her paternal grandmother (the wife of Robert Sr.)? That was "Anne". It fits really well!

For the record, here are the relevant abstract references:

*Surry Will Abstracts: 1:46. Inv. of sale of David Walker decd. Buyers were: **Ann Walker**, David Walker, Robert Walker, Charles McCay, Jacob John Scott, Jacob Myers, John Holey, George Hyet, Andrew Lowery, **Robert Walker Sr.**, Peter Ludwick, John Growse, Martin Armstrong, Robert Lanier, Jo. Williams, Peter Shermer, Traugott Bagge, John Healey, etc. Total retnd to May Ct. 1775 by **Ann Walker & Robert Walker** admins. L44:12: 6.*

*Surry Will Abstracts: 1:93a. **Ann Walker**, William Dobson, Richard Goode, Joseph Winston are bound to Martin Armstrong, Robert Lanier, John Hudspeth, Matthew Brooks, Justices, for L500 N.C. money 12 Feb. 1778 as **Ann Walker** and William Dobson jointly are appointed guardians of **David Walker**, Lillias Walker and Hannah Walker, orphans of David Walker*

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

decd. Wit: Jos. Williams. Rec. Feb. Ct. 1778.

Surry Will Abstracts: "1:102. Acct. of est. of children of David Walker decd by **Ann Walker** & William Dobson, guardians. 13 May 1778. Cash reed of Robert Warwick L4, ditto **Robert Walker** Ll. Rec. May Ct. 1778.

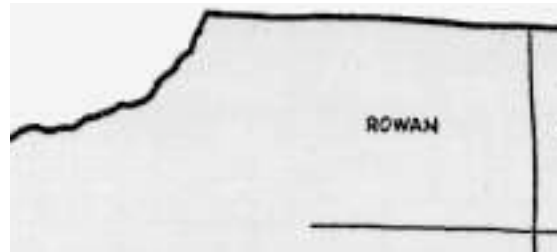
Surry Will Abstracts: 1:107a. **Robert Walker**, William Dobson, Martin Armstrong & Michael Howzer are bound to John Hudspeth, Charles McAnally & Robert Lanier, Surry Co. Justices, for L200 proc 14 May 1788 (sic) as **Walker & Dobson** are bound guardians of David Walker, orphan of David Walker decd, making exhibit to the Justices in 3 mos. of their guardianship accts. Wit: Jo. Williams, Clk. Rec. May Ct. 1778.

But now we can move on to information in which I do have more confidence:

COUNTIES OF NW NORTH CAROLINA:

It's going to be tough to follow the history of Robert Walker, Esq., and his family, if you don't examine the history of the area where he lived. We're looking at the northwest part of North Carolina:

In 1753 Rowan County was formed, and we find Robert living there by no later than 1768:



We can find several references to Robert Walker in the Rowan Co. NC Court of Pleas & Quarter Sessions Book #3. In these records he appears before the Court as an ordinary citizen. He is also found in tax lists for this time period, including 1768.

The earliest reference comes from Rowan Co. Court Records: July 16, 1768: "*On motion of John Dunn, Esqr. ordered by the court that Robert Walker have leave to keep an Ordinary at his own dwelling house in Rowan County. Security William Tim: Cole and Thomas Stilwell.*" (An "Ordinary" is a form of tavern, and we are going to find that Robert was in the tavern business until his death, with his wife taking over thereafter.)

This tavern could arguably be considered the origin of the modern city of Walkertown, NC - - we'll talk more about that later.

A major function of the Court was to manage the roads in the county, with citizens appointed to various duties. In January 1769, we find this appointment: "Overseer of Roads Robert Walker from Vacouia Line to Sandy Ridge Capefare Road (from Wachovia to Cape Fear)"

Also in August 1769 he returns to court for a renewal: "Ordinary License renewed for one year at his dwelling house." And again on 14 Aug 1770 "Ordered that Robert Walker have license to keep Ordinary at his dwelling house."

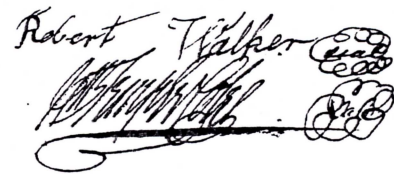
Regarding these Tavern Bonds, Craig & Kathy Walker found the following transcript of the actual August 1769 bond. The spelling and punctuation of the original document are preserved:

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

"KNOW all Men by these Presents that we **Robert Walker, Wm Temple Cole & Charles McAnally** are held and firmly bound unto **Wm Tryon** Governor and Commander in Chiefe in and over the Provenche of North Carolina in the Sume for Thurtey Pounds Proclamation Money to bee paid to the Governor or his Successors to the which Payement well and truly to be made we binde ourselves and Every of us our and every of our Heirs Executors and Administrators jointly severally firmly by these Presents Sealed with our seals and Dated the 9th Day of August 1769

The Condition of this Obligation is such That whereas the sd **Robert Walker** hath obtained a License to Keep A Tavron on his Plantation where he livs on the **moraven Road** on the Waters of **muddy Creek** in **Rowan County** if therefore ye sd **Robert Walker** doth Constantly find and provide in his or her said Tavern Good wholesome and Clean Diet and Lodging for Travelers and Stable Fodder & Corn or Pasturage as the Season Shall require for thine Horses for and during the terme of one yeare from the 9 Day of August and shall not suffer unlawful Gammeing in his or her House nor sell Liquer on the Lords Day to aney Person by which such Persons may in toxicated then the Obligation to be void Otherwise to Remaine in force

And this comes with the signatures of Robert and of Wm Temple Cole (not sure, the second entry handwriting is incredible!):

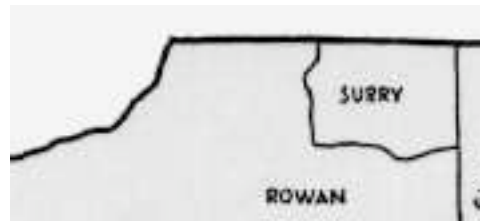
The image shows two handwritten signatures. The top signature is 'Robert Walker' in a cursive script. Below it is a second signature, which is more difficult to decipher but appears to be 'Wm Temple Cole'.

Oh, note that the Bond states that Robert “...livs on the **moraven Road**...”. As noted earlier, Robert strategically placed his Tavern on a major Moravian route to and from Pennsylvania.

There is another function of the Court - it approves the brands that citizens may apply to their livestock. The following would appear to prove that Robert was therefore engaged in farming, as well as running his tavern: "Rowan Co. Court Records: 1771 Robert Walker Mark is sloping crop of each year (ear), one on the four (fore?) side of the left year and the other slops back side of the right year & Brand is R3 on the right shoulder and buttocks."

SURRY COUNTY:

Then in 1771 Surry County was formed, and that now included Robert's home. All of his court records henceforth refer to Surry County. The Surry County courthouse was established in 1779 at a placed called Richmond. (But don't look for Richmond on a NC map - it no longer exists!)



We're going to find a lot of information about Robert in the Court Records for this new Surry County. We'll come back to that shortly. But first a little more geography:



In 1789 (after Robert's death) Surry was split, and Stokes County was formed. The old courthouse was now inconvenient, so both counties formed new county seats, and Richmond was ultimately abandoned. Robert was dead by then, but his old home and The Old Richmond Courthouse were now in Stokes County.



ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

Then in 1849 and 1850 Surry and Stokes counties were each split again, adding Yadkin and Forsyth counties. And where then was the Old Richmond Courthouse? It was on the Forsyth County side, near where the four counties come together.

So where would we go if we wanted to visit GGGGG Grandpa Walker's old Richmond home? The Richmond Courthouse is now just an archeological site, located in Forsyth County, near Tobaccoville, NC, on Payne Road just off Donnaha Road, near the Yadkin River. That would be about 15 miles northwest of Winston Salem, NC. Here's what it looks like today:



TAX LISTS:

The Rowan Co Tax list shows Robert Walker on 1768 tax list of Jacob Laesch. This list is for Bellows Creek (aka Belews Creek), The listing is "Robert Walker & son Robert 1 poll". They have no slaves. (The one poll tax is probably for Robert Jr., with Robert Sr. probably not required to pay the poll tax because he is older than age 50 at that time.)

The 1771 tax list of Surry Co. shows Robert Walker with 3 polls. The 1782 Surry tax list shows Robert Walker with 1212 acres. The 1785 tax list of Capt. Lovill shows Robert Walker with 1112 acres. 1 white poll, 3 black polls, on the 1786 tax listing is "Mary Walker, Escrs of Robert Walker decd" and show 812 acres, 3 black polls and 17 town lots.

Later I'll discuss his land ownership a bit more.

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

Two of the most fascinating documents I have found are the Rowan and Surry County Court minutes. Most of this comes from the abstract of "Surry County, North Carolina, Court Minutes Volumes I and II 1768-1789" by Mrs. W. O. Absher. In this abstract, in addition to dozens of references to Robert, we can find a number of my other relatives. I have written a whole separate paper on Surry County and my family connections based on these court minutes, and other references. You can examine the full details by clicking on the following:

<http://www.coffey.ws/familytree/familynotes/A3WalkerCoffeyConnections.htm>

CAUTION: This is a messy and complex site, and rambles on about many ancestors in addition to Robert Walker. But it will allow you to examine more carefully the actual entries in the Court minutes.

Anyway, here are some of the highlights regarding Robert: Let me first address his title, "Esquire". Originally, in the Middle Ages, this was a person who ranked "above a gentleman, and below a knight". It has since evolved in the United States to usually be a "...sign of courtesy

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

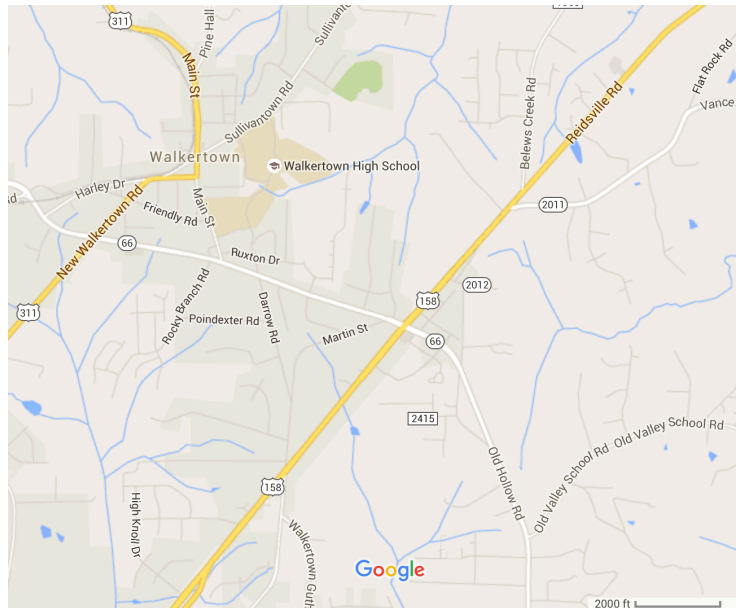
toward members of the legal profession". I seriously doubt that Robert was formally trained as a lawyer, but in North Carolina in the late 1700's it would have probably been a courtesy reference to his official duties with the court.

When we looked at the Rowan County court records above, Robert appeared as an ordinary citizen. But in about 1771, when the new Surry County was formed, we suddenly find him consistently referred to as "Robert Walker Esquire", and he is found serving as a commissioner, or justice, in the Surry County North Carolina Court Minutes. It would appear he saw an opportunity to move up when the new county was formed?

The first Surry County reference is actually found in the original survey for the boundary of the new Surry County (see above "Connections" link for the survey transcript). This is a tedious but fascinating document, using trees, houses, creeks, water falls, fish traps, oak saplings, etc., etc. as survey landmarks. But at one point we find the Survey line described as "...running west crossing a branch of Dan River East of Robert Walkers Esquire, thence East of his house about one-quarter of a mile, crossing the easternmost Branch of Muddy Creek, thence through the Moravian Tract, crossing the fork of the road . . ." etc., etc.

This survey was filed and proven before Jesse Benton, the clerk of Surry Court in 1771. The interesting thing is that he is now "Robert Walker Esquire", suggesting that he had already assumed his official court duties.

The adjacent modern map gives you a quick introduction to the area being discussed, which is near modern Walkertown, NC. Note the blue lines, which show the streams through the area. And take note of Hwy 66, Old Hollow Road. This road is essentially the watershed for the area. Streams north of this line flow north, and are branches of the Dan River. And streams south of this line flow south, into what was then known as Muddy Creek. Also note Hwy 158, Reidsville Road. This is approximately the route of the "road to the iron works" which was first described as passing from Robert's house. More on all this later.



(Note: The above Survey suggests his house was near the southern BORDER of the original Surry County. Be aware that the border was later moved a few miles farther south, and also be aware that Robert later moved to the town of Richmond, the County Seat, which was in the center of Surry. More discussions of locations will follow. Land records show that on 14 Feb 1779 Robert Walker bought 12 1/2 acres in the town of Richmond for 33 pounds – he was ready to move to the new county seat as soon as it was established.)

Found another early reference related to the startup of Surry County, but this one was actually

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

located in the "Surry Will Abstracts" (even though it has no relationship to wills): "Martin Armstrong, John Armstrong, **Robt. Walker** & William Roberson of Surry are bound to his majesty for 1000 pds. sterl. as Martin Armstrong is appointed Sheriff of Surry Co. 3 Apr. 1771. Wit: Jesse Benton. Rec. May Ct. 1771," Robert's very good friend (see later!) Martin Armstrong is appointed Sheriff of Surry County, with Robert helping post bond. The new county is ready to go!

Many of the early Surry court records are missing, with only bits and pieces available in the earliest years. Here's another of the earlier records: He is reported as "Present" in the official minutes for "the third Tuesday (of) February (in the) 11th year (of the) Reign (of) Lord George Third". Got that?

(That date, in a system called Regnal years, counts from the date the monarch came to the throne, and translating it was a bit of a challenge. But after some research, and learning that George III became King on 25 Oct 1760, I worked the date out to be "Tuesday, February 18, 1772".)

The first Surry Court sessions were held at the house of Gideon Wright, one of the "Esquires". This is because the new courthouse was not yet built. (Note: Will address locations in more detail later.) Here's the preamble to one of this court's early rulings, naming Robert, and explaining their official duties:

*09 Nov 1771 (CR092.326.17, Surry Co., NC Criminal Action Papers) North Carolina Surry County
At an inferior Court of Pleas & quarter Sessions begun and held in & for the County of Surry on the Third
Sunday of November in the twelfth year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord George the third by the Grace of God
of Great Britain France and Ireland King Defender of the Faith & Before the Worshipful Jacob BONN Charles
MCANALLY Gideon WRIGHT and **Robert WALKER** Esquires and others their Companion Justices assigned to
keep the Peace for said County and also to hear and determine all Petty Larcenies Trespasses, Assaults
Batteries Crimes and Misdemeanors of an inferior Nature Whatsoever committed or done in the County
aforesaid.*

It appears that the County Court sat about 4 times a year, for only a few days each session. Therefore Robert still had plenty of time to tend to his lands and his tavern.

Reading the court minutes, Robert's name appears with great frequency. Not surprising, since he is present in his official duties at many of the meetings.

He also appears fairly often as the SUBJECT of court proceedings as well. For one thing he kept a Tavern at his house, and needed to renew his license at regular intervals. Was there a conflict of interest? Well, to his credit, he does not appear to have been sitting as a Commissioner on any of the particular days when HIS tavern license came up for renewal! However - - we do find him sitting at the bench on 9 May 1785 when it is "Ordered: Tavern Rates (shall) be amended as follows: Good cider 6 (shillings?) per quart til 1 Feb. annually; afterward at 8;..."

With regard to another entry, we can't be sure if he was interested in the welfare of the community orphans - or just looking for cheap servants. But on 13 May 1785 we find "Ordered: Sarah Brandon, orphan of Wm. Brandon, deceased, age seven years, be bound unto Robert Walker and his wife Mary, (to) learn mistery Spinster until 18 years and at her freedom be

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

given feather bed, furniture, cow and calf..."

(This "learn mystery Spinster" threw me, until I found another genealogy reference indicating that it meant she was to learn how to be a spinster - - how to spin and do other household duties.)

Robert apparently had other young servants, possibly acquired the same way. But one of those, apparently a very brave lad, had the nerve to appear before the court on 9 May 1780, and complain: "John McCay, servant boy of Robert Walker, brought before Ct. & complained his master had used him with too much severity, which fact Walker acknowledged. Ordered: In future Walker shall find John McCay during his servitude good, wholesome diet, clothing, washing and lodging and (shall) give him unreasonable correction at no time..."

Robert did not tolerate insolence when he sat as Commissioner. We find on 19 November 1785 "Ordered: William Crawford, Esq. Fined 5 shillings for profane swearing and speaking in contempt of Court after he was order to Silence; fine paid and delivered to Robert Walker, Esqr."

Apparently the court and community were strict in other ways as well. At roughly the time the new courthouse was ready, we find on 11 Feb 1779 "Ordered Robert WALKER, Esqr. And Samuel CUMMINS appointed commissioners to provide and agree with workman to erect Stocks and Whiping Post in town Richmond and call upon County Trustee for money for expense of same." And apparently such County equipment only had a limited life, because we later find on 12 August 1785 another entry "Ordered: Commissioners to employ workman to erect Pair Stocks & Whipping Post at Court House..."

But they could be generous to those less fortunate. Quite often people were made exempt from the poll tax for various reasons such as age or poverty. On 10 November 1779 we find "Ordered: William McFee to be cleared from paying tax; he being object of pity and no person to work for him."

A very frequent action of the Court is to order citizens to serve to inspect the roads around the county. (I believe the farm/home owner was responsible for maintaining the roads fronting on his property, but the County needed to assure it was done properly?) Robert often sat on the Commission that make those orders, but he also was assigned to serve to "view a road" himself on occasion.

Robert Walker Esq., and his son Robert Jr., both are present from time to time in the Court records. At one point they were both appointed to the same committee to view some roads. Sometimes, particularly after Robert Sr. dies and Jr. becomes the Sr. Robert, you have to be careful which one you are reading about!

The Commissioners also appointed citizens to serve on juries, and Robert Jr. was so ordered on 11 Feb 1779, and he served for two days on 12-13 May 1779. The striking thing is that the same single jury heard NINE civil cases over just those two days. Justice was swift!

Robert also served as the County tax collector for a while: An entry in the Surry Will Abstracts

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

reports that on 17 Aug 1780 "...sd Walker is appointed Tax Commissioner". (And an entry in the Moravian's Bethabera Diary on 27 Nov 1782 reports "Mr. Walker was here to collect the grain tax, which was paid to him in Tickets and money.")

The Court usually assembled four times a year, in February, May, August, and November. Particularly in the later years, Robert Walker tended to appear only on the first day of the session and to conduct no business on that day. It is my guess that he was sort of a "senior justice", and perhaps came in primarily to organize the agenda for the current session? Or maybe he was getting old, and it was just an honorary appearance?

A final note: We don't know exactly when Robert Walker Esquire died, but his last appearance in official capacity was on 13 February 1786. In that same session he appeared of 14 February to enter a deed of property to Mordecai Mendenhall, and swore an oath that the deed was valid.

And then on the next day, 15 February, he appeared as a plaintiff, and then as a defendant, before a jury in two court cases. Apparently he and another person sued each other for slander. The same jury heard both cases, and found for the defendant in each case. (In other words, the jury decided neither party was really guilty of slander.) And on 18 February he was named as a member of a census committee (see "Census Taker" below).

He appears once more in the May 1786 session, but not in an official capacity. He and his wife Mary entered a deed on 10 May. And he was sued by a Richard Philips on 11 May. (It is not clear why there was a lawsuit, and is not clear what was the outcome.)

He obviously died some time between the May and August 1786 Court Sessions.

There was a flurry of court activity related to his death in the session that sat on 15-16 Aug 1786. The first to appear was his wife Mary, who wanted leave to continue to keep the Tavern operating at her home. On lesser matters, the Commissioners appointed a replacement for Robert, and his will was proved. Over the next two years there were several more court actions related to his estate.

CENSUS TAKER:

One of Robert's last official acts on County business also tells us something of his family: There was a "North Carolina Census 1784-1787". And the Court minutes of 18 Feb 1786 contain the item "Report of committee to examine lists of Inhabitants of County as follows: LOVILLES District: Robert WALKER." (Other committee members also named). And the actual census data report names "A list of souls for the District of Capt. Lovel, Taken by Robert Walker". (I would presume this was the district around Richmond, where I believe Robert was living at the time.)

The census report lists the first person as Robert Walker himself, with household consisting of: "1 White Male 21-60 years; 2 White Males under 21 & above 60; 4 White Females all ages; 3 Blacks 12-50; 2 Blacks under 12 and above 50".

HIS WILL:

Craig & Kathy Walker found a copy of Robert's will. You can view an image of the original (Caution: it's a large file!) at:

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/FamilyNotes/Robert_Walker_Esq_Will.PDF

The text of his will (**with added notes clarifying recipients**) follows:

"North Carolina, Surry County, March [blank] day, the year of our Lord God 1786. I Robert Walker of the County aforesaid and Town of Richmond do hereby in the name of God amen, constitute make and ordain this to be my last will and testament. First of all and order that my body be buried decently at the discretion of my executors and that all my lawful debts and funeral charges be paid. I do hereby will and order that my wife Mary Walker and my son Robert Walker and my trusty friend Col Martin Armstrong to be appointed the executors of this my last will testament.

(Mary Walker – Wife)

"I do hereby will and bequeath unto my beloved wife, Mary Walker the third of all my moveable estate, as also all the negros so long as she lives in widow-hood after my death, only the negro Phillip shall be sold or hired, and Rose shall remain with her mistress as long as the negro Rose lives. I also will and order that my wife shall have the raising of her children and that she raise them at the whole expense of the estate. I allow my wife any one of the plantations I own, that she chooses, until all of the children comes of age. As also the still, the utensils of husbandry, two horses, five cows and calves, her bed and bedding and chest of drawers, her tea ware and kitchen furniture and all the negros till the children come of age; but that an inventory be taken of the whole and valued and if that my widow marrys then she shall have the thirds only and the court shall choose guardians for the children. As also I will to my wife her mare and saddle and the thirds of all the moneys in hand and the thirds of all on the books. And also three hundred acres of land on the East side of the River Tennessee.

(James – son)

"I do here give and bequeath unto my son James five hundred acres of land on the East side of the River Tennessee. As also three hundred acres on Duck River out of the 180 hundred tract, and my horse and saddle, and watch, and fifty pounds in money when he comes of age. I do also allow that he shall be well learned in English arithmetic and astronomy and tuition at the expense of the whole estate.

(David – son)

"I also will and bequeath unto my son David three hundred acres of land on Duck River of the aforesaid tract. As also five hundred acres on the West side of the Tennessee River and also five hundred acres on the East side of the Tennessee River and their heirs forever, to have and to hold. As also to David I will & ordain that he shall have when he shall be of age a horse & saddle of the value of twenty five pounds and five pounds for to buy him a watch, my buckles and hat and that my apparel and books be divided at the discretion of my wife and the David shall have learning equally as high as James. As also I will and order that David shall have a negro bought equally good value to Peter if there be not any in my possession at my death.

(Polly & Betsey – young daughters by last (meaning current) wife)

"I do further will and bequeath to my daughter Polly, had by the last wife, the negro child named Susey. As also twenty five pounds in money when she is of age, as also a horse and saddle valued to twenty five pounds, a cow & calf, a bed & bedding, and chest of drawers. And to my daughter Betsey, by the last wife, I give and bequeath the negro child Mann, and a horse and saddle, a cow and calf, a bed and bedding, a chest of drawers and twenty five pounds in money and good learning to both and if ___ both of them marrys contrary to their mothers will

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

& consent they shall forfeit the one half of their portion and their mother or their guardian shall dispose of it to any of their brethren as seems good to them.

(Robert Walker – son)

"I do hereby will and bequeath unto my son Robert Walker three hundred acres of land on Duck River out of the 180 acres tract and five shillings in money to him and his heirs to have & to hold forever.

(Robert Walker – grandson, son of Robert Walker)

"As also to his son Robert Walker I give & bequeath three hundred acres out of the aforesaid track to him & his heirs forever. As also fifty pounds in money to be wholly expended on him in learning from time to time as need requires.

(Robert Walker – grandson, son of William Walker)

"As also I give & bequeath unto Robert Walker, the son of my son William Walker, to him I give and bequeath three hundred acres of land on the West side of the Tennessee River as also twenty five pounds in money to be expended on him in learning as his need requires, the said lands to have and to hold forever, him, and his heirs.

(Possible Future – grandson, son of John Walker)

"As also I do hereby give & bequeath unto a son of my son John Walker if so be that he has a son called Robert Walker to him I give and bequeath two hundred acres of land on the West side of the Tennessee.

(Robert Wright – grandson, son of Silley Wright & Mary Walker Wright)

"As also I give & bequeath unto Robert Wright, my grand son, son of Silley Wright to him I give and bequeath two hundred acres of land on the East side of the Tennessee, to have and to hold forever and his heirs.

(Mary Miller – granddaughter - daughter of Elizabeth (Betsey) Miller)

"As also I will and bequeath unto Mary Miller the daughter of Betsey Miller two hundred acres of land on the West side of the Tennessee to have and her ___ being forever to have and hold.

(William Walker – son)

"I do hereby will & bequeath unto my son William Walker five shillings.

(John Walker – son)

As also unto my son John Walker I will and bequeath five shillings.

(Elizabeth Miller & Mary Wright- daughters)

"And to my daughter Elizabeth Miller and also unto Mary Wright my daughter I will and bequeath to each of them five shillings and asset of meaning in value equal to three pounds to each of them.

(Mary Walker – no relationship noted – his wife?)

"As also to Mary Walker, I give and bequeath five shillings and asset of meaning equal value as aforesaid.

(Hannah Walker – no relationship noted)

"And to Hannah Walker I give and bequeath five shillings in money and asset of meaning equal value as aforesaid.

(Polly & Betsey – young daughters by last (meaning current) wife)

"I further do will & bequeath unto my two young daughters Polly and Betsey by the last wife to them I give and bequeath to each of them three hundred acres of land on the East side of the Tennessee River next to their mothers land to them and their heirs forever.

(Future Children)

"NB ___ if any more children shall hereafter be born to me by my wife, they shall have and enjoy equal portion with those now mentioned of the last wife's children, if the estate can bear

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

it, if not they must have a dividend out of the aforesaid bequeath with their brothers and sisters.

(Closing)

"And all the _____ after all the bequeaths ____ off shall be sold at publick sale as also all the lands, ____, and _____ except what is bequeathed and five years until given, and paid in equal ____ giving _____ and paying interest.

NB__I allow it is best, I will that Peter the negro shall remain with my widow as long as she lives a widow and a young boy be bought out of the estate for James, the same he shall have and hold forever.

And after their mothers death the sons shall have double portions with the girls and so all the negros that ____ is then and after shall be property divided among her children.

I do hereby revoke disannul all other former wills and acknowledge this to be my last will and testament before these presents.

As to the plantation, my widow's dower, after her death, her sons shall have an equal portion with my two ____ sons Robert and William Walker and the three hundred acres on the Tennessee my wife shall have and hold forever and bequeath to whom she will.

I therefore do conclude and finish this last will and testament being perfect health and sound mind and memory. I have done to the best of my skill and ability and that without the least prejudice, so peace and ____ I ____ and ____ of almighty God remaining amongst you _____. I think I have answered the ____ of my creation in a great measure. I hope to die in peace and hopes in salvation in and through our blessed redeemer, Jesus Christ.

Robert Walker (seal)

"Signed sealed & acknowledged before us the subscribing (testament?) the (blank) day of March and the year of our Lord God 1786.

"North Carolina, Surry County, August term AD 1786. The foregoing will of Robert Walker, Esqr was proved in open court by the comparison of hands, towit, by the oaths of Joseph Williams, John Randleman, Macolm Curry, William Hughlett, John Armstrong, John Thomas Longino & James Gaines _____, here being Recorded accordingly __ J Williams (County Clerk).

NORTH CAROLINA PROBATE RECORDS:

Kathy Walker found images of his estate inventory and other documents at the following:

<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:SQWF-D7DN-9?i=137&wc=32L2-K66%3A170003101%2C170782501%3Fcc%3D1867501&cc=1867501>

On this page, at top left, you should see "Image 138 of 213". Images 138-141 are the estate inventory. Image 147 reports on the sale of some estate items. Image 80 shows an 1801 Quit Claim from most of the family members. Image 81 is an 1801 Quit Claim from the minor children James and Betsy.

Estate inventoried by Job Martin & Joseph Randleman, including negroes Peter (worth £120) Phillis (£100), Susannah (£30), Nancy (£20), Rose (£80), & Aggie (£20). Total to the amount of 828 pounds, 9 shillings, 10 pence plus two silver watches. Returned by William Meredith and William Cook. Also notes due from (list of 13 names) to 73 pounds, 8 shillings, 5 pence with

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

Treasury Certificate & certificates due from (long list of 65 names) totalling 278 pounds, 18 shillings, 11 pence. Wits: W. Meredith, William Cook.

One of those listed debtors, by the way, is one "James Coffey", whom I have written about extensively, and who owed Robert 14 shillings and 3 pence. I suspect this was an outstanding bill from Robert's Tavern? It's not relevant to this Walker study, but if you have time on your hands, or want to learn more about Surry County, you're welcome to read:

<http://www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/FamilyNotes/JamesCoffee.pdf>

ROBERT WALKER, LAND SPECULATOR

At first glance, Robert's will (see above) suggests he was a very large landholder in Surry County, generously handing out hundreds and hundreds of acres from his huge estate to his children. But then you look at a map, and discover that the Tennessee and Duck Rivers actually come together in Western Tennessee, NOT in present day North Carolina.

He is in fact giving away frontier land, which he had probably never seen, and certainly never lived on. He had joined many of his contemporaries, and engaged in a popular pastime of the era, trying to acquire promising western lands either for his children or purely for speculative profit gains. There is no evidence that any of the named children ever actually lived there either.

(I did find some reference to one of the children, our ancestor Robert Jr., selling some of the land: "On September 23, 1809, Clement Cannon of Williamson County bought from 'Robert Walker, heir of Robert Walker, Senior, deceased of the County of Surry and State of North Carolina' a tract of 175 acres on Elk River (now in Tennessee). See also notes with son Robert Jr., who was acquiring land in the same area in his own name.)

This is part of a very interesting topic in American History. The original North Carolina colony claimed all lands lying to the west as far as the Mississippi River. In 1777 North Carolina created a "county" in its western reserve, Washington County, which at its creation encompassed the entire present-day Tennessee. And land there became available for purchase at 50 shillings for every 100 acres.

The area became a United States territory in 1790, and Tennessee became a state in 1796. So our Robert was active in the period when this was considered part of North Carolina.

The story of the land speculation is a long and complicated one. There are lots of complications that may have impacted Robert. The price to the state may have been between 50 shillings and 10 pounds per 100 acres, or he may have acquired it in a private deal. There may have been land claims by Revolutionary War soldiers involved. There were often overlapping claims. Much of the land near the Duck River belonged by treaty to the Cherokee Indians, but North Carolina was often reluctant to recognize Indian rights. The acreage quoted in Robert's Will may have been prior to a proper survey, and may have thus been grossly incorrect. And there is evidence of "substitutions" replacing initial claims. And all of this came loaded with confusion and corruption.

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

See the later discussion of Robert's association with Martin Armstrong, and his brother John Armstrong. Following are some notes of what I have found so far about specific acquisitions of Robert and his family:

Robert's Tennessee Land:

In the Houston Clayton Library I found "John Armstrong's Entry Book: October 21, 1783 – May 25, 1784", abstracted by Irene M. Griffey. Ms. Griffey also abstracted "Earliest Tennessee Land Records", which shows that many of these warrants were turned into actual land grants.

These abstracts included the warrant applications filed for some of the land Robert Walker gave away in his will (I think the will implies there was actually more than this). Following are the Walker family Warrants that I found, with notes indicating that a couple of these were actually finalized as land grants. Comments will follow:

(Entry) E137: *"John Walker – (Petition filed on) October 21, 1783. In Green County on the North side of French Broad River beginning at an Oak on the bank of the river and running down for compliment including his improvement." 250 Acres, Warrant issued June 7, 1784.*

E428: *"Robert Walker – October 25, 1783. On the North side of Tennessee River beginning at the mouth of the second large creek above the mouth of Duck River running up the sd Tennessee River for compliment." 4000 acres, Warrant issued July 10, 1784.*

E584: *"Robert Walker Junr. – October 27, 1783. In Green County on Duck River beginning where the Soldiers' West boundary line crosses the sd river the last time so running up the river on both sides for compliment." 1800 Acres, Warrant issued July 26, 1784.*

E1040: *"John Walker – October 29, 1783. In Green County on Plumb Creek including the warpath." 300 Acres, Warrant issued June 7, 1784.*

E1266: *"Robert Walker, Senr. – December 13, 1783. In [blank] County on the North side of the river Tennessee opposite to his former entry of four thousand acres, beginning at high water mark including the largest water course that falls into the sd Tennessee opposite to the aforesd entry running alongside of the Tennessee for compliment". 1200 acres, Warrant issued June 24, 1784. (Grant #1228 issued 27 Nov 1793, Bk 81, Pg 510. However grant description is "On S side of Elk River", which is a far distance from the original description – presume there was a substitution?)*

E1307: *"William Walker – Jan'y 4, 1784. On the no. side of French Broad River below Jesse Green it being the bottom on said river joining Capt. James Hubbards entry & running up the river for compliment including an island." 272 Acres, Warrant issued June 7, 1784. (Grant #323 issued 20Sep 1787.)*

E1620: *"John Walker – April 5, 1784. Joining Joseph Hardens entry on the waters of Duck River No. 1619 running down the creek for compliment." 1300 acres, Warrant issued Nov. 30, 1784.*

E1629: *"Robert Walker for James Paroul Walker – April 9, 1784. Lying on the S. Side of the Tinsee (sic) River in the County of [blank] beginning at High Water mark on the banks of the Tinisee (sic) River at the upper side of Robt Walker Senr's Entry of 1200 acres so running up along side of the Tinisee (sic) for compliment." 1000 Acres, Warrant Issued Jan'y 12, 1785.*

E2227: *"Robert Walker, Senr. – May 22, 1784. On the Tennessee joining Joel Lewis's Entry No. [blank] on the upper line & up said river for compliment." 700 Acres, Warrant issued Jan'y 10, 1785. (Grant #124 issued 10 Jul 1788, Bk 67, Pg 469. However grant description is "Lying on Fork of Weakleys Creek" – this is a fork of Elk Creek, which is found at a distant location – presume there was a substitution?)*

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

COMMENTS:

I think that his sons were applying for land at the same time. While it is possible that the above applications for William and John refer to people other than Robert Walker Esquire's sons, I think the coincidence of dates and the family relationship with the Armstrong brothers suggest they're ALL Robert's family. Because of the relationship between the blocks, and the way the names are offered, I think it is absolutely clear that at least warrants E428, E584, E1266, E1629, and E2227 refer to the right family.

None of these warrants had actually been converted to grants before Robert's death, so his will must have been assuming ultimate success? Would guess that Robert Jr., as executor, took responsibility for proper follow-up? And of possible interest: We can't fully pin down where Robert Jr. lived between 1787 and 1795 – and two of the grants were finalized in 1788 and 1793 – so maybe Robert Jr. was off in Tennessee getting things sorted out?

Note the final area appears to be in Giles County, which is where we previously found another 1788 grant (#2935) that appeared to belong to Robert Jr.

Also the description that goes with these two grants is different from the description in their respective Warrant applications – they refer to areas quite some distance apart. I suspect there was some substitution, and think maybe that was done because the original areas belonged to the Indians? North Carolina absolutely did not respect Indian rights, but when the Feds took over they insisted on at least token recognition of Indian land.

I have not determined if Robert's family ever realized any economic benefit. I do know that everything was suspended in 1790 when the federal government accepted control of the land from North Carolina, and that it often took years and years to work out problems of Indian rights, land fraud and lost records.

I'm always interested in the geography of areas claimed by ancestors. Based on examination of some Tennessee River charts, I believe the original tract "E428" (4000 acres) and adjacent "E1266" (1200 acres), can be found just south of where modern Interstate-40 crosses the Tennessee River. On the satellite image, it looks like VERY rough terrain. It's now part of the Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge, and the nearest town is "Sugar Tree", population 160. (The substituted grants along the Elk River look much more promising as agricultural land.)

Other Land Holdings:

I wish to also note that not all of Robert's land acquisitions were in "Tennessee". In the Surry County, North Carolina, Deed Book C, we find that on 3 Nov 1784 Robert Walker received four grants of land, totaling 1450 acres, on Muddy Creek and "Blews" Creek. Others at the same time got land on the "Dann" river. A little search of geographic names shows that these were really Belews Creek and Dan River, which are all located in what is now Forsyth County. This is not far from where Robert lived. This land is near the present day city of "Walkertown", which we will discuss in a moment.

How do we know that the Robert Walker who acquired the land grants near Walkertown in 1784 was OUR Robert? Because a deed of sale on 6 Mar 1786, says that the sale was by "Robert

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

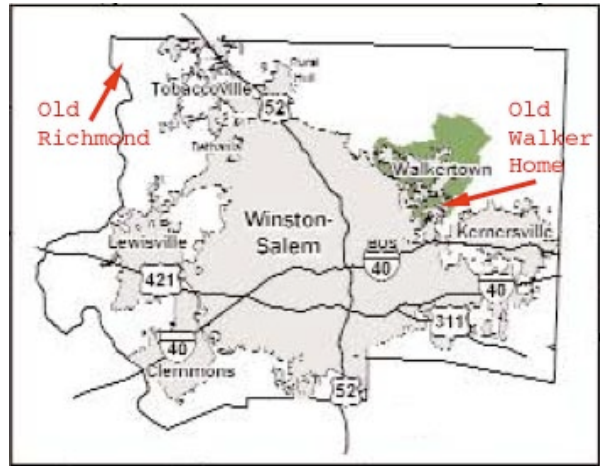
Walker, Esq. And wife Mary", and notes that the land sold was "part of larger tract granted to Robt. Walker 3 Nov 1784".

WALKERTOWN

This city is in present day Forsyth County, an eastern suburb of Winston-Salem, as shown on this map. To learn more, visit:

<http://www.walkertownareahistoricalsociety.org/>

This city did not exist in the time of Robert Walker Esq., but it is in the area where he lived prior to his move to Richmond. (It's about 17 miles as the crow flies from modern Walkertown to the site of old Richmond.)



And it is clear that the city's name derives from the family of our Robert Walker Esquire – although it is unclear whether it was named specifically in honor of Robert Esq, or in honor of one of his descendants. I think it most likely that it was named while a descendant lived there, but in honor of the family as a whole.

Wikipedia gives a reference: "Walkertown was named for Dr. Robert Walker who was living at the site by 1771." Reference: Powell, William S. The North Carolina Gazetteer: A Dictionary of Tar Heel Places, Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968.

On examination, I conclude this is a problematic statement. The Robert Walker who lived in the area in 1771 was our "Esquire" and not a doctor, and they may be mixing him up with somebody else named Robert, and/or a physician named Dr. Walker? Oh, and we can do better than the "1771". Documents discussed earlier show he was in the area by 1768 when he got a Tavern license!

The "Walkertown Area Plan" found at the city web page is more cautious. It says: "The early history of Walkertown is not clear. However, it is known that Robert Walker owned a tract of land in the vicinity of present-day Walkertown as early as 1771." The same plan, in their section on "Identified Historical Resources" mentions a "Dr. Robert Walker House (D)" built circa 1820, in the central part of the city. (The "(D)" indicates it has been demolished!)

I made an effort to locate the Robert Walker Esq property in the Walkertown vicinity using old documents. I conclude it is in the southern third of the present day Walkertown city limits – that would make it about 2 miles south of the town center. You can read my analysis at <http://www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/FamilyNotes/RobertWalkerHouse.htm>

Randy Walker says "The 'Doctor' Robert Walker in reference was a Dr. William Robert Walker who was born 19 Oct 1804 and was the great-grandson of Robert Esq. Dr. Walker came by way of William Walker, son of Robert Esq. He moved to Missouri in the spring of 1852 where he practiced medicine for over 40 years. On the 10 Feb 1881 he was supervising the loading of some saw logs and sustained an injury that resulted in his death 2 days later. He was a pioneer physician in Missouri."

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

My own investigation showed that this "Dr. William Robert Walker" is the one that married Elizabeth B. Vanhoy, and he was the son of the Robert Walker who married Martha Love. And he had a brother "Robert Love Walker". However I don't think he ever went by the name "Robert" – I suspect his brother used that. He was a physician, and is found, using only the name "William" and age 45, in the 1850 census in Forsyth County with his wife and 9 children. He is believed to have become the postmaster when the Walkertown Post Office was started, according to postal records, on 6/15/1848. While he might have chosen the name "Walkertown" after himself, it may have also been informally called that much earlier. He is also found in the 1860 and 1870 census for Henry County, MO, always under the name "William".

He also doesn't fit with the Walkertown Area Plan reference to the "Dr. Robert Walker House built circa 1820" – he would have been age 15 and much too young to build a house. Although he might have later practiced medicine from that house. (I wonder if his FATHER could have been the "Dr. Robert"?)

MY PERSONAL ASSESSMENT (BY FRED COFFEY) This all started with **Robert** Walker Esq., of Surry County, who lived in the area of Walkertown by no later than 1768-1771, and who had an obsession about assuring there would be an abundance of "**Roberts**" among his descendants. He had a son William, who in turn dutifully named a son **Robert** (1770–1848), assuring both William and **Robert** recognition in **Robert** Esq's will. William's son **Robert** married Martha Love, and became a very wealthy and prominent citizen, and probably built a big house about 1820 in the area near Love's Methodist church (now central Walkertown). And, being grateful to grandfather **Robert**, he named his own sons "William **Robert**" and "**Robert** Love". And son William **Robert** (always called William in the census and his father's will) practiced medicine and served as postmaster, in an area that was becoming more commercial and that people began to call "Walkertown".

Then along come the historians, who learn that there had been Walkers about, using the name **Robert**, since 1771, that one of the Roberts lived in a big house, and that one Walker was a physician/postmaster when the area began to be called "Walkertown". Hey, that's all you need to start talking about "Dr. **Robert** Walker who lived here since 1771 and built an historic house in about 1820"!

Being a descendant of Robert Walker Esquire, my view is that it all comes back to this Walker family patriarch! So "Walkertown", indeed honors my ancestor!

LAND HOLDINGS AND TRANSACTIONS, WALKERTOWN AREA:

Robert Walker was on the Rowan County 1768 tax list of Jacob Laesch. This list is for Bellows Creek (aka Belews Creek). Parts of the Walkertown area drain into Belews Creek, so this tax list is probably referencing his land in and near today's Walkertown. So he was there by no later than 1768. Also note earlier discussion under "DNA", which suggests strongly that Robert and his brother David were still in Pennsylvania in 1765. I believe that while he may have been on this tax list, he did not yet officially OWN this land:

The northern part of North Carolina was in the Granville Proprietary. The Granville agents were making land grants from 1744 to 1763. When Lord Granville died in England in 1763, his land

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

offices closed and never reopened. In 1778 North Carolina opened land offices, and began issuing land grants. But between 1763 and 1778 you either bought land from someone who had a Granville Grant, or you worked on the basis of "Squatters Rights". There's a passing reference to Robert in the Moravian 3 July 1771 Bethabara Diary, mentioning "...he is not a Freeholder". I think that suggests he was a "squatter" without legal title to the land where he lived.

It appears that in 1778, as soon as North Carolina opened land offices, Robert applied for the land he had been squatting on. And he apparently got it. In the Surry County, NC, Deed Book C, Robert Walker received four land grants on 3 Nov 1784. And others in his family were also aggressively acquiring land in the vicinity of "Muddy" and "Belews" creek. Here are the relevant grants:

Name	County	Year Entered	Year Issued	Acres	File #	Location
Robert Walker	Surry	1779	1784	150	588	On a branch of Blews creek [Blues Creek]
Robert Walker	Surry	1778	1784	500	652	O the Middle Fork of Muddy Creek
Robert Walker	Surry	1779	1784	300	727	On the waters of Muddy Creek
Robert Walker	Surry	1779	1784	500	791	On the head of Blues Creek
David Walker (a minor)	Surry	1778	1780	300	234	On the waters of Muddy Creek
Robert Walker Jr.	Surry	1779	1780	600	291	Beg. At the Morvarian Corner white oak
William Walker	Surry	1780	1784	100	726	On the waters of Mudy (Muddy) Creek
John Walker	Surry	1778	1780	500	317	Beg. At a black oak on the North side of a branch

That's 2950 total acres, or 4.6 square miles! Looking at a map, my impression is that ALL of modern Walkertown is only about 20 square miles! Note that two of the four grants to Robert are on Muddy Creek, and two on Blues/Blews/Belews Creek. His holdings crossed the watershed, which is roughly in the middle of Walkertown.

Another Walker researcher, Betty Hicks, found the 1778 entry that became File #652 above, in "Abstracts of the Land Entries, 1778-1781, in Surry County, NC" reporting *"#164 ROBERT WALKER enters 500 acres of land in Surry Co. lying on the MIDDLE FORK of MUDDY CREEK, beginning at the WACHOVIA line at a point due W from a big poplar tree on the creek with a big notch in it being a determined line betwixt JOSEPH EDWARDS A FORMER PROSESSOR and I, so running S some distance over the road that leads to the iron works so W to a corner settled betwixt MY BROTHER DAVID, DEC'D., so running NW a conditional line to the WACHOVIA Line - June 9 1778. (Warrant Granted. December 28, 1778 - entry withdrew, money refunded.)"*

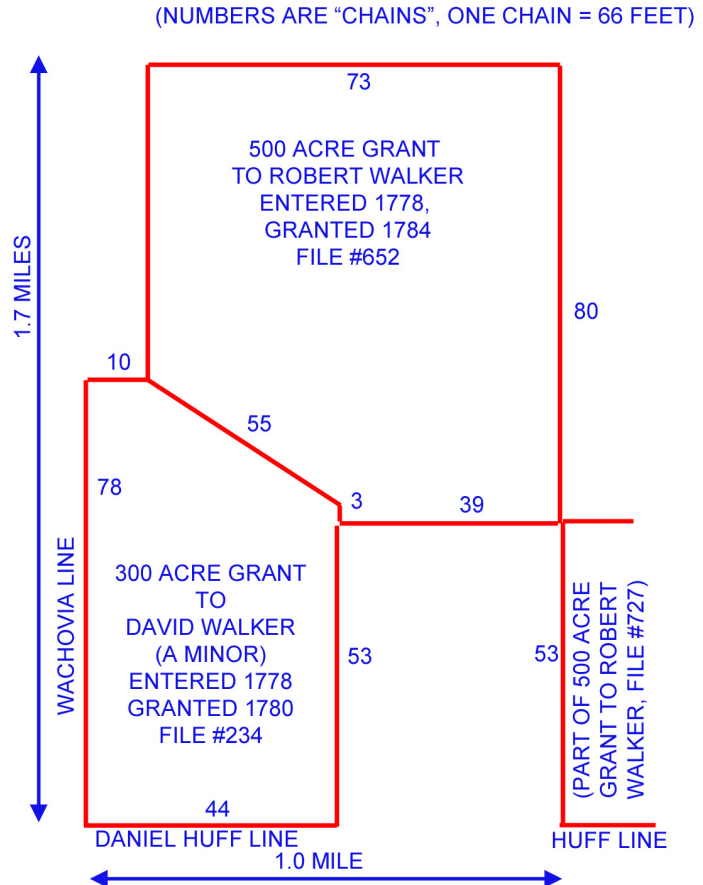
(NOTE: In this, I think "PROSESSOR" should read "PROCESSIONER", referring to the practice of a "procession" of land owners routinely walking the boundaries of land, verifying and updating markers as appropriate (e.g., is the "big poplar tree" still there)? These New Englanders drew on the age-old ritual of beating the bounds, also called hunting the borough, proceSSIONing, or perambulation. Also the "iron works" mentioned were located very near what is now Reidsville, NC. The road to the iron works would approximate the modern Reidsville Road (Hwy 158) in Walkertown. This highway intersects "Iron Works Road" just west of Reidsville.)

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

One of the particularly interesting grants was found by Kathy Walker: State of North Carolina Grant No. 233 (this would be File #234 above) Issued 3 Apr 1780 Entered 21 Aug 1778. *"Know ye that we have granted to David Walker /a minor/ three hundred acres of land in Surry County on the waters of Muddy Creek beginning at a Black Oak running North West being **a line agreed on with Robert Walker** fifty five Chain to a Post Oak thence West Ten Chain to a Stake in the Moravian Line thence on Said line South Seventy eight Chains to Daniel Huffs Corner Post Oak thence East on Huffs line forty four Chains to a Hicory on the Same hence North to the Beginning. TO HOLD unto the Said David Walker /a minor/ his Heirs and Afsigns forever. Dated the Third Day of April 1780. By His Excellency's Com'd R. C. Carnell J. C. Hargan Sec."*

There is a complementary Grant by North Carolina Issued 3 Nov 1784 to Robert Walker: "No 651: *Know ye that we have granted unto Robert Walker five hundred acres of Land in Surry County on the Middle Fork of Muddy Creek beginning at a post oak runs thence East seventy three chains to a stake South eighty chains to a stake West thirty nine Chains to a black oak in **David Walkers line** north on his line three chains to a black oak North West on his line fifty five chains to a post oak then north to the beginning to hold unto the said Robert Walker his heirs and assigns forever dated the Third day of November 1784.*

These two grants together are clearly for the land settled by Robert and by his brother David. Brother David is deceased, and that land went to David Junior, a minor. (Oh, and I strongly suspect that the "Daniel Huff" mentioned was also my ancestor, that he was the grandfather of Mary Jones who married Robert Walker Jr.!?)



There is a third grant of interest, File #727 above. I had trouble reading and following the details, but it clearly refers to a connection between a corner of one of the above grants, and to the Daniel Huff line. The above is a sketch of how the three fit together:

All three of these grants refer to "Muddy Creek", which puts them in the south half of Walkertown.

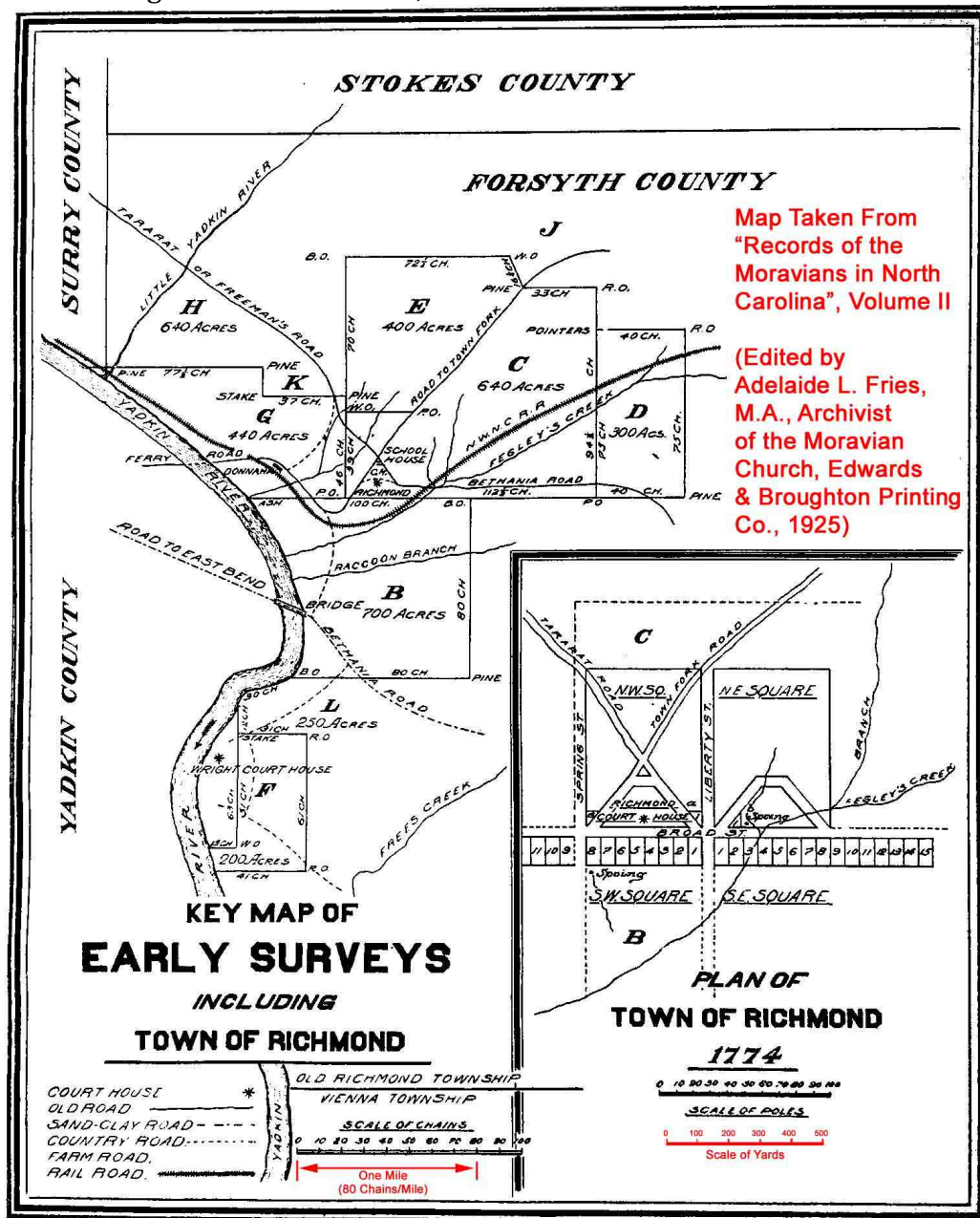
In later years, Robert sold some parts of his grants. On 14 Feb 1786 he sold two tracts of land on Muddy Creek and Blews (Belews) Creek, which were presumably part of these grants. This sale was to Mordecai MENDENHALL, and was also noted in the Surry Court Minutes on Page 84. There was an additional sale of another 50 acres on Muddy Creek on 6 Mar 1786 to

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

Archibald CAMPBELL, also noted in the Court Minutes on Page 90. The sale price was 47£ 10s. This one is very clearly part of the 1784 grant, since the deed notes that it was "part of larger tract granted to Robt. Walker 3 Nov 1784". The deed also indicates that the sale was by "Robert Walker, Esq. and wife Mary". Note that Robert's will was drafted in the same month as this last sale. This may have indicated he was then in poor health?

LAND HOLDINGS AT RICHMOND:

The earlier map also shows the location of Richmond. We found a 1774 survey showing the land holdings around Richmond, as follows:



KEY MAP OF WRIGHT AND RICHMOND COURT-HOUSE TRACTS

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

You will see an "Area E" near the top with 400 acres – that is land owned by Robert Walker Esq. And he also owned, according to the 1786 tax list, some 12 town lots. (You can easily find the Richmond site using Google Maps. Just ask for "Payne Road, Tobaccoville, NC". It's a short road, and the site is the cleared area at the eastern end.)

This image shows a location identified as "Gideon Wright Home & Courthouse". Before the Richmond courthouse was built, the county commissioners met in a building on the farm of Gideon Wright. And there appear to have been some serious political issues! Following is a quote I borrowed from www.planetmurphy.org :

"On the local level in Surry County, another sort of war was taking place. The county leaders – Gideon Wright, Martin Armstrong, Alexander Martin, and Benjamin Cleveland – started fighting over the location of the new Surry Court House. This fight became part of the local issues of the on-coming American Revolution. A patriot group including Martin Armstrong pushed to have the courthouse at Mulberry Fields (Wilkesboro). Another group pushed to locate it eastward on the Yadkin River farm of Gideon Wright. Both Armstrong and Wright took the matter directly to Governor Tryon to obtain his permission. Wright won and the courthouse was constructed on his farm which along the East Bend - Bethania Road. Martin Armstrong and his followers refused to accept the decision and began efforts to move it to Mulberry Fields. Even as justices of the peace, they refused to attend any court session at courthouse on Wright's farm. Several years later in about 1775, the courthouse suspiciously burned to the ground."

ROBERT WALKER ROLE: The new courthouse was built at Richmond in about 1779, and Richmond was only about 2 miles northeast of Gideon Wright's farm. So Armstrong never won his battle to locate it at Wilkesboro (about 40 miles farther west). The Surry Court records do show that Robert Walker was willing to sit on the Gideon Wright court, so he could not have been part of the Armstrong faction that refused to attend. Armstrong DID participate as a Commissioner after the move to Richmond, so that may have been the final compromise? Armstrong, Wright and Walker all became major land owners around Richmond.

I will talk more about Robert's associations with Wright and Armstrong in a moment.

There are some Richmond land records I'm still puzzling over, but I'm beginning to suspect that Armstrong, Wright, and maybe Walker, were getting grants in the Richmond area from North Carolina in 1778. Note that 1778 is when NC began to make its own grants from areas of the former Granville Proprietary. There are also references to old Granville grants below. I found the following references to grants in the Richmond area, with boundaries related to Armstrong/Wright/Walker lands. There is an implication that Robert's land was formerly owned by a "Douglass", suggesting that Robert acquired his land from a man who received a Granville grant?

JOSEPH WINSTON HIS ENTRY BOOK, SURRY CO NC, LAND ENTRIES; 1778-1781 by Agnes M. Wells, Virginia G. Phillips, Carol J. Leonard; 1987

p.45/497 George Sprinkle entered 360 acres in Surry Co, North side of the Yadkin below Gidion Ritts [Wrights], it being an old entry made in Earl of Graville's office. (SEE NOTE 1 BELOW) 12 Aug 1788.

p.50/550 Gidion Wright entered 200 acres in Surry on the Yadkin R, beg at upper corner of George Springles, thence NE up the river and round to my old line. 13 Aug 1778.

SURRY CO NC DEEDS; Vol 1 DB A; 1770-1783; Mrs. W. O. Absher, Mrs. Robert K Hayes

p.229-30 10 Dec 1778 NC Grant #18 to John Armstrong. 640 acres both sides Fralesy Crk [Frays, Freys, Freese Crk?] including the town of Richmond. On Gideon Wright's line crossing Tarrarat Road, Townfork Rd, the

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

*agreed line bet Armstrong & **Robert Walker**.*

p.243-244 10 Dec 1778 NC Grant to Samuel Cummins. 640 acres Yadkin R adj Gideon Wrights line, below mouth of the Little Yakin crossing Tarrarat Rd to Great Yadkin.

SURRY CO NC DEEDS; Vol 1 DB B; 1770-1783; Mrs. W. O. Absher, Mrs. Robert K Hayes

p.84 3 Apr 1780 NC Grant to Gideon Wright. 200 acres Yadkin R, his own line

p.138 1 Aug 1781 Samuel Cummins to Joseph Phillips. 640 acres on Yadkin adj Gideon Wright line, below mouth of the little Yadkin, crossing Tararat [Ararat] Rd. [This 640 acres was a NC grant to Saml Cummins on 10 Dec 1778]

p.185 11 Sep 1781 Joseph Phillips sold the above 640 acres to William Shepperd. Adj Gideon Wright's line, below mouth of the Little Yadkin, crossing Tararat Rd & the Little Yadkin to Great Yadkin.

*SURRY COUNTY LAND ABSTRACTS: 29 Apr 1778 ARMSTRONG, JOHN 640 acres on Figley's Creek bounded by: Gideon Wright "land formerly belonging to John Sneed" caveat filed by **Robert Walker** - new survey ordered*

*SURRY COUNTY LAND ABSTRACTS: 29 Apr 1778 ARMSTRONG, JOHN 640 acres on Figley's Creek bounded by: bounded by: town of Richmond caveat filed by **Robert Walker** - new survey ordered*

*SURRY COUNTY LAND ABSTRACTS: 29 Apr 1778 **WALKER, ROBERT Senr. 400 acres formerly known by the name of Douglass place** bounded by: Gideon Wrights old survey, near Freeman's Road "being a line determined by John Armstrong and myself" to the forks of the road that leads to Dan River*

NOTE 1: A Gideon Wright genealogist, Kay Haden, reports: "The Grant from the Earl of Granville to Gideon Wright was made 10 Aug 1762; Gideon Wright was said to be of Rowan County. The tract was on the East side of the Yadkin R opposite to Benjamin Pettit, 69 acres. This was a lease for 3h for every hundred acres to be paid at the Court-house of Rowan - a typical grant from the crown in this time period. Surveyed 19 May 1762. Gideon Wright & George Sprinkle Surveyor & Chain Carriers. Proved in open Court at Rowan Co, Oct 1762 and Recorded in Book 5, p.75."

There's another tiny land transaction for a tiny town lot in Richmond that is quite interesting from an historical perspective:

*SURRY CO NC DEEDS; VOL 1 DB B; 1770-1783; Abstracted by Mrs W. O. Absher, Mrs. Robert K Hayes p. 297-298: "6 Feb 1783 Samuel Cummins & wife Mary to **Robert Walker** for 20 shillings. 7 1/2 square poles in Town of Richmond, corner Diamond bet sd Cummins & Walker, NW Square of town, corner Broad St, lot formerly claimed by Gideon Wright. Wit: Martin & John Armstrong."*

BACKGROUND: This is an interesting wrap-up of some American Revolution events: Colonel Gideon Wright supported the King in the American Revolution and his lands were confiscated (but his wife was allowed to continue using them). Robert's close friends, Colonel Martin Armstrong and his brother John, were winning leaders on the Patriot side. Gideon died in 1782. Armstrong and Walker are both now sitting on the Surry Court (and actually approving matters related to Gideon's estate). And Walker is buying a piece of Gideon's former holdings. The victors divide the spoils?

ROBERT WALKER'S ASSOCIATES:

Let me introduce a group, and two individuals, who were clearly close associates of Robert, and who played prominent roles in the history of our country. Their interactions with Robert will help understand Robert:

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

The Moravians:

The Moravians were a Protestant Church originally from Pennsylvania, who expanded into a major settlement in North Carolina. Robert usually had good rapport with the Moravian community – before moving to Richmond his property was just outside the Moravian block, to the East. And the Moravians kept great diaries, with many references to Robert. It's interesting reading – see a whole separate paper I wrote on his Moravian relationships above.

Martin Armstrong:

Who is this person? I believe he was a major presence in the life of Robert Walker Esq., and probably a very close friend. His acquaintance with Robert dates at least from the formation of Surry County in about 1770 and, at Robert's death in 1786, Martin was one of the Executors of Robert's last will and testament (along with Robert's wife Mary and son Robert Jr.).

We first find Martin as a surveyor laying out the Surry County line, with its reference to passing Robert's house. We find Martin serving as County Sheriff when Robert first appears as a Justice on the Surry Court. The Surry County courthouse was built on land owned by Martin, and our Robert acquired several town lots in Richmond. Martin also served alongside Robert as a fellow Justice for many years, until Robert's death. Martin was Colonel of the Surry Militia during the revolution, and probably commanded Robert's son Robert Jr. at the Battle of Kings Mountain.

Of particular interest may be that Martin Armstrong was a MAJOR land speculator at the time our Robert got involved in Tennessee land speculation. Martin and his brother John Armstrong played major roles in the scandals involving Tennessee land, where the two brothers were in charge of taking entries to claim land. Martin at one time held 50 land patents and 260,000 acres for himself.

And, in my mind, there is little doubt that Robert Walker's own land speculation benefited from his close association with Martin Armstrong. Again, this is an extremely complicated subject, and one that could stand further research into the roles and holdings of Robert Walker.

John Armstrong:

Brother of Martin, see above. John managed the land office in Hillsborough, NC, after the revolution. His "Entry Book" records several warrants initiating the granting of land around the Tennessee River to Robert Walker and his family. He also signed as a witness to the proving of Robert's will.

Gideon Wright:

Gideon, and our Robert, also had a long relationship. They appear together as Justices from the earliest days after the formation of Surry County.

Ultimately, Gideon Wright and Martin Armstrong came down on opposite sides of the American Revolution. Gideon and his brother Hezekiah remained loyal to the King, and were both Colonels in the Whig militia. Martin, and his brother were officers on the Patriot side.

ROBERT WALKER, ESQUIRE

FIRST SPOUSE: ANNE?

(See the discussion earlier about whether or not "Ann" was the name of Robert's first wife.

SECOND SPOUSE: MARY

We do not yet have any firm information as to family origins of either of Robert's wives. However there may be a clue regarding the second wife: There is a marriage record extracted from the Family History Library, County Records, Salt Lake City, UT, dated 18 Aug 1775, showing that a Mary PROWELL married a Robert Walker in Guilford County, NC. Guilford is the next county to the East of Surry County. However we have been using this date of 18 Aug 1775 as the date that Robert Walker JUNIOR married Mary JONES, and that Mary was from Guilford County, so there's clearly (!) some confusion here! (I think that marriage date for Robert Jr. is less likely, because it would mean that Robert Jr. and Mary had no children for the first 5 years of their marriage. Also Mary Jones would have been only age 13 if they married in 1775.)

Will try to do some future checking, but this is difficult. All we know that Robert Sr. and Robert Jr. each married a wife named "Mary" at more or less the same time.

We do know MORE about Mary AFTER Robert Esq's death. Kathy Walker discovered Surry Court documents regarding guardianship of the two young girls and marriage records, it is now evident that Robert's widow Mary remarried Jesse Lester on 20 May 1787. Picking up from Kathy's info, I wrote about Mary (Walker) Lester as follows:

www.coffey.ws/familytree/familynotes/MaryWifeOfRobert.pdf

MY FAMILY LINE, ROBERT'S DESCENDANTS:

Everything I presently know about Robert Walker Esq is above. However his son Robert (Junior) may be of interest to some. Have a look at the following:

[http://www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/Docs/WALKERRobertJr\(W\).pdf](http://www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/Docs/WALKERRobertJr(W).pdf)

And my initial "search" for my Walker roots is discussed with his grandson, William, at:

[http://www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/Docs/WALKERWilliam\(W\).pdf](http://www.coffey.ws/FamilyTree/Docs/WALKERWilliam(W).pdf)

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