

# **WALKER: The Seven Davids**

By Fred Coffey

<http://www.coffey.ws/familytree/familynotes/Walker7Davids.pdf>

I descend from a Robert Walker Esq., who lived in Surry County, NC, where he died in 1786. This Robert had a brother "David" who has a son "David", and per his will Robert himself also had a son "David".

There is a "family story" that Robert and his brother were part of a group of 5 brothers who settled together in North Carolina. However we couldn't specifically identify any of the other 3 brothers, so thought that story might be a myth.

But now we see there are four "Davids" in Surry County that are candidates as children of the above sons David. And recently completed y-DNA tests on living descendants show that ALL FOUR of these "David" lines are without doubt connected to the family of Robert Esq. and his brother. However I believe it is quite impossible that they are all descendants of JUST Robert and his brother David.

Therefore at least one, and possibly two, of these "four Davids" descendant lines MUST come from the OTHER brother(s), who have yet to be identified. For purposes of this paper, accept that ALL the people discussed below are RELATED, as PROVEN by the DNA. But the DNA cannot itself show who descends from whom.

Let me first describe things that I KNOW to be provably true, and then move on to theories as to how these "Facts" might be interpreted:

## **THE KNOWN FACTS - The Early Davids:**

(1) DAVID(BOR): We need quick handles, and the "BOR" is meant to indicate this one is the brother of Robert Walker Esquire. There are many records related to this David, who died in about 1774/75. And these records prove he left a minor son named David.

(2) DAVID(SOR): Robert Walker Esq. named "my son" David in his will. So the "SOR" label for this David stands for son of Robert, the David named in Robert's will.

(3) DAVID(SOD): Per above, we know that DAVID(BOR) had a son David, so we'll call him "SOD" for son of David.

(I once thought that DAVID(SOR) and DAVID(SOD), might be the SAME person; i.e. that Robert Esq adopted his brother's son, and thereafter referred to him as his own son. I now think that's impossible: If we can't even show a way for ALL the following to descend from TWO Davids, we absolutely can't get there with only ONE!)

### **THE KNOWN FACTS – Possible Descendant Families:**

There are four known families that descend from a “David”, from the right time period, with connections to Surry County:

(4) DAVID(Sarah): There is a David Walker, who married Sarah McPherson. This David Walker is found in the *1850 Federal Census for Forsyth, NC*, (Forsyth was spun off from Stokes, which was split off from Surry). The census indicates his age is 85, and claims he was born in **Pennsylvania**. This is the one who “Find-a-grave” reports is buried in Love Methodist Church Cemetery in Walkertown, with a reported birth date of 14 Sep 1765. Also buried there is his son, David Walker Jr. (2 Oct 1788 – 13 Jul 1864), who married Martha Crook Bennett. “Junior” is the head of household in that 1850 census. Here are the known children of this David:

#### **DAVID(Sarah)**

*John (20 Dec 1786 - 10 Jul 1863)*

*David Jr. (23 Oct 1788, Surry - 19 Jul 1864)*

*Thomas (17 Sep 1790, Stokes - 10 Mar 1853, TN)*

*Owen (13 Oct 1792, Stokes - 1846, IN)*

*Alvis (14 Jun 1795, Stokes - 16 Dec 1879, Forsyth)*

(5) DAVID(Mary): We know there was a David Walker that married a Mary Reece in 1802. Some of the marriage records for Mary also show she was born in 1780, and that fits nicely. But the most important clues are in the 1822 will of Mary’s father, **Abraham Reece**. He writes “...I give unto my son in law **David Walker** one dollar freely to be enjoyed by him forever and I also give my three grandchildren **Elizabeth, John and Jeremiah Walker** five dollars each freely to be enjoyed by them forever.” So we know the children as follows:

#### **DAVID(Mary)**

*Elizabeth (abt 1803)*

*John Thornton (30 Dec 1804 - 23 Jan 1880)*

*Jeremiah (abt 1805)*

(6) DAVID(Milley): This David Walker married Amelia Malinda “Milley” Pinnix on 24 Sep 1809 in Surry County. They had children born in Surry County, but subsequently moved to Warrick County, IN. This David died 7 Apr 1853 in Warrick County. Here are the known children:

#### **DAVID(Milley)**

*Talitha (12 August 1811, Surry County, NC – 24 June 1878, Warrick County, IN)*

*Robert Burton (1815, Surry County, NC – 1851, Warrick County, IN)*

*Mary Eva (1816 NC - 1856, Warrick Co IN)*

*Overton Gibson (12 May 1818, Surry County, NC - 20 September 1896, Kansas)*

*Martin R (1820, NC - )*

*Susanna (1821 - )*

*David Wilson (1822/24, Surry County, NC - )*

*Merida L (1832 )*

(7) DAVID(1843): This David Walker died before 11 December 1843 in Stokes County, NC. Estate documents identify many of his children, many of whom also have connections to Stokes Co. We don't know the name of the mother of these children, so we identify him as "1843", the year of his death.

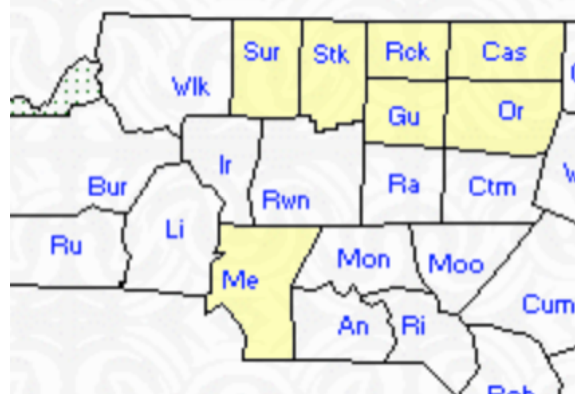
**DAVID((1843))**

*Temperance (23 Nov 1814 NC, 19 Jun 1892 Forsyth, NC)*  
*William A (22 May 1817, NC, 6 Dec 1873, Forsyth NC)*  
*Smith A (27 Mar 1822, Stokes, NC, 4 Apr 1891, Ray, MO)*  
*Thomas Columbus (27 Dec 1826, Stokes NC, 18 Jun 1906, Forsyth ;NC)*  
*Hezekiah Blackwell (3 Mar 1828, NC, 8 Jan 1869, NC)*  
*Nancy G (1834, Forsyth, NC -*  
*Martha E (Jun 1834, Forsyth, NC -*  
*Elizabeth S (1837, NC -*

**GEOGRAPHY:**

As this discussion progresses, I will be making several references to various counties. It is VERY IMPORTANT to understand how they have evolved over time. Here's a map of the relevant area as of 1790, with counties of interest in yellow:

Particularly important, be aware that until 1789 the Surry and Stokes shown here were a single county, called Surry. So prior to 1789 any reference to Surry would refer to the combined area. After that, any reference to "Surry" refers only to the left half, and the right half is "Stokes".



And in 1849/50 Surry and Stokes are split again. The bottom half of the 1790 Surry becomes "Yadkin", and the bottom half of the 1790 Stokes becomes "Forsyth".

**Mecklenburg** is older, was formed in 1762. In 1777 **Caswell** was formed from the North half of Orange County. So any records prior to 1777 may refer to "Orange". In 1785 **Rockingham** was formed from the North half of Guilford County.

**THE GENEALOGISTS:**

I have been collecting information from quite a few genealogists who are working on different parts of this Walker family, and I will quote them as sources frequently:

I am **Fred Coffey** ([FredCoffey@aol.com](mailto:FredCoffey@aol.com)), and I descend from Robert Walker Esq. through his son Robert II, and his grandson William. I have no personal stake in any of the "seven Davids", but I took a special interest in DNA testing, and started asking questions of all the

participants and trying to understand how all the pieces fit together. The more confused I became, the more questions I asked.

I have been working a lot with **Kathy Walker** ([KathyWalker@wi.rr.com](mailto:KathyWalker@wi.rr.com)), and her husband Craig. Craig also descends from Robert Walker Esq. through his son Robert II, and his grandson Robert III. We have exchanged a lot of information on our shared ancestry. Most recently Kathy has begun to capture a tremendous database of land transactions involving all she can find on the descendants of Robert Esq. and his brother David. Right now it's a work in progress, but I'm sure she will ultimately share with any of the other "genealogists".

**Randy Walker** ([randye.walker1@charter.net](mailto:randye.walker1@charter.net)) descends from DAVID(Sarah), whom he has long believed is DAVID(SOD). Randy has probably been working on Walker genealogy longer than any of us, and has provided tremendous help to myself and to others, even though most of us don't share his descent from DAVID(SOD).

**Betty Hicks** ([bwhicks@att.net](mailto:bwhicks@att.net)) descends from Robert Esq's son William, but has worked extensively with Randy. She understood and explained some of Randy's sources, and was able to help me find additional subjects for DNA testing. She offered enough information on various Walker lines to help me find **John Walker Blazier**, a descendant of David(Mary), and **John Alfred Walker III**, a descendant of DAVID(1843). DNA says we're all "family"!

**Marcy Walker Murdock** ([swissms68@att.net](mailto:swissms68@att.net)) is a descendant of DAVID(Milley), and pointed out a number of her sources about that line, and also sources related to DAVID(SOD).

**Kim Walker Smith** ([kimbo.david80@gmail.com](mailto:kimbo.david80@gmail.com)) is a descendant of Robert Esq's son John, and sponsored her uncle Bobby Walker to participate in our Walker DNA Project. I got confused thinking that one of our "Davids" had land transactions with this John, and Kim quickly pointed out that she had the will of John, which disproved my analysis. We need to discuss:

#### **DIGRESSION: THE FOUR JOHNS:**

Robert Esq. named a son John in his will. I'll call him "John #1". Kathy Walker discovered some 1803 "quit claim" statements related to Robert's estate, which called this son "John Walker (Spartenburg SC)", showing where he was at that time. I thought that he had returned to North Carolina after this date, where he interacted with one of the Davids.

But Kim pointed out the will she found for "John Walker (Spartenburg)", which proved that he had stayed in SC until his death in about 1814. And that will named a son John, who was a minor in 1814. I'll call him "John #2". Kim showed that this John was born in 1797, and died in Oct 1860 in Alabama.

John's will named his wife as **Margaret**, named his sons (probably in order of birth) as **William, Samuel, David, John** and **Absalom** – the last two were minors. His daughters were **Sabra, Margaret, Nancy** and **Rebecca**.

Now, one of our Davids did have land transactions, in Surry County, with a John Walker, in 1800 and 1809. I'll call him "John #3". And given the above info, this John was clearly NOT John Walker (Spartenburg).

Further, there were other land transactions in the same exact geographic area that involved a person was probably a son of "John #3". I'll call this apparent son "John #4". This John Jr. had Fisher's River land transactions in 1825, 1837, 1840, 1846, 1855 and 1857. He is found in the 1850, 1860, and 1870 census in or near Dobson, NC (Dobson became the county seat of Surry after Yadkin was split off). In each census his wife is Lucy, born about 1814. In the 1850 census John and Lucy have a daughter, Lydia. By the 1860 census Lydia was married to Oliver Stanley, and they also lived in Dobson. Lydia and Oliver are also found in the 1880 census, still in Dobson, with 3 children. And I found the death certificate for Lydia Stanley, born 16 Sep 1844 and died 3 Apr 1934 at age 90. In that death certificate her parents were named as John Walker and Lucy Bradshaw.

Where did John #3 and #4 come from? I find it interesting that John #1 named a son "**Samuel**". Maybe this is another one of the Walker names, like David, Robert, etc. that tended to get used over and over?

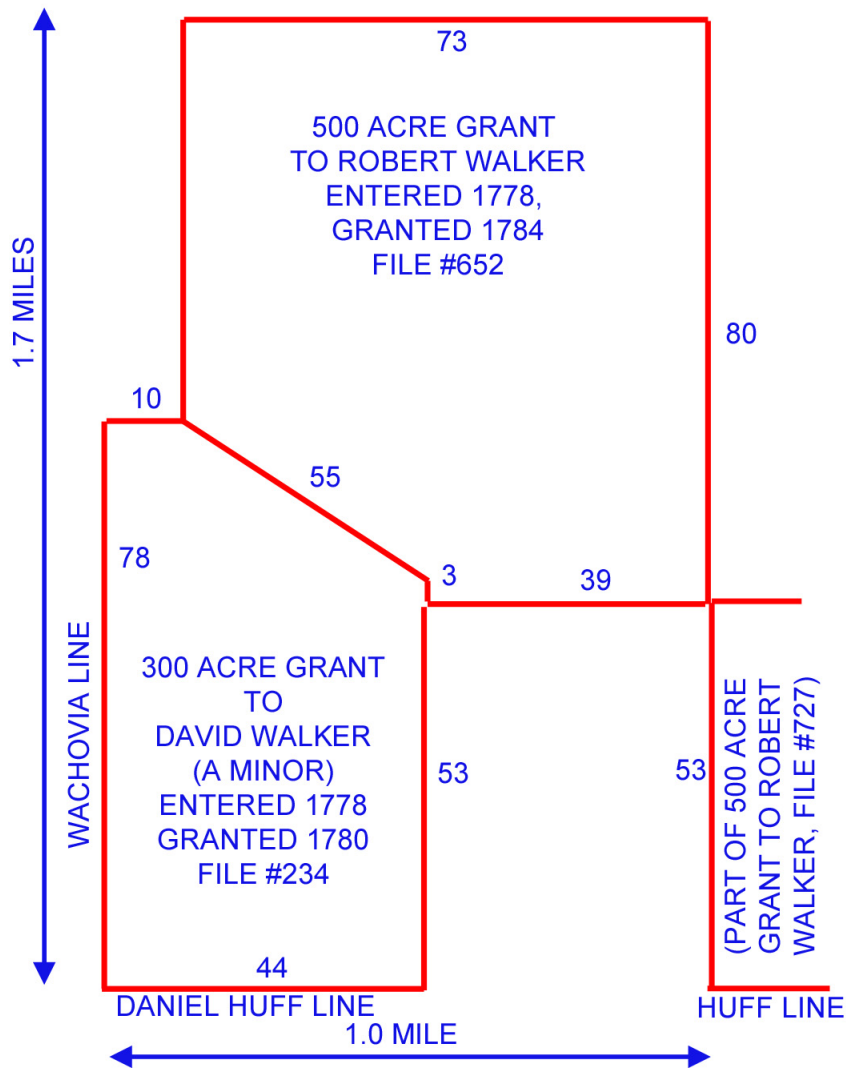
Some genealogies claim John #3 and #4 may be connected to a **Samuel** Walker found in the 1850 census, with connections to "Flat Rock", Surry, which is only about 12 miles NE of Dobson. This Samuel was born about 1775 in Flat Rock, and was married Hulda Means (1876-1860). This Samuel can be tracked through the 1810, 1820, 1830, and 1840 census, and is found on the 1812 tax list, all for Surry. In the 1850 census, he is in the Northern Division of Surry, with wife Hulda and a **son James**. He died in May 1858 in Surry, and his probate documents name daughters Sarah and Adeline as minors. (Kathy Walker is talking about trying to sort out land transactions in Surry for "James", so she needs to watch out for "James son of Robert Esq.", versus "James son of Samuel"!)

Anyway, keep "Samuel" in mind as possibly descended from one of the brothers of Robert Esq and his brother David?

#### **EVIDENCE: DAVID(Sarah) is DAVID(SOD)**

I know that Randy Walker has long believed this to be true, and it seemed quite plausible. However now the land records stirred up by Kathy Walker eliminate all doubt. Kathy identified some Surry County land grants, applied for in 1778 and granted in 1780-84. One grant was to Robert Walker, and one was to DAVID(SOD) for land originally occupied by DAVID(BOR). Here's a sketch based on the grant descriptions:

(NUMBERS ARE "CHAINS", ONE CHAIN = 66 FEET)



Robert Walker, and his brother David, had originally been “squatters” on their land, because there was no formal way to obtain land grants when they arrived in North Carolina. However starting in 1778, the State of North Carolina began to make formal grants, and these “squatters” were allowed to formalize their land holdings. However Robert’s brother David was deceased at this time, so the State allowed an unusual grant to David’s son, who was still a minor. So one of the grants was to “David Walker (a minor)”. The above is an overview of the two grants.

Kathy was able to track later references to this DAVID(SOD) grant, down to the final disposition of it in May 1828. However be aware that all references after 1790 must be to

the David Walker in STOKES county, where this land was located. (There is ALSO a separate David Walker in SURRY, whom we will address later.)

The STOKES references include purchases and sales of land connected to the above grants. The earliest is an 1788 sale of 110 acres by “David Walker and his wife Sarah”. And the “David” references gradually involve evolution into a “David Sr.”, and a “David Jr.”. The information is supported by census information for Sr. and Jr., plus slave trades involving Jr. And in the end we arrive at the 1850 census in Forsyth County (spun off from Stokes) where we have the household of David Sr. (born in **Pennsylvania!**) and David Jr.

**EVIDENCE: DAVID(Mary) is DAVID(Millie) is DAVID(SOR)**

DAVID(SOR) presents some difficulties. One of the problems is that, except in Robert Esq’s will, we cannot find specific references that document his connection to Robert. In particular, there are “Quit Claim” references related to Robert’s will, found by Kathy Walker, that purport to list all the sons of Robert. They name those sons, but they do NOT name David! Kathy was tempted to claim “this David doesn’t exist!”

I am quite puzzled why DAVID(SOR) is not named in the quit claim records. But I think I can offer pretty solid circumstantial evidence about him. But before explaining, you need a little geography. Here’s a 30-mile tour you can ask Google Maps to show you:

***TOUR:** Tell Google maps you want to visit 4916 **HUNTING CREEK** Church Road in Hamptonville, NC. Less than ½ mile north of this location is a small stream currently named “Walker’s Branch”, proving you’re near the home of Robert Walker II and his family.*

*Now tell it you want to visit **DEEP CREEK** Friends Cemetery, Yadkinville, NC. That’s about 16 miles, and this is the location of the Quaker Church Robert II and his family attended.*

*Then tell it you want to go to 5183 Rockford Road, Dobson, NC. That’s another 7 miles. Now look around until you spot a big, old, rundown building. That is the tavern, in the new Surry county seat of **ROCKFORD**, that Robert Esq’s wife Mary, and her new husband Jesse Lester, built in about 1790 after Richmond was discontinued.*

*Next, tell it you want to continue on north to 1987 Rockford Road. That’s about another 6 miles. **CODY CREEK** is about 1000 feet off to your West. And this is about a mile north of where Cody Creek drains into **FISHER RIVER**.*

*(If you want to visit a bit farther, tell it you want to go to **Flat Rock**, which is 16 miles farther up the road. That’s where Samuel Walker, mentioned in the “Four Johns” discussion, was found.)*

Now according to the grave marker for DAVID(Millie), he was “about age 77” when he died in 1853. That means he was born about 1776. That would make him about age 10 when Robert Esq died, and DAVID(SOR) was named as a minor. I suspect he remained under the care of his stepmother Mary, second wife of Robert Esq.

In 1789 Surry County was split, with the eastern half becoming Stokes County. Richmond is on the Stokes County side, and in the 1790 census Jesse Lester is there. His household has 2 free white males 16 and over, 1 male under 16, 5 free white females, and 8 slaves. (I wonder if the second male over 16 was Robert's son James, and wonder if the male under 16 was David? I do KNOW that 2 of the females would be Mary's daughters by Robert Walker.)

In 1797, then, DAVID(SOR) would be about age 21, and thus an adult. And in November 1797 David Walker buys 200 Acres from Joshua Freeman on Cody's Creek. That's only about 6 miles north of Jacob Lester's new tavern, where I believe he had been living.

In Feb 1800 DAVID(SOR) sold a John Walker 50 acres of his Cody's Creek land. And in Sep 1804 this John Walker bought 110 acres from Edwin Pace in Fisher's River. Note Cody Creek drains into Fisher River, so this is very near the 50 acres John bought from DAVID(SOR). Then John Walker sold the 50 acres he bought from David in 1900 back to David in Feb 1809. (This John is NOT David's brother John, but I think he might be a cousin? See the discussion of the "Four Johns", earlier in this paper.)

Now, we find that the *North Carolina Index to Marriage Bonds* shows that this DAVID(SOR) married Mary Reece on 21 Jun 1802 in Surry. And the Bondsman was Robert Walker, David's brother! This is consistent with the info above about DAVID(Mary). Now we know that DAVID(SOR) is DAVID(Mary), and it introduces us to Abraham Reece, Mary's father.

And Abraham Reece was part of this extended family. His wife was Mary Huff, and Mary was the aunt of Robert II's wife Mary Jones, whose mother was Jemima Huff (Mary Huff's sister). Further, Robert II's son Richard married Keziah Reese, another daughter of Abraham Reece. Further, Abraham and his wife Mary were "recrq" (received into membership by their own request) to the Deep Creek Friends, where Robert II and his family were members. And Abraham is buried in the Deep Creek Friends cemetery.

We know that DAVID(SOR)'s wife Mary Reece died young. And we next find that our DAVID(SOR) married Melley Penix on 24 Sep 1809 in Surry, per County Court Records at Dobson, NC (Cody's Creek is near Dobson).

So now we have that DAVID(SOR) is DAVID(Mary) is DAVID(Millie).

And there's one more connection. In the mid-1800's, this David moved to Indiana with his wife and children. And so did some of Robert II's family, after Robert II's death. And so did some of Abraham Reece's descendants. The members of this extended family were presumably talking to each other, and decided the best future for their families was in INDIANA.



### **EVIDENCE FOR DAVID(1843):**

While quite a lot is known about this David. It is not known who his wife was, or when he was born, but his will and descendant information clearly associate him with Stokes. Betty Hicks gave me a lot of the supporting documentation.

If we are correct above, we now know that DAVID(SOD) was DAVID(Sarah), and DAVID(SOR) was DAVID(Mary) and also was DAVID(Milley). And since DNA absolutely says that DAVID(1843) is related, then we must conclude that THIS David must be the descendant of an unidentified BROTHER of Robert Esq and his brother David?

Randy Walker thought that DAVID(1843) was actually DAVID(SOR). I think that is largely because, after the death of DAVID(1843), his four youngest children (Hezekiah, Nancy, Martha and Elizabeth) were found living with Thomas Walker, the son of Randy's DAVID(Sarah). So DAVID(1843) must be family, and he was associated with Stokes, where Robert Esq. had lived.

But if DAVID(1843) was from a nearby brother, there is no reason to think that the family of DAVID(Sarah) would not know that brother's family quite well, and would not hesitate to take in the family of DAVID(1843). The Thomas Walker DAVID(1843)'s kids moved in with had his own children, but they were now adults, and Thomas had space.

### **"WILLIAM WALKER FROM CASWELL, NC" THEORY:**

There are a few ancestry.com trees based on DAVID(1843) that claim his wife was Mary Reese, and that his father was William Walker, born 1768 in Caswell, NC. (Since Caswell did not exist until 1777, he would have been born in Orange). This William reportedly died Jan 1854 in Caswell, and reportedly had married Rebecca Jones (1780 – 1804).

The people who claim this ancestry include descendants of John Thornton Walker (1804), Smith A Walker (1822), Thomas Columbus Walker (1826), and Hezekiah Blackwell Walker (1828). They do all tend to assume that Mary Reese was mother of all these children. But I think we have established that Mary Reese was NOT connected to DAVID(1843), and that only John Thornton Walker was a descendant of Mary Reese. The others are, however, clearly descendants of DAVID(1843).

I think it is just plausible that William Walker from Caswell, NC, could be the missing brother of Robert Esq. and DAVID(BOR). And there is a marriage record for Caswell County, for a David Walker who married a Patsey Dolton on 30 Jan 1806. And that could be a reasonable fit for the mother of the children identified with DAVID(1843). And Patsey is a nickname for Martha, and one of his children is a Martha? Also there are done "Davids" in the 1840 and earlier census for Caswell, that might fit?

I'll leave it up to others to try to work this out.

### **PURSUING THE "FIVE BROTHERS" THEORY:**

Look at the various scenarios above. In no case are we able to construct a scenario where EVERYBODY descends from DAVID(SOR) plus DAVID(SOD). We always need at least a third line.

How could we try to establish where one or more of those five brothers may have settled?

Our Walker family "naming practice" may offer a clue, given they persist in re-using a limited number of family names. If we could find other Walker families in the general area with matching name patterns, we might try to find and persuade a Walker from each such line to get a DNA test?

Where might we find such a family? If they moved to NC in conjunction with our family, they probably were there and settled in by 1790. Are there any clues in the 1790 census regarding where there are major accumulations of "interesting" Walkers?

Keep in mind the discussion of the "Four John's" earlier, where we introduced a Samuel Walker who was found in northern Surry County. Perhaps Samuel could be a son of one of the "five brothers"?

Looking elsewhere, here is a tabulation of the families found in the 1790 census for three of the most promising counties:

Sons names from Will of <u>Robert Walker</u>	<u>Family Count* by County &amp; Name of Head</u>		
	<u>Mecklenburg</u>	<u>Rockingham</u>	<u>Caswell</u>
Robert	1(4)	1(4)	
William	2(11)	4(17)	1(?)
James	(one, deceased)	2(13)	3(?)
David		2(11)	
John	4(23)	1(5)	
Other	8(40)	7(36)	3(?)
Total	<u>15(78)</u>	<u>17(86)</u>	<u>7(?)</u>

**\*Example: "4(17)" indicates 4 families with 17 free people.**

In this, Mecklenburg County is interesting because they have significant numbers of Walkers. But also of interest is that Betty Hicks found the will of a James Walker family there - with children named Robert, William, and John. There is no "James" in the census, because the patriarch James died before 1790. But by 1800, there are 3 families with 16

members headed by a "James". And this family reportedly came from Pennsylvania via the Great Wagon Road in about 1769. That is VERY consistent with what we believe for our Robert Walker Esquire and his brother David.

(HOWEVER: In the overall "Walker DNA Project" there is one tested person (#269574) who claims descent from THIS specific family. But he is in "Group-5", rather than our "Group-42". Those two groups are absolutely NOT related. This is not absolute proof, because there appears to be much uncertainty in the links back to the above "James". However it is rather discouraging.)

Rockingham County has the largest population of Walkers, it is not far from Surry County, and it has families using all the common Robert Walker Esq. names. Note that prior to 1785 this was part of Guilford County, and we should be alert to references in Guilford.

Finally, Caswell County appears to be roughly third in Walker inhabitants, it is also not far from Surry, and some genealogies already try to tie DAVID(Mary) to a William from Caswell. (It appears that Caswell did not provide a head count for members of each family in 1790.)

Trying to understand all the families from each of these, see how they are connected, and try to find a living male descendant, is a non-trivial task. Any volunteers?

I did a survey of the presumed North Carolina County origins of various individuals who have already participated in the OVERALL Walker DNA Project. Mecklenburg County has representatives in Walker Project groups #1, #2, #5 and #37. Rockingham County is represented in groups #2, #33, and #35. And Caswell County is represented in groups #6, #14, #22 and #33. These don't rule out the presence of OUR family, but the prospects are diminished. "Walker" is such a common name!

One nice thing about the DNA tests: They remain part of FTDNA's database indefinitely, and it is always possible that an entirely NEW line with "Group 42" DNA will appear in the future and show a match. Keep your fingers crossed.

### **THE CHALLENGE:**

I invite readers to pick up any of the above scenarios, or any alternative combinations of their own, and then prove their preferred one to be true to the exclusion of all others. Or if not that, then prove that at least one or more of the above can at least be solidly ruled out.