

# Mary Wife of Robert Walker Esq and Jesse Lester

By Fred Coffey

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

I descend from Robert Walker Esquire of Surry County, NC, and his first wife, through his son Robert Walker Jr. Robert Esq. was married a second time, to a wife named “Mary”, and apparently had 4 additional children. Although Mary is not my ancestor, I found her story interesting.

Over time I exchanged notes with Kathy Walker and Betty Hicks about Mary. The most-likely candidate we had was that Mary was born “Mary Prowell”. But most recently I had an exchange with Mr. Jack London, who proposed a theory that Mary was born “Mary London”, and she was the daughter of Jack’s ancestor Amos London Sr.

After vigorous debate, the consensus now is that Mary was “Mary Prowell”, not “Mary London”. The following shows what we believe are the first generation of all the descendants of Robert Esquire, plus the descendants of Mary after her second marriage to Jesse Lester:

Robert WALKER Esq. (Abt 1717/20 - bef Aug 1786) & Anne?  
Robert WALKER Jr. (1 Sep 1748 - Abt 1833-35) & Mary JONES (1 Nov 1758 - 9 Jun 1853)  
William WALKER (1750 - Aug 1814)  
John WALKER (abt 1750 - 1814) & Margaret  
Mary WALKER (1769 - 14 Jun 1844) & Thomas Sylvanus “Silley” WRIGHT (1759 - 22 Jun 1840)  
Elizabeth “Betsey” WALKER & MILLER  
Robert WALKER Esq. (Abt 1717/20 - bef Aug 1786) & **Mary PROWELL** (abt 1756 - Apr 1829)  
James WALKER (1774 – abt 1836)  
David WALKER (1777 - 17 Apr 1853) & Mary REECE (1780 - bef 1808)  
David WALKER (1777 - 17 Apr 1853) & Amelia Malinda “Milley” PINNIX (1779 - 1850)  
Mary “Polly” WALKER (abt 1783 - bef 1790)  
Elizabeth “Betsey” WALKER (12 Dec 1785 - 24 Mar 1859) & Benjamin Franklin HOWARD Jr. (1780 - 1825)  
Jesse LESTER (abt 1751 - 12 Dec 1815) & **Mary PROWELL** (abt 1756 - Apr 1829)  
Mary “Polly” LESTER (abt 1790 - 20 Sep 1856) & James FITZGERALD ( - bef 1850)  
Sally LESTER (abt 1794 - )

We believe the marriage of Jesse Lester to Mary Prowell/Walker was also the second marriage for Jesse – they had both lost their previous spouses. We believe the following was Jesse’s first marriage:

Jesse LESTER (abt 1751 - 12 Dec 1815) & **Mary? LONDON** (abt 1756? – bef 1787)  
Thomas W LESTER (bef 1787 - )

And I want to offer a timeline table, for discussion as this paper progresses:

Person	Year Born	Mary’s Age at child’s birth	Age in Robert’s 1786 will	1790 census age	1800 Census
Mary Prowell	1755	0	31	34	45+
James Walker	1774	19	12	16	26
David Walker	1777	22	9	13	23
Ward Sarah Brandon	1778	23	10	12	
Polly Walker	1783	28	3	(deceased)	
Betsey Walker	1785	30	1	5	15
Polly Lester	1790	35	Na	0	10
Sally Lester	1794	39	Na	Na	6

Let me quickly introduce some logic on dates: I show Mary as born about 1755, because the 1800 census put her in the “45 and over” category. And it can’t be much earlier than 1755 because her youngest child Sally was born when she was age 39. Childbirth becomes less likely when the mother is age 40 or over.

I show James as born about 1744, because the 1790 census says there must be a child age 16 or older. I show David as born about 1777 because there is a child under age 16 in the 1790 census. (There would have also been a child Sarah Brandon in the 1790 census, an orphan that Robert and Mary took in a few years earlier, and maybe others.)

After Robert’s first wife died, we believe he married Mary Prowell on 18 Aug 1775. Mary would have been about age 20.

Robert’s will was written March 1786 and proved August 1786. That will reported four children as not having yet reached legal age of maturity (age 18 in NC). They were James, David, Polly and Betsey, and those would have been the children of Mary.

In that August Mary was granted leave to continue operating Robert’s Tavern. She then married Jesse Lester on 20 May 1787, and Jesse eventually became an “Esquire”, thus assuming Robert Walker’s political role.

On 14 Feb 1788 Jesse Lester was appointed guardian to Robert Walker’s daughters Polly and Betsey. I believe that Robert’s daughter “Polly” died quite young, after that 1788 date and no later than about 1790. In about 1790 Mary produced her first child by Jesse, and named that child “Polly” Lester, in honor of her deceased first-born child “Polly” Walker.

In 1790 Surry County was split, and Richmond ceased to be a county seat. Jesse and Mary Lester moved to the new Surry County Seat in Rockford, building a new tavern. They had an additional daughter Sally (abt 1794). The “Jesse Lester Tavern” is still standing (needs refurbishing!) on Rockford Road, Rockford, NC. Jesse died 12 Dec 1815; Mary died April 1829.

Now let’s look at supporting details:

### **Could she have been “Mary Prowell”?**

There is a record of a Mary Powell, marrying a Robert Walker:

#### **North Carolina, Marriage Bonds, 1741-1868**

Name:	Mary Prowell	ImageNum:	006514
Gender:	Female	County:	Guilford
Spouse:	Robert Walker	Record #:	03 463
Spouse Gender:	Male	Bondsman:	Colored Alex Martin
Bond Date:	18 Aug 1775	Witness:	Alex McClaran
Bond #:	000060622		

We were initially skeptical if this was the right Robert Walker and Mary – those names are quite common, and there are a few other “trees” that claim this marriage! Initially we didn’t actually know when Robert’s first wife died, or when he remarried. The earliest dated reference to his spouse that I have found is a Moravian Diary reference to “Mistress Walker from Richmond” dated July 20, 1779. We weren’t sure if this was Mary, or his first wife. All it proved was that he was married to someone on that date.

Kathy Walker dug up several references connecting the "Prowel" name to Robert and Mary's son James. That has been conclusive in our belief that Mary Prowel is indeed the wife of Robert. See this, showing that Edward's son James is sometimes referred to as James Prowel Walker:

**NOTICE.**—Application will be made to the commissioner of West Tennessee on the 17th day of June next for a certificate on grant No 1224, issued by the state of North Carolina to Robert Walker and Samuel P. Walker, through mistake of the surveyor's return, instead of **James P. Walker**, on the 27th November, 1793, for 1000 acres, as the land called for in said grant cannot be identified.

**GEO. GRAY, Agent**  
for James Prowel Walker.  
April 30, 1816.—92-4t.

The earliest explicit reference to the name "Mary" that I can find is as follows:

Surry Court Minutes, 13 May 1785

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

Reviewing his will, I believe that Robert's sons Robert Jr., William and John are from his first wife. He also mentions Robert Wright, his grandson, son of his daughter Mary Walker who married Silley Wright. And he mentions Mary Miller, his granddaughter, the daughter of his daughter Elizabeth (Betsey) Miller. Later in the will he gives 5 shillings to "daughter Elizabeth Miller & Mary Wright daughter". So, by his first wife he has children Robert, William, John, Mary and Elizabeth.

He also gives a small gift to a "Hannah Walker". Kathy Walker reports "Hannah is David Walker (brother of Robert Esq) daughter and there are records showing custody."

But the YOUNG children Robert mentions in his will are son James, son David, and daughters Polly and Betsey. None of these are "of age". (Legal age was 18 in North Carolina.)

It is my impression that he is naming them in order of birth: He talks about James becoming "well learned" and immediately gives him his watch. Then he mentions David saying he shall eventually have certain things "at the discretion of my wife". Then he moves on to his "young daughters" Polly and Betsey, with future gifts "subject to partial forfeit if they marry contrary to their mother's will".

So I think James is likely the oldest of the minor children, David second, and then the "babies" Polly and Betsey.

In the Closing, he says with regard to his widow's dower, that "her sons shall have an equal portion with my two sons Robert and William". That sound to me like Robert/William are by his first wife, and

James/David are by his current wife Mary. Mary clearly has at least two sons at the time of Robert's death!

(That kind of leaves Robert's son John hanging out. Per Robert's will, any grandson, a son of John, only gets an inheritance if that grandson is named "Robert". But it seems that John is clearly an adult, and thus has to have been born before about 1768. He is definitely too old to be a daughter of Robert's wife Mary!)

We also have some other hints from Robert's will:

**Robert Walker's Will, dated March 1786:**

*"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.*

*"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"*

We have evidence (discussed later) that one of these daughters, Betsey, was born in 1785. And Robert's will refers to both as "young daughters", and indicates a possibility that his wife Mary might currently be pregnant. This is consistent with Robert married Mary in 1775, and both young daughters were little more than infants when he wrote his will.

**Mary and Robert Walker Esq:**

Additional details of the life of Mary and Robert are already documented as follows:

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

**Jesse Lester Background:**

There are trees that purport to show Jesse's parents' early background. The information I have found is not solidly documented, but I have taken it as given: He was born circa 1750 in Virginia or Pennsylvania.

We believe Jesse had also been previously married, to a wife who was a daughter of Amos London. And they had a son named Thomas W Lester. We will talk about the will of Amos London later.

**Mary Walker and Jesse Lester:** Robert Walker was last active on the Surry court, and a census taker, in February 1786. His will was written in March 1786, and I would guess he died in April or May. The Surry Court Minutes pick up the story as follows:

**Surry Court Minutes:** P96, 15 Aug 1786, Mary WALKER has leave to keep Tavern at her now dwelling.

**Surry Court Minutes:** P96, 16 Aug 1786, Will and testament of Robert WALKER, Esqr deceased, proved.

So, Mary picks up the operation of Robert's tavern. Her marriage to Jesse Lester is reported about one year later, on 20 May 1787. (I have found no records for Jesse UNTIL AFTER that date, so we have no information on where and how she met him. But we believe Jesse married a daughter of Amos London, who was a long time resident of Surry County.)

**Surry Court Minutes:** P123, 18 Aug 1787, Jesse LESTER has leave to keep Tavern at his now dwelling house.

**Surry Court Minutes:** 13 Nov 1787, "William CUPPLES and Andrew JACKSON, Esqrs. Produced license from Hon. Samuel ASHE and John WILLIAMS, Esqrs. Authorizing them as Attorneys."

What does this last entry have to do with Jesse & Mary Lester? This new lawyer presenting his credentials was indeed Andrew Jackson, then age 20, who would 40 years hence be elected the 7th president of the United States. Andrew had just completed his legal education less than two months earlier and was really struggling to make a living as an attorney.

According to HistoryNet.com, there's a story that goes with the presence of Andrew: *"During one of his travels to court in the town of Richmond, Jackson stayed at the inn of Jesse Lister, and apparently left without paying his bill. According to tradition, Lister later wrote in his account book that the charge was 'Paid at the Battle of New Orleans.' (Jackson as president would deny the validity of this story when presented with the board-bill by Lister's daughter.)"*

**Surry Court Minutes:** P128, 17 Nov 1787, Jesse LESTER overseer, streets of Richmond.

**Surry Court Minutes:** P129, 17 Nov 1787, Jesse given keys to courthouse.

**Surry Court Minutes:** P131, 14 Feb 1788, Jesse LESTER appointed guardian to (blank & blank), orphans of Robert WALKER, deceased.

So, after the marriage, Jesse soon becomes the license holder for the tavern, and becomes involved in helping manage the city of Richmond. But this last item that absolutely ties him to Mary is his appointment as guardian of the orphans of Robert Walker, deceased. (The "blank & blank" children would be Robert Walker's daughters by Mary, "Polly and Betsey".)

**Surry Court Minutes:**

P138, 15 May 1788, Thomas POINDEXTER has leave to keep Tavern in Richmond, Jesse LESTER, security.

P146, 15 Aug 1788 Jesse LESTER (on committee report re Claims for reimbursement)

P151, Nov 1788, Jesse LESTER appointed committee to repair floor Courthouse.

P152, February 1789, Jesse LESTER qualified as Justice of the Peace.

P154, February 1789, Jesse LESTER appointed to committee settle estate of James GLENN.

P155, 11 May 1789, Present: Jesse LESTER, Esq.

P157, 14 May 1789, Jesse LESTER, gave deposition

P161, 12 Aug 1789, Jesse LESTER Esq. appointed committee

P162, 13 Aug 1789, Jesse LESTER received bill of sale from Joseph PHILLIPS

P163, 13 Aug 1789, lawsuit, Jesse LESTER vs Bazzle RIDDLE

P165, 14 Aug 1789, Jesse LESTER filed claim for repairing Court House Floor.

P167, 12 Nov 1789, Daniel LESTER appointed constable, Jesse LESTER security.

Above are the remaining records for Jesse in the court minutes. He moves up the political ladder, becoming an "Esquire" by May 1789. (I cannot figure out who is "Daniel Lester".)

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:

<u><b>CATEGORY</b></u>	<u><b>NUMBER</b></u>	<u><b>LIKELY NAMES AND AGES</b></u>
Free White Persons – Males Under 16	1	Mary's Son David Walker (age 13)
Free White Persons – Males 16 and Over	2	Head Jesse, Mary's son James Walker (age 16)
Free White Persons – Females	5	Mary Prowell Walker (age 34) Sarah Brandon (age 12 – ward) Mary's Daughter Betsey Walker (age 5) Jesse & Mary's daughter Polly Lester (age 0) Unknown
Slaves	8	Unknown
Total Persons	16	



Robert's will named Mary, Robert Walker, and Col Martin Armstrong as executors of his will. Apparently, Jesse's marriage to Mary gave Jesse Lester authority to act in the administrator role. Over the years 1790 to 1803 we find Jesse Lester acting in accord with either Robert Walker or Martin Armstrong to manage the estate of Robert Esq.

I also found the following reference in a tabulation of slavery activity in Stokes County, involving a purchase of slaves by Jesse:

**Slaves in Stokes Co**

5 Nov 1791, John THOMMASON, Sr to **Jesse LESTER, Esq.** 577 pds, 5 negroes Dicy 32 y/o; Anthony 13 y/o; Sarah 9 y/o; Delpha 6 y/o; Jeffery 3 y/o.

Richmond was no longer a convenient location, and the new Surry County Seat was designated in 1790 to be at Rockford. That is about 20 miles west of Richmond, upstream on the Yadkin River. Richmond was discontinued as a county seat, and soon abandoned. Jesse Lester obtained a license to operate a tavern in the new seat of Rockford. That tavern is still standing – tell Google maps to take you to “36.2682, -80.6484”, switch to street view, and look to the west. You will see this:



There is a sign off the left end, saying “Jesse Lester Tavern 1791”.

Jesse and Mary had two daughters, Mary “Polly” born about 1790, and Sally born about 1794. The child Mary married James Fitzgerald. See Mary (Prowell/Walker) Lester's will below for more detail on the children.

The family are found in the 1800 census as follows: (Memo: If Sally was born about 1794, there should be a female under age 10? Best guess is “census error”, and I think the three females 10-15 are Betsey Walker, Mary Lester, and Sally Lester?) There are 7 males listed, and we only know Jesse and son Thomas. The others may be various employees working in Jesse's tavern?

**Jesse Lester:**

Home in 1800 (City, County, State):	Salisbury, Surry, North Carolina
Free White Persons - Males - Under 10:	1
Free White Persons - Males -10 thru 15:	1

Free White Persons - Males - 16 thru 25:	2
Free White Persons - Males - 26 thru 44:	1
Free White Persons - Males - 45 and over:	2
Free White Persons - Females - 10 thru 15:	3
Free White Persons - Females - 45 and over:	1 (Mary, thus born in or before 1755.)
Number of Slaves:	20
Number of Household Members Under 16:	5
Number of Household Members Over 25:	4
Number of Household Members:	31

And in 1804 Jesse Lester was a bondsman for a marriage:

Name:	Betsey Walker
Gender:	Female
Spouse:	Benjamin Howard Jr
Spouse Gender:	Male
Bond Date:	19 Feb 1804
Bond #:	000145277
Level Info:	North Carolina Marriage Bonds, 1741-1868
ImageNum:	008251
County:	Surry
Record #:	01 112
Bondsman:	Jesse Lester

This connects Jesse to his stepdaughter, Betsey, daughter of Robert Walker Esq. (A search of “Howard” family trees shows that very few of them seem to know Betsy’s origins. However, many show that “Betsy Howard” is buried in the Howard Cemetery, Perry County, TN. Tombstone shows she was born Dec 12 1785 in Cerry (sic) County NC, died Mar 24, 1859.)

Jesse Lester died 12 Dec 1815 in Rockford. The will and probate records for Jesse were found by Kathy Walker, and can be viewed here:

<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/1519835:9061?ssrc=pt&tid=48444499&pid=20113184332>

Kathy writes “Thomas W. Lester is the executor of Jesse Lester estate (no will) and appears to fight with Mary for the property. It looks like they kept things in court for a long time and in the end Mary lost her battle to get a “widows dower”<sup>1</sup> recognized. It makes sense to me the first family would fight to keep the land from the second wife (and Thomas was the son of Jesse’s first wife).”

Here’s the 1828 will of Mary (Prowell/Walker) Lester:

**Will of Mary Lester:**

*In the name of god amen, I MARY LESTER of the county of Surry & State of North Carolina being weak of boddy but of sound mind and memory thanks be given to god for the same do make and ordain this to be my last will and testament revoking all other wills by me heartofore maid.*

*Ist: I recomend my soul to god who gave it me and My body to the earth from whence it came to be decently buried at the discretion of My children and as to sulch worly estate as it hath pleased god to bless me with in this life dispose of the same in manner and form following.*

*I give and bequeath to My daughter SALLY D. LESTER one hundred and fifty dollers.*

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<sup>1</sup> A **Dower** is a common **law** that entitled a **widow** to a portion of her husband's estate in absence of a will. In most circumstances, the **widow** was granted up to one-third **interest** in her husband's assets.

*Item: I give and bequeath to my four grand Sons JESSE, FRANCIS, JAMES P(?) & THOMAS P(?) FITZGARALD sons of JAMES FITZGARALD one hundred Dollers to be equally divided among them and to be given to them as they become of age.*

*Item: it is my will and desire that my negro woman ELVA shoud be sold by My Executors if she is not sold before my death and the money arising from the sale of said negro is to be applid as ---- states. VIZ one hundred and fifty dollars to SALLY D. LESTER and My four grandsons and the Surplus if there is any to be given to my daughter SALLY.*

*Item: I give and bequeath to My daughter SALLY D. LESTER my negro girl HENRIETTA & her increase.*

*Item: I give and bequeath to My grand daughter SARAH AN FITZGARRALD one negro girl by the name of CHARITY and if the negro girl should have children then and in that case it is my will and desire my other grand daughter MARRY ELIZABETH FITZGARALD should have one half of the increase.*

*Item: It is my will and desire that the above negro girl CHARITY shoud remain in the possession of my daughter MARY L. FITZGARALD wife of JAS. FITZGARALD during her natural life.*

*Item: I give and bequeath to my daughter SALLY D. LESTER all my stock of Cattle household and kitchen furniture and every other discription of property whatever to be had and her heirs forever.*

*Item: It is my will and desire that my daughter SALLY give unto my grandson JAMES P. FITZGARALD when he becomes of lawfull age twenty dollers.*

*Item: it is my will and desire that this one hundred dollers left to my four grandsons shoud remain in the hands or direction of my executors to be put out on Interest or to the best advantage for said children. Lastly I constitue and appoint my daughter SALLY D. LESTER Executrix and my friend JOSEPH WILLIAMS JUN. Executor to this my last will and testament In witness whearof I do hereunto set my hand and seal this 13th day of April A.D. 1825. Sighned, sealed and delivered in presence of WINSTON LOMEY MARY (x) LESTER (seal) J. FITZGARALD*

*A Codicil to my last will and testament. Whereas the negro girl ELVA had not been sold and AGGEY has been purchased since making the forgoing last will it is now my will and desire that the said negro girl AGGY shall belong to my Daughter SALLY D. LESTER but the increase of said negro girl shall decend to my grand Children by my daughter MARY L. FITZGARALD but in case the sd girl shoud have bornd six children then and in that case the remainder that is to say all over six are to decend to my daughter SALLY D. LESTER and my grand son FRANCIS FITZGARALD in witness whearof I do hearunto set my hand and seal this 21st day of July 1828, TEST: MARY (x) LESTER (seal)*

*ROBERT MARTIN  
WINSTON LOMAX*

It's interesting that Mary did not mention her sons James and David, or her daughter Betsey, all born to Robert Walker. Betsey married Benjamin Howard in 1804. Betsey and her husband were living in nearby Wilkes County in 1820. I think that James and Betsey had been well taken care of by Mary, and I'll talk about them shortly. (Betsey, by the way, seems to have named a son in honor of her father. One of her sons was James Walker Howard, born 12 Jul 1805.)

I was interested in trying to pin down the age of James. I did find that in the 1830 census for Perry, TN that Jas Walker and Elizabeth Howard were very close neighbors. James was the only white person in his household, and he had 6 slaves. He reported his age as "50 thru 59", meaning he was born between 1771 and 1780. That's consistent with my earlier assessment that he was born about 1774. James apparently died about 1836. The 1837 Perry Tax List identified several "heirs" as owners of "Jas P Walker" land holdings.

In the 1830 census, Elizabeth was listed adjacent to her brother James, so they were most likely immediate neighbors. Elizabeth had herself (age 40-49) plus 7 other white persons all under age 19. And she had 17 slaves.



In the 1850 census Elizabeth is age 67 (born about 1783). Household includes her son C Alex Howard (age 29) plus W.S. Maxwell (age 27, a lawyer) along with his wife and one baby (I suspect the Maxwells were simply boarders). The 1850 slave schedule indicates she has 18 slaves.

Elizabeth is not alive in the 1860 census, but since she died in the year ending March 1860 (death in 1859) she is covered in the Mortality Schedule that came with that year's census. Her son C A Howard is in the 1860 census, and he owns 18 slaves (9 of the slaves are children under age 7).

Mary's son David (by Robert Walker) has been elusive. The problem is that "David" was a very common name in the Walker family, and we have real trouble keeping them straight. I wrote a paper on the "David Problem" as follows:

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

This paper concluded that "David son of Robert" was probably this one:

David WALKER\* (1777 - 17 Apr 1853) & Mary REECE  
David WALKER\* (1777 - 17 Apr 1853) & Amelia Malinda "Milley" PINNIX

You can read the paper and see if you agree!

### **The Will of Amos London:**

As mentioned earlier, we believe that Jesse Lister was first married to a daughter (Mary?) of Amos London, and believed that they had a son Thomas W. Lester. Jesse's wife died, and Jesse remarried to Mary Prowell/Walker. The following will of Amos London is consistent with that belief:

#### **Will of Amos London Sr:**

*In the name of God Amen. I **Amos London Sr.** of the County aforesaid being weak in body but of sound sense and memory and knowing that it is appointed for all men once to die, do make and ordain this my last Will and Testament.*

*1st, I give and recommend my soul unto the hands of Almighty God that gave it.*

*2nd, my body to be buried in a decent Christian manner and as touching such wordly estate with which it has pleased God to Bless me with give, demise and dispose of the same in the following manner and form Vis; I give to **my daughter, Sally SUMMERS**, all my moveable estate of every kind whatever to her and heirs forever.*

*I give and bequeath unto **Thomas W. LESTER** a tract of 200 acres of land joining my old line and John SUMMERS Sr. to him and his heirs forever; provided when he comes of age he gives **his sisters Polly and Sally** \$2.00 each.*

*Hereby revoking all former wills and acknowledging this to be my last Will; In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 24th day of May A.D. 1805*

*Signed, sealed, published and pronounced in the presences of **Jesse LESTER**, M ARMSTRONG,  
Amos LONDON (seal)*

#### **Codicil to Amos LONDON will of May 24th, 1805**

*To my friends and acquaintances of Surry County; I am in the 68th year of my age and in the forepart of my life was agreeable and pleasant and so on did I live in my family with utmost content and satisfaction until about 20 years ago **my old woman** began to incur my displeasure and she together with her friends and her children, to wit, **my 2 sons** and some of the **BILLS** has in hundreds of ways too devious and too delicate and fretted me to distraction. I am left without a consort, I am reduced to almost poverty and in particular abused and beaten by **Amos Jr.**, spit upon, frowned upon by him and his family and treated in the most ungrateful manner, almost unheard of by a son to his father. So much repeated ill usage that my poor old grey hairs are almost brought down with sorrow to the grave.*

*I know my friends, I am and always was, as all men are, to human frailties and error from the impulse of passion, which has been in a great measure occasioned by the ill treatment of my 2 sons and their mother, continually*

*joining together to disturb my peace and happiness at home and as my intentions were always for to support my children by my industry and labour in a decent manner and receiving nothing in turn but abuse and ridicule, that would irritate any man of Spirit. This as I before mentioned being the desires of my heart, which the great and good will knows to contribute to my familys welfare and not being received with kindness and tenderness as a father has a right to expect from his sons, has made such deep impressions on my heart as to crave death rather than to live in a world where I no more expect any content. I therefore bid farewell to my acquaintances and particular to my children and their mother with a request that **Amos (jr)** deliver to **his sister, Sally SUMMERS** all my moveable effects. I shall endeavour to travel to some distant part where I hope to receive happiness in and thus a blessed return to Jesus Christ.*

**Amos London**

Test; **Jesse LESTER**, M. ARMSTRONG, Jurat

**State of North Carolina, Surry County, Feb. Session A.D. 1807**

**Jesse LESTER** and Martin ARMSTRONG, Esquire the subscribing Witness to the foregoing Last Will and Testament of **Amos LONDON** together with the codicil of said Will made oath that they saw the said LONDON sign publish and declare the same to be his Last Will and Testament that he was of sound, disposing mind and memory and that he did it freely and without compulsion which was ordered to be recorded.

Recorded accordingly by Jo WILLIAMS C.C.

Book 3 page 77 - 78 - 79 etc.

Let the record show that when he refers to “**my old woman**” the reference is to his wife **Sarah Cranmer**. And when he refers to “**my two sons**”, the references are to **Amos London Jr** and **John London**. And “**BILLS**” refers to the family of **Sarah Bills** who married his son Amos Jr.

Next, let me show what we believe was the Amos London Sr. genealogy, with the same names highlighted:

**Amos LONDON Sr.** (abt 1737 - 24 Dec 1806) & **Sarah CRANMER** (25 Nov 1738 - 1832)

Mary? LONDON (abt 1756? – bef 1787) & **Jesse LESTER** (abt 1751 - 12 Dec 1815)

**Thomas W LESTER** (abt 1796)

Mary WALKER/PROWELL (abt 1756 – Apr 1829 & **Jesse LESTER** (abt 1751 - 12 Dec 1815)

Mary “**Polly**” LESTER (abt 1790 - ) & James FITZGERALD

**Sally** LESTER (abt 1794 - )

**John LONDON** (1760 - Oct 1832)

Sarah “**Sally**” LONDON (1763 - 1825) & Johnson **SUMMERS** (1765 - 1807)

**Amos LONDON Jr** (abt 1773 - Feb 1850) & **Sarah BILLS** (4 Feb 1774 - 25 Jul 1857)

So, Thomas Lester is Amos’ grandson, and Amos is therefore simply giving land to his grandson. Jesse Lester is Amos’ son-in-law, who is acting as witness to his will. And when Amos asks Thomas to give Polly and Sally \$2.00 each, he is actually referring to “half-sisters”, not “full sisters” of Thomas.