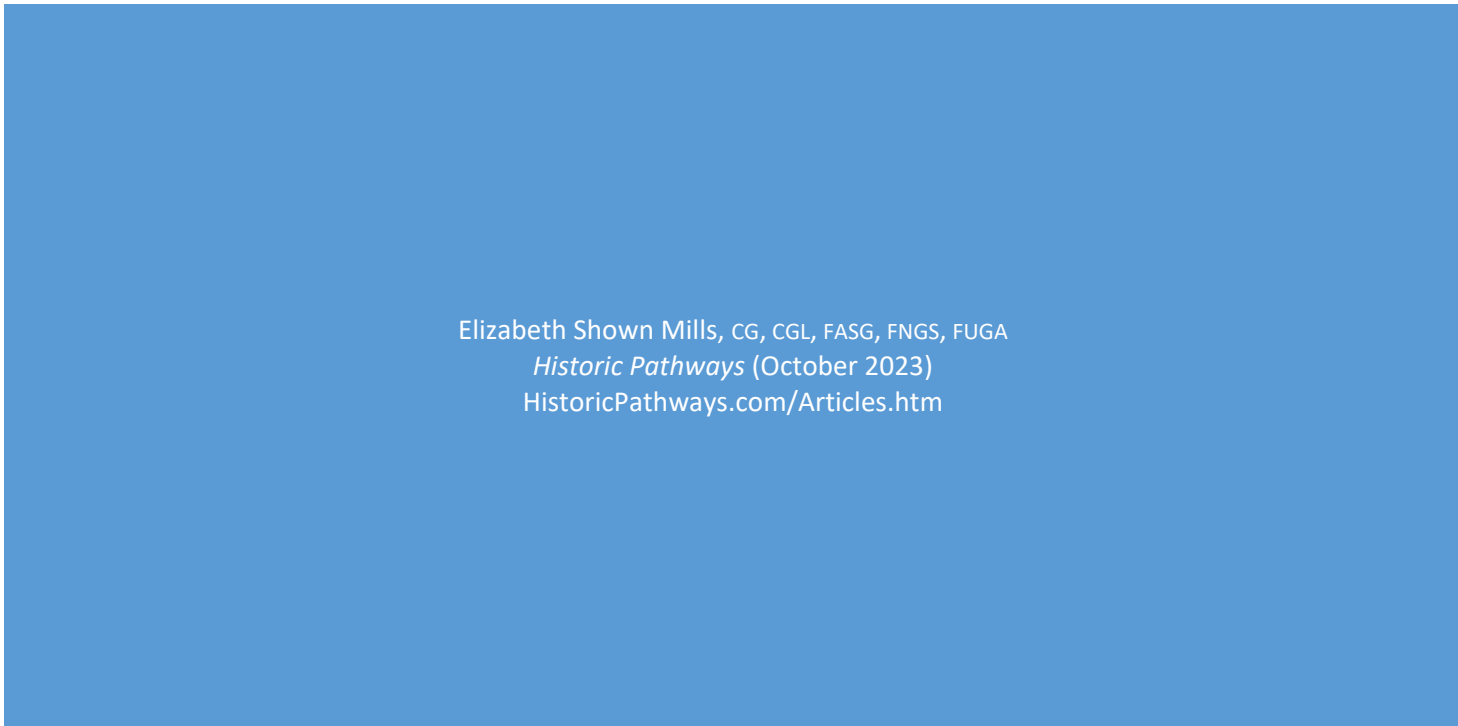


William Mills (c1695–1755)
of Goochland and Albemarle Counties, Virginia:
Correcting His Identity and Identifying His Y-Signature



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Elizabeth Shown Mills, CG, CGL, FASG*

Colonial settlers who bore common names pose a significant challenge when researchers set out to identify them and their origin. The William Mills who applied for a grant on Albemarle County's Pedlar River before 1744, while the region was still part of Goochland County,¹ well makes that point. He illustrates how thorough use of all surviving records for a time and place provides the essential details needed to separate individuals of common name. He also demonstrates how the targeted tracking of offspring can yield genetic evidence to separate non-related same-name families.

EXAMINING THE CLAIMS

As with many Virginia ancestors of his era, descendants offer a buffet of undocumented claims for William's identity, origin, and kin. Two commonly reported facts *are* easily documented and provide a foundation for evaluating all other claims. First, this William was the father of the Loyalist colonel Ambrose Mills, who was captured at the Battle of King's Mountain in October 1780 and summarily hanged. Second, this William's 1755 will naming his wife Mary and his children was proved in 1766 in Amherst,² a county severed from Albemarle in

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The research for this project, across two decades, has combed surviving records for sixty-one counties in ten states through which William and his first two generations of offspring spread. As a foundation for this summary article on this progenitor, thirty-five underlying research reports have been archived at the author's website *Historic Pathways*. Several will be specifically cited for their assembly of surviving records on a person (or family and associates in a given locale). Unless otherwise stated, county courthouse records cited in this paper were consulted at the respective Clerk's Office, on microfilm at the appropriate state archives, or online at FamilySearch.org. All cited websites were last verified on 1 Nov. 2023.

¹ Virginia Land Office, Patent Book 28: 539, 400 acres patented 1749; Library of Virginia, Richmond. The fact that William applied for the land and had it surveyed before the 1744 county split is evidenced by the patent's statement that the land was on both sides of Pedlar River and Dancing Creek *in Goochland*.

² Amherst Co., Va., Will Book 1:73–76. For Ambrose, also see E. Alfred Jones, "The Journal of Alexander Chesney, a South Carolina Loyalist in the Revolution and After," *Ohio State University*

1761. These two facts have been stirred into a stew of assumptions, irrelevant “hints” suggested by online document providers, and assertions designed to cast the family’s Loyalist service in a more-acceptable light.

Identity claims:

Despite the fact that multiple given names were highly uncommon on the Virginia frontier, thousands of online trees identify William as William *Henry* Mills. Many call him *Colonel* William Henry Mills, assigning to him the identity of a Irish-born surgeon and South Carolina Revolutionary War officer who served the Loyalist cause and died post-war in England.³ No evidence is provided for the alleged middle name by those who assign it, and no evidence has been found. All legal documents created by and about the Pedlar River William, from land patents to deeds to court orders to his will and its probate, call him only “William Mills.”⁴ The assertion that he was the Loyalist colonel is thoughtless on its face, given that William’s will was probated a decade before the Revolution erupted. Both errors are the type easily avoided by systematically gathering all documents each man created to robustly reconstruct each life—the Reasonably Exhaustive Research Principle that stands as the first criterion of the Genealogical Proof Standard.⁵

Origin claims:

In 1845, a grandson of William’s grandson and namesake (the Loyalist major William Mills of Rutherford County, North Carolina), set out to exonerate the family’s Loyalist reputation. In a lengthy newspaper article, J. M. Edney asserted that Maj. William’s Loyalist service stemmed from the fact that he was underage and had no choice but to do the bidding of his father Ambrose. (Edney also contradicted himself by reporting Maj. William’s birth in 1746—making him a mature man of thirty when the Revolution commenced, rather than an obedient minor.) As for Maj. William’s father, according to Edney, Col. Ambrose’s own Loyalist service stemmed from the fact that he was born in England and thus, was

Bulletin 26 (Oct. 30, 1921): 72–74 (Ambrose Mills); imaged, *Google Books* (https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_Journal_of_Alexander_Chesney/658zAQAAAMAJ).

³ For known records created by and about this genealogical doppelgänger, see E. S. Mills, “Col. William Henry Mills, Esq. (c1727–1786); Spouses: 1-Unknown; 2-Elizabeth Montgomery: Research Notes,” last updated 2 Dec. 2022, 25 pp.; archived online at *Historic Pathways* (<https://www.historicpathways.com/download/MillsWilliamHenryColElizabethMontgomery.pdf>).

⁴ For abstracts, transcriptions, and/or images of all known records created by or about William Mills of the Pedlar, see E. S. Mills, “William Mills (c1695–1755) of Goochland and Albemarle Counties, Virginia; Spouse Mary [—?—]: Research Notes,” last updated 15 Nov. 2022, 104 pp.; *Historic Pathways* (<https://www.historicpathways.com/download/MillsWilliamMaryofGoochAlbemarle.pdf>).

⁵ Board for Certification of Genealogists, *Genealogy Standards*, 2d ed. (Nashville: Ancestry Imprint, Turner Publishing Co., 2019), 1–2.

an “honest but erring” man loyal to his birth.⁶

Edney’s version of the family origin and the father-son service at Kings Mountain was supplied to the nineteenth-century historian-archivist Lyman C. Draper who actively sought Revolutionary-related records and lore.⁷ Draper’s condensation of Edney’s account was then summarized in 1921 within the “Additional Notes” published as an introduction to the journal of the Loyalist Alexander Chesney.⁸ Embroidering upon this base, a trio of Edney’s cousins in 1923 declared (without evidence) that the family came to Virginia by way of Maryland; that Ambrose was born in Derbyshire, England, as a descendant of the “Derby family”; and that the Millses were “Cavaliers belonging to the Court party in the time of King Charles I.” With the circular reasoning common in that era, they concluded: “The fact that the Mills family were of Cavalier origin is proof of their position in England.”⁹ This version is etched now (and again without evidence) in Ambrose’s *Find A Grave* memorial.¹⁰

Parentage claims:

Contrary to the alleged Derbyshire roots, the most-common parentage claim for William of the Pedlar assigns him to a Scottish immigrant family. While William migrated to the Pedlar from the older, more-eastern and English-rooted county of Goochland, a separate Mills family migrated from Pennsylvania down the western side of the Blue Ridge and settled in Virginia’s Augusta County. There, in 1757, one Gilbert Mills died leaving a will naming “son William.” After Lyman Chalkley’s abstract of that will was published in 1912,¹¹ genealogists assumed that William of Albemarle must be the William named by the Augusta father, despite the physical mountain range and cultural chasm that separated them. On

⁶ J. M. Edney, “Our Ancestors—Revolutionary Incidents, &c,” *Ashville (N.C.) Messenger*, 28 Nov. 1845, p. 2 col. 6, p. 3 col. 1. A more likely explanation for Ambrose’s allegiance was penned in 1823 by a contemporary friend, John Bryan, who asserted that Ambrose joined the British cause because, after his wife and children were massacred by Native Americans, the British vigorously pursued and punished the perpetrators. A transcript of Bryan’s reminiscences is published by Douglas Ransom as “The Notorious Hallows of Surry County,” *North Carolina Genealogical Society Journal* 5 (Feb. 1979): 2–3.

⁷ Lyman C. Draper, *Kings Mountain and Its Heroes* (Cincinnati: Peter G. Thompson, 1881), 481–82.

⁸ Jones, “The Journal of Alexander Chesney, 66–71 (Thomas Fletchall) and 72–74 (Ambrose Mills).

⁹ Mrs. J. R. Baird, T. C. Catchings, and Mrs. M. C. Torrey, *The Clendinen, Myers, and Mills Families; And Various Related Families in the South* (Atlanta: A. B. Caldwell Publishers, 1923), 156, 159.

¹⁰ *Find A Grave* (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/59106974/ambrose-mills>), “Colonel Ambrose Mills” memorial created 23 Sept. 2010 by Diane Boren.

¹¹ Lyman Chalkley, *Chalkley’s Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish in Virginia: Extracted from the Original Court Records, 1745–1800*, 3 vols. (Rosslyn, Va.: Commonwealth Printing Co., 1912), 3:46.

this basis, 83 percent of the 4,978 *Ancestry* trees that (at this writing) profile William Sr. of Albemarle also assert that he was Gilbert’s son. On the basis of “name’s the same,” hundreds of those have also accepted *Ancestry* and *FamilySearch* automated hints suggesting he was the child christened 24 August 1699 as son of Gilbert Mills of “Angus shire,” Scotland.¹²

Augusta County’s William-of-Gilbert was a quite different man from his Albemarle contemporary. Gilbert’s son William, prior to Gilbert’s death, gave power of attorney to his kinsman and “trusted and loving friend,” the entrepreneur John Mills of Augusta and Bedford Counties,¹³ then left for North Carolina in company with John’s brothers Blaney and Hugh Mills.¹⁴ Across the late 1750s and early 1760s, the Augusta trio—William, Blaney, and Hugh—appear in the records of Anson County, North Carolina, and its offshoot Mecklenburg, as settlers on Clark’s Creek. There, William-of-Augusta’s probate was opened in January 1767. The settlement of his land claims and the guardianships of his minors identify one son John and three daughters—Sarah, Ann, and Jeanne—a totally different family than that of William of the Pedlar.¹⁵ In the meanwhile, Blaney and Hugh Mills returned to Augusta and lived out their lives near their brother John in the part of Augusta that became Botetourt. The hundreds of documents created by this Augusta > Botetourt set of Millses contain not one interaction with the William

¹² None of these claims cite valid evidence. The *Ancestry* source, whenever cited, is invariably “U. S. and International Marriage Records, 1560–1900,” a database created from undocumented pedigree charts and family group sheets contributed across the years to the Genealogical Society of Utah.

¹³ Augusta Co., Va., Deed Book 4:182–83 (9 Oct. 1752).

¹⁴ The relationships between John, Hugh, and Blaney are proved by Hugh’s will, naming Blaney and John as his brothers. See Botetourt Co., Va., Will Book A:225–36 (probated May 1785).

¹⁵ For key N.C. documents proving identities and kinships, see the following:

- William Mills (x) as witness to Blaney’s land purchases from John Clark, 29–30 Oct. 1755; Anson Co. Deed Book 1 (typescript copy): 209–10.
- Hugh Mills land grant on Clark’s Creek in “North Carolina, U.S., Land Grant Files, 1693–1960,” *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/60621/>) > Anson > 1779–2438 > image 350 of 1224.
- Hugh Mills’s sale of his Clark’s Creek land on 13 Dec. 1771, after he returned home to his Augusta neighborhood (which had been cut away into Botetourt in 1770); recorded, Lincoln Co., N.C., Deed Book 1:709. Lincoln Co., created in 1779, was an offshoot of Anson Co.
- William Welsh to “loving cousins Sarah Mills & Ann Mills & Jeanne Mills,” 13 July 1765, their respective shares of 640 acres on Clark’s Creek surveyed for William Mills; Mecklenburg Co. Deed Book 2:159–60. Mecklenburg was cut from Anson Co. in 1762; part of it split off in 1768 to become Tryon, then Lincoln in 1778.
- Sheriff’s levy on goods & chattels of John Mills, 16 Mar. 1784, including 606 acres on waters of Clark’s Creek, “his deceased father William Mills’ improvements,” Lincoln Co., Deed Book 2:706–7.

Mills family of Goochland > Albemarle > Amherst.¹⁶

Spousal claims:

Descendants of William of Albemarle have also more-or-less agreed on a fictive identity for his wife, whom all known documents identify only as “Mary.” Most often, claims assert that she was *Mary Walton*, variously *Mary Lavender* or *Mary “Marty” Lavender Walton*. From there, with the aid of automated hints from tree-building webstes, she often morphs into the Mary Walton who was christened 21 September 1701 in Middlesex, England, as the daughter of one Edward and Mary Walton.¹⁷ No evidence is offered to show that William “of Derbyshire, England” or “Angus-shire Scotland” married Mary Walton of Middlesex. No evidence is cited for Mary’s identity; and no evidence is provided that Edward Walton of Middlesex—or his daughter Mary—migrated to the colonies. The alleged Walton kinship appears to rest in the equally undocumented claim in some 2,740 online trees that her granddaughter Mary “Polly” Mills (wife of James Stepp), was “more fully” named *Mary Walton Mills* and, of course, “named for her grandmother.” As documented by the family reconstruction that follows, Waltons and Lavenders were part of the family cluster, but not as the birth identity of William’s wife Mary.

**WILLIAM & MARY MILLS:
THE EVIDENCE**

William Mills Sr. made his first appearance in Goochland County records in 1730, when an undated court order dismissed his suit for debt against Robert Wade of Goochland and Hanover. That dismissal occurred because neither party appeared

¹⁶ For abstracts, transcriptions, and/or images of documents created by this William and the Augusta > Botetourt trio (John, Blaney, and Hugh), see the following research reports at *Historic Pathways*:

- “Augusta County & the Virginia Frontier, Mills & Watts: Initial Survey of Published Literature,” 8 Feb. 2019 (updated 11 July 2022, 107 pp. (<https://www.historicpathways.com/download/MillsAugustaVirginiaFrontier.pdf>).
- “Mills & Associates: Rutherford County, NC, Its Parent Counties (Anson, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, and Tryon) and its Offshoots (Buncombe, Burke, Henderson, and Polk ...): Expanded Survey,” last updated 17 Nov. 2022, 172 pp. (<https://www.historicpathways.com/download/MillsRutherfordTryonLincolnSurvey.pdf>).
- “Mills & Associates: Botetourt County, Virginia: Initial Survey,” last updated 15 Nov. 2022, 19 pp. (<https://www.historicpathways.com/download/BotetourtVA.pdf>).

¹⁷ Citations are invariably not to the original record, but to the database entry in “England Births and Christenings, 1538–1975,” *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:NPH5-V8R>). For an image of the original, see *FamilySearch* digital film 8041375 > image 510.

when the case was called.¹⁸ No prior reference to the case (or to William) has been found in Henrico County, from which Goochland was created in 1728, or in adjacent Hanover County whose records of the era are largely destroyed. The first patent issued to William on 11 April 1732, granting him 400 acres on a branch of Goochland’s Lickinghole Creek adjacent to Henry Chiles (also of Hanover), Samuel Coleman, Edward Scott, and Richard Kerby,¹⁹ speaks against the alleged English or Scottish births and backdates William Sr.’s presence in the region to 1729 or earlier.

William’s grant was founded on a regular Treasury warrant—a purchase system the Virginia assembly designed in 1705 for those “not having right to any land for importation.”²⁰ Although surviving records are incomplete, the tens of thousands that remain contain no earlier grant for any individual claiming an importation right under the name William Mills (or Miles or other variants) within this William’s life span. No such documents naming males whose surnames are typically confused with Mills (Hills, Miller, Wills, etc.) are appropriate to this William.²¹

Colonial land laws and practices dictated a lengthy process for grants. Settlers chose the land and appeared before the county’s land registrar to enter that tract in the county’s land-entry register. They were then to pay the county’s official surveyor, within six months, to lay off the metes and bounds of the appropriate number of acres. The surveyor periodically journeyed to Williamsburg, to file with the colony’s secretary the plats he had created. After some delay to allow for possible challenges to William’s claim, the patent would then be issued.²² Those

¹⁸ Goochland Co., Order Book 2:78. Wade, a neighbor of William Mills on Lickinghole Creek, made his first appearance in Goochland at the March 1728/9 term of court when he was sued by Samuel Cabell. In March and August 1734, after selling his Lickinghole land, Wade was cited as a resident of Hanover Co. See Goochland Co., Order Book 1:91; and Deeds & Wills 2:1, 62. Wade, like Mills, has not been found in the pre-Goochland records of Henrico.

¹⁹ Virginia Land Office, Patent Book 14:407; Library of Virginia. Chiles’s residence in Hanover is stated in the 31 Oct. 1732 deed by which he sold part of his Goochland land to Mills; see Goochland Co., Deeds & Wills 1:366.

²⁰ William Waller Hening, *The Statutes at Large ... of Virginia*, vol. 3 (Richmond: Samuel Pleasants, 1809), 305, Act of Oct. 1705.

²¹ Image copies of the original grants are browsable on microfilm at the Library of Virginia and index-searchable online at “Virginia Land Patents and Grants,” database with images, *Library of Virginia* (<https://lva-virginia.libguides.com/land-grants>). Abstracts have been published in the classic series begun by Nell Marion Nugent and continued by the Virginia Historical Society, *Cavaliers and Pioneers: Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants*, 8 vols. (various publishers, 1934–2005).

²² For the Treasury grant process, see Frederick Bittle Kegley, *Kegley’s Virginia Frontier* (1938;

delays, coupled with the time William would have spent in Goochland assessing its lands before choosing a productive site, suggest that he likely chose and applied for his first Goochland patent no later than late 1729 in order to receive a patent in April 1732.

William did not surface in Goochland as an impecunious laborer. Within months of his initial patent for 400 acres, he purchased another 300 acres of already patented land along the Lickinghole near Wild Boar Creek.²³ Four years later, he invested in still another 400-acre Treasury grant on the western frontier of the sixty-mile-long Willis River.²⁴ Across that decade, he subdivided his two Lickinghole tracts and sold parts of them; each time, his wife Mary participated in the sale, thereby documenting her role as his wife by March 1733/4.²⁵ On occasion he witnessed a neighbor's deed or was cited therein as an adjacent landowner, further attesting the continuity of his residence along the Lickinghole.²⁶

Each Goochland document William created from 1730 through 1744 is critical to separating him from a contemporary Goochland man of the same name. That other William Mills settled before 1739 on Goochland's Pidy Rock Creek (toward the eastern end of the Willis); applied for a patent in which he identified himself as a native of Aberdeen, Scotland; and received the patent in 1746.²⁷ William of Pidy Rock also served as a processioner for St. James Southam Church on nearby Tar Wallet Creek (later within Cumberland County) from 1741 through 1763, and then disappeared leaving a creditor who sued in 1765 for title to his land and his enslaved people as well.²⁸

reprinted Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co.), 54–58. For importation grants, see Richard Slatten, "Interpreting Headrights in Colonial-Virginia Patents: Uses and Abuses," *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* 75 (Sept. 1987): 169–79. Kegley suggests that a two-year delay was typical. As seen from William's 1749 patent, at least five years elapsed between his entering the land and his receipt of the patent.

²³ Goochland Co., Deeds & Wills 1:366. The seller, Henry Chiles, had purchased the already-patented land in February 1729/30, about the same time that William Mills entered the adjacent tract; see Goochland Co., Deeds & Wills 1: 158–61, 165–66.

²⁴ Virginia Land Office, Patent Book 17:164. Wife Mary would relinquish her dower interest in this land when the last of it was sold in 1743; Goochland Co., Deeds & Wills 4:270–71.

²⁵ Goochland Co., Deeds & Wills 1:487–88 (12 Mar. 1733/4); 2:168–69 (17 Feb. 1735/6), 231–32 (15 June 1736).

²⁶ Goochland Co., Deeds & Wills 3:121–22 (16 May 1738), 466 (14 Sept. 1741).

²⁷ Virginia Land Office, Patent Book 25:230.

²⁸ For a disambiguation of these two William Millses of Goochland, see Mills, "William Mills (c1695–c1755) ... Research Notes," particularly pp. 15–20. For the 1765 debt suit against the Scottish-born William that stands as his last known record in the colony, see James Lyle vs. William Mills, Cumberland Co. Chancery Causes 1765-001; imaged, "Chancery Record Index," *Virginia Memory* (www.lva.virginia.gov/chancery). For his activities in St. James Southam Parish, while the

In 1743–44, as the Virginia Assembly debated the creation of Albemarle County, William of the Lickinghole sold the last of his plantation there, as well as his Willis River tract. His wife Mary relinquished her dower rights to both.²⁹ Applying for another 400 acres of Treasury land on Albemarle's Pedlar River, near the base of the Blue Ridge,³⁰ he moved his family there amid other migrants from Goochland: Burkes, Cabells, Davises, and Tuleys. Subsequent acquisitions followed. As sons came to adulthood, lands were claimed in their names, surrounding him on the Pedlar and its Buck Branch.³¹ Surviving court minutes, deeds, jury lists, land surveys, and road orders cite William periodically³² until September 1755, when he called in five neighbors (an excessive number in his society) to witness his last will and testament. He began that will by stating he was “weak in Body.”³³ After signing his will, he dropped from all further Albemarle records—suggesting the will was created on his deathbed. His estate was held together until 1766, after his youngest son came of age.³⁴

Two particulars in William's will provide additional clues to work with as origins and kinsmen are sought for William and Mary: first, the language he used in his bequest to his eldest son Ambrose; second, his choice of a male to guide his wife's executorship of his estate.

Ambrose as biological son (or not) of Mary:

After bequeathing all personal estate to Mary, “as long as she lives,” William

Pedlar River William was in Albemarle, see Ann K. Blomquist, *The Vestry Book of Southam Parish, Cumberland County, Virginia, 1745–1792* (Westminster, Md.: Heritage Books, 2006), 29, 54, 69, 79, 86, 117, 141, 153, 180; and William Lindsay Hopkins, *St. James Northam Parish Vestry Book, 1744–1850, Goochland County, Virginia* (Richmond: P.p., 1987), 4; citing Vestry Book 13.

²⁹ Goochland Co., Deeds & Wills 4:270–71 (14 Nov. 1743), 356–57 (15 May 1744).

³⁰ Virginia Land Office, Patent Book 28:539.

³¹ In addition to William's original Pedlar tract of 400 acres, see Virginia Land Office, Patent Book 32:696 (William Mills, 350 acres, branches of Buck Creek of Pedlar); 34:40 (Thomas Mills, 355 acres, branches of Pedlar); and 36:942 (William Mills [Jr.], 330 acres, branches of Buck Branch of Pedlar). The nineteenth-century Albemarle historian Alexander Brown asserted that Ambrose Mills (William's eldest son) also entered land on the Pedlar in 1745, but did not cite the record; see Brown, “Historical and Genealogical Notes,” *William and Mary College Quarterly* 8 (April 1900): 208–9. The patent to William Jr.'s land, a tract that William Sr.'s will referred to as “unsettled,” was not issued until 1765 when William's widow Mary and their newly adult son Jesse prepared to probate William Sr.'s will. William Jr. had left the Pedlar for N.C. years before his father's death, as seen in his profile later in this paper.

³² Albemarle Co., Court Orders 1744–1748: 239 (12 Mar. 1746/7), 251 (13 Mar. 1746/7), 345–47 (10 Mar. 1747/8), 361 (12 May 1748), 374–75 (Mar.–Jun 1748 land surveys); *ibid.*, part 2, pp. vi (12 Nov. 1746) and x (10 Dec. 1747). Also Albemarle Plat Book 1:127, 133 (12–14 Apr. 1750); and Albemarle Wills & Deeds, Book 1:475–76 (deed of sale 13 Aug. 1752).

³³ Amherst Co., Will Book 1:73–76, for 1755 will and 1766 administratrix's bond.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

began his bequests to each child, apparently in their order of birth. His one provision for his eldest son states: “I give and bequeath to my son Ambrose Mills a proportionable part of all my estate excepting my Lands, [at] the death of *his mother (my wife)*.” The dual relationships stated for Mary raise questions that parallel the apparent child-spacing of William’s children. If Ambrose and all his siblings were children of Mary, then there would be no need for William, after referring to Ambrose’s inheritance from “his mother,” to clarify the statement by saying he meant “my wife.” As will be seen in the data provided below for William’s children, there is reason to suspect that he may have had two sets of children, with Mary being a stepmother rearing the children of the first marriage.

Thomas Joplin as co-executor (or not) with Mary:

William’s decision to appoint his wife Mary as executrix, even though she was not literate, was not common among males in his place and time. Those who did make this choice usually named a male to serve with her, to advise her on financial and legal matters. Grown sons of the testator, if any, were typically appointed to that role. In this case, one grown son had died (Thomas), one had left the Pedlar for North Carolina (William Jr.), one was preparing to leave for the Carolinas (Ambrose), and the fourth son (Jesse) was a child.³⁵ Alternatively, men in William’s circumstance who had brothers or other family in the region appointed their kinsmen or they appointed male relatives of their wife. Although families of the surnames alleged for William’s wife Mary—*Walton* and *Lavender*—existed then in Albemarle, no male from either family was tapped to assist Mary in the administration of the goods William left to support her and their children.

Instead, William named a man named Thomas Joplin with whom he had not even one interaction of record across the quarter-century that both men lived in Goochland and Albemarle Counties. Joplin’s first-known lands had centered on Tuckahoe Creek along the southern bounds of present Richmond,³⁶ while William Mills settled on Lickinghole, some thirty miles to the northwest. When Joplin left Goochland, he chose land on the Rockfish River in eastern Albemarle³⁷—some sixty miles from William’s land on Albemarle’s westernmost river, the Pedlar. In Henrico County, before Goochland had been created, Joplin had wed Hannah

³⁵ See the subsequent sketches of each son in the section “William & Mary Mills: The Offspring.”

³⁶ Goochland Co. Deeds & Wills 3:103–4 (1729 land sale, Parish to Jopling). Also Joplin’s assignment to a road crew for “making a bridge over Tuckahoe Creek”; Goochland Co., Court Order Book 4: 373 (Feb. 1738/9 term).

³⁷ Virginia Land Office, Patent Book 31:5–6, Thomas Joplin, 300 acres on South fork of Rockfish and 400 acres on South side of Rockfish.

Freeman, daughter of George Freeman;³⁸ extensive study of that family yields no interaction with William or Mary Mills or with any of their identified neighbors and associates. The one sole link that has been found between William Mills and Thomas Joplin was the marriage of a Joplin daughter to Mills's Pedlar River neighbor Robert Davis, another migrant from Goochland.³⁹ Davis, one of the neighbors William called in to witness his will, was also a man William had sued several years before.⁴⁰

The inability to document Joplin's presence in the lives of the Millses (or vice-versa) suggests no reason why William placed into Joplin's trust the future financial welfare of his widow and children. Possibly, that reason lies in Joplin's civic status. If so, it also suggests a lack of male kin for either William or Mary and a resulting desperation for trustworthy help. The contemporary diaries of the Albemarle-Amherst planter-attorney William Cabell occasionally mention Thomas Joplin and his activities on behalf of the parish. At Joplin's death in 1789, Cabell sat down with his diary to note: "Thomas Jopling the elder departed this life in a very advanced age. He was an honest Man and his death much lamented by all his Acquaintances."⁴¹ Perhaps William Mills looked upon Joplin as a parish leader of integrity who could be trusted to "do right" for his widow and children.

Whether Joplin informally accepted his role as advisor to the widowed Mary, during the years that William's estate was held together unprobated, is undiscernible from surviving records. In 1765, William and Mary's youngest child, Jesse, came of age and took a wife; with that marriage, Jesse became the brother-in-law of Amherst County's William *Walton*.⁴² About that same time, William

³⁸ Henrico Co., Wills & Deeds 1725–1737: 518 (George Freeman will, 3 Oct. 1735, mentioning "son in law Thomas Joplin and his wife my daughter Hannah Joplin").

³⁹ Amherst Co. Court Order Book 1773–1782: 455 (Jane Davis, widow, refused to take administration of the estate of her deceased husband Robert Davis, whereon "Thomas Jopling Father to the said Jane Davis" was appointed administrator).

⁴⁰ Albemarle Co., Court Orders 1744–48: 239.

⁴¹ Diary of William Cabell Sr., photostat 148, folder: "Receipt Book, 1751–1755, and Diary 15 July 1783–31 Dec. 1795, folder 2 of 3"; manuscript [collection] 23338, Cabell Family: Diaries, 1751–1825; Library of Virginia.

⁴² Amherst Co. Marriage Bonds and Consents, 1763–1783, chronological sequence, Jesse Mills and Lucy Tilman, 6 August 1765 bond; loose papers, Amherst Co. microfilm 104, Library of Virginia. For the 1 December 1758 Goochland marriage of William Walton to Lucy's sister Elizabeth Tilman, see W. Mac. Jones, ed., *The Douglas Register: Being a Detailed Record of Births, Marriages and Deaths Together with Other Interesting Notes, as Kept by the Rev. William Douglas, from 1750 to 1797* (Richmond, Va.: J. W. Ferguson, 1928), 13. For evidence that Elizabeth (Tilman) Walton was sister of Lucy (Tilman) Mills, see Augusta County Chancery Causes, no. 1817-084, Daniel Tilman [and siblings] vs. Elizabeth Christian, filed 19 July 1811; imaged "Chancery Record Index," *Virginia Memory* (<https://www.lva.virginia.gov/chancery>).

Mills's heirs finalized the patent process for title to the 330 "unsettled" acres that he had bequeathed to his absent son William Jr.⁴³ Three weeks after that patent was issued in Williamsburg (10 July 1766), the will of William Sr. was presented for probate in Amherst. Joplin declined to serve; the administration was bonded to Mary alone, with her son Jesse and son-in-law William *Lavender* as her sureties.⁴⁴ William Sr.'s second daughter Elizabeth and her new (second) husband John Ripley soon contested Mary's handling of the estate; the surviving records of that suit do not refer to Mary as Elizabeth's mother. After a year on the Amherst docket, the parties settled out of court in November 1768⁴⁵ and the Ripleys left for South Carolina where Elizabeth's brother Ambrose and sister Sarah had migrated in the wake of William Sr.'s death.⁴⁶

Seven years after this lawsuit was settled, Mary died. On 1 July 1776, the Amherst court summoned "the Heir at Law of William Mills Deceased ... to appear here at the Next Court to declare whether he will take upon himself the administration of the Estate of Mary Mills, Deceased." In August the court repeated its summons, enjoining "Ambrose Mills Son and Heir at Law of William Mills deceased." In neither instance did the court state Ambrose's relationship to Mary, whose estate needed an administrator, or identify Ambrose as an heir of Mary.⁴⁷ Ambrose, then a resident of Tryon County, North Carolina, did not appear; he was, in fact, at that time in the Rowan County jail to which he had been consigned as a suspected Loyalist.⁴⁸ No further court orders were issued in Mary's estate. Apparently, whatever she owned was then assumed by the two children who remained in Amherst: Jesse and Mildred, the wife of William Lavender.

WILLIAM & MARY MILLS: THE OFFSPRING

1. **William¹ Mills**, born c1695, apparently in Virginia; married (1) before 1720; possibly married (2) c1734, Goochland Co., Va.; known wife **Mary** (died 1776, Amherst Co., Va.). William made his will on 6 September 1755, while "weak" in body.⁴⁹ He was the father of eight children. Whether Mary was the mother of the

⁴³ Virginia Land Office, Patent Book 36:942.

⁴⁴ Amherst Co., Will Book 1:73 (will), 75 (administrator's bond), 104 (inventory).

⁴⁵ Amherst Co., Court Order Book 1773–1782: 212, 244, 294, 328, 391, 434.

⁴⁶ For these migrations, see each sibling's profile in the next section of this paper.

⁴⁷ Amherst Co., Court Order Book 1773–1782: 154, 157.

⁴⁸ William L. Saunders, ed., *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, 10 vols. (Raleigh: P.M. Hale, State Printer, 1886–90), 10:730, 760.

⁴⁹ These points have all been developed and documented on pp. 5–11 of this paper.

first four or five is debatable.⁵⁰

- + 2. **AMBROSE² MILLS**, born by 1721; married (1) **MOURNING STONE**, c1745; (2) **ANN BROWN**, c1765; hung 14 October 1780, Rutherford Co., N.C.
- + 3. **THOMAS² MILLS**, born c1723–24; married before 1752, possibly **ELEANOR CABELL**; died before 6 September 1755, Albemarle Co., Va.
- + 4. **SARAH² MILLS**, born c1726; married before 1749, **THOMAS WATTS**; died after c1795, Fairfield District, S.C.
- + 5. **WILLIAM “BILLY”² MILLS**, born c1728; married c1750, allegedly **REBECCA**, possibly surnamed **WALTON**; hung October 1780, Rutherford Co., N.C.
- + 6. **ELIZABETH² MILLS**, born c1730–35; married (1) before September 1755, **THOMAS LEARWOOD**; married (2) c1767, **JOHN RIPLEY**; died after 1790.
- + 7. **ANNE² MILLS**, born c1738; married c1759, **LEWIS WITT**; will probated 28 October 1816, Bedford Co., Va.
- + 8. **MILDRED “MILLY”² MILLS**, born c1745; married (1) **WILLIAM LAVENDER**, before 1770; (2) **WILLIAM WALTON** 16 April 1792; died 1820–22, Maury Co., Tenn.
- + 9. **JESSE² MILLS**, born c1743; married 6 August 1765, **LUCY TILMAN**; died after 29 July 1811.

2. Ambrose² Mills (William¹), born by 1721.⁵¹ About 1745, in Albemarle or Lunenburg County, he wed **MOURNING STONE**, speculatively the daughter of Lunenburg’s Thomas Stone.⁵² The 1750 and 1752 tax rolls of Lunenburg, which lay across James River from Albemarle, identify Ambrose as an overseer for the absentee planter, John Payne of Goochland.⁵³ In October 1754, after their portion of Lunenburg split off into the new county of Bedford, Ambrose appeared in Bedford’s court as surety for the well-to-do John Partree Burks who was being sued for debt by the surveyor George *Walton*.⁵⁴ Within months of William Sr.’s will, Ambrose and Thomas Watts, husband of Ambrose’s oldest sister Sarah, moved their young families to the Wateree River of

⁵⁰ Documentation for the events in this children’s summary appears in each child’s individual profile.

⁵¹ Age extrapolated from fact that he was sued as an adult in Nov. 1743 (i.e., born by Nov. 1722); Goochland Co. Order Book 5: 314. Commonly, the debt would have been a year or more past due—suggesting a birth before Nov. 1721. His known activities (more than a hundred identified events in Virginia and the Carolinas) are chronicled as transcriptions, abstracts, and/or images in E. S. Mills, “Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780): Spouses 1. Mourning Stone; 2. Anne Brown: Research Notes,” last updated 5 Sept. 2022, 66 pp.; *Historic Pathways* (<https://www.historicpathways.com/download/MillsAmbroseResearchNotes.pdf>).

⁵² Alexander Brown, “Historical and Genealogical Notes,” *William & Mary College Quarterly* 8 (1900): 208–9, responding to a query from a subscriber who had put forth garbled information. Brown in that era was the unofficial but widely acknowledged historian of early Albemarle and its offshoots, Amherst and Nelson.

⁵³ Landon C. Bell, *Sunlight on the Southside: List of Tithes, Lunenburg County, Virginia; 1748–1783* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1974), 101 and 152.

⁵⁴ Bedford Co., Va. Order Book 1:30.

South Carolina.⁵⁵ There, Mourning and all their children except the eldest son, were killed in a Native American attack on their frontier home.⁵⁶ About 1764, Ambrose wed **ANNE BROWN**, sister-in-law of the future Loyalist colonel Thomas Fletchall of Fair Forest in Spartanburg, South Carolina, and alleged daughter of the Loyalist colonel Thomas Brown.⁵⁷ Across the next decade, Ambrose would accumulate 1,000 surveyed acres at strategic sites in what is now Fairfield County.⁵⁸

Between 1768 and 1770, Ambrose and his now-married first-born William⁵⁹ made a fateful decision to leave Fairfield and join Ambrose's brother William Jr. in North Carolina.⁶⁰ Settling on Green River at the mouth of Walnut Creek in Tryon County (later Rutherford), Ambrose again expanded his landholdings rapidly and became embroiled in frontier politics. He was elected to Tryon's first "Committee of Safety" on the eve of the Revolution but was soon accused of disloyalty to the Revolutionary cause when he joined an expedition against the Cherokee to forestall an expected attack. After several months of imprisonment in the Anson County jail, he was released on humanitarian grounds.⁶¹ As the conflict heated along the border between the two Carolinas in 1779 and 1780—perhaps under the influence of his wife's

⁵⁵ Ambrose's move may be dated before Nov. 1756, when Thomas Prather requested bounty on a wolf's head, under assignment from Ambrose who would have sold his claim at a discount before leaving; see TLC Genealogy, *Bedford County, Virginia, Order Book 1, 1754–1761* (Miami Beach, FL: TLC Genealogy, 2000), 116. Ambrose also sold his surveyed but unpatented land, 898 acres in Bedford Co.; the deed is not recorded but on 27 Apr. 1761 William Callaway sold the tract by a deed that cited (without a date) his acquisition of the land from Ambrose. See Ann Chilton, *Bedford Co., Va., Deed Book A-1, 1754–1762* (Signal Mountain, Tenn.: Mountain Press, 1987), 8.

⁵⁶ Draper, *Kings Mountain and Its Heroes*, 481, drawing from the account by Ambrose's great-grandson Edney, states that young William survived; but he did not address other children of Mourning, which she surely had by the time the Indian hostilities erupted in the region. The 1823 recollections of John Bryan state, "the indians had killed his [Ambrose's] wife and *some of his children*"; see Ransom, "The Notorious Hallows of Surry County," 1.

⁵⁷ Alexander Brown opined in "Historical and Genealogical Notes," that Anne was the daughter of "Col. Brown, of Chester, S.C.," but offered no evidence. For Fletchall and Thomas Brown, see Draper, *Kings Mountain and Its Heroes*, 481; Edney, "Our Ancestors—Revolutionary Incidents, &c."; and Jones, "The Journal of Alexander Chesney," 6, 8, 65, 68, 71, 105, 107 (Brown) and 66–71 (Fletchall).

⁵⁸ Colonial Plat Books (Copy Series), 8:359, 477; and 18:432; series S213184, South Carolina Department of Archives and History (SCDAH), Columbia. Also series S213197, box 3, item 859.

⁵⁹ William married Eleanor Morris on 12 Oct. 1765 according to the previously cited biography penned by his grandson, Edney. The marriage likely occurred along the Wateree River, S.C., where William and his father then resided and where marriages were not recorded.

⁶⁰ The move appears to date between 16 Jan. 1768, when Ambrose had his last Wateree acreage surveyed, and 1 Dec. 1770, when he purchased his first 640 acres in Tryon Co. (later Lincoln and Rutherford). See SCDAH series S213184, vol. 8:432. Also Lincoln Co., N.C., Deed Book 1:680 (Reynolds to Mills).

⁶¹ William L. Saunders et al., eds., *State Records of North Carolina*, 26 vols. (Raleigh: P.M. Hale, 1886–1907), 10:730, 760, 827; and 22:186. Jones, ed., "The Journal of Alexander Chesney," 118. Kathy Gunter Sullivan, *Tryon County Documents, 1769–1779: A North Carolina County* (Forest City, N.C.: Genealogical Society of Old Tryon Co., 2000), 192–93.

kin—Ambrose accepted a colonel’s commission in the Loyalist forces. In that service, he was captured at the Battle of King’s Mountain. On 14 October 1780, with five subordinate officers and three soldiers, he was hung by Whig forces at Bickerstaff’s Farm in Rutherford.⁶²

Col. Ambrose² Mills left seven children by his two wives. By Mourning Stone, his only surviving child (and only child whose identity is on record) was

10. **MAJ. WILLIAM³ MILLS** (Ambrose², William¹), Loyalist officer, born 1746, Albemarle or Lunenburg Co., Va.; m. **ELEANOR MORRIS**, 12 Oct. 1765; died 10 Nov. 1834, Edneyville, Henderson Co., N.C. Seven children were born of this marriage: **John** (Col. John Mills, Esq.), **Marvel E., Mourning** (married Henry Graves Lewis), **Sarah** (married Rev. Asa Edney), **Eleanor “Nellie”** (m. Rev. Samuel Edney), **Elizabeth** (married George Washington Jones), and **Phalby** (married David Myers).⁶³ Their offspring are numerous, but proved descendants in the Y-line have not tested (or agreed to test) their Y-DNA.

By Anne Brown (later wife of John Carrick⁶⁴), Ambrose left three sons and three daughters:

11. **THOMAS³ MILLS** (Ambrose², William¹), born c1765, Craven Co., S.C. Although he was only in mid-teens when the Battle of Kings Mountain occurred, Thomas was accused of being an enemy captain by the post-war courts created to confiscate Loyalist property. After years of legal feints and thwarts aided by well-placed friends, Thomas, his brother Maj. William, and his mother Anne (as Col. Ambrose’s widow) avoided the confiscations.⁶⁵ In 1786 Thomas applied successfully for a state grant on Green River,⁶⁶ but absented himself from other county records and perhaps from the county itself. In

⁶² Draper, *Kings Mountain and Its Heroes*, 340. Jones, “Journal of Alexander Chesney,” 72–74.

⁶³ Edney, “Our Ancestors—Revolutionary Incidents, &c.,” provides birth, marriage, and death data for his grandparents, along with identities of Maj. William’s children (his mother’s siblings). Also Draper, *Kings Mountain and Its Heroes*, 482. For abstracts, transcriptions, and/or images of many documents created by William, see E. S. Mills, “William Mills, Maj. (1746–1834); Spouse, Eleanor Morris: Research Notes,” last updated 6 Sept. 2022, 70 pp.; archived online at *Historic Pathways* (<https://historicpathways.com/download/MillsWilliamofAmbroseResearchNotes.pdf>).

⁶⁴ Rutherford Co., N.C., Will Book B:76 ff (settlement, William Mills vs. John Carrick and others, Ambrose Mills estate, 1797). Also Buncombe Co., N.C., Deed Book A:39–41, 426–27 (disposition of property by heirs of Ann Carrick, 2 Oct. 1805 and 12 Aug. 1806).

⁶⁵ Rutherford Co., Minutes, Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, 1779–1786: 48, 67, 103, 105, 107, 115–16. Also, A. B. Pruitt, *Abstracts of Sales of Confiscated Loyalist Land and Property in North Carolina* (N.p.: P.p., 1989), 113–27; citing “Morgan District Superior Court Miscellaneous Records, DSCR 205.428.2, 582F.”

⁶⁶ David McCorkle and North Carolina Historical Records Online, *NC Land Grant Images and Data* (<http://www.nclandgrants.com>), Thomas Mills, Book 96:381; citing Rutherford Co. file 1653, NC microfilm reel S.108.160.25N, frame 217, State Archives. Also “North Carolina, U.S., Land Grant Files, 1693–1960,” *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/60621/>) > Rutherford > 1522–1817 > image 630 of 1539.

1800, three years after the settlement of his father's estate (a settlement that had been delayed until the youngest child came of age), he sold that Green River land to his brother Ambrose Jr. and dropped from county records entirely.⁶⁷ His identity past that point has not been adequately established. Various Mills lines in Tennessee and Georgia claim descent from him but none have mounted a credible proof argument. Claimants also have not Y-tested or else their Y-DNA differs significantly from that of testers with proved Y-lines from the Pedlar River William.

12. **JOHN³ MILLS** (Ambrose², William¹), born c1769.⁶⁸ In the mid-1790s, John married **MIRIAM WADLINGTON**, daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth Wadlington, and moved with her family to Christian Co., Kentucky.⁶⁹ Y-line descendants have not yet been identified.
13. **MARY "POLLY"³ MILLS** (Ambrose², William¹), born c1770,⁷⁰ married the Patriot soldier **RUSSELL TWITTY** by Rutherford bond dated 3 Nov. 1790.⁷¹ Her male offspring would not carry a Mills Y.
14. **MILDRED "MILLY"³ MILLS** (Ambrose², William¹), born March 1775;⁷² married **MERRIMON FEATHERSTONE** by Rutherford bond dated 5 Nov. 1799.⁷³ Milly was still living on 4 June 1846 when her son **Ambrose M. Featherstone** made his will, naming her as his heir.⁷⁴ Her male offspring would not carry a Mills Y.

⁶⁷ Rutherford Co., Deed Book 22–23 (recopied): 307–8.

⁶⁸ Approximate year of birth extrapolated from (a) the fact that he came to adulthood before the July–Oct. 1790 court terms when a financial guardian was appointed for Ambrose and Anne's minor children and (b) the birth months and years stated for John's younger siblings in those court orders. See Rutherford Co., Superior Court Minutes, County Court, 1789–1793, unpaginated, July and Oct. 1790 sessions.

⁶⁹ Christian Co., Ky., Deed Book A:184–87 (John and Mariam Mills to other Wadlington heirs, 29 Dec. 1804). Also Buncombe County, N.C., Deed Book A:426–27 (John Mills of Christian Co., Ky., and Ambrose Mills [Jr.] of Rutherford Co., legatees of Anne Carrick, to Joseph King, 12 Aug. 1806). John and Ambrose Jr.'s self-identification as "legatees" implies that their mother died testate, but the will has not been found.

⁷⁰ Birth year extrapolated from her placement as first-named of four minors of Ambrose, over age 14 in July 1790, who were ordered to court to select a guardian; see Rutherford Co., Superior Court Minutes 1789–1793, unpaginated, chronological order.

⁷¹ Rutherford Co., Marriage Bonds, alphabetically arranged; imaged, FamilySearch.org > image group no. 7740376 > image 766. Also application of Russell Twitty (Pvt., Capt. Twitty's Co., Col. Graham's Regt., N.C.) S17161; imaged, "US Revolutionary War (United States)," *Fold3* (<https://www.fold3.com/image/19736108> and 23 subsequent images).

⁷² Birth month and year given in guardianship proceedings, Rutherford Co., Superior Court Minutes 1789–1793, unpaginated, chronological order, 15 Oct. 1790.

⁷³ Rutherford Co., Marriage Bonds, alphabetically arranged; imaged, FamilySearch.org > IGN 7740373 > images 23–24.

⁷⁴ Henderson Co., N.C., Wills, 1838–1882: 17–18. Henderson County lay adjacent to Rutherford; parts of each would be combined in 1855 to create Polk County.

15. **AMBROSE³ MILLS JR.** (Ambrose², William¹), b. Feb. 1777;⁷⁵ married (1) **HONORA [—?—]** who died 28 May 1822;⁷⁶ and (2) **ANNA “NANCY” FOSTER JONES**, 1 Feb. 1825.⁷⁷ Called “Esq.” in 1822 and 1825, Ambrose Jr. made his will in Oct. 1845 and died in 1848.⁷⁸ His one son who lived to adulthood (**William E. Mills**) left only one son (also named Ambrose), whose *great-grandson provided one of the DNA samples by which the Y-signature of Col. Ambrose’s father could be identified*. See Chart 1.
16. **ANNA “NANCY”³ MILLS** (Ambrose², William¹), b. June 1780;⁷⁹ married **JOHN BIRD** by Rutherford bond dated 9 Nov. 1797.⁸⁰ She died after the 1820 census on which she is enumerated as a female living next door to her same-aged half-nephew, Marvel Mills (son of Maj. William).⁸¹ Her male offspring would not carry a Mills Y.

3. **Thomas² Mills** (William¹), born c1723–24; married before 1752; died before his father’s will of 6 September 1755, leaving children **Ambrose Mills** and **Elizabeth Mills** who are named in the will. Thomas’s birth period is extrapolated from the fact that he allegedly was of legal age to acquire land from the province by 1744–45⁸² and supported by the fact that in Nov. 1746 the county court paid him a wolf’s head bounty in his own right rather than making the payment to his parent, as would have been customary for a minor son.⁸³ Thomas’s land grant on Pedlar River, patented posthumously in 1756, is mentioned in 1770 as adjacent to land being sold by his brother “William Mills of North Carolina.”⁸⁴ Thomas’s widow seems to be the otherwise unidentified “**Eleonar Mills**” who has been found on record only twice. The fact that both occasions place her in the bosom of the Cabell family suggests that she

⁷⁵ Birth month and year given in guardianship proceedings, Rutherford Co., Superior Court Minutes 1789–1793, unpaginated, chronological order, 15 Oct. 1790.

⁷⁶ *Raleigh Register* (Raleigh, N.C.), 28 June 1822, p. 3 col. 5, for Rutherford death “after a long, protracted illness ... in the 35th year of her age, Mrs. Honora Mills, wife of Ambrose Mills, Esq.”

⁷⁷ The original marriage bond for “Ambroses” Mills and “Miss Nancy Jones” is dated 1 Feb. 1824; see *FamilySearch* digital film 7740375 > image 179. However, the marriage announcement was published in the *Raleigh Register*, 22 Feb. 1825, p. 3 col. 2, stating that the marriage occurred in the home of George Jones on 1 Feb. 1825. It is likely that the clerk issued the bond early in 1825, but absent-mindedly wrote the year as 1824.

⁷⁸ Rutherford Co., Will Book E:182–86.

⁷⁹ Birth month and year from guardianship proceedings, Rutherford Co., Superior Court Minutes 1789–1793, unpaginated, 15 Oct. 1790.

⁸⁰ Rutherford Co., Marriage Bonds, alphabetically arranged; *FamilySearch* digital film 7740371 > image 277. Also Buncombe Co., Deed Book A:39–41 (1805 land sale by heirs of Anne Carrick).

⁸¹ 1820 U.S. census, Rutherford Co., p. 383, line 7, for “Bird, Nancy” and family.

⁸² C. H. C. Seaman, ed., *The Lee Marmon Manuscript* (Sweet Briar, Va.: Amherst Co. Historical Museum & Nelson Co. Historical Soc., 1989), 47; imaged at *Internet Archive* (<http://www.archive.org/details/leemarmomonmanuscr00seam>). For Thomas Mills’s land claim of 1745, Marman at p. 45 states: “The Nelson historian Alexander Brown, relying on diverse and some now unavailable sources, has listed additional settlers who lived in the area of Old Amherst by 1745.”

⁸³ Albemarle Co., Court Orders 1744–48, part 2, p. vi.

⁸⁴ Amherst Co., Deed Book E:91.

may have been a Cabell. In 1769, she cowitnessed a deed from William Cabell Senr. to William Cabell Junr. for “natural Love & affection.” Cosigning with her was William *Walton*, the new brother-in-law of Thomas Mills’s brother Jesse. In 1774, Eleanor Mills was cited again in a court order to take her testimony in a suit by Charles Burrows against Joseph Cabell for assault and battery.⁸⁵ Thomas’s (and Eleanor’s?) son Ambrose has not been found as an adult and apparently died before 1777 when his sister Elizabeth, as wife of John Turner of Charleston, S.C., sold the whole of their father’s land grant.⁸⁶

4. **Sarah “Sally”² Mills** (William¹), b. c1726; m. before 1749, **Thomas Watts**.⁸⁷ In the wake of her father’s death, Sarah and Thomas moved with her brother Ambrose and Thomas’s brothers Edward Jr. and William Watts to Craven Co., S.C. (later Camden District and then Fairfield, Lancaster, and Kershaw Counties). Sarah died on their Wateree lands c1795–1800,⁸⁸ leaving children **John** (Rev. John Watts, Esq.), **Mary** (married Francis Kirkland), **Elizabeth “Betty”** (m. Richard Duggans); **George, William, Thomas Jr., Edward, Sarah “Sallie”** (married James Smith), and **Agnes** (married Christopher Addison).⁸⁹ Her sons would not carry a Mills Y.

⁸⁵ Amherst Co., Deed Book B:431. Also Amherst Co., Court Order Book 1773–1802, unpaginated, July 1774.

⁸⁶ Amherst Co., Deed Book E:91.

⁸⁷ Sarah, the second-named child in her father’s will, is cited there as “Sarah Watts.” As wife of Thomas Watts, on 9 Aug. 1749, she joined him in the sale of his grant on Pedlar River; Albemarle Co., Deed Book 1:96. Countless online allegations that Sarah married one “Thomas Caleb Watts” and died in Amherst in 1766 are based on a mash-up of two Thomas Wattses and one Caleb Watts in Amherst. The alleged year of her death is a conflation with the year that her father’s will was probated—i.e., the last time someone found her name in Amherst records.

For a separation of the various Thomas Wattses in Amherst, see E. S. Mills, “Watts & (Some) Dillardards of Albemarle & Amherst Counties, VA,” report, 3 December 2019 (updated 29 April 2022), 130 pp.; *Historic Pathways* (<https://www.historicpathways.com/download/WattsDillardAmherstCoSurvey.pdf>). For all records found to date for Sarah and Thomas, see E.S. Mills, “Thomas Watts (b. c1725; d. c1796–1800); Spouse Sarah Mills: Research Notes,” last updated 29 Nov. 2019, 46 pp.; *Historic Pathways* (<https://www.historicpathways.com/download/WattsThomasSarahResearchNotes1.pdf>). For the proof argument rooting this Watts-Mills family in Albemarle, see E. S. Mills, “Frontier Research Strategies—Weaving a Web to Snare a Birth Family: John Watts (ca. 1749–ca. 1822),” *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* 104 (Sept. 2016): 165–90.

⁸⁸ Sarah’s death is approximated from depositions by her granddaughter Catherine “Caty” (Watts) Hornsby (b. c1769) and Caty’s husband Moses Hornsby, created Nov. 1821 in Covington Co., Miss., saying that they had known her Watts grandparents (plural) in S.C., for about 40 years. While Covington’s legal records of that period have been destroyed, the Hornsby affidavits are filed in the Louisiana succession (probate) file for their uncle (Sarah and Thomas’s son Thomas Watts Jr.), Ouachita Parish Succession file A1082 and Succession vol. C:31–38, “Thomas Watts of S. Carolina,” particularly C:37.

⁸⁹ Mills, “Thomas Watts (b. c1725; d. c1796–1800); Spouse Sarah Mills: Research Notes,” pp. 2–3. Also Richland Dist., S.C., probate files, box 33, pkg. 801, Estate of Thomas Watts [Jr.], naming siblings who were to be his residual heirs after a \$6,000 payment to Joseph Watts [the natural, half-Indian son Thomas Jr. had set up on land in Louisiana]; digitized at *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/search>) > South Carolina Probate Records, Files, and Loose Papers, 1732–1964 > Richland > Probate Court, Estate papers > Box 033, Packages 801–825.

5. **William “English Billy”² Mills Jr.** (William¹), born c1728, had already removed to N.C. prior to his father’s death. His eldest son Jesse Mills, born c1751, would cite his birthplace in a Revolutionary War pension application as “Deep River, Chatham County”⁹⁰ (then Orange Co.). In 1769, in nearby Tryon County (the portion that became Lincoln, then Rutherford) Billy executed a deed of gift to his son Jesse, conveying personal goods and animals of the sort that young men use to start a household.⁹¹ On 5 October 1770, Billy made his only known appearance in Virginia records. Identifying himself as “William Mills of North Carolina” (county unstated), and making the same $\#$ mark that he made on his deed of gift to Jesse, he sold for 25£ the 330 acres of Pedlar River land he had inherited from his father. The three witnesses to that document did not include Mary Mills or her son Jesse or son-in-law William Lavender—the only kinsmen Billy had left in the Albemarle-Amherst region.⁹²

Three years later, Billy invested his proceeds in 200 acres on Tryon’s Horse Creek of the North Pacolet River; but, as a result of Native unrest, he sold the land within months.⁹³ From there, he moved to the Green River–Walnut Creek area settled by his brother Ambrose. A January 1779 land entry for one William Hall describes Hall’s land as one mile from Ambrose Mills, bordering “land claimed by Ambrose Mills where Wm. Mills Sr. now lives.”⁹⁴ In the fall of 1780, days before the Battle of King’s Mountain, “English Billy” was one of several Loyalists taken prisoner in Rutherford by Whig troops. He was ordered hung by Lt. Jesse Walton,⁹⁵ whose Amherst brother Maj. William Walton was the brother-in-law of English Billy’s younger brother Jesse. Thereafter, Billy’s widow and children—at least through the close of the war—were taken into the stone fort home of Col. Ambrose’s son Maj. William. An affidavit in the Revolutionary War pension application of Billy’s son Jesse—made by Maj. William’s son Col. John—reports that Jesse’s mother (unnamed) lived with John’s parents (Maj. William and wife) when Jesse returned from war.⁹⁶

⁹⁰ Affidavit of applicant, 25 Oct. 1832, Jesse Mills Pension Application (Pvt., Miller’s Regt., N.C. Line), W7448, widow Sarah (née Garrett); imaged in “Revolutionary War Pensions,” *Fold3* (<https://www.fold3.com/image/25852181> and 50 subsequent images), particularly image 25852214.

⁹¹ Lincoln Co., Deed Book 1:45 (26 April 1775).

⁹² Amherst Co., Deed Book C:118.

⁹³ Rutherford Co., Deed Book J-L (recopied): 245–46.

⁹⁴ The “William Jr.” of 1779 Tryon > Rutherford at this time was Ambrose’s son who is known to history as “Maj. William.” For the Hall record, see A. B. Pruitt, *Abstracts of Land Entries, Tryon and Lincoln Co., NC, 1778–1780* (N.P.: P.p., 1987), 42; citing p. 103.

⁹⁵ This otherwise unknown incident was reported in the affidavit of applicant William Walton [Jr.] (Private, Capt. John Loving’s Co., Stevens’ Regt., Va.), no. S17184; imaged, “Revolutionary War Pensions,” *Fold3* (<https://www.fold3.com/image/20447289> and 33 subsequent images), particularly 20447300, 20447303, 20447306, 20447308. William Jr.’s father, Maj. William Walton, as widower of Elizabeth Tilman, would later marry the widowed Mildred (Mills) Lavender, youngest sister of “English Billy,” as outlined under Child 7. The applicant William Walton Jr., specifically identified Lt. Jesse Walton as his uncle.

⁹⁶ Affidavit of John Mills of Rutherford Co., 18 May 1833, in Jesse Mills Pension Application, images 25852227 and 25852229. A militia colonel and justice of the peace at the time of his affidavit,

Billy's death during the Revolution went unremarked within local court records. Given that he only occupied land at the time of his death, with no patent yet issued, no probate was opened with heirs identified. No known document names his wife. Tradition reported in many online trees holds that she was named **Rebecca**, and that her daughter Polly carried the middle name **Walton**.

Exhaustive study of the records of Tryon, Lincoln, Rutherford, and their offshoots enable the reconstruction of four children for Billy and his wife. They are detailed below because they are critical to establishing the identification of the Y-haplogroup of their grandfather, William Sr.

17. **JESSE³ MILLS** (William², William¹), b. c1751,⁹⁷ is the only child proved for William "Billy" Mills by *direct* evidence. In March 1769, shortly before William donated to "my son Jesse" goods of the type young men needed to establish a household, land was surveyed for Jesse on the Pacolet, not far from his father.⁹⁸ Due to Native hostilities, neither would remain there. If Jesse married at the time he first set up housekeeping, the marriage was short-lived and apparently childless. In 1785, after service for the Patriot cause, Jesse wed **SARAH GARRETT**,⁹⁹ likely the daughter of the widow Mary Garrett who was enumerated next door to him on the 1790 census.¹⁰⁰ In October 1790 Jesse submitted to the Rutherford court a claim for £1.18.8 due him for 100 miles travel (round trip) and three days appearance as a witness in a court case—suggesting that Jesse's residence was fifty miles from the Rutherfordton courthouse. While attending that term of court, Jesse also did service as a juror,¹⁰¹ indicating that he was at that time a landowner,¹⁰² although documentation for his first acquisition of land on

this John was about ten years old when his uncle Billy's widow and children were taken in by his parents.

⁹⁷ Birth year estimated from the fact that he first applied for land and was set up with his own household goods in 1769. Possibly he was already of legal age but, by custom, he could have been as young as, say, sixteen.

⁹⁸ Lincoln Co., Deed Book 1:45 (William Mills to Jesse Mills, 18 July 1769). Also "North Carolina, U.S., Land Grant Files, 1693–1960," *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/60621/>) > Tryon > 1-557 > image 531, Jesse Mills.

⁹⁹ Jesse Mills Pension Application, particularly image 25852206.

¹⁰⁰ 1790 U.S. census, Rutherford Co., "12th Company," p. 145 lines 1–11: Robt. Young, Rev. Robt. Caruth, *R^d Yielding* (Jesse's proposed brother-in-law), James Jeffery, Henry Russell, Jno. Young, *Mary Garrett, Jesse Mills*, Sam. McBriers [McBryer], Jno. Fisher, *William Mills* [Maj. William, son of Ambrose]. McBryer, in 1787, had purchased from Maj. William, 100 acres below the mouth of Walnut Creek; that placement suggests that Jesse Mills was at the time of this 1790 census living on the land his father had inhabited at his death. Jesse would move soon thereafter. For the Mills to McBryer sale, see Rutherford Co., Deed Book E-I (recopied): 213–14.

¹⁰¹ Rutherford Co., Superior Court Minutes, 1789–1793, unnumbered pages, Oct. 1790 term.

¹⁰² Both grand and petit jurors in N.C. in this era were required to be freeholders—owners of

Green River has not been located. In May 1795, he applied for a second grant on Flat Branch of Green River, said to be adjacent to his homestead and “not fare from his new Cabbin.” When the land was surveyed on 7 Oct. 1797, his chain-bearer was Richard Yielding, the new husband of Jesse’s proposed sister, Milly Mills (no. 19, below).¹⁰³ There, Jesse would remain, expanding his farm to some 600 acres before his death. In each case, he bought raw and unimproved government land.¹⁰⁴ Unlike the descendants of his uncle Ambrose, he farmed without enslaved labor.¹⁰⁵

On 25 October 1832, Jesse applied successfully for a pension citing his service as a Patriot soldier. Questioned about his birth, he stated “the year I cannot exactly tell. I have no record of my age and none was kept to my knowledge.” After his death on 11 Oct. 1842, his widow Sarah applied for a pension, stating that she had married him on 8 December 1785. She also presented two small leaves from her family record, partially illegible, naming six children born 1787–1800: **Nancy, Mary, William**, [illegible], **Sary**, and **Jesse**.¹⁰⁶ The 1810 and later censuses suggest Jesse and Sarah were parents of two other sons born 1800–5. One, likely, was the **Noah Mills** who resided next to Jesse Jr. on the 1830 census, one house from Jesse Sr. and Sarah.¹⁰⁷ The second, suggested by reconstruction of all Millses in Rutherford during its first century, was likely the “**Ambrose Mills, Jr.**” who made his first appearance on the 1830 census two houses from Jesse’s land neighbor Benjamin Coward.¹⁰⁸ No male-line descendants of Jesse have yet taken a Y-test.

18. **MARY “POLLY” WALTON?³ MILLS** (William², William¹), born *circa* mid-to-late 1750s, wife of **JAMES STEPP**, is identified by local tradition as a sister of Jesse Mills. Numerous interactions between Stepp and the Mills family suggest the

land held in fee simple; see Walter Clark, ed., *The State Records of North Carolina*, vol. 25, *Laws 1789–1790* (Goldsboro, N.C.: Nash Brothers, 1906), 422, chapter III, sect. II.

¹⁰³ McCorkle, *NC Land Grant Images and Data* (<http://www.nclandgrants.com>), Jesse Mills, Book 96:395; citing Rutherford Co. Grant No. 1554, NC microfilm reel S.108.160.25N, frame 2242, State Archives. Also, “North Carolina, U.S., Land Grant Files, 1693–1960,” *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/60621/>) > Rutherford > 1522–1817 > images 741, 743.

¹⁰⁴ McCorkle, *NC Land Grant Images and Data* (<http://www.nclandgrants.com>), Jesse Mills, Rutherford Co. files 1676, 2230, 2444, 2889, and 3638.

¹⁰⁵ 1790 U.S. census, Rutherford Co., “12th Company,” p. 145 line 8. 1800 U.S. census, Rutherford Co., p. 128 line 17. 1810 U.S. census, Rutherford Co., p. 414 line 7. 1820 U.S. census, Rutherford Co., p. 354 line 12. 1830 U.S. census, Rutherford Co., p. 531 line 9.

¹⁰⁶ Jesse Mills Pension Application, particularly images 25852219, 25752226, 26852229, 25852206, 25852198 and 15852202.

¹⁰⁷ 1830 U.S. census, Rutherford Co., p. 531 line 9.

¹⁰⁸ Ambrose “Sr.” at that time was “Ambrose, Esq.,” son of Col. Ambrose. For the “Ambrose Jr.,” of 1830, see 1830 U.S. census, Rutherford Co., p. 540 line 25. Also 1850 U.S. census, Rutherford Co., Polk Dist., p. 231 dwell./fam. 10. For his 1873 will, which places his farm on Potter’s Creek, south side of Green River, see “North Carolina, U.S., Wills and Probate Records, 1665–1998,” *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/60621/>) > Polk > Record of Wills, 1855–1909 > image 32 of 631.

tradition is valid. Stepp's first mention of record occurred 4 Dec. 1778, when one John Auston claimed 150 acres on Bright's Creek of Green River, including "a cabin where Jas Step lived." The next day, one Aaron Reily attempted to enter a tract on Green River, "including Jas Step's improvement," but Stepp caveated the claim; Reily abandoned his claim the following November and Stepp entered the land in his own name.¹⁰⁹ The choice of homestead was unfortunate. The following fall, the Stepp home was visited by the British lieutenant Anthony Allaire, who reported in his journal that Stepp's wife, about "a twelvemonth past" had been scalped and toma-hawked "several times in the head" by hostile Indians who also bashed in the head the babe in her arms "in a most inhuman and savage manner" (a babe who survived) and kidnapped her oldest son (who had not been heard from since).¹¹⁰ Local lore holds that Polly subsequently killed the leader of a band of Indians who harassed the settlers post revolution.¹¹¹

James Stepp thereafter appears in various public records of Rutherford and later Buncombe Counties that place him in the Mills neighborhood through at least 1800.¹¹² The 1790 census attributes to their household two males over sixteen, four males under sixteen, and four females—suggesting eight children, a marriage about 1773–74, and a birth for Polly in the 1750s.¹¹³

19. **MILLY MILLS** (William², William¹), born before 1767, married **RICHARD YIELDING** by Rutherford bond dated 5 November 1788; the absence of parental consent suggests that Milly was of age.¹¹⁴ Across the next two decades Yielding would appear in a number of documents created by Milly's proposed brother Jesse Mills—as in 1797, when Yielding served as chain

¹⁰⁹ Pruitt, *Abstracts of Land Entries, Tryon and Lincoln Co., NC, 1778–1780*, 33, citing original p. 82; and 35, citing p. 404. Also "North Carolina, U.S., Land Grant Files, 1693–1960," *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/60621/>) > Anson > 1779–2438 > images 135–39, James Step entry, 3 Nov. 1779. In 1793, Maj. William Mills would buy from Auston that land, which was again said to include "a cabin where James Step lived"; see Rutherford Co., Deed Book J–L (recopied), K:213.

¹¹⁰ *Diary of Lieut. Anthony Allaire* (New York: New York Times & Arno Press, 1968), 30; imaged, *Internet Archive* (<https://archive.org/details/diaryoflieutanth0000alla/page/30/mode/2up>). Allaire (1755–1838) was a British officer. His account of the 29 September–1 October visit with the Stepps (a visit rather than an occupation of their premises) implies that they were Loyalists, like Polly's father Billy.

¹¹¹ "Polly Mills Stepp," *Henderson Heritage* (<https://www.hendersonheritage.com/polly-mills-stepp/>).

¹¹² In 1784, for example, James Step was appointed to a jury to lay off a neighborhood road ending at Mills Gap on Green River; see Rutherford Co., Minutes, Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, 1779–1786: 201. For other records created by Stepp in Rutherford Co., see the previously cited "Mills & Associates: Rutherford County, NC."

¹¹³ 1790 U.S. census, Rutherford Co., 13th Company, p. 147 col. 2 line 7.

¹¹⁴ "North Carolina, U.S., Marriage Records, 1741–2011," *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/15495439:60548>), original bond of Richard Yielding (s) and surety William Henry (mark).

carrier for the survey of Jesse’s land adjacent to his home on Flat Branch of Green River.¹¹⁵ Some online trees assign Milly to the family of Maj. William, citing no evidence. However, she and her children appear in no original records or family accounts created by Maj. William’s offspring.¹¹⁶

20. **JOHN³ “LITTLE” MILLS** (William², William¹),¹¹⁷ born c1766–70,¹¹⁸ is the most obscure Mills male of his generation in Rutherford. As with Mary and Milly, no *direct* evidence identifies a parent for him. His relationships are established through indirect evidence provided by land records, location, and associations. He is clearly distinguishable from multiple cousins named John Mills by his ownership of specific lands and by the fact that (like other offspring of English Billy and unlike the offspring of Col. Ambrose) he held no slaves.¹¹⁹

The 1800 census suggests for John “Little” a marriage about 1795, with two sons born by 1800; the 1810 census contrarily assigns him three females born 1794–1800 and two sons born 1800–10, suggesting the possibility of a second marriage to a woman who brought daughters into the marriage.¹²⁰ He is omitted from the 1820 return but is enumerated again in 1830 adjacent

¹¹⁵ “North Carolina, U.S., Land Grant Files, 1693–1960,” *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/60621/>) > Rutherford > 1522–1817 > image 743.

¹¹⁶ Particularly: the 1845 account of Edney, son of Maj. William’s daughter Phalby, named all his mother’s siblings and did not include Milly; see “Our Ancestors—Revolutionary Incidents, &c.” The attribution of Millie to William-of-Ambrose reflects the pattern of most descendants of the Rutherford Millises; in past generations, before the life and family of English Billy was developed, it was routinely assumed that all descended somehow from Col. Ambrose.

¹¹⁷ The sobriquet used here for John comes from one of his land plats on which the surveyor called him “John Mills (Little)” to distinguish him from his same-name cousins. See McCorkle, *NC Land Grant Images and Data* (<http://www.nclandgrants.com>), for John Mills, Book 137:282–83; citing grant 3464, State Archives.

¹¹⁸ John’s birth period is extrapolated from (1) the 1810 census that places his birth at 1766–84 and (2) the 1830 and 1840 censuses that place his birth between 1760 and 1770. He is missing from the 1820 census.

¹¹⁹ The disambiguation of John “Little” Mills from his first cousin John (son of Ambrose I) and his first-cousin once-removed, Col. John Mills, Esq. (son of Maj. William) is developed in the previously cited research report, “Mills & Associates: Rutherford County, NC,” at pp. 4–5.

¹²⁰ 1800 U.S. census, Rutherford Co., Morgan Dist., p. 128 line 12, “John Mills I”. The unexplained script initial added after his surname on this census echoes the mark with which he signed his 1804 land sale, rendered by the county clerk in block print as †. This was an antiquated form of the capital letter J, also seen in the 1769 document by which William “Billy” Mills conveyed to his son Jesse Mills cattle branded with †M, as well as the mark † that Billy used on his 1769 and 1770 deeds of sale.

Also see 1810 U.S. census, Rutherford Co., p. 414 (penned at right) line 5, which enumerates him as “John Mills W.” By custom in this place and time, when multiple men of the same name resided in the county, tax assessors and census takers often added identifiers after their names—most commonly (a) the name or initial of their father or (b) the name or abbreviation of the waterway on which they lived. John did not live on a waterway that began with the letter W. Nor did either of his two contemporary cousins who were also named John.

to sons Lavender and Calvin and in 1840 adjacent to Lavender.¹²¹ No known record hints at the identities of the three females in his 1810 household. No known record names his wife or wives. However, two possibilities are suggested by the names he gave to his two sons. The name of the eldest, Lavender, suggests his mother may have been a cousin: John's aunt Milly (Mills) Lavender Walton of Amherst (no. 9, below) had brought her family to adjacent Burke County about 1794, including the youngest daughter Milly Jr. who has not been otherwise identified as an adult.¹²² The name of John's youngest, Calvin Garrett, suggests that his mother was from the family of Sarah Garrett who wed John's proposed brother Jesse. (See no. 17 above.)

John "Little" Mills spent his life on Roton/Rotton/Rotten Creek of Green River—a waterway that lay directly across Green from the Silver Creek lands of his first cousin Ambrose, son of Col. Ambrose. The first Mills land on Rotton had been entered in 1784 by Col. Ambrose's son Maj. William,¹²³ who became the family head after the hanging of Col. Ambrose and English Billy. In his patriarchal role, the married Maj. William had taken in the family of his deceased uncle Billy.¹²⁴ With a large and growing family of his own, Maj. William apparently settled Billy's family on that Rotton Creek land but did not complete the patent process until Dec. 1808—a long-delayed action possibly triggered by the death of Billy's widow and the need to distribute property among her offspring. The 1808 survey cites one boundary as lying adjacent to "the 50 acres tract John Milles got from Fish[er]."¹²⁵ That adjacent acreage was land John had purchased in 1806 at the head of Rotton's Creek and would convey in 1825 to his own son Lavender Mills.¹²⁶ (Also germane: two years after Maj. William entered that first tract at the head of Rotton's Creek, he paid for the survey of a second tract there that he would convey in 1793 to Richard Yielding, the new husband of John's proposed sister Milly.¹²⁷)

¹²¹ 1830 U.S. census, Rutherford Co., p. 527 lines 13–15. 1840 U.S. census, Rutherford Co., p. 323 line 20, "John Mills Sr." enumerated adjacent to [son] "Lav. Mills."

¹²² The last known record for Mildred "Milly" Lavender is an Amherst court order of 20 Mar. 1793, in settlement of her father's estate. All of Milly (Mills) Lavender Walton's children were by then of age or married except Mildred ("Milly Jr.") who was still a minor in 1794. See Amherst Co., Court Order Book 1790–1794: 509.

¹²³ Rutherford Co., "Rutherford Land Entries, 1783–1788, unpaginated; imaged, *FamilySearch* digital film 7517759 > image 157.

¹²⁴ As stated in the previously cited affidavit of Maj. William's son John (Col. John, Esq.) for the pension application of English Billy's son Jesse.

¹²⁵ "North Carolina, U.S., Land Grant Files, 1693–1960," *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/60621/>) > Anson > 2580–2829 > image 755–57. For John's purchase of the land from Fisher, a representative of Tench Coxe, see Rutherford Co., Deed Book 22–23:156.

¹²⁶ Rutherford Co., Deed Book 35:40.

¹²⁷ "North Carolina, U.S., Land Grant Files, 1693–1960," *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/>)

In addition to the 1808 land purchase that distinguishes John “Little” Mills from “John Mills, Esq.,” three additional land documents help to establish the identity of John “Little” and reconstruct his place in the family.

- 15 January 1806, “John Mills” purchased 50 acres at the head of Rotton’s Creek from Peter Fisher, attorney for a group of land speculators, one of whom was Tench Coxe. On 11 February 1825, as John Mills (x), he conveyed to Lavender Mills 50 acres on the head of Rotton’s Creek, stating that it was “part of a tract granted by patent to Tench Coxe & Conveyed by him to the sd. John Mills.”¹²⁸
- 7 April 1808, a survey was made for Maj. William Mills of land on Rotton’s Creek that he had entered in October 1784. Twenty-four years had passed, while Maj. William speculated on thousands of other acres. In each and all of the other cases, he promptly commissioned the survey so that the patent could be issued to him. This one tract was a stark exception. One call in the survey that was eventually made is especially informative: “N 30 W 178 poles to the corner of the 50 acre tract John Mills got from Fisher.” That Fisher land is the tract John (x) purchased in January 1806 at the head of Rotton’s Creek and conveyed in 1825 to his son Lavender.¹²⁹
- 18 October 1826, “John Mills” entered a tract of land that was patented to him in December 1827 as “John Mills (little).” The survey calls show that he chose land adjacent not only to his 1806 purchase but also adjacent to the 1808 grant that Maj. William had claimed since 1784, along the line described as N 30 W 178 poles.¹³⁰

John’s own first purchase of land occurred in October 1797: 100 acres on Green River “near Potter’s line” that he bought from Maj. William’s land partner David Miller.¹³¹ John’s tenure there was short. In 1804, he sold the

.com/search/collections/60621/) > Rutherford > 1–303 > image 1366. Also McCorkle, *NC Land Grant Images and Data* (<http://www.nclandgrants.com>), William Mills, Book 65:318; citing Rutherford Co. file 293, NC microfilm reel S.108.160.15N, frame 664, State Archives. For the 1793 Mills-Yielding conveyance, see Rutherford Co., Deed Book J-L (recopied register): 382.

¹²⁸ Rutherford Co., NC, Deed Book 22–23 (recopied register): 156; imaged, FamilySearch digital film 7517770 > image 83. “X” is the mark shown for him in the clerk’s transcribed copy of the first record book.

¹²⁹ “North Carolina, Land Grant Files, 1693–1960,” database with images, Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/60621/>) > Anson > 2580–2829 > image 757 of 1435. Images 755–56 present the land entry and warrant.

¹³⁰ McCorkle, *NC Land Grant Images and Data* (<http://www.nclandgrants.com>), imaging Book 137:282–83; citing Grant 3464 NC State Archives.

¹³¹ Rutherford Co., Deed Book 7–9 (recopied register): 29–30.

tract over his mark † (an antiquated form of the letter *J*, which John’s proposed father “Billy” had used in 1769 to brand the cattle he gave his first son Jesse).¹³² In 1806, John acquired his fifty acres adjacent to the 1784 tract on which Maj. William appears to have settled the widow and orphans of his uncle Billy.¹³³ In 1808, he enlarged his holdings, purchasing 44 acres from his first cousin “John Mills Esq.” (aka Col. John Mills, son of Maj. William).¹³⁴

By the mid-to-late 1820s, John’s two sons were grown and in need of land on which to support their adulthood. In Feb. 1825, John conveyed the fifty-acre tract on Rotton to his son **Lavender Mills**,¹³⁵ who had wed shortly before the 1820 census.¹³⁶ In 1829, John conveyed his second tract to his son **Calvin Garrett Mills**, noting that it lay adjacent to the land he had given Lavender. Calvin’s deed, however, carried a critical condition: “Said John Mills keeps the said land During his life & at his Death the said Calvin Garret or his heirs takes possession.”¹³⁷ Between those two donations, in October 1826, John also filed for a new tract of raw land on the Rotton. Its survey, which was not made until 1836, placed it adjacent to the 1808 grant Maj. William had claimed since 1784, along the line described as *N 30 W 178 poles*.¹³⁸

The tract that John conditionally gave to Calvin provides indirect evidence to narrow John’s time of death. Unlike Lavender, Calvin did not remain in Rutherford. By 1840 he was a resident of Cherokee Co., Ga.¹³⁹ Prior to his move, without benefit of a recorded deed, he conveyed his interest in the parental land to his father’s first cousin Ambrose Mills (aka Ambrose Mills, Esq, son of Maj. William.). On 13 July 1842, Ambrose gave Lavender title to the land, copying the caveat that John was to remain there until his death;

¹³² Lincoln Co., Deed Book 1:45.

¹³³ Rutherford Co., Deed Book 22–23 (transcribed): 156 (Peter Fisher, agent for Tench Coxe et al., to John Mills). For the 25,690-acre grant to Tench Coxe et al., from which John’s 50 acres were carved (a tract bounding John’s proposed brother-in-law Richard Yielding), see McCorkle, *NC Land Grant Images and Data* (<http://www.nclandgrants.com>), Tench Coxe, Book 90:57–59; citing Rutherford Co. Grant No. 1028 (entry 1144), State Archives.

¹³⁴ Rutherford Co., Deed Book 24–26 (recopied): 265.

¹³⁵ Rutherford Co., Deed Book 35:40. also E. S. Mills, “Proof Argument: Parentage of Lavender Mills (c1800–c1859), Rutherford County, North Carolina”; *Historic Pathways* (<https://www.historicpathways.com/download/MillsLavenderProofArgumentForParentage.pdf>).

¹³⁶ 1820 U.S. census, Rutherford Co., p. 392 line 34. No record of the marriage has been found in Rutherford or any surrounding county. Identity claims for his wife have not been proved.

¹³⁷ Rutherford Co., Deed Book 37–38 (transcribed copy): 116. For direct evidence that Calvin was the son of John, see *Reminiscent History of the Ozark Region* (Chicago: Goodspeed, 1894), 719–20, autobiography of Calvin’s son “Hon. Thomas G. Mills,” naming his parents and grandfather John.

¹³⁸ McCorkle, *NC Land Grant Images and Data* (<http://www.nclandgrants.com>), John Mills, Book 137:282–83; citing grant 3464, State Archives.

¹³⁹ 1840 U.S. census, Cherokee Co., Ga., p. 174 line 5.

the deed was filed the following day.¹⁴⁰ When the 1850 enumerator visited Lavender’s neighborhood, he did not enumerate John; and that year’s census enumerates John nowhere else.¹⁴¹ It seems likely that John’s death triggered the 1842 titling of the land to Lavender.

Lavender Mills’s fourth-great-grandson, George Grant Mills, provided one of the DNA samples by which the Y-signature of English Billy’s father can be identified. See Chart 1

The two sons and two daughters identified above for William “Billy” Mills would make an unusually small family in his society, especially since his son Jesse was born about 1751 and a wife survived Billy in 1780. However, a page-by-page reading of all known records surviving for Rutherford Co., its antecedents, and its offshoot counties has yielded no other Millses in that locale who might be Billy’s offspring.

6. **Elizabeth² Mills** (William¹), born c1730; m. (1) **Thomas Learwood**; (2) **John Ripley**. Elizabeth’s first marriage occurred (likely in Albemarle County whose marriage records of the era are destroyed), before her father’s Sept. 1755 will that names her as “Elizabeth Learwood.” In 1757, Elizabeth and Thomas, as residents of nearby Prince Edward County, sold his 154-acre grant at the headwaters of Reedy Creek in adjacent Bedford County.¹⁴² In March 1760, a grant was issued to Thomas for another 230 acres in Bedford on west side of Elk Creek.¹⁴³ It is likely Thomas was already dead; three months later, the tithe list taken by Joel Watkins in Prince Edward County taxed the widowed Elizabeth “Learewood” for her “Negro London,” adjacent to her new brother-in-law Lewis Witt, his father Benjamin, and his young-adult brothers John and Absalom.¹⁴⁴ The following year, while still in Prince Edward, Elizabeth bore a son¹⁴⁵ who fought in the Revolution under the name *John Mills alias Ripley*—the alias being a name he said he used in childhood because it was his stepfather’s name.¹⁴⁶ Elizabeth’s marriage to Ripley occurred before September 1767, when the two of them sued her father’s widow Mary Mills. After several extensions to allow Mary time to answer their complaints, the case was settled out of court in November 1768.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁰ Rutherford Co., Deed Book 44:326.

¹⁴¹ 1850 U.S. census, Rutherford Co., Polk District, p. 243 dwelling/family 198.

¹⁴² Bedford Co., Deed Book 1:139–41.

¹⁴³ Virginia Land Office, Patent Book 33:799.

¹⁴⁴ “Prince Edward County (Va.) Tithables, 1750–1787,” 10 June 1760, random sheets, by year; barcode 1204962, Local Government Records Collection; Library of Virginia.

¹⁴⁵ Typically in this place and time, young widows with children to rear and no male relatives nearby to provide protection and support, would “move back home” to live amid family. The fact that Elizabeth, as a widow with children and one whose late husband had just sold their only land in the county, chose to stay in Prince Edward rather than move back to Amherst to live with William’s widow Mary also suggests that she may not have been Mary’s daughter.

¹⁴⁶ John Mills alias Ripley (Pvt., Capt. Rogers? Co., Genl. Hampton’s Regt., S.C.), no. S9025, opened 2 Apr. 1834, Athens, Oh.; imaged in “Revolutionary War Pensions,” *Fold3* (<https://www.fold3.com/image/25853045> and 19 subsequent numbers), specifically, 25853060.

¹⁴⁷ Amherst Co., Court Order Book, 2 June 1766–1769: 212, 244, 294, 328, 364, 391, 434.

Elizabeth and John then moved with her children to Old Ninety-Six District, S.C. (modern Laurens) where Elizabeth's son "John Mills alias Ripley" enlisted in 1776 at age fourteen. The sons Elizabeth bore would not carry Mills Y-DNA, although that one son did carry forth her surname.

At this point, there appears to be a gap in William Mills's children, suggesting a new wife; if not, Mary's reproductive pattern seems to have changed. While five children were born to William in the 1720–30 time frame and their birth periods are reasonably well established, the next fifteen years produced only three children of record. Illness or other frontier conditions could have caused the deaths of children born in that period.

7. Anne² Mills (William¹), born c1738; was named as an unmarried daughter in her father's 1755 will. Before 1760, she married **Lewis Witt**, formerly of Albemarle, whose parents had removed to nearby Prince Edward County. There, on 10 June 1760, Lewis, his father Benjamin, and his young adult brothers John and Absalom are clustered with Anne's widowed sister Elizabeth "Learewood" (the owner of a taxable slave), on the Joel Watkins list of tithes.¹⁴⁸ By February 1773, Lewis, Anne, and family had moved to Bedford where he contracted that month to buy land on Otter River but died before payment. His estate inventory, appraised 23 May 1774, did not include the tract; and the transaction would embroil Anne for some years thereafter.¹⁴⁹ As a widow, she operated a ford across Otter River.¹⁵⁰ Anne made her will on 9 December 1811. The recorded copy, made when the will was probated on 28 October 1816, names seven

¹⁴⁸ "Prince Edward County (Va.) Tithables, 1750–1787," op. cit. Lewis Witt's father Benjamin Witt had served as a grand juror with William Mills Sr. in Albemarle in 1748; see Albemarle Co., Order Book 1744–1748: 360. Shortly thereafter, Benjamin moved to his new land grant on Hunt's Creek of Slate River adjacent to his Chastain in-laws; see Virginia Land Office Patent Book 22: 111. Benjamin's father William died in Albemarle in 1754, leaving a will naming Benjamin, as well as three other sons who remained in the part of Albemarle that became Amherst; see Albemarle Will Book 2: 20–21. For an extraction of Witt records from the courthouse holdings of Albemarle and Amherst, see the following reports posted at Mills, *Historic Pathways*:

- "Mills & Associates: Albemarle County, VA: Court Orders, Deeds & Probate, 1745–1767," last updated 21 May 2022, 71 pp.; (<https://www.historicpathways.com/download/MillsAlbemarleCourtDeedsProbate.pdf>)
- "Witt & Associates: Albemarle & Amherst Counties, VA, Court Orders, 1745–1800," last updated 10 May 2022, 39 pp. (<https://www.historicpathways.com/download/MillsAlbemarleCourtDeedsProbate.pdf>)
- "Mills & Associates: Amherst County, Virginia, Court Orders," last updated 15 Dec. 2022, 112 pp; <https://www.historicpathways.com/download/MillsAmherstCoCourtOrders.pdf>
- "Mills & Associates: Amherst County, Virginia: Land & Probate Records, 1761–1806," last updated 27 May 2022, 41 pp.; <https://www.historicpathways.com/download/MillsAmherstLandProbateRecords.pdf>.

¹⁴⁹ Bedford Co., Will Book 1:211. Petition of Ann Witt, admx. of Lewis Witt, through attorney Innes & Camp, admitted to court 28 June 1784 in the case Witt vs. John Cooper, Bedford Chancery Records, 1785–011; imaged, "Chancery Records Index," *VirginiaMemory* (www.lva.virginia.gov/chancery).

¹⁵⁰ Bedford Co., Va., Order Book 9, 1786–1790, pp. 337–38.

living children: **Mills, Jesse, John, Rowland, Robert, “Agnes,”** and **Milly**—along with a deceased, married daughter **Betsy Calvert**.¹⁵¹ The recorded copy of the estate settlement of 1826 cites 186 acres on Bedford’s Otter River; it identifies Anne’s daughter “Agnes” as “*Agatha Lavender*” and her daughter Milly as “Milly Whitton.”¹⁵² Anne’s sons would not carry a Mills Y.

8. **Jesse³ Mills** (William¹), born c1740–43; married **Lucy Tilman**, about August 1765 in Amherst.¹⁵³ One year later, August 1766, his mother Mary presented his father’s will for probate, with Jesse and his brother-in-law William Lavender (husband of Milly) as her sureties.¹⁵⁴ The following year, Jesse and his wife’s brother-in-law William *Walton* cosigned a performance bond for the new county sheriff,¹⁵⁵ suggesting that Jesse was socially and politically ambitious. However, his finances and community status soon plummeted. He sold the parental land on the Pedlar and bought land on Tye River near the Waltons and Lavenders but, amid several consecutive years of late-freezes, droughts and floods that destroyed Amherst crops,¹⁵⁶ he repeatedly mortgaged his land, the enslaved people he expected to inherit from his mother, and another woman his wife Lucy had brought into the marriage.¹⁵⁷ Jesse avoided military service during the Revolution, signing petitions as a religious dissenter and “freeholder” who protested taxation to pay the expenses of the war.¹⁵⁸ By the close of the war he was landless and apparently excused from poll-tax assessments as well, although he remained in the county.¹⁵⁹ He lived at least until 29 July 1811, when he and Lucy were parties to a case filed in the district chancery court at Augusta Co. by heirs of Lucy’s grandfather Daniel Hix.¹⁶⁰ Although Jesse and Lucy had at least one son

¹⁵¹ Bedford Co., Will Book 4:276–77.

¹⁵² Bedford Co., Will Book 4:287.

¹⁵³ Amherst Co., Marriage Bonds and Consents, 1763–1783 (previously cited), chronological sequence. Lucy’s parents gave permission for her to marry Jesse on 20 July; he tardily posted bond and obtained a license on 6 August. The actual marriage date is not a matter of record.

¹⁵⁴ Amherst Co., Will Book 1:73–75

¹⁵⁵ Amherst Co., Deed Book B:261–62.

¹⁵⁶ “Diary of William Cabell Sr., folder: “2 January 1769–5 February 1770,” entries of 6–18 April 1769, 12 August 1769, 8 September 1769, 16 October 1769; folder “17 March 1771–2 December 1771,” for 26 May 1771.”

¹⁵⁷ Amherst Co., Deed Book B:264; C:178, 254, 316, 397; E:539.

¹⁵⁸ “Virginia Legislative Papers: Petition of Dissenters of Albemarle, Amherst and Buckingham, Oct. 22d, 1776,” *Virginia Magazine of History & Biography* 18 (1910): 140–43, citing “originals in the Virginia State Archives.” Also Jean Pickett Hall, “Legislative Petitions from Virginia Counties with Significant Record Losses: 1. Buckingham County,” *Magazine of Virginia Genealogy* 28 (May 1990): 91, 93.

¹⁵⁹ Amherst Co., Personal Property Tax Records, 1782–1823; Library of Virginia personal tax reels 18–19 and land tax reels 17–18. He was last taxed (personal tax) in 1784.

¹⁶⁰ Augusta County Chancery Causes, no. 1817-084, Daniel Tilman vs. Elizabeth Christian, filed 19 July 1811; imaged “Chancery Record Index,” *Virginia Memory* (<https://www.lva.virginia.gov/chancery>), esp. images 1–5.

(*Jesse Jr.*) and likely three others (*William, John, and Robert*),¹⁶¹ no Y-line descendants have been identified for testing.

9. **Mildred “Milly”³ Mills** (William¹), born c1744–45; died 1822, Maury County, Tennessee.¹⁶² Still single at the time of her father’s 1755 will, Milly married twice: (1) **William Lavender** c1759, in Albemarle;¹⁶³ and (2) by Amherst bond dated 16 Apr. 1792, the widowed Patriot Capt. **William Walton Sr.**,¹⁶⁴ whose brother Capt. Jesse Walton had ordered the hanging of Milly’s brother Billy during the Revolution. After Milly’s marriage to **Walton**, they joined her son William Lavender and that son’s wife Sarah in selling land her first husband had inherited from his father Charles Lavender Sr.¹⁶⁵ Milly and Walton then moved to N.C.’s Burke Co. (adjoining Rutherford where her brothers William and Ambrose had settled). There, Walton died 29 January 1806.¹⁶⁶ By 1808 Milly was living in Maury Co., Tenn., where she appeared at the estate sale of *John McDonald*, being the only other woman there aside from McDonald’s widow *Elizabeth*,¹⁶⁷ a situation suggesting that Milly was a family member. In 1810, Milly’s son **George Lavender** of Nelson Co., Va. (cut from Amherst), petitioned the legislature for permission to bring back into Virginia a slave from his father’s estate held by his mother “in Tennessee.”¹⁶⁸ Milly has not been found on the 1820 census, but a small probate was opened for her in Maury Co. in 1822.¹⁶⁹ Milly’s sons by Lavender would not carry the Mills Y.

WILLIAM MILLS’ Y-SIGNATURE

Numerous males of the Mills surname currently propose their descent from William Mills Sr. of Albemarle’s Pedlar River. The only males known to have

¹⁶¹ For the evidence identifying Jesse Jr. and suggesting the other children of Jesse Sr. and Lucy—as well as all known records created by or about the two Jesses—see E. S. Mills, “Jesse Mills Sr. (c1743–aft.1810) of Albemarle & Amherst Counties, Virginia; Spouse Lucy Tilman: Research Notes,” 73 pp., last updated 28 Apr. 2022; *Historic Pathways* (<https://www.historicpathways.com/download/MillsJesseSrLucyTilman.pdf>).

¹⁶² Maury Co., Tenn., Will Book C:478, 483.

¹⁶³ Mildred’s first marriage year is approximated from the fact that her son William Lavender attested on 17 May 1830 that he was 70 years of age—i.e., born c1760. See William Lavender (Private Capt. Allen’s Co., Col. Taylor’s Regt., Va. Line, RW), Widow Sarah, no. W20189; imaged, “Revolutionary War Pensions,” *Fold3* (<https://www.fold3.com/image/25255609> and 33 subsequent images), particularly 25255780.

¹⁶⁴ Amherst Co., Marriage Register 1763–1852, p. 73.

¹⁶⁵ Amherst Co., Deed Book G:254.

¹⁶⁶ “North Carolina, Historical Records Survey, Cemetery Inscription Card Index,” *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSGW-J3BD-D>), “Walton, William, Sr.” b. no date, d. Jan. 29, 1806, buried First Presbyterian Church Cemetery, Morganton.”

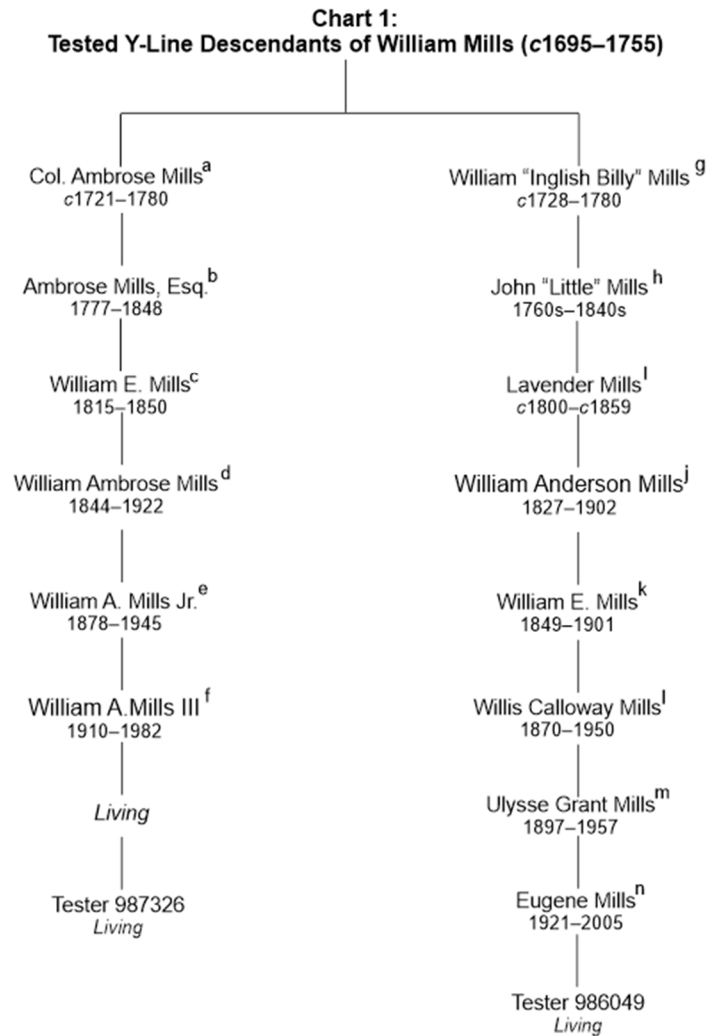
¹⁶⁷ Maury Co., Tenn., Will Book A: 4–5.

¹⁶⁸ “Legislative Petitions Digital Collection,” *Virginia Memory* (<https://lva-virginia.libguides.com/petitions>), George Lavender petition, 13 Dec. 1810; citing Legislative Petitions of the General Assembly, 1776–1856, accession number 36121, box 177, folder 10.

¹⁶⁹ Maury Co., Tenn., Will Book C:478, 483.

reliably documented that ancestry are descendants of the two sons who died in North Carolina, Col. Ambrose and English Billy. Targeted research has located one Y-line descendant of each son willing to test his Y-DNA; their 111-marker tests reveal only one mutation between them. The testing lab’s time predictor assigns them a 95.31 percent chance of being related within four generations and a 99.78 percent chance of being related within eight generations.¹⁷⁰

As shown on chart 1 below, Testers 987326 and 986049 are seventh cousins, once



NOTE: For documentation of each generational link, see Appendix.

¹⁷⁰ “Y-DNA Tip Report,” *FamilyTreeDNA* (<https://www.familytreedna.com/my/tip-report> : accessed 4 September 2022).

removed. Their most-recent common ancestor, William Mills Sr. of the Pedlar, is eight generations removed from 987326 and nine generations from 986049. Because they descend from two different sons of William Sr., the shared Y-signature can be assigned to William Sr. himself. The haplogroup R-M269, shared by a projected 110 million R-M269 males in Europe, most heavily concentrated in the British Isles and the Western coast of Europe. Formerly labeled R1b1b2, this haplogroup's distribution is heaviest in Wales (92% of males), Ireland (82%), Scotland (70%), Spain (Basque 86%, Andalusia 66%) France and Northern Portugal (60% each), Eastern England (Leicestershire 53%, Cornwall 50%), The Netherlands (52%), France (43–48%), and Germany (42 and 51%).¹⁷¹

Of greater value to the question of William's parentage and origin is the fact that his Y-haplogroup does not correlate to his surname. Among other Y-matches who tested at 37, 67, and 111 markers, testers 987326 and 986049 have no matches surnamed *Mills*. At the 25-marker level, they have only one match carrying their surname. The testers' 26 percent chance of sharing with that match a common ancestor within the last eight generations (49 percent within twelve generations and 80 percent within twenty generations¹⁷²) suggests that this sole instance of a shared surname is a coincidence. Of the 131 different surnames carried by their matches at the 67-marker level, the most suggestive are the twenty-eight bearing the surname *Mabry* (*Mabery*, *Maybery*, *Mayberry*, *Mayberry*) who self-declare ancestry from Belfast or the Irish counties of Derry and Kerry; six others of this surname cite a family origin in "England" generically. The other shared surnames are far less frequent: ten bear the surname *Bell*, six are surnamed *Baldwin*, five each are surnamed *Wilson* and *Scott*, and four each are surnamed *Cornwall* (*var.*

¹⁷¹ These statistics are primarily drawn from Fulvio Cruciani, Beniamino Trombetta et al., "Strong intra- and inter-continental differentiation revealed by Y-chromosome SNPs M269, U106 and U152," *Forensic Science International: Genetics* 5 (2011); archived ([https://www.fsigenetics.com/article/S1872-4973\(10\)00117-1/pdf](https://www.fsigenetics.com/article/S1872-4973(10)00117-1/pdf)). Also, P. Balaesque, GR Bowden et al., "A predominantly neolithic origin for European paternal lineages," *PLoS Biology* 8 (Jan. 2010); archived, *National Library of Medicine* (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2799514/>). For Wales, Ireland, and Scotland, see "Biology: Haplogroup R-M269," *HandWiki Biology Portal* (https://handwiki.org/wiki/Biology:Haplogroup_R-M269).

Also see Gérard Lucotte, "The Major Y-Chromosome Haplogroup R1b-M269 in West-Europe, Subdivided by the Three SNPs S21/U106, S145/L21 and S28/U152, Shows a Clear Pattern of Geographic Differentiation," *Advances in Anthropology* 5 (2015); archived, *Scientific Research: Open access* (https://www.scirp.org/html/3-1590437_53754.htm#f5). Also see Iñigo Olalde, Selina Brace, et al., "The Beaker Phenomenon and the Genomic Transformation of Northwest Europe," *Nature* 555 (Mar. 8, 2018); archived at *National Library of Medicine* (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5973796/>).

¹⁷² "Y-DNA Tip Report," *FamilyTreeDNA* (<https://www.familytreedna.com/my/tip-report> : accessed 4 Sept. 2022). The version of this report provided in September 2022 has been replaced by a radically different table that casts statistics in terms of time frames, rather than percentage probabilities. The current tip-report (1 November 2023), proposes a match about 1300 CE, with a range from 400–1800.

Curnow), *Gibson*, and *Jackson*. Research continues with these surnames.

The Y-results of both tester 987326 and tester 986049—identifying the 110 shared markers that comprise William Sr.’s Y-signature—are registered for analysis and comparisons in the FamilyTreeDNA databases for *Maybury* and *Mills*.¹⁷³

CONCLUSION

William Mills Sr. of Goochland and Albemarle has no known kinship to any other Mills line in North America or elsewhere. Surviving land patents imply that he was born in the colony, rather than having immigrated (or having been transported) from the British Isles. The widely published online databases with images for UK christenings, marriages, and burials present no William Mills of the right time frame with appropriately named children, who did not remain in the UK while the William of this study resided in Virginia.¹⁷⁴

The fact that William Mills Sr. of Goochland and Albemarle does not carry a Y-signature associated with the surname Mills possibly stems from a non-marital paternity event generations before him. Or he, himself, may have been born to a relationship between an unmarried Mills female and a father of a different surname. The prevalence of the surname *Mabry* in particular, among his Y-matches, suggests that future research should include contemporaries of that surname and its variants.

APPENDIX: Notes to Chart 1

LINE 1: TESTER 987326:

- a. **Col. Ambrose Mills (c1721–1780) as son of William Mills Sr.:** Amherst Co., Va., Will Book 1:73–76 (1755 will of William naming son Ambrose). Amherst Co., Court Order Book 1773–1782: 154, 157 (court summons to Ambrose Mills, “son and heir at law of William Mills,” to administer estate of Mary Mills).
- b. **Ambrose Mills, Esq. (1777–1848) as son of Col. Ambrose and Anne (Brown) Mills:** Rutherford Co., N.C., Will Book B:76 (1797 probate settlement, heirs of [Col.] Ambrose Mills, decd.).
- c. **William E. Mills (1815–1850), as son of Ambrose Mills, Esq.:** Rutherford Co., Will Book

¹⁷³ *FamilyTreeDNA* (<https://www.familytreedna.com/public/Maybury> and <https://www.familytreedna.com/public/mills>)

¹⁷⁴ As a starting point for this research, see the *FamilySearch* databases, “England Births and Christenings, 1538–1975” (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1473014>), “England Deaths and Burials, 1538–1991” (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1473016>), and “England Marriages, 1538–1973” (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1473015>).

E:182–86 (Will of Ambrose Mills, Esq., Oct. 1845, codicil 28 Oct. 1848).

- d. **William Ambrose Mills (1844–1922) as son of William E. Mills:** “North Carolina, U.S., Death Certificates, 1909–1976,” *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/1121/images/S123_135-3000), William Ambrose Mills, b. 13 Mar. 1844, d. 27 July 1922, Polk Co., certificate 1922:329, citing parents William E. Mills and Ann Eliza Bryan.
- e. **William Ambrose Mills Jr. (1878–1945) as son of William Ambrose Mills:** “North Carolina, U.S., Death Certificates, 1909–1976,” *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/1121/images/S123_1286-1854), William Ambrose Mills, b. 8 Feb. 1878; d. 14 Apr. 1945, Polk Co., certificate 1945:7818, citing parents “Wm. Ambrose and Ella Mills.”
- f. **William Ambrose Mills III (1910–1982) as son of William Ambrose Mills:** “North Carolina, U.S., Birth Indexes, 1800–2000,” *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/8783/images/NCVR_B_C080_68001-0108), “Mills, William Ambrose Jr.,” b. 28 June 1910, Polk Co., to Wm. Ambrose Mills and Teanna Ferree; citing Registration Book 7:280. Also gravestone image, *Find A Grave* (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/64267000/william-ambrose-mills>), memorial created by granddaughter Beth Elliott, 16 Jan. 2011.

Tester 987326, as son of [Living] and grandson of William Ambrose III: For privacy, the personal data for these two living descendants are not published here.

LINE 2: TESTER 986049:

- g. **William “English Billy” Mills (c1728–1780) as son of William Mills Sr. and brother of Col. Ambrose Mills:** Amherst Co., Will Book 1:73–76 (1755 will of William I leaving 330 acres to son William). Amherst Co., Deed Book C: 118 (sale of 330 acres by “William Mills of N.C.”). Affidavit of John Mills in Jesse Mills Pension Application (Pvt., Miller’s Regt., N.C. Line), W7448, widow Sarah (née Garrett); imaged, “Revolutionary War Pensions,” *Fold3* (<https://www.fold3.com/image/25852181> and 50 subsequent images), particularly, images 25852227 and 25852229.
- h. **John “Little” Mills (1760s–c1842) as son of William “English Billy” Mills:** See proof argument in text. Also see the supporting documents detailed in E. S. Mills, “Mills & Associates: Rutherford County, NC, Its Parent Counties (Anson, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, and Tryon) and Its Offshoots (Buncombe, Burke, Henderson, and Polk Counties): Expanded Survey,” pp. 5–6, 48–50; archived at Mills, *Historic Pathways* (<https://www.historicpathways.com/download/MillsRutherfordTryonLincolnSurvey.pdf>).
- i. **Lavender Mills (c1800–c1859) as son of John “Little” Mills:** See discussion in text. Also see E.S. Mills, “Proof Argument: Parentage of Lavender Mills (c1800–c1859), Rutherford County, North Carolina,” 6 Sept. 2022; *Historic Pathways* (<https://www.historicpathways.com/download/MillsLavenderProofArgumentForParentage.pdf>)
- j. **William Anderson Mills (1827–1902) as son of Lavender Mills:** E.S. Mills, “William Anderson Mills (1827–1902) of Polk County, North Carolina, as son of Lavender Mills (c1800–c1859): Proof Argument”; *Historic Pathways* (<https://www.historicpathways.com/download/MillsAndersonProofArgumentForParentage.pdf>)

[.com/download/MillsWilliamAassonofLavenderProofArgument.pdf](#)).

- k. **William E. Mills (1849–1901) as son of William Anderson Mills:** “North Carolina, U.S., Marriage Records, 1741–2011,” *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/60548/images/42091_342596-01004), marriage license and return for *William E. Mills* 52, son of deceased *Anderson Mills* and Mary Weaver, Polk Co., 5 May 1901, to marry (second wife) Celia Gibbs. Also 1850 U.S. census, Rutherford Co., N.C., Polk Dist., p. 244 dwell./fam. 201, W. A. [William Anderson] Mills 23, Mary [née Weaver] 23, children Hosa 5, A. L. 3, *William* 1 [William E.], and Sarah Weaver 80.
- l. **Willis Calloway Mills (1870–1950) as son of William E. Mills:** “North Carolina, U.S., Death Certificates, 1909–1976,” *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/1121/images/S123_362-1507), Willis Callaway Mills, b. 26 Aug. 1870, d. 30 Dec. 1951, Forsyth Co., certificate 1951:27958, citing parents as “Wm. Mills” and Mary Cowart by informant Grant Mills. Also 1880 U.S. census, Polk Co., N.C., stamped p. 496, enumeration district 153, p. 11 dwell./fam. 94, William E. Mills 31, Mary 28, James 12, *Willis* C. 9, Laura, 7, adjacent to Willis’s grandmother Mary [Weaver] Mills 55 (widow of William E.).
- m. **Ulysses Grant Mills (1897–1957) as son of Willis Calloway Mills:** “North Carolina, U.S., Death Certificates, 1909–1976,” *Ancestry* (https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/1121/images/S123_433-2467), Ulysses Grant Mills b. 10 Feb. 1897, d. 17 May 1957, son of Willis Mills and Tempie Burgess, spouse of Emma Shehan.
- n. **Eugene Mills (1921–2005) as son of Ulysses Grant Mills:** “U.S., Social Security Applications and Claims Index, 1936–2007,” *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/23552374:60901>), b. 4 Feb. 1921, Polk Co., N.C., registered Aug. 1938, son of Grant Mills and Emma Shehan.

Tester 986049, George Grant Mills as living son of Eugene Mills: For privacy, his personal data is not published here.
