

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouses:

1. Mourning Stone; 2. Ann Brown

Research Notes

Ambrose Mills Family Summary:

Born: b. c1721,¹ allegedly in England²
Parents: William and Mary Mills of Goochland, Albemarle & Amherst Cos., VA³
Married: c1745, Southside Virginia⁴; c1764–5, Craven Co., S.C.⁵
Spouse: **1-Mourning Stone**; allegedly born 1724 James City, Williamsburg, Va., as daughter of Thomas Stone;⁶ killed by Indians who attacked her wagon, allegedly in Craven Co., SC (now Fairfield region)⁷
2-Ann Brown(e); sister-in-law of Loyalist Colonel Thomas Fletchell; possible sister of Loyalist Colonel Thomas Browne;⁸ married February 1790, **John Carrick**⁹
Occupation: Overseer and planter, allegedly a trader and sawmill owner¹⁰
Military Service: Loyalist colonel during American Revolution

¹ Age extrapolated from the fact that he was sued as an adult in November 1743 (i.e., born by November 1722). By common practice, however, the debt was likely at least a year past due—which means that he was likely born at least by November 1721. See Goochland Co., VA, Court Order Book 5:314, 374, Burton vs. Mills.

² All accounts that Ambrose was born in England apparently trace to J. M. Edney's 1846 biography of his grandfather William Mills, son of Ambrose—a biography that Edney likely wrote for Lyman C. Draper who was, at that time, combing the South for information about the men of King's Mountain; Draper reports part of Edney's account in his brief sketch of Ambrose. Draper's remarks about Ambrose appear to be the basis for Wilbur H. Siebert's biography of Ambrose in Siebert's edit of *The Journal of Alexander Chesney*.

A contemporary testimony of independent origin also *suggests* that Ambrose's brother William Jr. might have been of English birth. In 1832, Ambrose's son John created an affidavit in support of the pension application of his first cousin Jesse Mills (son of William Jr.). John did not identify his own father or mention their Loyalism; but he identified Jesse's father as William Mills (another Tory hung the week before King's Mountain) and said that William was "commonly called English Billy." For all these accounts see:

- J. M. Edney's 1846 biography of his grandfather William Mills; typescript posted in "Public Member Photos & Scanned Documents," *Ancestry* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 23 June 2015), unidentified contributor, "Maj William Mills 1746 to 1834." The contributor calls this typescript an "obituary written by his grandson J M Edney," without citing a source. However, the transcript itself states that it was written "October 30, 1845," 11 years after Maj. William's death.
- Draper's *Kings Mountain and Its Heroes: History of the Battle of King's Mountain, October 7th, 1780* (Cincinnati: Peter G. Thompson, 1881), 72–74.
- Alexander Chesney, *The Journal of Alexander Chesney: A South Carolina Loyalist in the Revolution and After*, introduction by Wilbur H. Siebert, *The Ohio State University Bulletin* 26 (October 30, 1921), 71–74; HTML edition, *Google Books* (<http://www.books.google.com>). The bibliography to this edited copy of Chesney's diary cites "Papers of Colonel Thomas Fletchall (Public Record Office, London, A.O. 12 and 13."
- Jesse Mills Pension Application (Pvt., Miller's Regt., NC Line), W7448, widow Sarah (née Garrett); imaged in "Revolutionary War Pensions," *Fold3* (<https://www.fold3.com/image/246/25852181> and 50 subsequent images : accessed 30 May 2018). For the affidavit of John Mills, see 25852227 and 25852229.

³ See the assembly of data by E. S. Mills, "William Mills (c1695–1766) of Goochland, Albemarle & Amherst Counties, Virginia; Spouse Mary (Walton?): Research Notes," a work-in-progress last updated 28 August 2018; archived at Historic Pathways (<https://www.historicpathways.com>) under the "Research" tab.

⁴ Estimated from the 1746 birthdate of his son William.

⁵ Extrapolated from the ages of the children born to this marriage and his known location at the time.

⁶ For the alleged time and place of Mourning's birth and her alleged parentage, see *Singleton Family Organization*, database (<http://www.singletonfamily.org/getperson.php?personID=113454&tree=1> : accessed 27 June 2015), no sources cited.

⁷ J. M. Edney's 1846 biography of his grandfather William Mills.

⁸ J. M. Edney's 1846 biography of his grandfather William Mills. Also, Chesney, *The Journal of Alexander Chesney*.

⁹ Estate settlement, William Mills vs. John Carrick and others, Ambrose Mills estate, April Court 1797; Rutherford Co., NC, Will Book B:76 ff.

¹⁰ *Find A Grave* (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/59106974> : accessed 7 July 2018), "Col. Ambrose Mills" memorial page created by Dianne Boren. No source is given for her extensive biography of Ambrose.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

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Spouse 2: Ann Brown

Died: 14 October 1780;¹¹ hung with other captured Tory leaders at Biggerstaff's Farm, Rutherford Co., North Carolina¹²

Residences: Goochland County, VA, 1743–44¹³
Lunenburg County, VA, 1745–53¹⁴
Bedford County, VA, 1754–57¹⁵
Anson County, NC, late 1758¹⁶
Craven Co., SC, c1759–68¹⁷
Tryon Co. (now Polk), NC, c1770–79¹⁸
Rutherford Co., NC, 1780¹⁹

CHILDREN BY MOURNING STONE (only one who survived the Indian massacre):

1. WILLIAM MILLS, b. 1746, m. **Eleanor Morris**, 12 October 1765, Old Craven Co., SC; lived in Tryon, Rutherford, Buncombe and Polk Cos., NC; d. 1834.²⁰

CHILDREN BY ANNE BROWN:

2. THOMAS MILLS, b. c1765; charged in 1783 with being a captain in the King's Army under Major Forgison at King's Mountain; granted 160 acres in Rutherford on South side of Green River, adjoining James Coward's land, 8 April 1786.²¹ Not traced thereafter.

¹¹ J. M. Edney's 1846 biography of his grandfather William Mills.

¹² Lyman C. Draper, *Kings Mountain and Its Heroes: History of the Battle of King's Mountain, October 7th, 1780* (Cincinnati: Peter G. Thompson, 1881), 481.

¹³ Goochland Co., VA, Court Order Book 5:314, 374, Burton vs. Mills.

¹⁴ For his 1745 placement on Cattail Creek, Albemarle Co., see C. H. C. Seaman, *The Lee Marmon Manuscript* (Sweet Briar, VA: Sweet Briar College Printing Press for the Amherst Co. Historical Museum & Nelson Co. Historical Soc., 1989), 47; imaged at *Internet Archive* (<http://www.archive.org/details/leemarmomanuscr00seam> : accessed 2 June 2018).

For 1749–56 locations, see June Banks Evans, *Lunenburg County, Virginia: Order Book 2, 1748–1753* (New Orleans, La.: Bryn Ffylliaid Publications, 1995), 51; citing Order Book 2:246–47. June Banks Evans, *Lunenburg County, Virginia: Order Book 2 ½-B, 1753–1754* (New Orleans, La.: Bryn Ffylliaid Publication, 1998), 33, 35; citing Order Book 2 ½-B: 373, 386, 391. Landon C. Bell, *Sunlight on the Southside: List of Tithes, Lunenburg County, Virginia; 1748–1783* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1974), 135–38. 144–47, 202–8.

¹⁵ TLC Genealogy, *Bedford County, Virginia, Order Book 1, 1754–1761* (Miami Beach, FL: TLC Genealogy, 2000), 23, 69, 116, for the presence of his parental family in Bedford.

¹⁶ Brent H. Holcomb, *Anson County, North Carolina: Deed Abstracts, 1749–1766; Abstracts of Wills & Estates, 1749–1795* (Baltimore: Clearfield, 1974), 92, for his parental presence in Anson; citing vol. 5: 305.

¹⁷ Alexander Chesney, *The Journal of Alexander Chesney: A South Carolina Loyalist in the Revolution and After*, introduction by Wilbur H. Siebert, *The Ohio State University Bulletin*, 26 (October 30, 1921), 71–74; HTML edition, *Google Books* (<http://www.books.google.com>). The bibliography to this edited copy of Chesney's diary cites "Papers of Colonel Thomas Fletchall (Public Record Office, London, A.O. 12 and 13." Google's page block "65–71" has an extensive account of Col. Thomas Fletchall. The various sources that write about his wife's death at hands of Indians place them on the Wateree River, 1758–61; Wateree land grants date him there from 1761–68.

¹⁸ Lucille Hendrick Gardner and Virginia Greene DePriest, *Minutes of the Inferior Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions for Tryon County, North Carolina*, vol. 2, 1773–1779 (Shelby, NC: P.p., 1985), 2. A. B. Pruitt, *Abstracts of Land Entrys, Tryon and Lincoln Co., NC, 1778–1780* (N.p.: P.p., 1987), 42; citing page 103.

¹⁹ Daniel K. Bennett, *Chronology of North Carolina, Showing When the Most Remarkable Events Connected with Her History Took Place, from the Year 1584 to the Present Time, with Explanatory Notes* (New York, James M. Edney, 1858), 19–25; digital images, *Archive.org* (http://www.archive.org/stream/chronologyofnort00be/chronologyofnort00be_djvu.txt : accessed 5 June 2015).

²⁰ J. M. Edney's 1846 biography of his grandfather William Mills. Also *Find A Grave* (<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=114368978&ref=acom> : accessed 6 June 2015), memorial 114368978, "Maj William Mills," created by Holt Felmet, 25 July 2013. Marriage place extrapolated from known location of the family at the time of the marriage date.

²¹ A. B. Pruitt, *Abstracts of Sales of Confiscated Loyalist Land and Property in North Carolina* (N.p.: P.p., 1989), entry 589, Sept. 1783. David McCorkle, *NC Land Grant Images and Data* (<http://www.nclandgrants.com> : accessed 7 July 2018), imaging Book 96:381; citing Rutherford Co. file 1653, NC microfilm reel S.108.160.25N, frame 217, State Archives.

3. JOHN MILLS, b. cOctober 1767; d. cMarch 1842, Rutherford County. Land grants from 1815, as well as his will, identify him as *Colonel* John Mills.²²
4. MARY “POLLY” MILLS, b. 1770 or before; m. 3 Nov. 1790, Rutherford Co., **Russell Twitty** (1762–1834); d. 1834, [Franklin Co.?] Missouri.²³
5. MILDRED PAMELA “MILLY” MILLS, b. March 1775; m. 5 November 1799, Rutherford Co., **Merrimon Featherstone** (1755–1844); d. 1846, Henderson Co., NC.²⁴
6. AMBROSE MILLS; b. February 1777;²⁵ married (1) Unknown; (2) **Honora [–?–]**, d. 28 May 1822;²⁶ (3) 1 February 1825?, “**Nancy Jones, Widow.**” Called “Esq.” in 1822 and 1825. Died after 1840.²⁷
7. ANNA “NANCY” MILLS, b. June 1780; d. 1830 Green River, Polk Co., NC; treated as a spinster by most family compilations.²⁸

BIOGRAPHIES

1722–1780

Biography.

“Colonel Ambrose Mills

“Born in England in 1722, Ambrose Mills was taken in childhood to Maryland. There he married Mourning Stone, a spinster, and settled on James river in Virginia, afterwards removing to the frontiers of South Carolina, where his wife was killed by Indians in the Indian risings of 1755–61.²⁹ Ambrose Mills married (II), Anne Brown, a sister of Leah Fletchall, wife of Colonel Thomas Fletchall (see page 71). In or

²² Age extrapolated from the fact that he was first assigned road duty in October 1787 and was first added to the jury pool in January 1789; see James Alan Williams, *County Court Records, 1779–1794, Rutherford Co., NC* (Banner, KY: Williams Publishing, 2014), 196, 252. Also see David McCorkle, *NC Land Grant Images and Data* (<http://www.nclandgrants.com> : accessed 7 July 2018), imaging Book 131: 413; citing Rutherford Co. File No. 3072, NC microfilm reel S.108.160.35N, frame 746, State Archives. Also Rutherford County, Will Book E:87ff.

²³ Birth year extrapolated from the fact that she was the oldest of four minors of Ambrose, over aged 14 in July 1790, who were ordered to court to select a guardian; see James Alan Williams, *County Court Records, 1779–1794, Rutherford Co., NC* (Banner, KY: Williams Publ., 2014), 305–6. Also see Russell Twitty petition, 5 February 1833, Franklin Co., Mo., in Russell Twitty, RW pension application S17161 (Lt. William Twitty’s Co., Barber’s Batt., Graham’s Regt. North Carolina); typescript at William T. Graves, *Southern Campaigns, Revolutionary War Pension Statements & Rosters* (<http://revwarapps.org/s17161.pdf> : accessed 27 June 2015).

²⁴ Birth month and year given in guardianship proceedings of October 1790; see James Alan Williams, *County Court Records, 1779–1794, Rutherford Co., NC* (Banner, KY: Williams Publishing, 2014), 313. For marriage data, see eelliott1, “Mills Edney Gosnell Durham and Related Families in NC,” family tree, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/6388307/person/-1298761976/facts> : accessed 6 June 2015).

²⁵ Birth month and year given in guardianship proceedings of October 1790; see James Alan Williams, *County Court Records, 1779–1794, Rutherford Co., NC* (Banner, KY: Williams Publishing, 2014), 313.

²⁶ For the death of wife Honora, see Lois Smathers Neal, *Abstracts of Vital Records from Raleigh, North Carolina, Newspapers, 1820–1829*, vol. 2 of 4 (Spartanburg: Reprint Co., 1980), 491, death in Rutherford Co. “in the 25th year of her age, Mrs. Honora Mills, wife of Ambrose Mills Esq.”; citing *Raleigh Register*, 28 June 1822.

²⁷ For the Mills-Jones marriage, see Lois Smathers Neal, *Abstracts of Vital Records from Raleigh, North Carolina, Newspapers, 1820–1829*, vol. 2 of 4 (Spartanburg: Reprint Co., 1980), 491, citing marriage “at the house of Mr. George Jones of Rutherford county ... to Miss [sic] Nancy Jones of Wilkes County,” *Raleigh North Carolina Star*, 22 February 1825; *Raleigh Register*, 25 February 1825. A compiler’s note adds an abstract of 1 February 1824 marriage bond of “Mills, Abroes [&] Nancy Jones (widow).” Also 1840 U.S. census, Rutherford Co., N.C., p. 337, line 18.

²⁸ Birth month and year given in guardianship proceedings of October 1790; see James Alan Williams, *County Court Records, 1779–1794, Rutherford Co., NC* (Banner, KY: Williams Publishing, 2014), 313. For a sample treatment by descendants of Ambrose, see the above-cited eelliott1, “Mills Edney Gosnell Durham and Related Families in NC,” family tree, *Ancestry*.

²⁹ The time frame might err here. As seen in subsequent notes, Ambrose was in Bedford Co., Va., until November 1756, then appears briefly in Anson Co., NC, in November 1758. The SC residence appears to date from 1759. However, if he went directly to the Wateree River in 1757 and the massacre occurred in 1757–58, it is possible that he pulled back into Anson Co. until things settled down enough in SC for him to return. This point remains to be reconciled.

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about 1765 he settled on Green river, North Carolina. The issue of his first marriage was a son, William, born 10 November, 1746, and by his second marriage, three sons and three daughters.

“The military services of **Ambrose Mills** during the Revolutionary war include actions against the Cherokee Indians in 1776, in ignorance of the alleged alliance between the Cherokees and the British, an ignorance which was shared with the loyalists, Colonel John Phillips (see p. 65) and Alexander Chesney. In 1778, **Ambrose Mills** and Colonel David Fanning raised a corps of 500 loyalists for the purpose of joining the royal standard at St. Augustine in East Florida, but this scheme was frustrated by the treachery of a traitor in the camp betraying their plans to the enemy. *Colonel Mills and sixteen others were apprehended and taken to Salisbury jail.* On the way thither, David Fanning with characteristic courage endeavored to rescue his brother loyalist, but his small force was too weak to break through the American guard.

“One of the first engagements of **Colonel Ambrose Mills** after his liberation was the action at Baylis Earle's ford on the North Pacolet river, North Carolina, when he surprised and attacked the American camp of Colonel Charles McDowell on the night of 15 July, 1780. In this action the loyalists under Mills, and Major James Dunlap's party of seventy dragoons, killed Noah Hampton, son of Colonel Hampton, and wounded Colonel John Jones of Burke county, North Carolina—an attack which was revenged later by Captain Edward Hampton's exploit in overtaking Dunlap's party and inflicting defeat upon it. Draper, in his *King's Mountain and its Heroes*, is very severe in his condemnation of the killing of Noah Hampton by Dunlap while he was asleep, an act which he rightly regards as murder, though a precisely similar surprise, achieved by the deception of Colonel John Jones, is regarded as almost heroic. (Op. cit., p. 79). Major Dunlap, who had been appointed an officer in the Queen's Rangers in 1776, and was one of the most adventurous spirits among the loyalists, neither giving nor expecting quarter, was killed on or about 25 March, 1781, by his guard after his surrender at *Beattie's mill on Little river in South Carolina*. General Pickens offered a "handsome reward for the murderers" (Draper, op. cit., pp. 163-4). The feud between Colonel John Jones and the loyalists had become exceedingly bitter after his deception in palming himself off as a loyalist and thereby gaining entrance into a loyalist camp, with the object as he had averred of taking revenge on some "rebels" who had slain loyalists in a recent skirmish. Arriving at the camp, which was in a state of self-security and the loyalists mostly asleep, Colonel Jones ordered an attack by his party and killed one and wounded three. (Draper, op. cit., p. 79).

“Returning to the career of **Colonel Ambrose Mills**, he commanded the North Carolina loyal militia in the memorable battle of King's Mountain and was taken prisoner. The subsequent severity of his treatment as a prisoner and his execution has been the subject of hostile criticism. (Draper, op. cit, p. 82). Lord Cornwallis in his protest against his execution describes him as "always a fair and open enemy," a verdict which was endorsed by his opponents. (Correspondence of Lord Cornwallis, Vol. I, p. 67). **Early in the military life of Colonel Ambrose Mills, Lord Cornwallis had experienced some difficulty in restraining his ardor, and in complaining of his premature activities, desired him to act only on the defensive until ordered to act otherwise.** (Ibid ., op. cit, p. 47.)

TO DO:

This correspondence by Cornwallis needs to be found. Subsequently in this set of research notes I have correspondence that Cornwallis wrote *after* the death of Ambrose, but none that fits the description above.

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“William Mills, his son, was very popular, and was engaged with his father in the campaign against the Cherokee Indians, and at King's Mountain, where he was severely wounded, he acted as major under his father. He died in North Carolina, 10 November, 1834, aged 88. Colonel Ambrose Mills has been confused with Colonel William Henry Mills, an Irishman who had gone out to America as a surgeon's mate in the British army. Here he served until 1764, when he retired from his military duties and settled in South Carolina, marrying two years later an American lady at Georgetown in that Province. Early in the Revolutionary war, Colonel William Henry Mills served in the South Carolina Provincial Congress, but in June, 1778, he was appointed colonel of the Cheraws loyal militia. He died at Liverpool, England, 7 May, 1786, leaving a widow, Elizabeth, and one daughter. (A. O. 12/52, fos. 45-46, 327-340; Stedman, American War, Vol. II, p. 223; Tarleton, Hist of the Campaigns of 1780 and 1781, p. 127; Draper, King's Mountain and its Heroes, p. 373; B. F. Stevens, Clinton-Cornwallis.)”³⁰

1746–1834

VA & NC

Biography.

“William Mills”

“Written by grandson JM Edney.”

“He was born on the **James River in Virginia on Nov 10, 1746**. From there the family moved to the **Wateree River region of South Carolina** which was then quite remote and wild. It was here that his mother Mourning Stone was killed in an attack on her wagon around 1756. It is not known if there were other children with her.

“**His father Ambrose married second Ann Brown, sister in law to Loyalist Thomas Fletchall**. The family moved to the Green River section of what was then Tryon County and is now in Polk County, NC.

“**On October 12, 1765, at the age of 19 he married Eleanor Morris with whom he had 7 children**. In 1780 he was given the rank of Major, under McDaniel and went on an expedition against the Indians. He was in the Battle of Kings Mountain, was wounded in his right foot, from which he never fully recovered.

“In 1781, he, along with some fellow Carolinians, built a fort on White Oak and Green River, 10 miles from Rutherford County court House. These were termed “Regulators”. Being brave, resolute men they governed all about them. He then moved up Green River to a Plantation and was said to be the first white man to cross the Blue Ridge into what is now Henderson county, and the man from whom Mills River and Mills Gap Road took their names.

“His father [*sic*], mother, all the children except himself, fell by the tomahawk and scalping knife of the Indians at some time or another, and he was twice burnt out and plundered while living on Green River.” Written from Edneyville, October 30, 1845”³¹

³⁰ Alexander Chesney, *The Journal of Alexander Chesney: A South Carolina Loyalist in the Revolution and After*, introduction by Wilbur H. Siebert, The Ohio State University Bulletin 26 (October 30, 1921), 71–74; HTML edition, *Google Books* (<http://www.books.google.com>). The bibliography to this edited copy of Chesney's diary cites “Papers of Colonel Thomas Fletchall (Public Record Office, London, A.O. 12 and 13.” Google's page-block “65–71” has an extensive account of Col. Thomas Fletchall.

³¹ “Public Member Photos & Scanned Documents,” *Ancestry* (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 23 June 2015), Unidentified contributor, “Maj William Mills 1746 to 1834.” The contributor calls this typescript an “obituary written by his grandson J M Edney” without citing a source. However, the transcript itself states that it was written “October 30, 1845,” which was 11 years after Maj. William's death. It is more probable that this grandson wrote this as a sketch for Lyman C. Draper who was, at that time, combing the South for information about the men of King's

COMMENT:

For the full text of the transcript, see E. S. Mills, “William Mills, Maj. (1746–1834); Spouse Eleanor Morris: Research Notes,” a work-in-progress last updated 28 August 2018; archived at *Historic Pathways* under the “Research” tab.

TO DO:

Locate the original and verify. The last paragraph above seems to contain a transcription error—asserting that William’s father “fell by the tomahawk.”

THE RECORDS

NOVEMBER COURT 1743
GOOCHLAND COUNTY, VA

Court order

“Burton vs Mills. In the Action of Trespass on the Case between **Nowel Burton** Plt. and **Ambross [sic] Mills** Deft. Gideon Marr enters himself Special Bail and an Imparlanse is granted the Deft.”³²

COMMENT:

Most accounts of Col. Ambrose Mills assert his birth in the year 1723. However, he had to be at least 21 to be sued in November 1743. Also, whatever the debt, it had to be substantially overdue for a suit to be filed, which would place his birth at least a year before November 1722.

MARCH COURT 1743/4
GOOCHLAND COUNTY, VA

Court order

“Burton vs Mills. In the Action of Trespass on the Case between **Nowel Burton** Plt. & **Ambrose Mills** Deft. the Deft. appear but failing to plead on the motion of the Plt. Judgmt. by nihil dicit is granted him for what damages shall be recovered in this Suit to be discharged nevertheless if the Deft. shall plead at the next Court.”³³

MAY COURT 1744
GOOCHLAND COUNTY, VA

Court order

Mountain. Draper’s *Kings Mountain and Its Heroes: History of the Battle of King’s Mountain, October 7th, 1780* (Cincinnati: Peter G. Thompson, 1881), reports part of this in his brief sketch of Ambrose Mills on p. 481, but does not identify his source.

³² Ann M. Blomquist, *Goochland County, Virginia, Court Order Book 5, 1741–1745* (Westminster, MD: Heritage Books, 2007), 302; citing Order Book 5:314.

³³ Ann M. Blomquist, *Goochland County, Virginia, Court Order Book 5, 1741–1745* (Westminster, MD: Heritage Books, 2007), 357; citing Order Book 5:374.

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“Burton vs Mills. The Action of Trespass on the Case between **Nowel Burton & Ambrose Mills** Deft. is Continued.”³⁴

JUNE COURT 1744

GOOCHLAND COUNTY, VA

Court order

“Burton vs Mills. In the Action of Trespass on the Case between *Nowl. Burton* Plt. & **Ambrose Mills** Deft. time is granted the Deft. to plead Specially.”³⁵

NOVEMBER 1744

GOOCHLAND COUNTY, VA

Court order

“Burton vs Mills. In the Action of Trespass on the Case between *Nowl. Burton* Plt. and **Ambrose Mills** Deft. Edmund Gray and James Terry are Appointed to examine state and settle the severall matters in dispute between them and make report to next Court.”³⁶

1745

GOOCHLAND—ALBEMARLE COUNTIES

Settlement.

“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 ... **Thomas Mills** occupied over 535 acres on Dancing Creek while **Ambrose Mills** owned 1,100 acres in 1745 on **Cattail Marsh**, the lower side of Pedlar river and on **Goose Creek**; **William Mills** in 1745 possessed 1500 acres on Salt Creek, **Stone House Creek**, **Horsley’s Creek**, and Buck branch of Pedlar. ...”

“Table II: Place Names Before 1761 ...

Buck Branch — of Pedlar, near Horsley’s C, 1745, **William Mills**

Cattail Marsh — near lower side of Pedlar R., 1745, **Ambrose Mills**

Dancing Creek — 1745, **Thomas Mills**

Goose Creek — near lower side of Pedlar R., 1745, **Ambrose Mills**

Salt Creek— near Pedlar R. and Horseley’s C, 1745, **William Mills**”³⁷

COMMENT:

All of these land placements predate the patent records that I’ve found and include considerably more tracts than I have found. Note that the June 1747–June 1748 record below also credits

³⁴ Ann M. Blomquist, *Goochland County, Virginia, Court Order Book 5, 1741–1745* (Westminster, MD: Heritage Books, 2007), 396; citing Order Book 5:415.

³⁵ Ann M. Blomquist, *Goochland County, Virginia, Court Order Book 5, 1741–1745* (Westminster, MD: Heritage Books, 2007), 428; citing Order Book 5:450.

³⁶ Ann M. Blomquist, *Goochland County, Virginia, Court Order Book 5, 1741–1745* (Westminster, MD: Heritage Books, 2007), 489; citing Order Book 5:517.

³⁷ C. H. C. Seaman, ed., *The Lee Marmon Manuscript* (Sweet Briar, VA: Sweet Briar College Printing Press for the Amherst Co. Historical Museum & Nelson Co. Historical Soc., 1989), 47; imaged at *Internet Archive* (<http://www.archive.org/details/leemarmomanuscr00seam> : accessed 2 June 2018). Marman’s published manuscript (p. 45) cites his own source as “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.” Marman’s footnote 32, (appendix p. 5) cites: “Alexander Brown Papers, II, in Swem Library of the College of William and Mary.” That Library’s inventory of those papers (<https://ead.lib.virginia.edu/vivaxtf/view?docId=wm/viw00002.xml>) tells us that they span 1815–1910. They need to be studied.

William Mills with 54 acres for which I've not been able to find a patent.

These land notes do not come from the survey notes in the county's court order books or the commonwealth-level grant books. They may come from the earliest deed records that have long been missing. In 1979, the local historian Bailey Fulton Davis wrote:

“For some inexplicable reason there are no will or deed books in Albemarle from formation date from Goochland in 1744 to 1748. It may be that Tarlton's Raiders destroyed them, but there is no office statement to answer the question of their being gone. We do know that Tarlton gets the credit (?) [sic] for having destroyed the records of marriages back of about 1780.”³⁸

Possibly, the rights to these lands were sold prior to the patent being issued, as with Ambrose's Bedford tract that he had surveyed in the 1750s and then sold. The patent is issued in the name of the buyer. See the Walton-Calloway note under 27 April 1761, below.

1748

LUNENBURG COUNTY, VA

Court papers.

“1748 Folder ... William Hopkins shows that **Ambrose Mills** is indebted to him 1 Pound, 13 shillings, 9 pence, due by account. Account for above (2 items).

“1749 Folder ... Promissory note of **Ambrose Mills** of Albemarle Co. to William Hopkins 24 Sept. 1748. Wit: **R. Walton**, H. Wood.”³⁹

13 NOVEMBER 1749

LUNENBURG COUNTY, VA

Court order,

Payment of wolf bounties.

“To Henry Delony, assignee of **Thomas Watts/Walls**, granted by Wm. Howard, Cert. 3 Oct. 1749, 1 old Wolf head, 140 lbs. tobacco.”

[skip several]

“To **Ambross Mills**, granted by John Phelps, cert. 25 Feb 1748, 1 old wolf head, 140 pounds tobacco.”⁴⁰

COMMENT:

Two separate Thomas Wattses appear on Lunenburg lists of this period. The one in the same district with Ambrose was likely his brother-in-law, husband of Ambrose's sister Sarah Mills.⁴¹

1750

LUNENBURG COUNTY, VA

³⁸ Bailey Fulton Davis, *The Deeds of Amherst County, Virginia, 1761–1807 and Albemarle County, Virginia, 1748–1763* (Greenville, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1979), 1. The *Lee Marmon Manuscript* raises the possibility that the missing register may have been in the possession of Brown.

³⁹ Benjamin B. Weisiger III, *Albemarle County, Virginia, Court Papers, 1744–1783* (Richmond, VA: P.p., 1987), 3, 6.

⁴⁰ June Banks Evans, *Lunenburg County, Virginia: Order Book 2, 1748–1742* (New Orleans, La.: Bryn Ffylliaid Publications, 1995), 51; citing Order Book 2:246–47.

⁴¹ This disambiguation between the two Thomas Wattses is worked out in E. S. Mills, “William Mills of Haile's Tithe List, 1750, Lunenburg Co., Virginia: Identification Needed,” report to file, 20 June 2018; archived at *Historic Pathways* under the “Research” tab.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

Tax roll.

“For 1750: List taken by Nicholas Haile.” [about 120 taxpayers; skipping first 75 or so]

John Keeth

John Macfaull

William Mills 1 [not William Sr. or Jr. of Albemarle]⁴²

William Hays

John Richardson

William Bennet

Peter Bennet

Joseph Bennet

Nicholas Welsh

[skip 15]

Charles Simmons

William Linch

Thomas Wats 1

John Boon

John Smith

Peter Kinsey

Joshua Bartlet

John Anderson

Jeremiah Scafe.

[end of list]⁴³

“1750 List taken by John Phelps”

William Mobberley 1

Benjn. Turman

John Jennings 2

Edwd. Mobberly, Junr.

Thomas Mobberly

Roger Conner 3

Edwd. Mobberly 1

Benjn. Mobberly 1

[skip 10 households]

Celmt. Mobberley 1

[skip 7 households]

Capt. Linch [Wm. Linch is cited adjacent to Thos. Watts in Hailes Dist.]

Harry Cockram 3

Jno. Mobberley

Mordecai Mobberley

Hamon Mobberley 6

[skip 2 households]

Jno. Payne

Chs. Spurlock

⁴² See E. S. Mills, “William Mills of Haile’s Tithes List, 1750, Lunenburg Co., Virginia: Identification Needed,” report to file, 20 June 2018; archived at E. S. Mills, *Historic Pathways* (<https://www.historicpathways.com>) under the “Research” tab.

⁴³ Landon C. Bell, *Sunlight on the Southside: List of Tithes, Lunenburg County, Virginia; 1748–1783* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1974), 135–38; no source cited.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

Ambrose Mills	4	[Ambrose, the next year, is identified as Payne’s overseer]
[skip 5 households]		
Wm. Stone		[Ambrose is by now married to Mourning Stone] ⁴⁴
Robt. Irons		
Wm. Stone Junr.		
Euseibus Stone	4⁴⁵	

1751

LUNENBURG COUNTY, VA

Tax List.

COMMENT:

The roll for this year appears to be missing.

1752

LUNENBURG COUNTY, VA

Tax List.

“For 1752, List taken by John Phelps.”

[skip 28]

“Mr. John Payn’s list

[Someone has penciled into the book “of Goochland”]

Ambrose Mills, Overseer **7**

[skip 12]

Edwd. Mobberley	1	[1756 on Little River, Cheraw/Camden/Fairfield] ⁴⁶
Clemt. Mobberley	1	[Also settled on Little River, Camden/Fairfield SC] ⁴⁷
Benjn. Mobberley	1	[Also settled on Little River, Camden/Fairfield SC] ⁴⁸

Thos. Halsey

Richd. Hill

Robt. Baber

Israel Peterson

Wm. Verdeman

Robt. Verrdeman

Wm. Verdeman, Junr.

Jonas Anderson

Stepn. Hudson

Petr. Hudson

Col. Wm. *Randolph*

Frs. Luck, overseer

[skip 19]

⁴⁴ Lyman C. Draper, *Kings Mountain and Its Heroes: History of the Battle of King’s Mountain, October 7th, 1780* (Cincinnati: Peter G. Thompson, 1881), 481. Draper, the famed creator of the Draper Manuscripts at the Wisconsin Historical Society, corresponded from the 1840s with thousands of families of participants in the Revolution to acquire privately held records, memoirs, etc. His biography of Col. Ambrose Mills, however, does not provide sources.

⁴⁵ Landon C. Bell, *Sunlight on the Southside: List of Tithes, Lunenburg County, Virginia; 1748–1783* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1974), 144–47, particularly p. 145; no source cited.

⁴⁶ Ann Chilton, *Bedford County, Virginia, Deed Book B2* (Signal Mountain, TN: Mountain Press, 1992), 7, citing B-2:94; “Deed from Edw. Mobberly (Craven Co., S.C.) to Samuel Drake, 330 Acres on Otter River,” Bedford Co.

⁴⁷ Kenneth Shelton, *All That Dare Oppose Them: The Whig Victory at Mobley’s Meeting House, June 1780* (P.p.: P.p., 2005), 22.

⁴⁸ Kenneth Shelton, *All That Dare Oppose Them: The Whig Victory at Mobley’s Meeting House, June 1780* (P.p.: P.p., 2005), 22.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

Jas. Standeford
[skip 3]

[In 1810–15, in daughter county Franklin, Standefords
Millses, and Callaways were next-door neighbors.

Rich. Callaway

Amb. Bramlet

[skip 56]

Wm. Callaway

Wm. Gowin

[Gowins were Fairfield associates & neighbors of Watts]

Robt. Graves

Wm. Simmons

Jno. Mounts

Jno. Mounts, Jr.

Wm. Watkins

Saml. Watkins

Yowel Watkins

Jno. Wood

Capt. Chs. Lynch's list

Thos. Price

Rice Price

Edward Wats

Edwd. Wats, Junr.

[Edward Jr. and William took out adjacent grants, 1763, on the
Wateree River, adj. *Thomas* Watts. Edw. Jr. & William Watts

Wm. Wats

moved 1762–65 to Little River, near the Bedford Mobleys and

Geo. Wats

Ambrose Mills; Wm. & Fairfield John bought Mills's Fairfield land]

Jno. Wats

5

[One Charles Denny is said to have married Anne Learwood,
daughter of Ambrose's sister Elizabeth (Mills) Learwood]⁴⁹

Jno. Denny

Jno. Denny, Junr.

Zach. Denny

Robt. Worthen's list

Jno. Braisey, Overs.

Jno. Reed

Benjn. Arnolds, Qr.

Thos. Gaddey, Overs.

Richd. Turner

Jason Meader

[Moved to Anson Co., NC, as did George Watts, above]

Job Meader⁵⁰

2

[Little River, SC, land grant in 1760;⁵¹ in Anson Co., NC, by 1762;⁵²
back on Little River in Fairfield, 1790; son-in-law of Edward Moberly,
Sr., who is taxed at the start of this list.⁵³]

⁴⁹ Joey67, "Denney Family," *Missouri Family Trees* (<http://missourifamilytrees.blogspot.com/2010/03/denney-family.html> : accessed 23 May 2016). Ann Larwood Denny is said to be the mother of Benjamin Denney (b. c1780 in VA; d. January 1842 in Pulaski, MO; and Charles Denney Jr. who died 1841 in Pulaski. Charles Denney's parents are said to be Samuel Denney and Sarah Suddarth, whose parents were William Suddarth and **Parlow Mills**. No sources are cited.

⁵⁰ The name Ambrose is also used in this Meader/Meadow/Medders family. Perhaps coincidentally, many of my autosomal DNA matches include descendants of these Meaders. Relationships have not been worked out.

⁵¹ Kenneth Shelton, *All That Dare Oppose Them: The Whig Victory at Mobley's Meeting House, June 1780* (P.p.: P.p., 2005), 22.

⁵² Ann Chilton, *Bedford Co., Va., Deed Book A-1, 1754–1762* (Signal Mountain, TN: Mountain Press, 1987), 22; deed from "Job Meador of Anson Co., N.C., to John Williams of Bedford County, 70 acres lying on the South side of Otter River." The Moberlys/Mobleys who moved to Fairfield also lived on Otter River in Bedford. The Watts of Bedford owned land on Elk and Ivy Creeks, as did the Woodwards who also moved to Fairfield where they were Watts neighbors.

⁵³ Kenneth Shelton, *All That Dare Oppose Them: The Whig Victory at Mobley's Meeting House, June 1780* (P.p.: P.p., 2005), 100, 118. Shelton cites Robert Mills, "Statistics of South Carolina, 1826" for statement that Job Meador died Oct. 1822 at 101 years of age.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

Joel Meader
Benjn. Orrick
Jno. Eckols
Jeffery Crowley
Wm. Harvey
Lewis Meador [Moved to Anson Co., NC]
[skip 39]
Jas. Gibson 1 [Fairfield, SC, 1790]
Randal Gibson 1 [Fairfield, SC, 1790]
Thos. Prather
Adam Biard
Thos. Walker
Wm. Briant
Jno. Davison
Henry Farguson
Matw. Amory
Wm. Armstrong
Thos. Carr
John Mills 2 [No known relationship to Ambrose; he is not named as a son
in the will of Ambrose’s father⁵⁴]
[skip 7, to end of list]⁵⁵

COMMENT:

Several families on this list—not just Ambrose Mills and the Wattses, but also Gibsons, Mobblerlys, and Meadors would move down to Craven Co. (later Camden Dist. and Fairfield Co.).

**5 SEPTEMBER 1753
LUNENBURG COUNTY, VA**

Court order.

“John Thompson agst **Ambrose Mills** for debt due; dismissed.”⁵⁶

**OCTOBER 1754
BEDFORD COUNTY, VA**

Associate.

“George Walton, Plaintiff, against John Partree Birks, Defendant, In Debt. This day came the Plaintiff by his attorney, and the defendant in his proper person, and **Ambrose Mills** came into Court and undertook for the Defendant that in case he shall be cast in this suit that he shall satisfy and pay the condemnation of the Court or render his body to prison in execution for the same or that the said Mills will do it for him, and the said Defendant acknowledging the Plaintiff’s action, therefore it is considered by the Court

⁵⁴ This John of Goochland was associated closely with a different William of Lunenburg in the period of these lists. John remained in the region for some years after the region became Bedford Co. See E. S. Mills, “William Mills of Haile’s Tithe List, 1750, Lunenburg Co., Virginia: Identification Needed,” report to file, 20 June 2018; and E. S. Mills, “Mills: Bedford County, Virginia: Extended Survey of Resources,” report to file, 28 August 2018; both archived at *Historic Pathways* under the “Research” tab.

⁵⁵ Landon C. Bell, *Sunlight on the Southside: Lists of Tithes, Lunenburg County, Virginia, 1748–1783* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1974), 202–8.

⁵⁶ June Banks Evans, *Lunenburg County, Virginia: Order Book 2 ½-B, 1753–1754* (New Orleans, La.: Bryn Ffylliaid Publication, 1998), 33, 35; citing Order Book 2 ½-B: 373, 386, 391.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

that the Plaintiff recover against the Defendant 7£ 18 shillings and 3? pence, the debt in the declaration mentioned, and his costs. But this judgment is to be discharged by the payment of 3£ 9 shillings and 4 pence half penny, together with 5% interest from March 1, 1754, and the costs, and the plaintiff agrees to stay execution of this judgment one month.”⁵⁷

COMMENT:

- Note that Ambrose Mills is supporting Birks in this suit lodged by Walton. Genealogists have long asserted (without presenting evidence) that Ambrose’s mother was one *Mary Walton*.⁵⁸
- Before May 1755 (see below), apparently to clear this debt, John P. Birks and his wife Sarah would sell a tract of land on Elk Creek adjoining “Watts.” Edward Watts had earlier bought Elk Creek land from George Walton.

DECEMBER 1754

BEDFORD COUNTY, VA

Legal suit.

“Archibald Buchanan, John Bowman and Co., Plaintiffs, against Ambros Mills, Defendant, in debt. This day came the Plaintiffs by their attorney, and the Defendant in his proper person, and the Defendant acknowledging the Plaintiff[’s] action, therefore it is considered by the Court that the Plaintiffs recover against the Defendant 7 £, the debt in the declaration mentioned, and his costs. But this judgment, except as to the costs, is to be discharged by the payment of 3 £ 16 shillings, with 5% interest from may 3, 1753.”⁵⁹

AUGUST 1755

BEDFORD COUNTY, VA

Legal suit.

“Ordered that the Sheriff of this County summon **Ambros Mills & Edward Watts** to appear at next Court to answer the complaint of Robert Ewings, Gent.”⁶⁰

COMMENT:

- No further mention of this case has been found.
- The 1786 will of Robert Ewing in Bedford names his daughter Patty (“Pety”) Mills, who was then the wife of John Mills Jr. of Botetourt (formerly Augusta).⁶¹

6 SEPTEMBER 1755

ALBEMARLE COUNTY, VA

Will.

⁵⁷ TLC Genealogy, *Bedford County, Virginia, Order Book 1, 1754–1761* (Miami Beach, FL: TLC Genealogy, 2000), 23.

⁵⁸ Mrs. P. W. Hiden, “Nicholas Mills of Hanover County,” *Tyler’s Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine* 14 (1833): 237–42; 15 (1933): 38–64; reprinted as *Genealogies of Virginia Families; From Tyler’s Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, Gary Parks, ed. 4 vols. (Baltimore: Genealogical Pub. Co., 1981), 2: 700–1.

⁵⁹ TLC Genealogy, *Bedford County, Virginia, Order Book 1, 1754–1761* (Miami Beach, FL: TLC Genealogy, 2000), 33-34; citing original p. 49.

⁶⁰ TLC Genealogy, *Bedford County, Virginia, Order Book 1, 1754–1761* (Miami Beach, FL: TLC Genealogy, 2000), 69.

⁶¹ Joida Whitten, *Abstracts of Bedford County, Virginia, Wills, Intentories, and Accounts, 1754–1787* (Dallas, TX: Privately printed, n.d.), pp. 168–70, citing original “pages 526–530.” For the identity of Patty’s husband, see Bedford Co., VA, Deed Book 7, 1780–87: 697–98, Mills of Botetourt to Beauford, sale of land in Bedford. For the separation of John Mills Jr. and Sr. of Goochland > Bedford and then Augusta > Botetourt, see E. S. Mills, “Mills & Associates: Montgomery, Fincastle & Botetourt Counties, Virginia: Extended Survey of Resources,” report to file, 28 August 2018; archived at *Historic Pathways* under the “Research” tab.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

“In the Name of God Amen. I **William Mills** of Albemarle County, being weak in Body, although I bless God of a perfect sence & Memory, but calling to mind the uncertainty of this Transitory World, and that all flesh must Yield when it pleases God to call, therefore I do Constitute this to be my Last Will and Testatment and desire it may be received by all persons as such.

“First, I commit my body to the Earth to be decently buried by my Executors hereafter named and Secondly I submit my soul to almighty God who gave it to me in full & sure hopes of a Resurrection at the last day; and as Touching my worldly Estate, and what it has pleased God to bless me with, I give and dispose of it as followeth (To Wit).

“Imprimis, I give & bequeath all my personal estate that I am possest with as long as she lives, to my dearly beloved **Wife Mary Mills**.

“Item, 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).

“Item, I give & bequeath to my **Daughter Sarah Watts** a proportionable part of all my Estate Excepting my Lands—

“Item I give & bequeath to my **Son William Mills** a proportionable part of all my moveable Estate, and the Three Hundred & thirty acres of Land that’s unsettled, to have & hold forever.

“Item, I give & bequeath to my **daughter Elizabeth Learwood** a proportionable part of all my Estate excepting my lands to have & to hold forever—

“Item, I give & bequeath to my **daughter Anna Mills** a proportionable part of all my Estate excepting my land to have & to hold forever.

“Item, I give & bequeath to my **son Jesse Mills** a proportionable part of all my Estate besides my Lands & the Tract of Land I now live on, to have & to hold forever—

“Item, I give & bequeath to my **Daughter Milley Mills** a proportionable part of all my Estate Excepting my lands to have & to hold forever.

“Item, I give & bequeath to my son **Thomas Mills’s children (Viz^t) Ambrose Mills Jun^r & Elizabeth Mills** (the son & daughter of the Decd. Thomas Mills) a proportionable part of all my Estate Excepting my lands, to be Equally Devided Between them to have & to hold forever, to be paid to them after my dearly beloved Wife Mary Mills’s Death or if it should please the Almighty God that I should die first & [if] my wife should think proper to alter her Station of Life as to Marriage, upon the day of the Marriage all the aforesaid Legacies to fall to Each of the Legatees as afore mentioned, and my will & desire is that my dearly beloved Wife **Mary Mills & Thomas Joblin** should be **Executrix & Executor** of this my Last Will & Testament.

“I[n] witness whereof I hereunto set my hand & seal this Twenty Sixth day of September one thousand Seven hundred & fifty five. **William Mills {Seal}**.

“Test. [Witnesses] John Staples, Isham Davis, William Floyed, Charles Tuley, Robert Davis.⁶²

NOVEMBER 1756
BEDFORD COUNTY, VA
Bounty sale.

⁶² Amherst Co., VA, Will Book 1: 73–76 for will, administrator’s bond, and inventory.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

To Thomas Prather, Assignee of **Ambrose Mills**, 1 ditto [old wolf's head], December 29, 1755, Marck Cole, 100."⁶³

COMMENT:

- In assigning his bounty to someone else—to a man who would have to wait for payment until the court session where the payments were made—Ambrose would have sold it at a discount. He obviously needed funds.
- Ambrose Mills has not been found after this in the county records.
- The next record for him, 5 December 1758, places him in Anson Co., NC.

CA. 1756

BEDFORD COUNTY, VA

Land survey.

COMMENT:

At some point during his Bedford residency, Ambrose applied for a patent to land on Elk Creek, Bedford Co. After having the land surveyed, he sold his uncompleted claim to William Callaway, (likely about the time of his removal from Virginia) and the land was patented to Callaway in 1760 at which time it was described as

“Beginning at Walton and Callaway’s Corner Red Oak on the said Creek, thence along their Line S 20 Degrees E 54 poles to a Red Oak, [thence] S 70 Degrees E 90 poles to a Locust, [thence] South 30 Degrees E 212 poles to a white Oak, Thence along Walton Line N 80 Degrees East 262 poles to his Corner Locust in **Payne’s Line**, thence along his Lines N 10 Debrees W 62 pols to an Old Corner fallen Down, [thence] North 50 Degrees E 67 poles to **Callaways** Corner Red Oak in the same, Thence along [several illegible words] West one hundred and [illegible word representing a number [poles] to a Hickory; [thence] North 84 Poles to a white Oak, [thence] North 60 Degrees W 214 poles to a Red Oak, [thence] South 73 Degrees West 80 poles to a Pine, [thence] North 50 Degrees West 54 poles to **Elk Creek** aforesaid and thence down the same as it Meanders to the first station.”⁶⁴

COMMENT:

Callaway then sold a part of the land in 1761, as follows:

“Deed from William Callaway to Thomas Pullen, 204 acres for 23 Pounds beginning at a white oak binding on the land Thomas Pullen bought of George Walton. (This being part of 898 acres which Geo. Qalton surveyed for Ambrose Mills, who later sold it to Wm. Callaway). Rec. April 27, 1765.”⁶⁵

⁶³ TLC Genealogy, *Bedford County, Virginia, Order Book 1, 1754–1761* (Miami Beach, FL: TLC Genealogy, 2000), 116.

⁶⁴ Library of Virginia, “Land Office Grants,” database with images, *Virginia Memory* (http://image.lva.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/GetLONN.pl?first=602&last=&g_p=P34&collection=LO Patent : downloaded 14 June 2018), citing “Land Office Patents No. 34, 1756–1762, p. 602 (Reel 33–34).”

“Index of Pool,” *Direct Line Software* (www.directlinesoftware.com/Pool/bedford.txt : downloaded 7 June 2018), Bedford lands, William Callaway, 898 acres Bedford, on E side of Elk River, item 178; siting Virginia Patent Book 34:602..

⁶⁵ Ann Chilton, *Bedford Co., VA, Deed Book A-1, 1754–1762* (Signal Mountain, TN: Mountain Press, 1987), 8; citing Bedford Co. Deed Book A-1:430.

CA. 1758–61

CRAVEN COUNTY, NC

Death.

COMMENT:

This is the period in which Ambrose's wife and all children except William were supposedly killed in the area of Wateree River, SC.

5 DECEMBER 1758

ANSON COUNTY, NC

Residence.

"William Nutt, Sr. of Anson, to son Andrew Nutt, all interest in 162 A **where Ambrose Mills now dwells** ... to son Wm. Nutt, Jr., 272 A, part of land I now live on, surveyed by Francis Beaty ... to son John Nutt 300 A where I now live ... my wife Elen ... Wm Nutt (W) (Seal), Wit: Nathaniel Walker, James McCorkel, Hugh McCain."⁶⁶

COMMENT:

Ambrose Mills does not appear on the published 1750–57 quit-rent lists for Anson.⁶⁷ The above deed reference is the only record found to date that places Ambrose in Old Anson. Apparently, he lived briefly in Anson before migrating down Broad River to current Fairfield County, SC.

13 DECEMBER 1759

BEDFORD COUNTY, VA

Debt.

"Venable vs. **Mills** – Attachment, the Defendant not appearing, judgment is granted the Plaintiff 4 £ 1.7.7 and costs and William Callaway, garnishee, declares he has sufficient of the Defendant's Estate in his hands. Ordered that he satisfy this judgment and costs out of the same to the Plaintiff."⁶⁸

COMMENT:

- This Mills reference is likely to Ambrose, who sold 898 acres to William Callaway as mentioned in a later deed recorded 27 April 1761 (see below).
- There is no grant of this land on file for Ambrose. He did not finish the grant process before he left Albemarle. The case minute above informs us that Callaway took over his claim to the land and, as shown below, the tract was patented to Callaway.

FEBRUARY COURT 1760

BEDFORD COUNTY, VA

Debt.

"Stone vs. **Mills** – abates by Plaintiff's death."⁶⁹

COMMENT:

⁶⁶ Brent H. Holcomb, *Anson County, North Carolina: Deed Abstracts, 1749–1766; Abstracts of Wills & Estates, 1749–1795* (Baltimore: Clearfield, 1974), 92; citing vol. 5: 305.

⁶⁷ William D. Bennett, "Anson County, N.C., Quit Rents List, 1750–1757," *North Carolina Genealogical Society Journal* 18 (May 1991): 73–81.

⁶⁸ TLC Genealogy, *Bedford County, Virginia, Order Book 1, 1754–1761* (Miami Beach, FL: TLC Genealogy, 2000), 166; citing original Order Book 1-B: 106.

⁶⁹ TLC Genealogy, *Bedford County, Virginia, Order Book 1, 1754–1761* (Miami Beach, FL: TLC Genealogy, 2000), 166; citing original Order Book 1-B: 106.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

Considering that Ambrose Mills m. Mourning Stone, the defendant in the above case is possibly Ambrose, although it could have been his father.

(BEFORE) 27 APRIL 1761

BEDFORD COUNTY, VA

Land sale.

Ambrose Mills sold to William Callaway 898 acres, surveyed for him by George Walton, **adjacent to land of George Walton**. Deed has not been found but is mentioned in this deed abstracted by Chilton:

CALLAWAY, WILLIAM, Deed from William Callaway to Thomas Pullen, 204 acres for 23 Pounds beginning at a white oak binding [bounding] on the land Thomas Pullen bought of **George Walton**. (This being part of 898 acres which Geo. Walton surveyed for **Ambrose Mills**, who later sold it to Wm. Callaway). Rec. April 27, 1761. Pg. 430."⁷⁰

COMMENT:

- By the 1790s, when Franklin County emerged from parts of old Bedford and Henry Counties, the Callaways—and Sanderfurs who also appear in this set of research notes—were neighbors of our second Mills line: that of William Mills (Y-DNA Witt) of Franklin County.
- William Callaway appears to be the county clerk. When the April 1761 term ended, the last item reads: “Ordered that the Court be adjourned Signed, William Callaway.”⁷¹

15 JULY 1760

BEDFORD COUNTY, VA

For 4£ 10s, a patent is issued to William Callahan for 898 acres “lying and being in the County of Bedford on the East side of **Elk Creek** and Bounded as followeth (to wit):

Beginning at **Waltons and Calloways corner** Red Oak on the said Creek, Thence along the Line S 20 Degrees # 54 poles to a Red Oak, S 70 Degrees E 90 poles to a Locust, South 10 Degrees W 144 poles to a white Oak, South 30 Degrees East 212 poles to a white Oak, Thence along **Waltons** Line North eighty Degrees East 262 poles to his Corner Locust in **Payne’s line**, thence along his Lines North 10 Degrees West Sixty two poles to an Old Corner fallen Down, N 50 Degrees E 67 poles to **Callaways** Corner Red Oak in the same, Thence along [several torn words] W “one hundred and [torn words] to a Hickory, North 84 poles to a White Oak, North 60 Degrees West 214 poles to a Red Oak, S 73 Degrees W 80 poles to a Pine, North 50 Degrees W 54 poles to the Creek aforesaid and thence down the same with Meanders to the first station.”⁷²

1 DECEMBER 1761

CRAVEN COUNTY, SC

Land warrant.

⁷⁰ Ann Chilton, *Bedford Co., Va., Deed Book A-1, 1754–1762* (Signal Mountain, TN: Mountain Press, 1987), 8.

⁷¹ TLC Genealogy, *Bedford County, Virginia, Order Book 1, 1754–1761* (Miami Beach, FL: TLC Genealogy, 2000), 233.

⁷² Library of Virginia, “Land Office Grants,” database with images, *Virginia Memory* (http://image.lva.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/GetLONN.pl?first=539&last=&g_p=P288&collection=LO_Patent : downloaded 20 May 2016), “Callaway, William, grantee ... Bedford County ... 898 acres on the east side of Elk Creek”; citing “Land Office Patents No. 34, 1756–1765, p. 602 (Reels 33–34).”

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

“The following Petitions for Warrants of Survey of Land, certifying of Platts and prolonging of Warrants and were produced & read Viz't.

Ambrose Mills 100 on Little River⁷³

COMMENT:

- 100 acres was the allotment for two headrights. Ambrose had been married for some years by 1761. However, his wife and all children except a son (William) supposedly were massacred during the Indian uprisings on the Carolina frontier, 1758–61. Ambrose remarried, but at the point above, it would seem that he applied only for himself and that son.

MAY 1762

CRAVEN COUNTY, SC

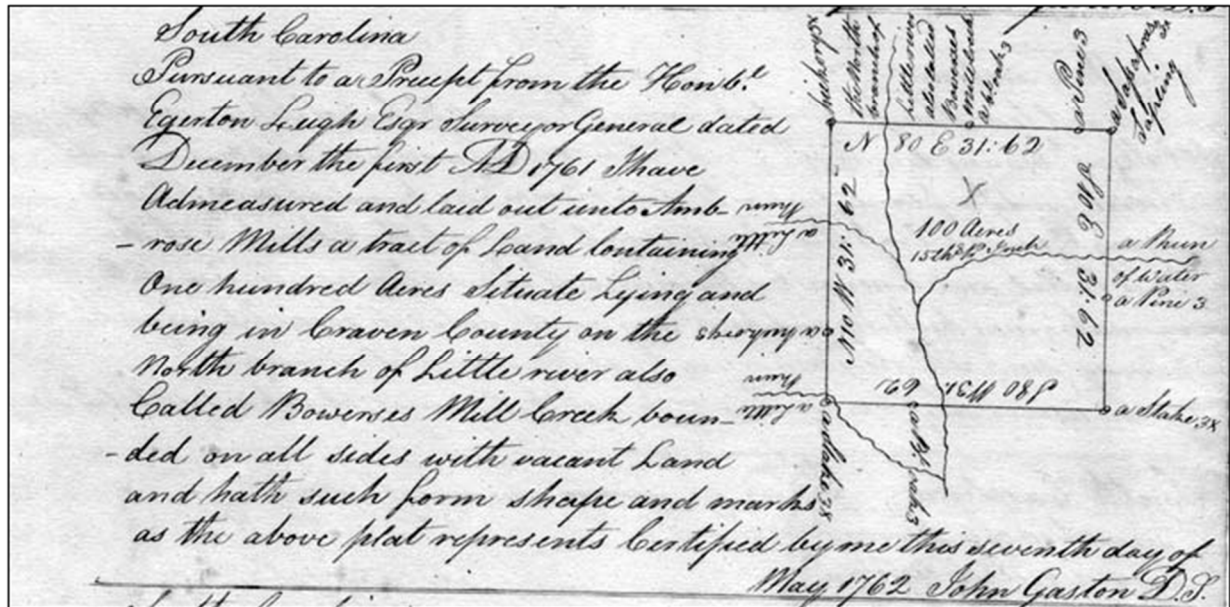
Land survey.

“Pursuant to a Precept from the Honbl. Egerton Leigh Esqr Surveyor General dated December the first AD 1761 I have Admeasured and laid out unto **Ambrose Mills** a tract of Land Containing one hundred Acres Situate Lying and being in Craven County on the **North branch of Little River** also Called **Bowerses Mill Creek** bounded on all sides with vacant Land and hath such form shape and marks as the above plat represents[.] Certified by me this seventh day of May 1762. John Gaston, D.S.”⁷⁴

S213184: Colonial Plat Books (Copy Series)

MILLS, AMBROSE, PLAT FOR 100 ACRES IN CRAVEN COUNTY.

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⁷³ Brent H. Holcomb, *Petitions for Land from the South Carolina Council Journals*, vol. 5, 1757–1765 (Columbia, SC: SCMAR, 1998), 83. *South Carolina Department of Archives and History*, database and images ([http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/online archives/](http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/online%20archives/) : accessed 7 October 2014), "Mills, Ambrose, Plat for 100 Acres on Little River."

⁷⁴ *South Carolina Department of Archives and History*, database and images ([http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/online archives/](http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/online%20archives/) : accessed 7 October 2014), "Mills, Ambrose, Plat for 100 Acres on Little River."

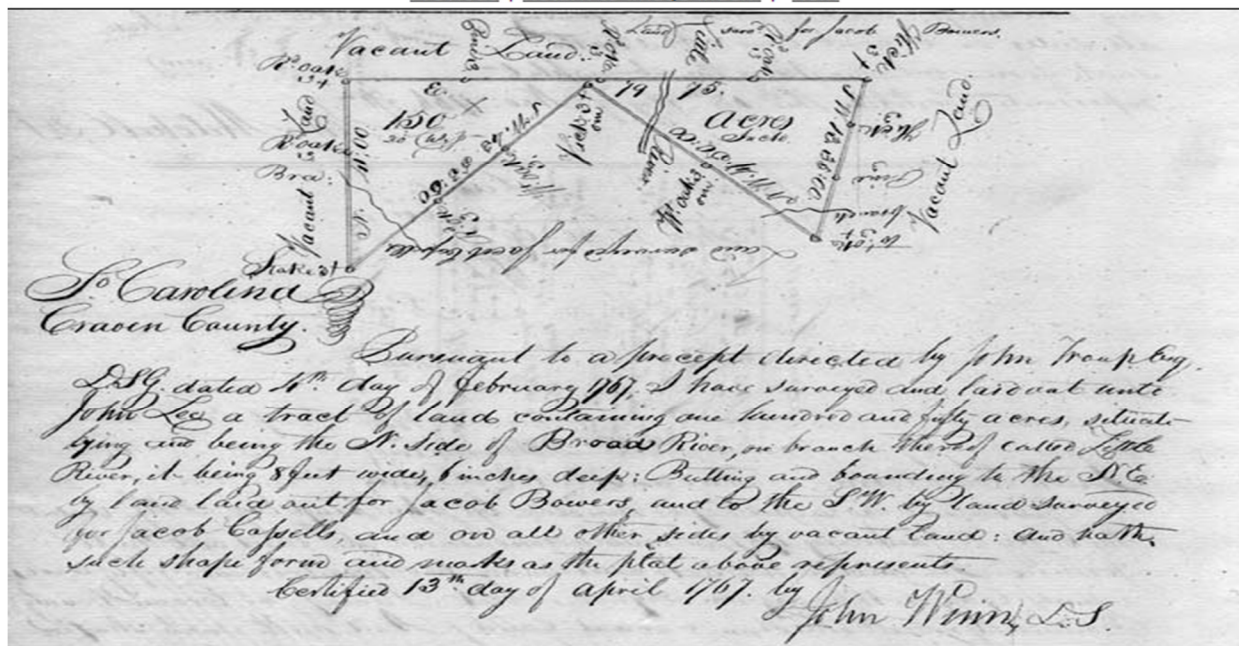
COMMENT:

- Ambrose did not complete the grant process by returning the survey to the Council at Charleston to have it certified. Had he done so, the grant would have been issued at that point. In June 1766 (see abstracts under that date, below) he turned back to the colony his interest in this tract and another surveyed tract, making a new request for Wateree River land a few miles above (and on the opposite side of the river from) the trio of tracts warranted in 1763 to Thomas, William, and Edward Watts Jr. On 2 September 1766 (see that date below) the land previously surveyed for Ambrose was granted to Thomas Holsey.⁷⁵
- Ambrose’s neighbor, **Jacob Bowers**, had his petition for land approved by the council on 5 September 1758, for 400 acres on Little River.⁷⁶ His survey plat has not yet been posted online by the SC Department of Archives and History.
- Although Bowers’s plat is not available for this initial survey of published materials, a later survey for his adjacent landowner to the south, John Lee, helps to recreate the region.⁷⁷
- **John Lee** will be encountered again later in conjunction with **Ambrose Mills, William Watts, and John Watts**. The land that William purchased from Ambrose Mills’s son and heir on Wateree Creek of Fairfield County had been first surveyed for John Lee, then granted to Ambrose Mills. (Like Ambrose, Lee would be a prominent Loyalist in Fairfield.⁷⁸)

S213184: Colonial Plat Books (Copy Series)

LEE, JOHN, PLAT FOR 150 ACRES ON BROAD RIVER.

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⁷⁵ Brent H. Holcomb, *Petitions for Land from the South Carolina Council Journals*, vol. 6, 1766–1770 (Columbia, SC: SCMAR, 1999), 26.

⁷⁶ Brent H. Holcomb, *Petitions for Land from the South Carolina Council Journals*, vol. 5, 1757–1765 (Columbia, SC: SCMAR, 1998), 31.

⁷⁷ South Carolina Department of Archives and History, database and images (<http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/onlinearchives/Search.aspx> : accessed 7 October 2014), "Lee, John, Plat for 150 Acres on [waters of] Broad River."

⁷⁸ Kenneth Shelton, *All That Dare Oppose Them: The Whig Victory at Mobley's Meeting House, June 1780* (N.p.: Privately printed, 2005).

2 NOVEMBER 1762

CRAVEN COUNTY, SC

Land petition.

“Pages 554–557: His Honour the Lieutenant Governor acquainted the Board, that his Excellency the Governor had gone into the country for a few days, and not being returned he had probably forgot that this was the day appointed for receiving Petitions for Warrants of Survey of Land &C. and **detaining the poor people in Town longer than was absolutely necessary would be a very great hardship to them.** He [the Lieutenant Governor] had therefore ordered the Council to be summoned in order to receive their Petitions and **to swear them to their Family Rights, which would save at least 24 hours to them.** ... The several Petitioners were thereupon ordered in and sworn to the allegations of their respective Petitioners, and the Petitioners being read are as follows, viz’t. ...

Ambrose Mills 300 on the Waters of Santee River”⁷⁹

COMMENT:

- This 300-acre request for family rights, in addition to the 100 acres already granted, would make eight headrights—ostensibly: Ambrose, his one surviving son William, and 6 enslaved people.
- Ambrose had this land surveyed but did not complete the grant process. The survey is cataloged in the SC Department of Archives & History’s COM-Index as “Mills, Ambrose, unrecorded plat for land not granted, 300 acres on Kirkpatrick’s Branch, Turkey Creek, Broad River, Craven [Fairfield] County, surveyed by John Gaston, 2/3/1763.”⁸⁰
- Ambrose apparently folded this request into a different tract of 600 acres that he petitioned for and had surveyed in 1766 (below).
- His 1766 headright total of 700 acres would represent himself, William (possibly), his new wife, one new child, and some 12 enslaved people. Because the 1766 headright incorporated the 300-acre application Ambrose had previously begun, the same individuals could be counted again. Son William had already married by 1766 and would not qualify for use by Ambrose under ordinary circumstances; but the folding of the old application into the new likely means that William *was* one of these for whom Ambrose claimed a right in 1766. I have not found a 1766 grant for William in SC in his own name.

27 DECEMBER 1762

CRAVEN COUNTY, SC

Plat.

“Tawneyhill, George, unrecorded plat for land not granted, 150 acres on **Turkey Creek**, Broad River, Craven County, surveyed by I. Perry. Names indexed: **Mills, Ambrous**; Perry, Isaac; Tawneyhill, George.”⁸¹

3 FEBRUARY 1763

CRAVEN COUNTY, SC

⁷⁹ Brent H. Holcomb, *Petitions for Land from the South Carolina Council Journals*, vol. 5, 1757–1765 (Columbia, SC: SCMAR, 1998), 96.

⁸⁰ *South Carolina Department of Archives and History*, database and images (<http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/online/archives/> : accessed 7 October 2014), “Mills, Ambrose, citing “Series S213197, Box 0003, Item 00859.

⁸¹ *South Carolina Department of Archives and History*, database and images (<http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/online/archives/Search.aspx> : accessed 7 October 2014), citing “Series S213197, Box 4, item 01052.”

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

Plat.

“**Mills, Ambrose**, unrecorded plat for land not granted, 300 acres on Kirkpatrick’s Branch, **Turkey Creek**, Broad River, Craven County, Surveyed by John Gaston.”⁸²

22 FEBRUARY 1763

CRAVEN COUNTY, SC

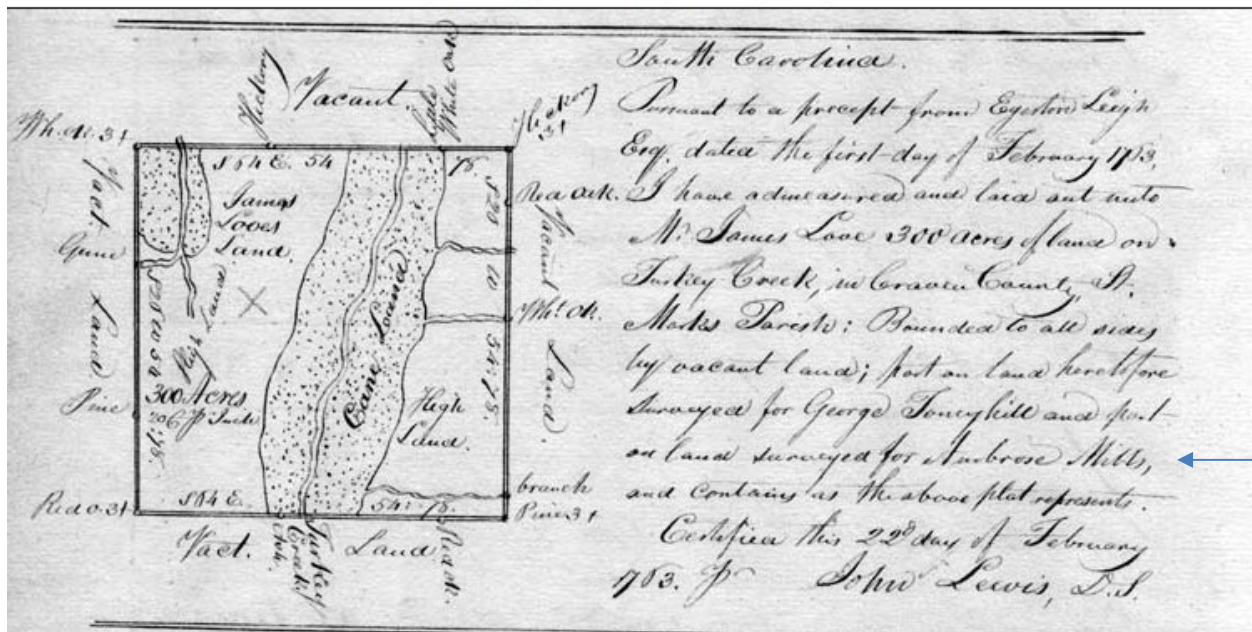
Plat.

“Love, James, Plat for 300 acres in Craven County. Names Indexed: Leigh, Egerton; Lewis, John Love, James; **Mills, Ambrose**; Toneyhill, George. Locations: Craven County; St. Marks Parish; Turkey Creek.”⁸³

S213184: Colonial Plat Books (Copy Series)

LOVE, JAMES, PLAT FOR 300 ACRES IN CRAVEN COUNTY.

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12 OCTOBER 1765

CRAVEN CO., SC

Marriage.

Son William Mills married **Eleanor Morris**.⁸⁴

3 JUNE 1766

⁸² South Carolina Department of Archives and History, database and images (<http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/onlinearchives/Search.aspx> : accessed 7 October 2014), citing "Series 213197, Box 3, item 00859."

⁸³ South Carolina Department of Archives and History, database and images (<http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/onlinearchives/Search.aspx> : accessed 7 October 2014), citing "Series 213184, vol. 7, page 384, item 2."

⁸⁴ J. M. Edney's 1846 biography of his grandfather William Mills.

CRAVEN COUNTY, SC

Land petition.

“The following Petitions for Warrants of Survey, to Prolong Warrants & to Certifie Platts were presented & read Viz. ...

Ambrose Mills 600 Wateree River Join’g Kirkland, McCormick & Layton”⁸⁵

COMMENT:

- On this trip to Charleston, to petition the council, Ambrose appears to have turned back to the colony his 300-acre survey in the Little River-to-Broad River area and replaced it with the larger request on the Wateree River, a few miles to the east.
- He also relinquished his 100-acre survey at the forks of Little River and, at the September council meeting, it would be assigned to *Thomas Holsey*. He would replace this 100-acre tract in 1768, getting land at the forks of Wateree Creek. See below.

2 SEPTEMBER 1766

CRAVEN COUNTY, SC

Land disposal.

Petitions “to certify plats ...

Thomas Holsey 100 Survyd for **Ambrose Mills**”⁸⁶

28 SEPTEMBER 1766

CRAVEN COUNTY, SC

Land survey.

“Pursuant to a Precept directed by John Troup Esqr D S Genl dated the third day of June 1766_[,] I have admeasured and laid out unto **Ambrose Mills** a tract of Land Containing six hundred acres situate lying & being in Craven County on the South [west] side of the Wateree river butting and bounding on the NE on the River & SE on land laid out unto *Patrick Mackormack* and on the SW land laid out unto **Francis Laton**, vacant land and land laid out according to information) to one **Pickett** [Micajah] and on the NW on Land laid out unto **Richard Kirkland** and such for one **Pickett** such shape form and marks as appears in the above delineated plat Certified by me this 28th day of Sep 1766. J. F. Butts, D.S.”⁸⁷

COMMENT:

The copy-book version of the plat, below, needs to be rotated about 90° clockwise for proper N-S orientation.

⁸⁵ Brent H. Holcomb, *Petitions for Land from the South Carolina Council Journals*, vol. 6, 1766–1770 (Columbia, SC: SCMAR, 1999), 10.

⁸⁶ Brent H. Holcomb, *Petitions for Land from the South Carolina Council Journals*, vol. 6, 1766–1770 (Columbia, SC: SCMAR, 1999), 26.

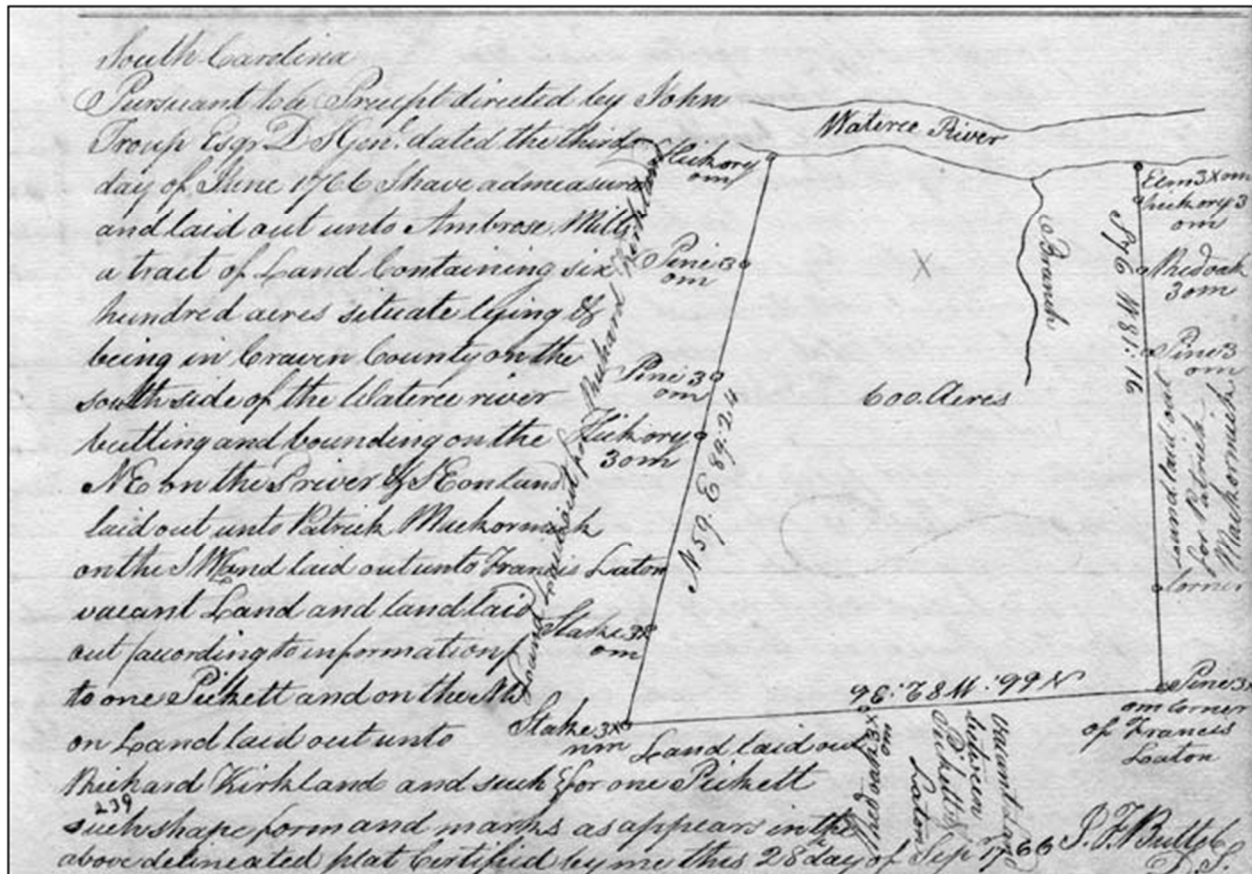
⁸⁷ *South Carolina Department of Archives and History*, database and images (<http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/onlinearchives/> : accessed 7 October 2014), “Mills, Ambrose, Plat for 600 acres in Craven County”; series S213184: Colonial plat Books (Copy Series).

**Ambrose Mills Plat:
600 Acres—Wateree River⁸⁸**

S213184: Colonial Plat Books (Copy Series)

MILLS, AMBROSE, PLAT FOR 600 ACRES IN CRAVEN COUNTY.

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COMMENT:

Regarding the individuals and locations named in this plat:

- In 1790, Francis Layton lived two houses from Moses Hornsby, who had married the daughter of Ambrose’s nephew John Watts.
- Throughout the 1780s (as with the 1790 census), numerous documents associate **Charles and Micajah Pickett** with our John Watts; after John removed to Georgia, his apparent brothers William Watts and Thomas Watts Jr., both used Charles Pickett as their neighborhood justice of the peace.
- A 15 June 1791 survey for **Moses Knighton** places his land adjacent to **Francis Layton** and **Thomas Watts [Jr.]**⁸⁹ In 1790 our **John Watts** lived 13 houses from Moses Knighton.

⁸⁸ South Carolina Department of Archives and History, database and images (<http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/onlinearchives/> : accessed 7 October 2014), “Mills, Ambrose, Plat for 600 acres in Craven County”; series S213184: Colonial plat Books (Copy Series).

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

- The watercourse marked “Tater’s Creek” on this copy-book plat is Taylor’s Creek—aka Layton’s Creek.
- Lewis’s plat also needs to be rotated—180° in his case.

**16 DECEMBER 1766
CRAVEN COUNTY, SC**

Land grant.

“**Mills, Ambrose**, land grant for 600 acres in Craven county. Names indexed: Mills, Ambrose.”⁹¹

**19 FEBRUARY 1767
CRAVEN COUNTY, SC**

Land memorial.

“**Mills, Ambrose**, memorial for 600 acres on Wateree River, Craven County. Names indexed: Kirkland, Richard; Laton, Francis; McCormick, Patrick; Mills, Ambrose; **Picket**.”⁹²

**5 JANUARY 1768
CRAVEN COUNTY, SC**

Land warrant.

Surveyor General Egerton Leigh issued a warrant for 100 acres to be surveyed for **Ambrose Mills** in the Fork of Wateree Creek [Fairfield County].⁹³

COMMENT:

- This warrant is not included in Holcomb’s abstracts from the council journals. However, the date appears on the survey plat itself, created 11 days later.
- Again, the plat associates him with the future Loyalist John Lee, of the plat below.

**16 JANUARY 1768
CRAVEN COUNTY, SC**

Land survey.

“Pursuant to a precept directed by Egerton Leigh, Esq. Sur. Gl. dated Jan’y 5th 1768, I have surveyed and laid out unto **Ambrose Mills** a tract of land containing one hundred acres, situate lying and being in **Fork of Wateree Creek**, on small branch thereof and bounding to the N.E. by land surveyed for **John Lee**, and on all other side by vacant land. And hath Such shape form and marks as the plat above represents. Certified January 16th 1768 pr. John Winn, D.S. Ord. Gr. 6th Apl. 1773.”⁹⁴

⁹¹ *South Carolina Department of Archives and History*, database and images (<http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/onlinearchives/Search.aspx> : accessed 7 October 2014), citing “Series 213019, volume 14, page 136.”

⁹² *South Carolina Department of Archives and History*, database and images (<http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/onlinearchives/Search.aspx> : accessed 7 October 2014), citing “Series S111001, volume 9, page 187, item 2.”

⁹³ *South Carolina Department of Archives and History*, database and images (<http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/onlinearchives/> : accessed 7 October 2014), “Mills, Ambrose, citing “Series: S213184 Colonial Plat Books (Copy Series).”

⁹⁴ *South Carolina Department of Archives and History*, database and images (<http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/onlinearchives/> : accessed 7 October 2014), “Mills, Ambrose,” citing “Series: S213184 Colonial Plat Books (Copy Series).”

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

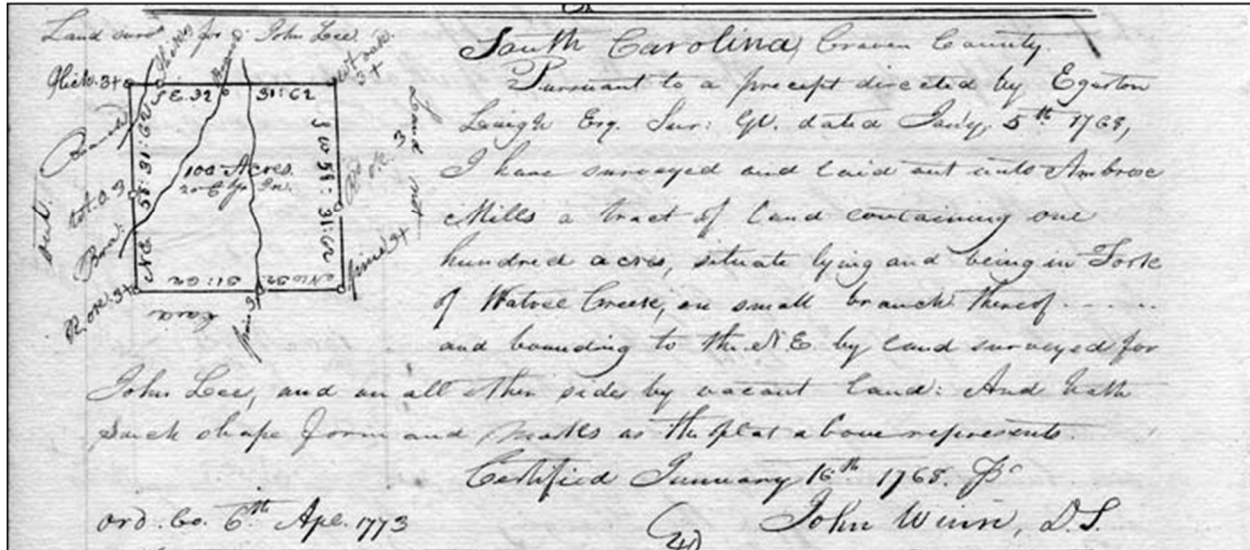
Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

S213184: Colonial Plat Books (Copy Series)

MILLS, AMBROSE, PLAT FOR 100 ACRES IN CRAVEN COUNTY.

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COMMENT:

This land in 1784 would be purchased by **William Watts** and his brother **John Watts**, sons of Ambrose's sister Sarah (Mills) Watts. In 1786 it would be sold by **John**, acting alone. See abstracts, below.

1768–70

SC & NC

Move.

COMMENT:

Ambrose's move from Craven County > Camden District, SC, to Tryon County, NC appears to have been made during this period. The location he chose on Walnut Creek of Green River was not far from the Pacolet River settlement made by his brother William and William's son Jesse. See the next two documents.

18 JULY 1769

TRYON COUNTY, NC

Deed of gift.

"**William Mills** of Tryon Co, for love and good will, to my son **Jesse Mills** of same, 20 head of cattle, three breeding mares, one feather bed, three dishes, eight and five pounds proc. Money ... 18 July 1769 ... **William Mills (A)** (Seal), Wit: *Thorneas* [Thomas?] *Gore*, *John Gore*. Rec. July term 1769."⁹⁵

⁹⁵ Brent Holcomb, *Deed Abstracts of Tryon, Lincoln & Rutherford Counties, North Carolina, 1769–1786; Tryon County Wills & Estates* (Greenville, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1977), 4 citing Tryon-Lincoln vol. 1:45.

COMMENT:

This William Mills was “English Billy”—i.e., Ambrose’s brother William Jr. The nature of the gift is that of a father “setting up” a newly wed son. Coupled with the land survey of March 1769, we might estimate Jesse’s birth by March 1748.

For further evidence of William and Jesse’s kinship, see notes below from the Revolutionary War pension application made by Jesse (a Patriot soldier), with affidavits by Ambrose’s sons Ambrose Jr. and John.

3 MARCH 1769

TRYON COUNTY, NC

Land grant.

“Surveyed for **Jesse Mills** 150 Acres of Land on the St Side of the **N. Fork of Packlet** Beginning at a Red Oak in *James Howards* line and *Kilpatrick’s* line, thence along Kilpatrick’s line S100 poles to a Red Oak, thence along Sd line W. 60 poles to a Red Oak, thence S. 60 poles to a Red Oak, thence E. 200 poles to oa Post Oak, thence N. 160 poles to a Red Oak, and thence to the Beginning. [Signed] Zach. Bullock [Surveyor].”⁹⁶

16 DECEMBER 1769

TRYON COUNTY, NC

Land grant.

“**Jesse Mills**: 150 Acres Tryon on the South side of the N^o Fork of Packlet.”

Beginning at a red oak in **James Howards** and **Kilpatricks Line** thence along said Line S 100 poles to a red oak, thence said Line W 60 poles to a red oak, thence E 200 poles to a post, thence N 160 poles to a red oak, thence to the Beginning.

Entered [no date shown]; issued 16 December 1769.⁹⁷

COMMENT:

The Pacolet River is a branch of Broad River, about 50 miles long. It lies now in NW South Carolina but its headwaters drain a small part of North Carolina. See the marked area in the bottom left corner of Map 1. The Broad ran down through Old Craven > Camden > Fairfield Cos., SC, where Ambrose Mills and Edward & William Watts took out land on Little River of the Broad.

There is a problem with this land description. One does not go W 60 poles and then E 200 poles. A call is missing in between those two calls. See the 3 March 1769 survey above for the full metes and bounds.

1 DECEMBER 1770

TRYON COUNTY, NC

Land purchase

“*Thomas Reynolds* of Tryon co., to **Ambrose Mills** of same, for £100 proc. Money ... land on both sides **Green River** including the mouth of **Walnut Creek** by the upper end of a small Island above the mouth of

⁹⁶ “North Carolina Land Grant Files, 1693–1960,” database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 7 July 2018) > Tryon > 1-557 > image 531, Jesse Mills.

⁹⁷ David McCorkle, *NC Land Grant Images and Data* (<http://www.nclandgrants.com> : accessed 7 July 2018), imaging Book 10:536; citing Tryon Co. File No. 209, NC microfilm reel S.108.160.5N, frame 608, State Archives.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

the creek, 640 A granted 25 Sept. 1740 ... Thomas Reynolds (+) (seal), Wit: **William Mills, Mose Moore, Henry Reynolds (+_)**. Rec. Jan. term 1773.”⁹⁸

COMMENT:

The Green River is also a tributary of the Broad River. Now damned, it flows through the mountains south of Ashville in Buncombe Co.

Ostensibly, the witness William Mills would be Ambrose’s son by Mourning Stone, born in 1746 and now a married adult. The N.C. land grant packets filmed by Ancestry does not include a grant to Thomas Reynolds (Runnels, etc.) in 1740; it shows none before 1753.

Ambrose’s memorial page at *Find A Grave* provides an undocumented account of this purchase, with additional details I’ve not yet verified:

“In 1770, he bought a tract of land containing 640 acres in Old Tryon County [Today’s Polk Co.] from Thomas Reynolds for 100 pounds on both sides of Green River, including the mouth of Walnut Creek. Reynolds had bought the property in 1760 and there was a cabin on it called Powell’s cabin. **He established a trading post and a sawmill by a spring.** It is said the basin was hewn from solid rock. (Jackson tradition is that it was either Gabriel Sr. or David Sr. who carved the basin for Mills). It was called Mills Spring.”⁹⁹

4 JANUARY 1773

TRYON COUNTY, NC

Court order.

“A Deed of Sale from *Thomas Reynolds* to **Andrew [Ambrose] Mills** for 640 acres dated 1 September [December?] 1770. Proved by *Moses Moore* evidence thereto. Ordered to be Registered.” Proved 4th Tuesday in January 1773.”¹⁰⁰

6 APRIL 1773

CRAVEN COUNTY, SC

Land petition.

“The following petitions praying to have Elapsed platts Certified & read vizt ...

Ambrose Mills

100 in Craven County”¹⁰¹

COMMENT:

This is the land surveyed in 1768, at the forks of Wateree Creek—the land purchased by **William Watts** and our **John Watts** in 1784 and then sold by our John Watts on 29 January 1786 (see that date, below).

26 APRIL 1773

TRYON COUNTY, NC

⁹⁸ Brent Holcomb, *Deed Abstracts of Tryon, Lincoln & Rutherford Counties, North Carolina, 1769–1786; Tryon County Wills & Estates* (Greenville, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1977), 50; citing 1: 680.

⁹⁹ *Find A Grave* (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/59106974> : accessed 7 July 2018), “Col. Ambrose Mills” memorial page created by Dianne Boren. No source is given for her extensive biography of Ambrose.

¹⁰⁰ Lucille Hendrick Gardner and Virginia Greene DePriest, *Minutes of the Inferior Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions for Tryon County, North Carolina, vol. 2, 1773–1779* (Shelby, NC: P.p., 1985), 2. No Picketts.

¹⁰¹ Brent H. Holcomb, *Petitions for Land from the South Carolina Council Journals, vol. 7, 1771–1774* (Columbia, SC: SCMAR, 1999), 245.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

Land purchase.

“*Walter Sharp* of Rowan Co., to **Willm. Mills** of Tryon Co., for £50 proc. Money...land on **Green River** and both sides **Panther Creek**, 300 A granted to Walter Sharp 28 Apr 1768. Walter Sharp (Seal), Wit: *Wm. Sharp, Wm. Butler*. Rec. Apr.. term 1775.”¹⁰²

COMMENT:

The location suggests that this William was the son of Ambrose.

18 MAY 1773

CRAVEN COUNTY, SC

Land grant.

“**Ambrose Mills**, land grant for 100 acres on a branch of Wateree Creek. [No adjacent landowners named.]”¹⁰³

17 SEPTEMBER 1773

CRAVEN COUNTY, SC

Land memorial

Ambrose Mills, memorial for 100 acres on Wateree Creek. ... adjoining John Lee.¹⁰⁴

2 NOVEMBER 1773

TRYON COUNTY, NC

Land sale.

“**William Mills** of Tryon Co. to *Christopher Plunket* for 30 pds. proc. money, 200 a. in Tryon Co. on both sides **Lewses Crk. of N. Pacolet River**. Land is ‘one moitre’ [i.e., *moiety*, meaning *half*] of tract of 400 a. conveyed to *John Kerconal* (sic) 23 May 1772 and by him conveyed to sd. Mills. Land joins *Richard Herrses* (sic) line. Rec. 11 July 1794. [Witnesses:] *William Capshaw, John –x– Ashly*.”¹⁰⁵

COMMENT:

This William appears to be William Jr., brother of Ambrose and father of Jesse who obtained land on the Pacolet in 1769. I have not yet found the means by which he acquired this land.

26 JULY 1775

TRYON COUNTY, NC

Military service.

“Minutes of a meeting of inhabitants of Tryon County. ... At a meeting of the Freeholders of the County of Tryon at the Court House of said County ... in order to elect a Committee for said County, The Following persons were chosen to wit: ... **Captain Paris’ Company**—George Paris, **Ambrose Mills**.”¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Brent Holcomb, *Deed Abstracts of Tryon, Lincoln & Rutherford Counties, North Carolina, 1769–1786; Tryon County Wills & Estates* (Greenville, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1977), 72; citing Tryon-Lincoln vol. 2: 155–56.

¹⁰³ *South Carolina Department of Archives and History*, database and images (<http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/onlinearchives/Search.aspx> : accessed 7 October 2014), citing “Series S213019, volume 11, page 495.”

¹⁰⁴ *South Carolina Department of Archives and History*, database and images (<http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/onlinearchives/Search.aspx> : accessed 7 October 2014), citing “Series S111001, volume 12, page 426, item 2.”

¹⁰⁵ Caroline Heath Davis, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts of Deeds, 1773–1795* (Rutherfordton, NC: P.p., c1973), 97; citing K:245.

¹⁰⁶ William L. Saunders, ed., *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, 10 vols. (Raleigh: P.M. Hale, State Printer, 1886–90), 10:120; HTML edition, “Colonial and State Records of North Carolina,” University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, *Documenting the American South* (<https://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/index.php/document/csr10-0060> : 15 June 2016), citing “MS. Records in Office of Secretary of State.”

COMMENT:

Col. David Fanning's narrative, below, explains more about this Paris expedition to the Cherokee. Paris's duplicity, alleged by Fanning, appears to have set the stage for Ambrose Mills's alleged "incitement" of the Cherokee, for which he would be arrested as an enemy to the American cause.

1775

NC-SC

Historical context

Journal of Alexander Chesney:

"When the war broke out between England and America the congress party early in 1775 were sending a quantity of Ammunition and clothing as presents to the Indians. The loyalists who had not joined them assembled and went to Ninety-Six a wooden-fort [and] after besieging the place for some days took it, and the stores; after distributing the Ammunition amongst the loyalists, both parties agreed to a Cessation of Arms for some weeks untill several of the leading men could go and return from Charlestown to receive [Governor] Lord William Campbell's directions on the business; **Colonel Flechall** and Captain John Mayfield were two of the delegates sent. ... they were lodged in the goal [gaol] of Charlestown and the papers they had received from the Governor ... Campbell were seized. In the meantime the congress party sent to the neighbourhood of Ninety-Six an Army under the command of Colonel Richardson who seized the leading men of the loyalists and put them in goal and disarmed the rest; all this was accomplished before the expiration of the troops.

"I went down to Jackson's Creek when Colonel Richardson's encampment was at Congaree and piloted Capt. James Phillips and his company to my father's and provided them a man (Charles Brandon) as a guide to take them to **Col^l Mills** in North Carolina who found guides through the Cherokee and Creek nations of Indians, on their way to St. Agustine in East Florida where they were kindly received by the Governor."¹⁰⁷

1775

NC-SC

Historical context

"Narrative of Col'o David Fanning, Written by Himself, Detailing Astonishing Events in No. Ca., from 1775 to 1783 ... [at] King's County, Long Beach, New Brunswick, 24 June 1790."

"**Col. Thomas Fleachall of Fairforest**, [brother-in-law of Ambrose Mills] ordered the different Captains to call the musters, and present two papers for the inhabitants to sign. One was to see who was friends to the King and Government; and the other was to see who would join the Rebellion.

"The first day of May [1775], Capt. James Lindley, of Rabern's Creek sent to me, as I was a Sergeant of the said company, to have his company warned to meet at his house 15th of said month. I did accordingly, and presented two papers; there were 188 men signed in favour of the King, also declared to defend the same, at the risk of lives and property, in July 1775. There was several advertisements set up in every part of said district, that there was a good prespetearing [Presbyterian] minester to call at the Different places, to preach and Baptise children.

¹⁰⁷ Alexander Chesney, *The Journal of Alexander Chesney: A South Carolina Loyalist in the Revolution and After*, introduction by Wilbur H. Siebert, *The Ohio State University Bulletin*, 26 (October 30, 1921), 6. The bibliography to this edited copy of Chesney's diary cites "Papers of Colonel Thomas Fletchall (Public Record Office, London, A.O. 12 and 13."

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

“But at the time appointed, instead of meeting a Minister, we all went to meet two Jews by name of Silvedoor and Rapely; and after making many speeches in favour of the Rebellion ... at last presented Revolution papers to see who would sign them; they were severly reprimanded by Henry O’Neal and many others. It came so high, that they had much adue [ado] to get off, with their lives. The Rebels then found that we were fully determined to oppose them. They began to embody in the last of said month; to compel all to join them, or take away our arms. ...

“This continued for some time, until the Rebels had taken **Thomas Brown** [putative brother-in-law of Ambrose Mills], who after that had the honor to be Colonel of the Regiment of the East Florida Rangers, at Augusta. They burnt his feet, tarred, feathered and cut off his hair. After that he got so he was able to set on horseback, he came to our poast, and the Rebels then began to embody again.

“**Col’n Fletchall** found a large camp, and marched from the Liberty Springs to Mill Creek on our way towards Ninety Six; Twelve miles from Ninety-Six the Rebels found that they were not strong enough for us, and sent an Express to Col’n Fletchall to come and treat with them, which said Fletchall did. ... We were all dismissed until further orders.

“Our party was then informed of [Capt. Robert Cunningham’s] being taken off in the night time, and by making inquiry after him, we got information of a large quantity of Ammunition, that was there, on its way to the Cherechee Nation for **Capt. Richard Paris** to bring the Indians down into the settlement, where the friends of the Government lived, to murder all they could. We intercepted the amonition and took Capt’n R. Paris, who swore to these facts. We there formed a large camp, and **Col. Fletchall** being so heavy, he gave up the command to Maj. Joseph Robinson.”¹⁰⁸

9 FEBRUARY 1776

TRYON COUNTY, NC

Military service.

“Resolved according to orders of Committee of Safety (of Salisbury District), each Capt in his District cause **every third effective {every third eligible man}** to go and joyn the forces raised in the other counties in this Province to suppress all insurrections that is raised & may be raising in our said Province that are against the Cause of American Liberty. Resolved that each man that refuses if allotted to go on this immergency shall be deemed enemies to their Country, & shall be dealt with according to the Resolves of the Congresses or otherwise.

“Resolved that Mr. William Moore be now appointed Commissary for the Regiment of Tryon County in the present immergency for this Province to go against those that are against the Cause of American Liberty, & that the said William Moore shall now on sight prepare wagons, provisions & such things as lies in his power for the support of the said Regiment, & be ready at Major Thomas Beatie’s by the 15th Instant {Feb. 15, 1776} with such support {signed} William Graham Chairman.”

[Compiler’s Note: “The emergency preparations are due to intelligence received that Governor Martin had raised an army to rendezvous with British naval and land forces in Wilmington. This became known also the Battle at Moore’s Creek Bridge.”]¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ William L. Saunders et al., eds., *State Records of North Carolina*, 26 vols. (Raleigh: P.M. Hale, State Printer, 1886–1907), 22:186; HTML edition, “Colonial and State Records of North Carolina,” University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, *Documenting the American South* (<https://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/index.php/document/csr22-0043> : 15 June 2016), citing “MS. Records in Office of Secretary of State.”

¹⁰⁹ Kathy Gunter Sullivan, *Tryon County Documents 1769–1779: A North Carolina County* (Forest City, NC: Genealogical Society of Old Tryon Count), 2000), 192.

[SPRING?] SUMMER 1776

TRYON-RUTHERFORD CO. NC

Military service.

“In the summer of 1776, Major Andrew Williamson organized an expedition against the Cherokees, in the belief that they had been encouraged to hostility by Colonel John Stuart, superintendent of the Indians, and by his deputy, Alexander Cameron. Several loyalists, including Alexander Chesney, Colonels John Phillips and **Ambrose Mills**, joined this expedition, whether in ignorance of this rumor or in the expectation of an attack on the white inhabitants in general, it is impossible to hazard an opinion. Chesney himself offers no reason for joining Williamson, except that he had no objection to fighting against the Indians. It must, however, be remembered that he was at this time a conscript in the American forces. ...

“By November, 1777, the revolutionists in Georgia had already seduced the northern Creek Indians from their allegiance to England, and were now, through the agency of Galphin, threatening the Cherokees with destruction for their attachment to Great Britain. (W. H. Siebert, "The Loyalists in West Florida and the Natchez District," in *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 1916, Vol. II, p. 467.)”¹¹⁰

COMMENT:

Fanning’s recollections, as published above, place the event in the summer of 1776. However, the expedition appears to have occurred in the Spring. By June, Ambrose was in jail, as seen below.

12 JUNE 1776

TRYON COUNTY, NC

Military service.

“Gentlemen of the Commity of Rowan County, with these we send you under gard **Ambrous Mills** one of the greatest Enemy of our pese in Tryon County a companion of *Robinsons* and been lying out in the mountens since before the South Carolina campaign; has held a coraspondence with *Camron*; has acknowledged himself to have been in the Indian Nations, he seems simple but is subtile and insinuating and has had influence enough to pradgiduse {prejudice} not only his nighbours but many at a great distance against the Cause of American liberty, in short his character is so notorious that we expect that every gentleman in Rowan is acquainted with it and we hope that he will be confind till he has a fare tryel[.] Every article above mentioned and a great deal more can be proved against him when required. For further perticquelers inquire of Cpt Cook Commander of this guard {.} for fear of a resque will not inform you of our own circumstanvecs but hope Mr. Cook will there to inform you {.} we are gentlemen

¹¹⁰ Alexander Chesney, *The Journal of Alexander Chesney: A South Carolina Loyalist in the Revolution and After*, introduction by Wilbur H. Siebert, *The Ohio State University Bulletin*, 26 (October 30, 1921), 118. The bibliography to this edited copy of Chesney’s diary cites “Papers of Colonel Thomas Fletchall (Public Record Office, London, A.O. 12 and 13.” Google’s “page block “65–71” has an extensive account of Col. Thomas Fletchall. Here, at page block 69–71, we learn that Thomas Fletchall (like Ambrose Mills) **owned and operated mills**: “In July, 1780, he [Fletchall] was visited at his old home by the well-known loyalist, Lieutenant Anthony Allaire, who records in his Diary his interesting examination of the **Fletchall mill**, a curiosity such as he had never seen before. (“Diary,” in *Draper’s King’s Mountain and its Heroes*.)” Post-war, Thomas and Leah (Brown) Fletchall fled to St. James Parish, Cornwall County, Jamaica, from where he filed a loyalist claim. Chesney’s editor (page block 71–74) tells us: “**A long list of the debtors of Colonel Thomas Fletchall in South Carolina** and a list of the grants of land made to him there are in the Public Record Office. (A. O. 13/128).” **This claim file needs to be checked for possible reference to the Watts of Camden District—the brother-in-law and nephews of Fletchall’s brother-in-law Mills.** The cited Siebert article, in *MVHR* 2 (March 1916): 465–83, is imaged at *Archives.Org* but offers nothing new.

with great respect your most obedient Humble Survents. [Signed] John Walker, June the 12 1776. *Jas Mcentire George Black, Jas. Cook.*

“We have sent the deposition of *Robert Ranken*, a worthy man of this neybourhood that may be depended on.”¹¹¹

15 JUNE 1776

TRYON COUNTY, NC

Military service.

[Compiler’s comment:] “Rowan Committee of Safety dealt with **Mr. Mills** as follows. Their order was written below the communications from the Tryon Committee.”

“To the Corronor or Keeper of the Publick Gole for the District of Salisbury ----

“We do hereby require you to take into your costeday the above named **Ambrous Mills** a Netorious offender against the common cause of America and him safely keep in the publick gole until discharged by order of Congress or Committee. Given under our hands this 15th of June 1776. [signed] Matthew Lock, Griffith Rutherford. This 15th of June 1776.

[Compiler’s comment: On the reverse is written] “Ambros Mills. Comitment. Disposition Salsburg Goal.”¹¹²

JULY 1776

AMHERST COUNTY, VA

Probate.

Ambrose Mills, as “heir at law” of the estate of **Wiliam Mills** was summoned by the Amherst County Court to appear and declare whether he would administer the estate of **Mary Mills, dec’d**.¹¹³

COMMENT:

An “heir at law” was a “forced heir,” as opposed to being a legatee under a will. In colonial Virginia, the heir at law of a landowner was the eldest son who, under primogeniture, inherited all land unless the father left a will giving some tracts to other sons. This identification of Ambrose as the eldest son helps to date the time frame of the parental marriage.

Apparently, Ambrose did not return—being detained by and because of his Revolutionary War activities.

7 AUGUST 1776

ROWAN COUNTY, NC

Arrest.

“Proceedings of the Safety Committee in Rowan County.

Whereas, **Ambrose Mills** now in the common Gaol of said county has at sundry times expressed his inclination and by his conduct appeared some time past active to induce the good people of this country

¹¹¹ Kathy Gunter Sullivan, *Tryon County Documents 1769–1779: A North Carolina County* (Forest City, NC: Genealogical Society of Old Tryon Count), 2000), 192–93.

¹¹² Kathy Gunter Sullivan, *Tryon County Documents 1769–1779: A North Carolina County* (Forest City, NC: Genealogical Society of Old Tryon Count), 2000), 193.

¹¹³ Mrs. P. W. Hiden, “Nicholas Mills of Hanover County,” *Tyler’s Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine* 14 (1933): 237–42; 15 (1934): 38–64; reprinted as *Genealogies of Virginia Families; From Tyler’s Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, Gary Parks, ed. 4 vols. (Baltimore: Genealogical Pub. Co., 1981), 2: 700–1; citing Amherst Order Book 1773–82.

to take up Arms and co-operate with the Indians in subjugating these United States, therefore RESOLVED, That the publick Gaoler in said county do immediately confine the said **Ambrose Mills** in the Criminals' Room in said Gaol. And that the said Gaoler by all means in his power prevent the said Mills corresponding with any person by letter or otherwise."¹¹⁴

22 AUGUST 1776

ROWAN COUNTY, NC

Arrest.

"Proceedings of the Safety Committee in Rowan County.

Present, Three Members of the Town Com: and Three of the County. Whereas, by a Resolve of the County Committee dated the 7th Instant, **Ambrose Mills** was to be confined in the Criminals' room in the Common Gaol—And it now appearing that the said Mills is in a very low state of health so that by so close confinement his life may be much endangered, It is therefore the opinion of the said Members of Committee that the Gaoler ought & is hereby required to admit the said Ambrose Mills to any part in said Gaol, at least untill his health is recovered and there safely kept until farther order is made thereon. [Signed] Wm. Sharp, Secy County Com.; Anw. Newman, Cmn T. C."¹¹⁵

7 SEPTEMBER 1776

ROWAN COUNTY, NC

Oath of allegiance.

"Journal of the Council of Safety, begun and held at Salisbury ... "Resolved, That the Troops stationed on the Frontiers of Tryon County, by order of General Rutherford, for the Protection of this State, be continued till further Orders of this Board, General Rutherford or the Congress.

Ambrose Mills and John Auston of Tryon County having been brought before this Board for acting inimical to the Cause of American Freedom, and after examination it was thought proper to discharge them, the first having entered into Bond and taken the Oath of Allegiance to this State, the other having also taken the said Oath of Allegiance."¹¹⁶

1778

NORTH CAROLINA

Historical context.

Fanning's narrative continues:

"I then proceeded to Tiger river, where I arrived safe on the 1st of June, 1778. Myself, and Samuel Smith ... were taken by a company of rebels ... We made our escape the second night ... They persued me through the woods by the horse's tracks, upwards of seventy miles, and came to Reburn's Creek where I lived. They were anxious to recover their horse from me, and promised for to return one of the four they had taken from me, if I would deliver up the said horse.

¹¹⁴ William L. Saunders, ed., *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, 10 vols. (Raleigh: P.M. Hale, State Printer, 1886–90), 10:730; HTML edition, "Colonial and State Records of North Carolina," University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, *Documenting the American South* (<https://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/index.php/document/csr10-320> : 15 June 2016), citing "MS. Records in Office of Secretary of State."

¹¹⁵ William L. Saunders, ed., *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, 10 vols. (Raleigh: P.M. Hale, State Printer, 1886–90), 10:760; HTML edition, "Colonial and State Records of North Carolina," University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, *Documenting the American South* (<https://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/index.php/document/csr10-0348> : 15 June 2016), citing "MS. Records in Office of Secretary of State."

¹¹⁶ William L. Saunders, ed., *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, 10 vols. (Raleigh: P.M. Hale, State Printer, 1886–90), 10:827; HTML edition, "Colonial and State Records of North Carolina," University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, *Documenting the American South* (<https://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/index.php/document/csr14-0546> : 15 June 2016), citing "MS. Records in Office of Secretary of State."

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

“This being agreed upon, I went with them ... when we had advanced 30 miles we came near to where a rebel fort was ... and [they] told me to surrender ... On my arrival at the Fort, I was stript of my clothes, and confined close ‘till morning, when they tied my legs under a horse’s belly and took me before a magistrate. ... On my proceeding towards the gaol, the guard was particularly careful about securing me ... to a stout fellow who was one of them. When I found him asleep, I took the opportunity to cut myself loose with ... a pair of horse fleames ... accidentally left lying in the road, and throwing myself out of the window made my escape and took to the mountains for shelter.

“I continued there for some time, when **Col. Mills** of the Loyal Militia on knowing where I was, proposed at several meetings, we had, to raise a company; which we did, of 500 men, for the purpose of going to St. Augustine. One of the company proved faithless, and gave information to the Rebels, who immediately embodied themselves, and took **Col. Mills** prisoner, with 16 of the company, and carried them off to Salisbury Jail. Myself with 14 more persued about 20 miles with an intention of resuing them, until we were in sight of Gilbert Town; where the Rebels had a guard; and ... our numbers being so small, and theirs increasing, we turned back.¹¹⁷

COMMENT:

Either Fanning’s account is two years “off” at this point, or else Ambrose was twice imprisoned at Salisbury. I’ve found no record of a second-such event.

31 MARCH 1778

TRYON COUNTY, NC

Land entry.

“Granted. *Anthony Metcaf* claims (page torn) ac in Tryon Co on N side of **Green R**; border: **Ambrose Mills** survey and his own land: entered Mar. 31, 1778; £2.0.6.”¹¹⁸

1768–1790

NORTH CAROLINA

Tax lists.

Neither Ambrose, his son William, his brother William, nor nephew Jesse appear on the surviving tax lists of NC that are covered by this volume.¹¹⁹

15 JANUARY 1779

TRYON COUNTY, NC

Disambiguation.

“487. Granted. *William Hall* claims 100 ac in Tryon Co on both sides of **Richland Cr** of **Green R**; border: **William Mills Jr** on N side; entered Jan. 15, 1779; L3.14.”¹²⁰

COMMENT:

¹¹⁷ William L. Saunders et al., eds., *State Records of North Carolina*, 26 vols. (Raleigh: P.M. Hale, State Printer, 1886–1907), 22:186; HTML edition, “Colonial and State Records of North Carolina,” University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, *Documenting the American South* (<https://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/index.php/document/csr22-0043> : 15 June 2016), citing “MS. Records in Office of Secretary of State.”

¹¹⁸ A. B. Pruitt, *Abstracts of Land Entrys, Tryon and Lincoln Co., NC, 1778–1780* (N.p.: P.p., 1987), 14; citing page 37.

¹¹⁹ See Clarence E. Ratcliff, *North Carolina Taxpayers, 1701–1786* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1984); and Ratcliff, *North Carolina Taxpayers, 1679–1790* (Baltimore: GPC, 1987).

¹²⁰ A. B. Pruitt, *Abstracts of Land Entrys, Tryon and Lincoln Co., NC, 1778–1780* (N.p.: P.p., 1987), 42; citing page 103.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

William Jr., as called here in Tryon, would mean “William, the younger” and would refer to the son of Ambrose. See William Sr. entry below.

15 JANUARY 1779

TRYON COUNTY, NC

Association.

“489. Granted. discontinued Oct. 2, 1779 *William Hall* claims 100 ac in Tryon Co on branch of **Green R** about 1 mile from **Ambrose Mills**; border: land claimed by **Ambrose Mills** where **Wm Mills Sr** now lives; entered Jan. 15, 1779; £3.14.”¹²¹

COMMENT:

William Sr. would be the brother of Ambrose. Their father, who had been called Wm. Sr. until his death, died in 1766. Also, here in Tryon, the William Jr. of Albemarle would not have been called William Jr. because he was the elder of the two adult Williams in Tryon.

C1780

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Historical context

[1832 recollection of Ambrose Mills’s son John, who would have been about 12–13 at this event]

“During the Revolutionary War ... the mother of Jesse Mills [i.e., wife of Ambrose’s brother William] ... lived at the deponents Fathers House. On A day & year that the Deponent cannot now [remember] Some Person was seen Riding Towards the House. It was Said it was Jesse Mills Returning from the Army. His mother Run out to see Him Claping His Hands—as He Jesse Mills Came up Close to her She Exclaimed it [to be] Him. ... Jesse Mills was Riding a Sorrel Stallion with A Ball face. Jesse’s father **William Mills, Commonly cal^d English Billy** was a Virginia man whose Sucumstances would not Justify the Purchase of Sutch. ... Jesse got this Horse for His Services in the Revolutionary War. ... The deponent further States that he was Born in ... the House or Station described by the Said Jesse Mills as Having been burned by the _____ [illegible]. The House belonged to the Deponants father who with the deponent was Absent at the time of Attack & Conflagration. ... Sworn to & Subscribed by me this 18th day of May 1833. Jn^o Mills.”¹²²

25 SEPTEMBER 1780

CROSS CREEK, SC

Military service.

Gen. H. W. Harrington to Major Gen. Gates: ... I received intelligence on Saturday evening that **Mills’s Gang** at the **Long Bluff & Pedee** are not more than 300, about 90 of them Red Coats, thought to be Colo. Hamilton’s North Carolinians. Their Head Quarters are at Capt. Dwiers Mills, a little above the Long Bluff. Lt. Colo. Gray has been with 100 on this side the River to his own Plantation, but they are now rather shy of coming to this side & it was believed they had moved some of their Plunder & were preparing to

¹²¹ A. B. Pruitt, *Abstracts of Land Entries, Tryon and Lincoln Co., NC, 1778–1780* (N.p.: P.p., 1987), 42; citing page 103.

¹²² Jesse Mills Pension Application (Pvt., Miller’s Regt., NC Line), W7448, widow Sarah (née Garrett); imaged in “Revolutionary War Pensions,” *Fold3* (<https://www.fold3.com/image/246/25852181> and 50 subsequent images : accessed 30 May 2018). For the affidavit of John Mills, see 25852227 and 25852229.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

retreat. A Party of the Peedee Men under a Gentleman named Delong have actually gone along towards Kolbs ferry.”¹²³

c1–6 OCTOBER 1780

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Death.

William “English Billy” Mills was captured and hung by Revolutionary forces, a few days before the battle of Kings Mountain at the order of Lt. Jesse Walton.¹²⁴

COMMENT:

For the approximate time of William’s death, see the chronology of the battle, below.

7 OCTOBER 1780

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Historical context.

Battle of King’s Mountain. As a brief overview:

“The stunning victory won by a force of about 1,800 backcountry “Overmountain Men” over approximately 1,000 Tories at King’s Mountain on 7 Oct. 1780 has been justly described as a key turning point in the American Revolution.

“The Tory force ... was commanded by Maj. Patrick Ferguson, the son of a Scottish judge. At the Battle of Brandywine, Ferguson’s right arm had been shattered. However, he practiced so assiduously that he learned to wield his sword with his left hand, earning him the nickname ‘Bulldog’ in the process.

“A few weeks before King’s Mountain, Ferguson, who guarded Lord Charles Cornwallis’s left flank, led a foray to the vicinity of Old Fort in North Carolina. At about that time he bluntly warned the local revolutionaries that if they did not cease their rebellion he would march over the mountains, hang their leaders, and lay waste their settlements with fire and sword. This brought an indignant reaction from the backcountry forces and a conference between Cols. Isaac Shelby and John Sevier, who agreed that they should take the offensive. They called a rendezvous at Sycamore Shoals (now in Tennessee) for 25 September. On that day Sevier and Shelby arrived with 240 troops each to join Col. Charles McDowell, who was already there with 160 North Carolina riflemen. They were heartened when Col. William Campbell marched in with 400 Virginians. ...

“On 30 September the American force reached Quaker Meadows in Burke County, where it was joined by Col. Benjamin Cleveland and 350 North Carolinians. By 1 October the Americans were camped just south of King’s Mountain. Rain kept them there a day while the officers elected Campbell commander.

Ferguson was also slowed by rain. ... He had not intended to install his army atop King’s Mountain. ... The mountain, with its short and relatively level summit, must have impressed Ferguson as a good defensive position; he wrote to Cornwallis, asking for reinforcements and boasting that he was on King’s Mountain and could not be driven off.

¹²³ William L. Saunders et al., eds., *State Records of North Carolina*, 26 vols. (Raleigh: P.M. Hale, State Printer, 1886–1907), 14:652; HTML edition, “Colonial and State Records of North Carolina,” University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, *Documenting the American South* (<https://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/index.php/document/csr10-0385> : 15 June 2016), citing “MS. Records in Office of Secretary of State.”

¹²⁴ Affidavit of Applicant, William Walton (Private Capt. John Loving’s Co., Stevens’ Regt., VA), no. S17184 in “Revolutionary War Pensions,” *Fold3* (<https://www.fold3.com/image/25255701> and 33 subsequent numbers), particularly 20447300, 20447303, 20447306, 20447308.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

“Early on the afternoon of 7 October, the Americans arrived at the foot of King's Mountain, near where it extends into South Carolina. They launched a four-pronged attack, with two columns on each side of the mountain, led by Colonels Campbell and Sevier on the right and Shelby and Cleveland on the left. Ferguson and his men apparently were taken by surprise by the boldness and rapidity of the Overmountain Men's aggression. Over the roar of the battle could be heard intermittently a shrill shriek from the silver whistle Ferguson used to direct his troops. It was soon silenced, however, as Ferguson was killed while leading a desperate sortie by a few of his men to break out of the mountaineers' cordon.

“Capt. Abraham DePeyster, the second in command, almost immediately raised a white flag. However, several minutes elapsed before the surrender could take effect, and during that period several more Tories were killed. ...

“Finally the guns fell silent and the American victory was complete. In an hour's time, Ferguson and 119 of his men had been killed, 123 wounded, and 664 captured. The Americans had lost 28 killed and 62 wounded. The Americans were still so angry at their enemies that on their ride home, Campbell found it necessary to issue an order directing the officers to halt the slaughter of prisoners. Finally Campbell convened a court-martial to try some of the prisoners. According to Shelby, 36 men were convicted of "breaking open houses, killing the men, turning the women and children out of doors and burning the houses." Of those convicted, 9 were actually hanged.¹²⁵

14 OCTOBER 1780

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Death.

“Early in the evening, the trials having been brought to a conclusion, a suitable oak was selected, upon a projecting limb of which the executions were to take place. It was by the road side, near the camp, and is yet standing [in 1881], known in all that region as the Gallows Oak. Torch-lights were procured, the condemned brought out, around whom the troops formed four deep. It was a singular and interesting night scene, the dark old woods illuminated with the wild glare of hundreds of pine-knot torches; and quite a number of the Loyalist leaders of the Carolinas about to be launched into eternity. The names of the condemned Tories were **Colonel Ambrose Mills**, Captain James Chitwood, Captain Wilson, Captain Walter Gilkey, Captain [Arthur] Grimes, Lieutenant [Thomas] Lafferty, [Captain] John McFall, [Lieutenant] John Bibby, and [Lieutenant] Augustine Hobbs.

“After nine of the condemned were hung, three more prisoners were tied and prepared for hanging. At this point, Colonel Shelby intervened and proposed that the executions be stopped. The other officers agreed, the three were untied, and the remaining condemned prisoners were pardoned. One of the reprieved Tories confided to Colonel Shelby that the much reviled and feared British Colonel Banastre Tarleton had been dispatched by Lord Cornwallis and would arrive by morning. The Patriot army quickly decamped in order to stay ahead of Tarleton, and left Biggerstaff's property about five o'clock in the morning.

“The poor Loyalist leaders had been left swinging from the sturdy oak upon which they had been executed. No sooner had the Whigs moved off, than Mrs. Martha Bickerstaff, or Biggerstaff, the wife of [Loyalist] Captain Aaron Bickerstaff who had served under Ferguson, and been mortally wounded at

¹²⁵ Noel Yancey, “Battle of King's Mountain, *NCPedia* (<https://www.ncpedia.org/kings-mountain-battle>: accessed 20 August 2018).

King's Mountain, with the assistance of an old man who worked on the farm, cut down the nine dead bodies. Eight of them were buried in a shallow trench, some two feet deep; while the remains of Captain Chitwood were conveyed by some of his friends, on a plank, half a mile away to Benjamin Bickerstaff's, where they were interred on a hill still used as a grave-yard.

“The eight graves presumably remained undisturbed until 1855 when construction of a bridge across a stream on the property was undertaken to replace the nearby ford. [A] party of road-makers concluded to exhume the remains of Colonel Mills and his companions, as the place of their burial was well known. The graves of only four of the number were opened, the bones soon crumbling on exposure. ...

“About 1855, a bridge was constructed spanning the stream that had previously been crossed at a nearby ford. During construction of the new road, workers searched for and located the mass gravesite of eight of the executed loyalists. Draper mentions that four of the graves were opened and artifacts removed. The **remains of Colonel Ambrose Mills** were exhumed and reinterred in Polk County; however, it is not clear whether any of the other remains were ever disinterred.”¹²⁶

10 NOVEMBER 1780

[LOCATION NOT STATED]

Execution

Letter of Lord Cornwallis (Charles Cornwallis, Marquis Cornwallis)
to (American) General William Smallwood.

“Camp, November 10th 1780.

Sir: Your Letter of the 24th of last Month by some Mistake was not forwarded to me for several Days. I understand that some Prisoners who were on their March from Camden to Charlestown made their Escape, but have not yet had an Opportunity of informing myself whether those mentioned in your Letter were of the number. If they are still in our Possession, I will agree to Exchange them for Persons in similar Situation and Circumstances.

“I must now observe that the cruelty exercised on the Prisoners taken under Major Ferguson is shocking to humanity; and the hanging [of] **poor old Colonel Mills**, who was always a fair and open Enemy to your Cause, was an act of the most Savage barbarity. It has also been reported to me that Capt. Oates, of Colo. Gray's Militia, who was taken near the Pedee, was lately put to Death without any Crime being laid to his charge. From the Character which I have heard of you, Sir, I cannot suppose that you can approve of these cruel Murders; but I hope you will see the necessity of interposing your Authority to stop this bloody Scene; Which must oblige me, in justice to the suffering Loyalists, to retaliate on the unfortunate Persons now in my power.

“I am not conscious that any persons have hitherto been executed by us, unless for bearing Arms, after having given a Military Parole to remain quietly at home; or for enrolling themselves voluntarily in our Militia, receiving Arms and Ammunition from the King's Store & taking the first Opportunity of joining our Enemies. The only Persons who were hanged at Camden, After the actions of the 16th. & 18th., except some Deserters from our Army, were two or three of the latter description, who were picked out from about Thirty, convicted for the like offence, on account of some particularly aggravating Circumstances which attended their case.

¹²⁶ John Horton, “Biggerstaff's Old Fields and Long Farmstead, Rutherford County, North Carolina: Preservation Master Plan ... Prepared for Rutherford County Board of Commissioners,” June 2013, *North Carolina's Rutherford County* (http://rutherfordcountync.gov/_fileUploads/files/BOGLFMP1of8.pdf : accessed 26 June 2015).

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)
Spouse 1: Mourning Stone
Spouse 2: Ann Brown

“I would willingly Exchange any of the North or South Carolina Militia, who may be prisoners with us, for those who were taken on King’s Mountain.

“I am, Sr, Your most obedient & Most humble Servant, Cornwallis.”¹²⁷

COMMENT:

Cornwallis, at the time he referred to Ambrose as *old* Colonel Mills, was himself a month short of 42. Ambrose Mills was about 59.

27 DECEMBER 1780

CHARLESTON, SC

Historical context.

Letter from Charleston by unknown writer published in “Scots Magazine, January 1781”

“A gentleman lately come to town has favoured us with an account of the base treatment the unfortunate officers and men met with who surrendered prisoners of war last October to the Rebel, Col. Campbell, in the action of King’s Mountain. A small party of the (British) militia returning from foraging, unacquainted with the surrender, happening to fire on the Rebels, the prisoners were immediately threatened with death if the firing should be repeated.

“The morning after the action the prisoners were marched sixteen miles. Previous to their march, orders were given by Campbell, should they be attacked, to fire on and destroy every prisoner. The party kept marching for two days without any kind of provisions. On the third day’s march all the baggage of the officers was seized and shared among the Rebel Officers.

“A few days after a mock court-martial sat for the trial of the militia prisoners, when, after a short hearing, thirty gentlemen, some of the most respectable characters in that country, had sentence of death passed on them, and at six O’clock the same day they began to execute. **Col. Mills** and **Capt. Chitwood** of North Carolina, Capt. Wilson, of Ninety-Six, and six privates were first executed. The British Officers were compelled to attend at the execution of their brave but unfortunate men, who, with manly firmness, avowed their loyalty in their last moments, and with their latest breath expressed their unutterable detestation for the Rebels and their base and infamous proceedings. The remaining twenty-one were reprieved for a time.”¹²⁸

4 AUGUST 1781

GREENE COUNTY, TN

Land grant.

“Warrant No. 391”

“Know ye that We have granted unto **Ann Mills** one hundred acres of land lying and being in our County of Green.”

¹²⁷ William L. Saunders et al., eds., *State Records of North Carolina*, 26 vols. (Raleigh: P.M. Hale, State Printer, 1886–1907), 14:733–34; HTML edition, “Colonial and State Records of North Carolina,” University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, *Documenting the American South* (<https://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/index.php/document/csr14-0648> : 15 June 2016), citing “MS. Records in Office of Secretary of State.”

¹²⁸ William L. Saunders et al., eds., *State Records of North Carolina*, 26 vols. (Raleigh: P.M. Hale, State Printer, 1886–1907), 15:183; HTML edition, “Colonial and State Records of North Carolina,” University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, *Documenting the American South* (<https://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/index.php/document/csr15-0135> : 15 June 2016), citing “MS. Records in Office of Secretary of State.”

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

Beginning [*sic*] at a hictory Standing on the E side of a hill, thence N 30 poles to a stake, N 70 E 80 poles to a stake, N 60 poles to a stake, and two black oaks, 20 E 80 pols to a stake, S 130 poles to a Stake, W 163 poles to a stake, then by a right line to the Beginning.

“Entered 4 August 1781; issued 12 July 1794.”¹²⁹

COMMENT:

This Ann Mills is the widow of Ambrose. The location of the land grant suggests she may have considered moving her family to the frontier rather than staying in the area that was now Patriot controlled. As noted above, in the affidavit given by her son John for his cousin Jesse, the family home had also been burned.

OCTOBER 1781?

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Settlement.

“Book A (First two pages badly torn.) Oct. Term.

“An agreement between *Waightstill Avery and James Miller*. Lands mentioned on French Broad River, Cane Cr., Hoopers Cr., Davidson River. Other names mentioned, *Andrew Blanchard, Esq., Thomas Wadtington, Agnis Miller, Anna Mills, William Mills*, David Miller, **Widow Mills**, *Benjamin Davidson*. Dated Oct. ____?”¹³⁰

COMMENT:

This is the first document in the book. Anna Mills and Widow Mills are one and the same—i.e., Ann/Anna/Anne Brown, widow of Ambrose Mills. The William Mills of this document was Ambrose’s one adult son by his first wife, Mourning Stone of Albemarle Co., VA.

The next document is dated 14 April 1782 and proved July Term 1782.

Waightstill Avery was an attorney who presented his license at the first court held in Tryon, April? 1769.¹³¹

JANUARY 1782

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Probate.

“Ord that Letters of Adm. issue to **Ann Mills**, widow_[,] of [and] James Miller, on Estate of **Amrose** [*sic*] **Mills**, dec’d. She give [*sic*] bond with *John Earle* and *William Gilbert* in the sum of one thousand specia.”¹³²

COMMENT:

One John Earle of Lunenburg County, ca. 1749, is said to be married to **Mary Elizabeth Watts**.¹³³

¹²⁹ David McCorkle, *NC Land Grant Images and Data* (<http://www.nclandgrants.com> : accessed 7 July 2018), imaging Book 81:575; citing “TN Greene” File No. 1475, NC microfilm reel S.108.160.20N, frame 885, State Archives.

¹³⁰ James E. and Vivian Wooley, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Wills & Miscellaneous Records, 1783–1868* (Greenville, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1984), 1; citing Book A: 1–2.

¹³¹ Lucille Hendrick Gardner and Virginia Greene DePriest, *Minutes of the Inferior Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions for Tryon County, North Carolina, vol. 1, 1769–1772* (Shelby, NC: P.p., 1985), 1.

¹³² Hedy Hughes Newton, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts of Minutes, Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, 1779–1786* (Ellenboro, NC: P.p., 1974), 17; citing p.47.

¹³³ For example, see “scanner5” [creator, “Murphy-MacDaniel Family Tree,” *Ancestry.com* (http://trees.ancestry.com/tree/11032083/person/6159613367?ssrc=&ml_rpos=37 : accessed 5 January 2015), “John Earl” page.

The 1749 tax roll of Lunenburg places **Thomas Watts (husband of Sarah Mills)** in the household of that John Earl(e).¹³⁴

Ambrose's widow is in powerful company. Rutherford court minutes of this era identify Earle as a colonel and court justice. Subsequently in this same term of court, James Miller and William Gilbert served as surety for the newly elected sheriff, Andrew Hampton, for a bond of 2000 pounds specia;¹³⁵ and "William Gilbert, Esq.," who also signed the minutes as a county justice, was granted license to maintain a tavern.¹³⁶ The April 1782 term of court identified Miller as *Col.* James Miller.¹³⁷

JULY 1782

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Land confiscation.

"Following lists 3577 & 578 are from Morgan District. Superior Court Miscellaneous records---DSCR 205.428.2]"

COMMENT:

The compiler of this volume states "The material on Rutherford County is in the Pleas and Quarter Sessions Court minutes and Morgan District Court papers." He does not state explicitly was DSCR stands for. The numeric citation seems to be a cataloging number within the NC State Archives system.

"577. Rutherford Co Pleas & Quarter Sessions Court second Monday in Jul. 1782 before **William Gilbert**, James **Withrow**, Jonathan Hampton, & other justices" a Grand Jury say the following people, all late of Rutherford Co planters, 'aided and joined' the army of Maj. Ferguson and are convicted as tories."

The list of 93 names start with **William Mills** and includes "**Allbros** [*sic*] **Mills**, William Hinson Sr., and William Hinson Jr.

"578. The following is only a partial list; part of sheet is lost. A petition mentioned for a case between William Gilbert vs." 26 individuals, including **Ambros Mills**."

"The following are from Rutherford Co Pleas & Quarter Sessions Court minutes CR 086.301.1 and 086.301.2."

"579C, p. 42: On motion of **William Gilbert** esq and testimony produced by the Court it is ordered that the opinion of the Court be entered on the records to wit—it is the opinion of the Court that the said **William Gilbert** is not guilty of the charge laid against him to the General Assembly and we do certify that W Gilbert never plundered nor was guilty of plundering to our knowledge."

"582F. Grand Jury returns an inquisition of treason forfeitures against **Thomas Mills** and others; jurors for the State present and find a bill against William **Withrow** and others; Grand Jury dismissed."¹³⁸

¹³⁴ Landon C. Bell, *Sunlight on the Southside: List of Tithes, Lunenburg County, Virginia; 1748–1783* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1974), 108–15, particularly 114; no source cited.

¹³⁵ Hedy Hughes Newton, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts of Minutes, Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, 1779–1786* (Ellenboro, NC: P.p., 1974), 19; citing p. 50.

¹³⁶ Hedy Hughes Newton, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts of Minutes, Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, 1779–1786* (Ellenboro, NC: P.p., 1974), 20; citing pp. 52–53.

¹³⁷ Hedy Hughes Newton, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts of Minutes, Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, 1779–1786* (Ellenboro, NC: P.p., 1974), 22; citing p. 57.

¹³⁸ A. B. Pruitt, *Abstracts of Sales of Confiscated Loyalist Land and Property in North Carolina* (N.p.: P.p., 1989), 113–27.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)
Spouse 1: Mourning Stone
Spouse 2: Ann Brown

COMMENT:

Thomas Mills was the Ambrose and Anne's oldest son.

There follow several other abstracts from the county court minutes that I already have. Because of time restraints, I am not copying Newton's version.

JULY 1782

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Court order.

"Jurors find a Bill of Profacturas treason against **William Mills** and others. John Goodbread, one charged in sd ... appeared, pleads not Guilty." Estate of William Henry (agent: John Cook) was confiscated after a jury found him guilty. "The Grand Jury returns an Inquisition of treason against **Thomas Mills** and others."... "Ord. that the Commissioners of Confiscated property to advertise all persons (returned?) in the Enquisition by the Grand Jury for treason, forfeiture, confiscation against the State, to appear at next Court to answer the Charges. To advertise sixty days before next Court."¹³⁹

COMMENT:

The ellipses are as used by the compiler of this volume.

OCTOBER 1782

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Court minute.

Various individuals are found guilty of treason in this term and had their property confiscated. In the case of the Widow Biggerstaff (the woman whom history credits with burying the corpses of Ambrose Mills and seven others hanged on her farm) the court ordered the confiscation of "all her moveable property except Negroes and also all the lands possessed by her Deceased Husband in his lifetime, and also the rents of her land for the present year. [but] it is ord. that the trial of Aaron Biggerstaff for forfeiture treason be laid over till next Court."¹⁴⁰

"Ord. that an order of sale issue to **Ann Mills** and *James Miller, Adm.* on the Estate of **Ambros Mills**, dec'd. accordingly.

Ord. by Court that *James Miller* and **Ann Mills** have Authority (to) take into their possession all the Estate of **Ambros Mills** dec'd. in this State (or?) where to be found."¹⁴¹

1782

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Tax list.

Earl, John Rutherford 1782 [No further data]

Gilbert, William Rutherford 1782 ¹⁴²

¹³⁹ Hedy Hughes Newton, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts of Minutes, Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, 1779–1786* (Ellenboro, NC: P.p., 1974), 24–26, 28; citing pp. 63–66, 73.

¹⁴⁰ Hedy Hughes Newton, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts of Minutes, Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, 1779–1786* (Ellenboro, NC: P.p., 1974), 35; citing pp. 87–88.

¹⁴¹ Hedy Hughes Newton, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts of Minutes, Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, 1779–1786* (Ellenboro, NC: P.p., 1974), 36; citing p. 91.

¹⁴² Clarence E. Ratliff, *North Carolina Taxpayers*, vol. 2, 1679–1790 (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1984), 59, 74, 132. Does not include Anson, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, or Tryon. Alphabetized statewide, so clues to neighboring entries are obliterated.

COMMENT:

The compiled “statewide” list published by Ratliff includes Rutherford, but not any of its parent counties. No Millses are shown for Rutherford.

JANUARY 1783

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Court order.

“William Gilbert on Petition vs. Gideon Rucker, John Answorth, John Goodbread, Richard Ledbetter, James Chitwood, Joshua Chitwood, William Thomason, John Thomason, George Thomason, Barnaba King, Benjamin Biggerstaff, Samuel, Biggerstaaff, Thomas Welch of Sandy Run, John Camp, Thomas Cmp, Mark Powel, Jeremiah McDaniel, Joseph McDaniel, Peter Dills, William Robbins, Joseph Underwood, Thomas Robinson, Thomas Townsend, Joseph Clark, Ursy Husbands of Burk County, Jonas Bedford, **Ambros Mills**, William Nettles, Shadrack Nettles, John Edgerton, Simeon Harris and others: Judgmt. By Default.”

“James Gray, George Anderson, Joseph Young, David Moore, John Miller, Rodger Carson, James Hamilton, John Huddlestone, James Armstrong, James Wilson, Alexander McFadin, and Patrick Watson was summoned, Impaneled and sworn to try the Enquiry do find for the plaintiff against the Several Defendants and asses Damages to 1206 pounds Specia and Costs; Verdict.”¹⁴³

COMMENT:

The nature of the suit is not stated, but several of these (Goodbread, Chitwood, Biggerstaff, Mills) are otherwise documented as Loyalists in this set of materials. Likely, they all are.

JANUARY 1783

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Court order.

“John Walker, Esq., on petition vs. **Ambros Mills**, Elia Brock, Thomas Townsend, Jeremiah McDaniel, Joseph McDaniel, Benjamin Biggerstaff, Stephen Langford, Jonas Bedford, James Chitwood, Abram Green and William Green;

“William Morrison, William Porter, William **Withrow**, Thomas Welch, James Adair, Robert Rankin, Stephen Willis, Junr. James Gray, James McDaniel (of the Cove), John **Twitty**, James McDaniel (of Broad River), and James Armstrong was Summoned, Impaneled and Duly Sworn to try the Enquiry do find for the plaintiff against the Several Defendants and assess Damages to 540 pounds Specia and Costs.”¹⁴⁴

JANUARY 1783

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Court order.

“The Petition of John McClaine against **Ambros Mills** and other Enemies of the State. Judgmt. By Default.”¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ Hedy Hughes Newton, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts of Minutes, Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, 1779–1786* (Ellenboro, NC: P.p., 1974), 41; citing p. 103.

¹⁴⁴ Hedy Hughes Newton, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts of Minutes, Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, 1779–1786* (Ellenboro, NC: P.p., 1974), 42; citing p. 105.

¹⁴⁵ Hedy Hughes Newton, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts of Minutes, Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, 1779–1786* (Ellenboro, NC: P.p., 1974), 43; citing p. 107.

COMMENT:

There are also a number of cases where widows are being allowed to retain the property left by a husband who was deemed an “enemy” of the state.

1 AUGUST 1783
BURKE COUNTY, NC

Land grant.

“Know ye that We have given and granted unto **Anne Mills** a Tract of Land Containing Two Hundred and forty Seven Acres lying and being in Our County of Burke on the Western Waters on the West Side of **French Broad River** above the mouth of **Mills Creek**.”

Beginning [*sic*] at a large black Oak on the river bank marked WM and runs with this 80 poles to a white oak near **Mills Creek**, thence S 80 poles to a Maple in a swamp at the Head of a pond, thence W 80 poles to a black gum in a Swamp, thence S 227 poles to a Stake, thence E 83 poles to a black Oak on the River bank, thence up the Meanders of the river to the Beginning.

Entered 1 August 1783; issued 15 December 1787.¹⁴⁶

1 AUGUST 1783
BURKE COUNTY, NC

Land grant.

“Know Ye that We have given and granted unto **William Mills** a Tract of Land Containing One Hundred and thirty one Acres lying and being in Our County of Burke On the Western Waters on the East Side of **French Broad River**.”

Beginning at a Sourwood Tree on the River bank above the mouth of **Mud Creek** and Runs E 400 poles to two large white Oaks and a black Oak marked W.M. thence S 220 poles to a branch, the Same Course 40 poles to a black Oak on a High Ridge, thence W 28 poles to a red Oak and black Oak on the River bank at the upper end of the Bottom, thence down the meanders of the River to the Beginning.

Entered 1 August 1783; issued 15 December 1787.¹⁴⁷

COMMENT:

Past this point, Ambrose’s son William received dozens of land grants. See his Research Notes for that data. Here in the present paper, I will include additional grant data for him only if it mentions Ambrose’s widow and heirs. I will also note, here, the first land grant issued to Ambrose’s sons Thomas and John, because that information points to when each came of age.

AUGUST 1783
BURKE COUNTY, NC

Land grant.

¹⁴⁶ David McCorkle, *NC Land Grant Images and Data* (<http://www.nclandgrants.com> : accessed 7 July 2018), imaging Book 65:491; citing Burke Co. File No. 1088, NC microfilm reel S108.160.15N, frame 750, State Archives.

¹⁴⁷ David McCorkle, *NC Land Grant Images and Data* (<http://www.nclandgrants.com> : accessed 7 July 2018), imaging Book 65:490; citing Burke Co. File No. 1086, NC microfilm reel S.108.517, State Archives.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

“Know Ye that We have given and granted unto **William Mills** a Tract of Land Containing Six Hundred and forty Acres Lying and being in our County of Burke on the Western Waters on the West Side of French Broad River and on both sides of the mouth of **Mills Creek**.”

Beginning at a large black Oak on the river bank marked W.M., the Lower Corner of **Anne Mills Survey** and Runs with her line W 80 poles to a white Oak near the Creek, thence with Said line S 80 poles to two Maple in a Swamp at the head of a pond, thence W 80 poles to a black gum in a Swamp, **Anne Mills** NW Corner the same Course 156 poles to five red Oaks and a post Oak in a large Meadow, thence N 84 poles to the Creek, the Same Course 260 poles to a Stake, thence E 316 poles to a Stake on the river bank, thence up the meanders of the river to the Beginning.

Entered August 1783; issued 15 December 1787.¹⁴⁸

AUGUST–SEPTEMBER 1783

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Military service.

“The following are in Morgan Dist. Criminal Action papers DSCR 205.326.1[,] file for 1783 and are grouped together even though there [*sic*] from different counties.

“596. Aug. 19, 1783 a bond by **widow Mills, wife of Ambros Mills, & Wm Wills** [*sic*] to **Wm Gilbert** for £250 each for **Thomas Mills** to appear to answer charges as *captain under Maj. Forgison at Kings Mountain*.”

“589. Sept. 1783 a suit vs **Thomas Mills** (of Rutherford Co)—on Sept. 10, 1780, he was a captain in the King’s Army; evidence: **Wm Gilbert**, Ben Cleveland, Geo. Black, & Saml Hunter; ‘not a true bill’.”¹⁴⁹

COMMENT:

Thomas, at the the time he was alleged to be a captain, would have been in his mid-teens.

20 SEPTEMBER 1783

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Land sale.

“**William Mills** of Rutherford Co. to **William Twitty** of same for L 200 specia ... 150 A on N side of **Green River**, part of a tract conveyed to **Ambrose Mills** and falling to sd. William by heirship ... Powels Cabin ... William Mills (seal) Wit: **Ann Mills, John Mills**.”¹⁵⁰

COMMENT:

I have not yet found a record of a grant directly to Ambrose. Was this part of the 640 acres on Green River (both sides, near Walnut Creek) that he purchased in 1770 from Thomas Reynolds?

7 APRIL 1784

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Neighbor.

¹⁴⁸ David McCorkle, *NC Land Grant Images and Data* (<http://www.nclandgrants.com> : accessed 7 July 2018), imaging Book 65:490; citing Burke Co. File No. Burke file no. 1087, NC microfilm reel S.108.160.15N, frame 750, State Archives.

¹⁴⁹ A. B. Pruitt, *Abstracts of Sales of Confiscated Loyalist Land and Property in North Carolina* (N.p.: P.p., 1989), p. ?.

¹⁵⁰ Brent Holcomb, *Deed Abstracts of Tryon, Lincoln & Rutherford Counties, North Carolina, 1769–1786; Tryon County Wills & Estates* (Greenville, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1977), 146; citing Rutherford Deeds A-1:182.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

“John Scoot to James Jeffrys for 100 pds. Specia 100 a. on both sides **Walnut Creek** join. A new Survey of sd. Scoot between **Reynolds & Hinson’s line**. Land granted to *Phillip Hinson* by Pat. Dt’d. 29 Apr. 1768. Rec. 21 July 1792. Signed: John Scott, Lettic-o-Scoot. Charles Richardson, Jas. Scoot.”¹⁵¹

COMMENT:

John Smoot had been adjacent neighbor to Ambrose Mills. See deed abstract at 23 September 1786, below.

“Lettic-o-Scoot” reflects the format used by the transcriber of these records to indicate that Lettic Scoot made her mark “o” on the document.

APRIL 1784

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Court order.

“Ord. that **John Earle**, John Cummons, Abraham Music Jun., George Potts, (Terkub?) [*sic*] Potts, Matthies May.... Henry Wolf, Wm. Capshaw, George Green, William Thompson, John Fisher, John Thompson, Jonathan Potts, **James Step** be and is hereby appointed a Jury to lay off and mark a road...from *Hooper’s* ford on **North Pacolet** to **Mills Gap** on **Green River**, and that the Sheriff summons them to appear before **John Earle, Esq.** to qualify for their charge.”¹⁵²

COMMENT:

Men in this era were typically assigned to the stretch of road on which they lived, covering a distance of 3-5 miles. The above assignment of a crew from the North Pacolet (site of Jesse Miles, son of William Jr.) to Mills Gap on Green River (site of Ambrose and his son William), suggests that the two brothers (Ambrose and William Jr.) lived in reasonably close proximity in 1769–70.

OCTOBER 1784

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Road order.

“The court appointed overseers on that part of the public road leading from **Hoopers ford** on the **Pacolet** to **Mills Gap**. *John Cummons* overseer to *Michael Hawkins* place. **Tho. Justice** from there to the gap. That the inhabitants from *Capshaw Mill* to North Fork of **White oak**, as far as ... to work on *Cummons* road. The inhabitants from the **Widow Mills** to the extent of the County to work on *Justices* road.”¹⁵³

COMMENT:

The ellipses are as they appear in the published extract.

Note that the county records refer to “Widow Mills” as though there was just one in the county. The fate of the widow of William “English Billy” Mills remains unknown.

¹⁵¹ Caroline Heath Davis, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts of Deeds, 1773–1795* (Rutherfordton, NC: P.p., c1973), 55; citing I:398.

¹⁵² Hedy Hughes Newton, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts of Minutes, Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, 1779–1786* (Ellenboro, NC: P.p., 1974), 77; citing p. 201.

¹⁵³ Hedy Hughes Newton, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts of Minutes, Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, 1779–1786* (Ellenboro, NC: P.p., 1974), 88; citing p. 232.

10 DECEMBER 1784

CAMDEN DISTRICT, FAIRFIELD COUNTY, SC

Associates.

William Mills of **Rutherford County, NC** to **Macajah Pickett** of Craven County, SC. Lease and release. By virtue of a grant made 18? May 1773 to **Ambrose Mills**, 100 acres situated in Craven on a **small branch of the Wateree Creek** bounded NE by *John Lee*, and on other sides by vacant land. Sale for **20 pounds**, cash. Signed: *William Mills*. Witnesses: **John Mills**, *Surls Lewis*, **Ann Mills**. Proved 21 December 1784 by *Surls Lewis* before *John Winn, J.P.*[a Fairfield official] Recorded 26 June 1792.¹⁵⁴

COMMENT:

Transactions of 1784–86, dealing with Ambrose Mills’s Forks-of-the-Wateree grant, have several irregularities.

- The John Mills and Ann Mills who witnessed this document would should be the same individuals who witnessed the 1783 disposition of Ambrose’s Rutherford Co. land: Ambrose’s widow, Ann Brown, and their son John Mills. All known records speak of them as Rutherford Co. residents in this time frame. John would have been about sixteen.
- The document does not say where it was drafted. Ostensibly, Ambrose’s son and heir, William Mills, journeyed down to Fairfield—given that Macajah Pickett executed another purchase dated that same day in the area of Winnsboro. (William Tidwell, 10 December 1784.¹⁵⁵) If so, then the service of his brother John and step-mother Ann as witness would be unexplained, unless they made the trip him. (As a likely red herring, another John Mills had come into Fairfield about the time that Ambrose settled there and executed a variety of records in this era.¹⁵⁶ No association has been found.)
- The document appears to have been penned by William—a man who had lived in “*Craven County, SC*” in his youth—at which time it was, indeed, Craven County. At the time of the deed, the area had been *Camden District* for 15 years. In the second document executed that day by the purchaser, Macajah Pickett, Pickett identified his residence appropriately as “*St. Mark’s Parish, Camden District.*”
- Ambrose’s Fairfield lands were obviously “absentee landowner” lands for several years after his death. Notably, the Camden Court, unlike that of Rutherford County, did not prosecute the forfeiture of Ambrose’s land.
- Eleven days would pass before the Mills-Pickett witness, *Surls Lewis* of Fairfield (the neighbor to Ambrose’s 600-acre plantation), went before his neighborhood J.P. to prove the deed.
- Pickett disposed of the land within days—making no profit on the sale. Using the lease-and-release form of conveyance, he executed the “lease” in favor of **William Watts**, who was put in possession of the land for half the sale price; then Pickett executed the *release* to our **John**

¹⁵⁴ Fairfield Co., SC, Deed Book H (1792–93): 9–11; FHL microfilm 23,993.

¹⁵⁵ Fairfield Co., SC, Deed Book H (1792–93): 86–87; FHL microfilm 023,993.

¹⁵⁶ One John Mills acquired his first Craven County land in 1765, making him a contemporary of Ambrose. He was not a brother of Ambrose, according to the will of Ambrose’s father. This John Mills’s speculated on land in disparate parts of Fairfield, Rocky Creek, Bush Creek, Cedar Creek, and Sandy River; see *South Carolina Department of Archives and History*, database and images (<http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/online/archives/> : accessed 7 October 2014), “Mills, John,” numerous database entries and some plats, series S213184: Colonial plat Books (Copy Series). I have found no evidence of military service by him on either side.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

Watts, who paid the remaining half. This William and John were brothers, sons of Ambrose's sister Sarah (Mills) Watts.¹⁵⁷

- Thirteen months later (January 1786) **John Watts** sold this land to a neighbor, without William's participation, using his neighborhood j.p., **Charles Pickett**. See abstract under that date, below.

30 JUNE 1785

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Land sale.

"**William Mills** to *Samuel McBryer* for 100 pds. Proc. Money, 100 a. which formerly belonged to **Ambrose Mills** on **Green River** on N. side below mouth of **Walnut Creek**."¹⁵⁸

29 JANUARY 1786

FAIRFIELD DISTRICT, SOUTH CAROLINA

Land Sale.

John Watts of Fairfield County, Planter. Lease and release to *Nathan Sanders* of same, Planter. For 10 pounds sterling, 100 acres in the **fork of Wateree Creek**, bounded N.E. on land surveyed for *John Lee*, all other sides by vacant land. Originally granted to deceased **Ambros Mills** 16 May 1773 and sold by **William Mills**, son and heir of Ambros Mills to *Micajah Pickett* 9 & 10 December 1784. Watts does not say how he got the land from Pickett. [Signed] **John Watts**. Witnesses: *Henry Sanders, William Tidwell* (X). Proved 13 November 1787 by Sanders and Tidwell. Recorded 16 January 1788.¹⁵⁹

COMMENTS:

The Hinsons and Sanders both came out of **Albermarle and Bedford Counties, Virginia**, contemporaneously with the Millses and Wattses.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ See Elizabeth Shown Mills, "Frontier Strategies—Weaving a Web to Snare a Birth Family: John Watts (ca. 1749–ca. 1822)," *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* 104 (September 2016): 165–90.

¹⁵⁸ Caroline Heath Davis, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts of Deeds, 1773–1795* (Rutherfordton, NC: P.p., c1973), 32; citing G:213?.

¹⁵⁹ Fairfield Co., SC, Deed Book A: 508–10.

¹⁶⁰ "Notes for Philip Hinson and Mary," *Janet and Robert Wolfe Genealogy* (<http://www-personal.umich.edu/~bobwolfe/gen/mn/m673x31042.htm#FN56> : accessed 27 June 2015) reports:

"1758 In September, Bartlet Henson was on the militia roster of the Virginia Colonial Militia of Bedford County. [4]

"1758 In September, William Henson and Philip Henson were on the militia roster of the Virginia Colonial Militia of Albemarle County in the company of Capt. James Nevil. [5][6]

"1758 Phillip and William Henson were members of Captain Ellis' Company in Albemarle County, Virginia. [7][8]

"1765 In Albemarle County, Virginia court papers: "Bond of Julius Sanders and Philip Henson to David Ross, dated Sept. "1765, witnessed by William Rea and St. McCaul. Two orders to arrest Julius Sanders [in?] above suit, dated 6 Oct. and Jan. 3". [see 1768 newspaper notice] [9]

"1768 Philip Henson advertised: "Some Years ago I married Mary, the daughter of Julius and granddaughter of William Saunders, both of Albemarle county [Virginia]" ... Philip Henson claims that he and wife Mary are the heirs of several Negroes from the estate of William Sanders, to be inherited after the death of William's widow Mary. Meanwhile, William's son Julius has seized the slaves and is claiming them as his own. Philip warns others not to buy these slaves from Julius, because they do not belong to Julius. Just below, a notice by David Ross, states that Philip Hinson had mortgaged Negroes Pat, Joe, Jenny, and Sall to Alexander Baine {see 1765 court record. These Negroes were not named in the 1776 will of Philip Hinson, father of Kizannah}. [10][11] Photocopy, Philip Henson named father-in-law Julius Saunders, Newspaper notice."

[5] William Armstrong Crozier, *Virginia County Records*, Vol. 2 (New York: Fox, Duffield & Company, 1905), 67, of 66-67, [HathiTrust].

[6] William Waller Henning, *The Statutes at Large; being a collection of all the Laws of Virginia*, Vol. 7 (Richmond VA: 1820), 203, [HathiTrust].

[7] A. L. Henson, *A Henson Family History in Early America and their Revolutionary War Soldiers, 1725-1850* (1978), 6, [Google_Book].

[8] "Letters and Other Papers, 1735-1829 (From the Collection of the Virginia Historical Society)," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 23 (1915), 162-92 at 176.

[9] Benjamin B. Weisiger, *Albemarle County Virginia Court Papers 1744-1783* (1987), 42.

Re Henry Sanders:

- On 13 August 1787, Aaron Roberts of Camden District sold to **Mary Henson** (widow of Philip?) of same, 150 acres on Taylors Creek, branch of Wateree, granted 5 June 1786. Witnesses were **Henry Sanders** and **Isaac Gibson**.¹⁶¹

Re John Lee, neighbor to the original grant:

- Lee appears not only as an adjacent landowner to this 1768 Mills grant at the Fork of Wateree Creek, but he was also an adjacent landowner to Mills's 1762 grant at the Forks of Little River. *He should be studied as potential kin.*
- Ken Shelton cites a narrative by John Watts's contemporary, General Richard Winn, found in the Library of Congress and published in 1942 (but not otherwise cited), in which Winn states that John Lee lived 12 miles [northeast] from Mobley's Meeting House.¹⁶²
- Shelton also reports that "Lee's Old Place" was the campsite of Cornwallis's army on 8 January 1781.¹⁶³

23 SEPTEMBER 1786

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Land sale.

"No. 1036 ... **William Mills** to *John Young, Sr. & Robert Young* for 250 pds. proc. money, 200 a. **Green River** at mouth **Walnut Creek** above plantation where *John Young* now lives_[i] and run up branch to **Ambrose Mill's** line to *John Scoot's* new line. Rec. 13 July 1793. [Witnesses:] Thos. Wadlington, Francis Brown."¹⁶⁴

30 JUNE 1787

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Land sale.

"**William Mills** to *Samuel McBryer* for 100 pds. Proc. Money, 100 a. which formerly belonged to **Ambrose Mills** on **Green River** on N. side below mouth of **Walnut Creek**." [Witnesses:] Thomas Wadlington, Robt. Young.¹⁶⁵

7 AUGUST 1787

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Land grant.

[10] Newspaper, *The Virginia Gazette*, Williamsburg, Virginia: 8 September 1768, page 3, column 1.

[11] *Virginia Gazette* Archival images online, 1768, page 3, [Virginia_Gazette]."

¹⁶¹Also see (for slight differences), Tony Draine, *Fairfield County, S.C. Deed Book A, 1785-1788* (Columbia, S.C.: Draban Publications, 1991), 23.

¹⁶² Kenneth Shelton, *All That Dare Oppose Them: The Whig Victory at Mobley's Meeting House, June 1780* (N.p.: P.p., 2005), 48–50.

¹⁶³ Kenneth Shelton, *All That Dare Oppose Them: The Whig Victory at Mobley's Meeting House, June 1780* (N.p.: P.p., 2005), 93; citing 11 January 1781 letter from General Sumter to General Green, wherein he stated that Cornwallis's army camped had camped there on "Monday night." Assuming it was the immediately preceding Monday, that should have been 8 January.

¹⁶⁴ Caroline Heath Davis, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts of Deeds, 1773–1795* (Rutherfordton, NC: P.p., c1973), 68-69; citing J:42.

¹⁶⁵ Caroline Heath Davis, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts of Deeds, 1773–1795* (Rutherfordton, NC: P.p., c1973), 32; citing G:213?.

“No. 724, N.C. Grant No. 723, Caswell to **Ann Mills** for 50 shill. Every 100 a., tract of 100 a. on both sides **Green River**. 9 Aug. 1787.”¹⁶⁶

19 OCTOBER 1787

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Agreement.

“*Waightstill Avery – James Miller*, agreement, 19 Oct., 1787, Oct. Ct. 1791. Whereas divers suits and controversy by caviat for land have subsisted between said Avery and Miller and others hereafter named and a composite hath taken place in such a manner that said Avery is to have 348 a land in compute above the **Horseshoe of French Broad River** and 320 a land on **Cane Creek** claimed by Miller heretofore which he hath this day agreed to convey to said Avery, each party shall dismiss a caviat by himself in the name of Andrew Blanchard, Esq., against on and his caviats by him procured against said Avery in names of *Thomas Wadlington, Sarah Miller, Agnis Miller, Ann Mills, William Mills*, and Ann Haz . . . and that James Miller shall also dismiss all caviats by him procured against said Avery in names of Thomas Wadlington, Sarah Miller, Agnis Miller, Anna Mills or William Mills or other persons that each party shall pay their own attorneys fee in suit aforesaid same land against James Miller and David Miller and pay cost thereof except the attorneys fees for defendants of which he shall be clear or shall not pay more than a proportionable part accruing it is further agreed that all claimants on dismissal of the caviats aforesaid no judgments shall be entered for the defendants. Signed: Waightstill Avery, James Miller; Wit: Charles McDowell, James Greenlee, Reubin Wood.

“The said Avery agrees to disclaim in favor of said Miller and partners 640 a at the mouth of **Hoopers Creek**[,] Wadling on [an] entry at **Crabtree the Horse bottom**[,] Millers entry at and near the mouth of Davidsons Creek, the **Widow Mills** entries above the mouth of the same creek or the River and the said James Miller agrees to disclaim in favor of said Avery his entries on Benjamin **Davidson’s Creek** and the said Averys other entries on the creek below the Horse bottom and those for which the said Miller and partners have ... Surveys on interest. 19th 1787. Signed: Waightstill Avery, James Miller. R. Wood, Jurat.”¹⁶⁷

COMMENT:

The ellipses are shown above as rendered by the compiler, Davis.

OCTOBER TERM 1787

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Road order.

“Ord by the court that Alexander McFaddin, Thomas Wharey, Thomas Weaver, David ?y, Saml. McFaddin, **John Mills**, ??, ?Metcalf, Joshua Taylor, James Killpatrick, William Ballard & Anthony Laughlin be & is hereby appointed to lay off & assess the damages of that part of the road that leads through Anthony Dicky’s plantation & report to next court proceedings on said order.”¹⁶⁸

COMMENT:

¹⁶⁶ Caroline Heath Davis, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts of Deeds, 1773–1795* (Rutherfordton, NC: P.p., c1973), 24; citing F:153.

¹⁶⁷ Caroline Heath Davis, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts, Will Book B, 1791–1813* (Rutherfordton, NC: P.p., c1972), 1; citing Will Book B:1.

¹⁶⁸ James Alan Williams, *County Court Records, 1779–1794, Rutherford Co., NC* (Banner, KY: Williams Publishing, 2014), 196.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

This John Mills should be Ambrose's son, who has now come of age. From this, we may extrapolate that he was born about October 1766.

JANUARY 1789

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Jury duty.

John Mills is named among prospective jurors for the next (April) term.¹⁶⁹

COMMENT:

This should be John-of-Ambrose, who was first assigned to road duty in October 1787.

JULY 1790

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Court order.

"Ordered by the court that notice issue to **Ann Mills & James Miller Col.**, administrators on the estate of **Ambros Mills** decd to appear at next court with their sundary act & vouchers in order to settle with the court for said estate.

"Ordered by the court that the sheriff cite **Mary Mills, Milseed** [Mildred] **Mills, Ambros Mills & Nancy Mills** orphans & minors of **Ambros Mills** deceased to appear at our next cout in order to choose their guardian &e [&c]."¹⁷⁰

COMMENT:

As shown in 1797 notes below, the widowed Ann married John Carrick in February 1790. At that point, Carrick would by law take over the affairs of his wife. Hence the need for the former administrator to settle his account and for the appointment of a new guardian of the interests of the minors.

The published transcript errs in naming the daughter "Milseed." **The original register pens the name as "Mildred."**

Note that this daughter is variously called Milly, Pamela, and Pamily in the 1799 settlement of this estate.

AUGUST 1790

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Census.

"12th Company"

Wm. Mills	1 white male 16+	6 white females	8 slaves
	2 white males -16		

Jas. Logan

Yelverton Neville

Abr. Carter

Jno. Jones

¹⁶⁹ James Alan Williams, *County Court Records, 1779–1794, Rutherford Co., NC* (Banner, KY: Williams Publishing, 2014), 252.

¹⁷⁰ James Alan Williams, *County Court Records, 1779–1794, Rutherford Co., NC* (Banner, KY: Williams Publ., 2014), 305–6. The original court register, Rutherford Co., "Superior Court Minutes, County Court, 1789–1793," unpaginated; is imaged at *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-99G8-B3KM?i=561&cat=182527> : accessed 29 March 2019), image 562 of 905.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

Thos. Justus Jr.

[skip 11]

Allen Twitty	1 white male 16+ 1 white male -16	1 white female	1 slave
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[skip 24]

John Carrick	3 white males 16+ 1 white male -16	7 white females	6 slaves
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COMMENT:

Ambrose's sons Thomas and John were not heads-of-households on this census. They are likely two of the three males over sixteen. Note, however, that the present survey of published resources and land grants has turned up no reference to Thomas after his grant of 1785.

OCTOBER 1790

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Guardianship.

"**Mildred Mills** aged sixteen years next March, **Ambrose Mills** aged fourteen years next February & **Nancy Mills** aged eleven years next June came into open court & chose *Thomas Wadlington* their guardian, who entered into bond with James Gray & Richard Singleton in the sum of five hundred pound."¹⁷¹

OCTOBER 1790

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Probate.

"*Adam Whiteside* & *Timothy Riggs* esquires a committee settled with **Ann Mills** alias **Ann Carrock** & James Miller admr on the estate of **Ambros Mills** decd see report filed."¹⁷²

6 JANUARY 1791

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Land sale.

"**John Mills** to *Jhwenias* (this marked out and in pencil Jechonias written above) *Waldrop* for 100 pds. 100 a. on both sides **Green River** adj. Coward. Land orig. granted **Ann Mills** by Pat. dtd. 9 Aug. 1787 and conv. to her son the sd. **John Mills** and the sd. John Mills to Jechonias Waldrop. Rec. 5 Dec. 1794. [Witnesses:] John Young, jurat, Rebeckat Young."¹⁷³

5 JUNE 1792

FAIRFIELD COUNTY, SC

Witness.

¹⁷¹ James Alan Williams, *County Court Records, 1779–1794, Rutherford Co., NC* (Banner, KY: Williams Publishing, 2014), 313. The original court register, Rutherford Co., "Superior Court Minutes, County Court, 1789–1793," unpaginated; is imaged at *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q57-99G8-B3KH?i=569&cat=182527> : accessed 29 March 2019), image 570 of 905.

¹⁷² James Alan Williams, *County Court Records, 1779–1794, Rutherford Co., NC* (Banner, KY: Williams Publishing, 2014), 314.

¹⁷³ Caroline Heath Davis, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts of Deeds, 1773–1795* (Rutherfordton, NC: P.p., c1973), 106; citing L:309.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

Job Bass, of Richland County, SC, to **John Yarbrough** of Fairfield. Whereas a grant was made on 21 May 1772 to **Surls Lewis**, 400 acres in Craven County on South side of Wateree River on a branch called **Taylor's Creek**, bounded N on land surveyed for **Ambrose Mills**, S on land surveyed for **John Kirkling** and James Wallace, and W on land surveyed for **Francis Layton** (grant recorded Book 222, page 161, Secretary's office); and whereas Job Bass Sr. purchased 200 acres of this grant from **Surls Lewis** on 10 and 19 December [no year given] and recorded Book U [V?] No. 5, pp. 227-229 on 5 September 1786 ... Now Job Bass, son and heir of said Job Bass Sr. sells to *John Yarbrough* for a bond of 400 pounds dated 10 January 1772 and recorded in the county court of Fairfield? on 19 February 1787, conveys 100 acres on Taylor's Branch bounded NW by land surveyed for **Francis Layton**, the boundaries being as follows: Beginning at Layton's Corner pine on the N. side of Taylor's Creek, then S38.72 crossing the said Creek to a corner formerly a pine, then SE 80 to an Ash Tree on **Aldrege's Spring branch**, thence to a Large pine near the Creek so crossing the said Creek to a white? Oak station by a line of Marked Trees to a Black Jack a Corner tree on the opposite side of which said line was agreed to be the Division or Boundary Line between the said Job Bass Land and John Yarbrough aforesaid, thence SW 76 to the first Station or Beginning. All houses, etc. [Signed] Job Bass, William **Sanders**, **Zilpha Williams** (x), **RACHEL Sanders** (+ +). Proved 20 August 1792 by William Sanders before Zachariah Kirkland, J.P.¹⁷⁴

COMMENT:

- The Surls Lewis grant adjoined the 600-acre grant made in 1766 to Ambrose Mills.
- In 1784, when William Mills sold Ambrose Mills's land to John Watts's neighbor Micajah Pickett (who promptly resold it to William and John Watts), the document was witnessed (in NC) by **Surls Lewis**, John Mills, and Ann Mills.
- In 1787, Thomas Watts "Jr." bought land adjacent to Francis Layton, above.

JULY 1792

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Probate.

"The court appointed *Felix Walker* and *William Graham* committee to settle with the admr of **Ambros Mills** decd & also with the admr of John Miggs decd."¹⁷⁵

13 APRIL 1793

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Association.

"*William Twitty* to *Allen Twitty* for 200 pds., 150 a. on N. side **Green River** being part of tract form. The property of **Ambrose Mills**, decd., and falling to **William Mills** by heirship. Oct. 20, 1794. [Witnesses:] Ad. Osborn, W. Alexander."¹⁷⁶

APRIL 1793

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Probate.

¹⁷⁴ Fairfield Co., SC, Deed Book H: 92–94.

¹⁷⁵ James Alan Williams, *County Court Records, 1779–1794, Rutherford Co., NC* (Banner, KY: Williams Publishing, 2014), 368.

¹⁷⁶ Caroline Heath Davis, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts of Deeds, 1773–1795* (Rutherfordton, NC: P.p., c1973), 103; citing L:287.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

“Felix Walker and William Graham esquires a committee appointed to settle with the estates of John Miggs decd & the estate of **Ambros Mills** decd have report of the same to the court which settlements was accepted.”¹⁷⁷

15 APRIL 1797

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Probate settlement.

“Apr. Ct. 1797. Ambrose Mills, dec’d. died intestate in year 1780 leaving a widow Anna Mills and 7 surviving children to wit: **William Mills, Thomas Mills, John Mills, Ambrose Mills, Milly Mills, Polly Twitty & Amelia Mills & Anna Mills** the younger and the sd. Widow Anna Mills and Col. James Miller in 1782 administrated the Estate of the dec’d. and the sd. Anna Mills in Feb. 1790 intermarried with John Carrick and such proceedings have been had and management with estate of dec’d as appear in this copy hereunto annexed—Certified by Richard Lewis, Esq.

“William Mills appointed Guardian by Court of his brother Ambrose Mills the younger and his sister Anna Mills the younger and as Guardian has caused 3 sales to be instituted against sd. John Carrick in order to compel sd. Carrick to give security for the Estate of the dec’d., suggested by Petition to be in hands of sd. John Carrick on action of debt supposed to be for price of a Negro wench Rachel as part of Estate as appears in account of 2nd sale in the annexed copy and a 3rd sale by Petition against sd. John Carrick, Anna, his wife & James Miller, Administrator and Administrix in order to compel them to account for a still, some wagon irons, a note on McCafferty for four half Johanas, a mare, yearling, 5 cows and calves, a yearling heifer, 1 gray horse, 9 guineas, 4 dollars and lock Chain suggested by Petition to be unaccounted for by Administrators and also to compel the sd. Administrators to account for the Estate of dec’d. in general and whereas some dispute has arisen between sd Carrick & sd. William Mills concerning right of dower in lands of dec’d, and also other claimants of that estate –

“Now this Indenture Wittneseth sd. William Mills & John Carrick agree to settle sd. Law suits, the sd. Wm. Mills for himself and for sd. Wards Ambrose Mills & Anna Mills as their Guardian and also agent for sd. Thomas & John Mills, Polly Twitty & Pamela [Millie] Mills, agree to dismiss sd. three law suits in Rutherford Court at his own expense and pay all costs—Also sd. Bond on John Carrick be cancelled. All lands descended from Ambrose Mills dec’d. to Anna Carrick his wife, to wit: a tract of 600 a. conveyed to Ambrose Mills dec’d. by *Thomas Reynolds* by deed dt’d. 1 Dec. 1770 on N. branch Green River, conveyed heretofore by sd. William Mills and now in possession of Edwards, adjoining Edwards line, assigned for dower to sd. John Carrick & Anna his wife during their joint lives. And John Carrick shall not recover any sums of money, 3rd share or dividend of sd. Ambrose Mills other than what he has rec’d. and such as he the sd. John had in possession and has as he left it at sd. Old Plantation where he went to Cumberland, including 1 negro Rachel, the beds, household and kitchen furniture, farming tools, 1 horse and some cattle. Signed: William Mills, John Carrick. [Witnesses] Waightsell Avery, John McKinny, John Goodbread.”¹⁷⁸

COMMENT:

The recorded copy of this document (Rutherford Will Book B:76) has a glaring error. The document begins with these words:

¹⁷⁷ James Alan Williams, *County Court Records, 1779–1794, Rutherford Co., NC* (Banner, KY: Williams Publishing, 2014), 392.

¹⁷⁸ Caroline Heath Davis, *Rutherford County, North Carolina, Abstracts, Will Book B, 1791–1813* (Rutherfordton, NC: P.p., c1972), 16-17; citing Will Book B:76.

Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

“Whereas Ambross Mills, Deceased, died Intestate in the year 1780, Leaving a widow Anna Mills, and Seven Surviving Children to wit, **William Mills, Thomas Mills, John Mills, Ambross Mills, Milly Mills, Polly Mills** Twitty [*sic*], **Pamela Mills, and Anna Mills ...**”

While there are said to be seven children, eight are named. We see a corrected error with Polly. The “eighth” child stems from the duplication of “Milly” and “Pamela” whose names are thereafter merged in the document. For example, the original register, p. 77 (imaged at *Family Search*, permalink https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:375Q-29XY_F69?i=142&cc=1867501&cat=182814) carries three references:

“William Mills for himself and for his said Wards, Ambross Mills and Anna Mills as their guardian and also as agent for the said Thomas and John Mills Polly Twitty and **Pamilla [written over as Pamilly]** Mills doth by these pAmresents agree

“and the said William Mills for and in behalf of his said wards Ambross and Anna Mills and also as agent for the said Thomas and John Mills and the said Polly Twitty and **Pamilla** Mills, doth further agree and covenant to and with the said John Carrick ... for the said William Mills and the said Thomas & John Ambross Polly **Pamilly** and Anna shall and will release and acquit and discharge the said John Carrick ...”

William Mills’s “guardianship” of the minors did not mean that he took physical custody of them. Rather, he was guardian of their inheritance. Their mother’s new husband appears to have helped himself to part of that inheritance, prompting the suit by William Mills.

18 NOVEMBER 1797

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Land grant.

“Know Ye that we have granted unto **Ambros Mills**, fifty Acres of Land in Rutherford County joining his own land on **Panters Creek of Green River.**”

Beginning on a post oak on his old line, thence N 35 E 64 poles to a stake, thence W 126 poles to a stake, thence S 35 E 64 poles to his old line, thence with his old line to the Beginning.

Entered 18 November 1797; issued 22 December 1798.¹⁷⁹

18 NOVEMBER 1797

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NC

Land grant.

“Know Ye that we have granted unto **Milly Mills**, fifty Acres of Land in Rutherford County on **Panters [Panthers] Creek of Green River**, joining **Ambros Mills** land.”

Beginning at his hicory corner, thence with his lines N 90 poles to his black oak corner, thence E 90 poles to a stake, thence S ninety poles to a stake, and from thence W 90 poles to the beginning.

Entered 18 November 1797; issued 22 December 1798.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁹ David McCorkle, *NC Land Grant Images and Data* (<http://www.nclandgrants.com> : accessed 7 July 2018), imaging Book 100: 264; citing Rutherford Co. file no. 1740, NC microfilm reel S.108.160.26N, frame 155, State Archives.

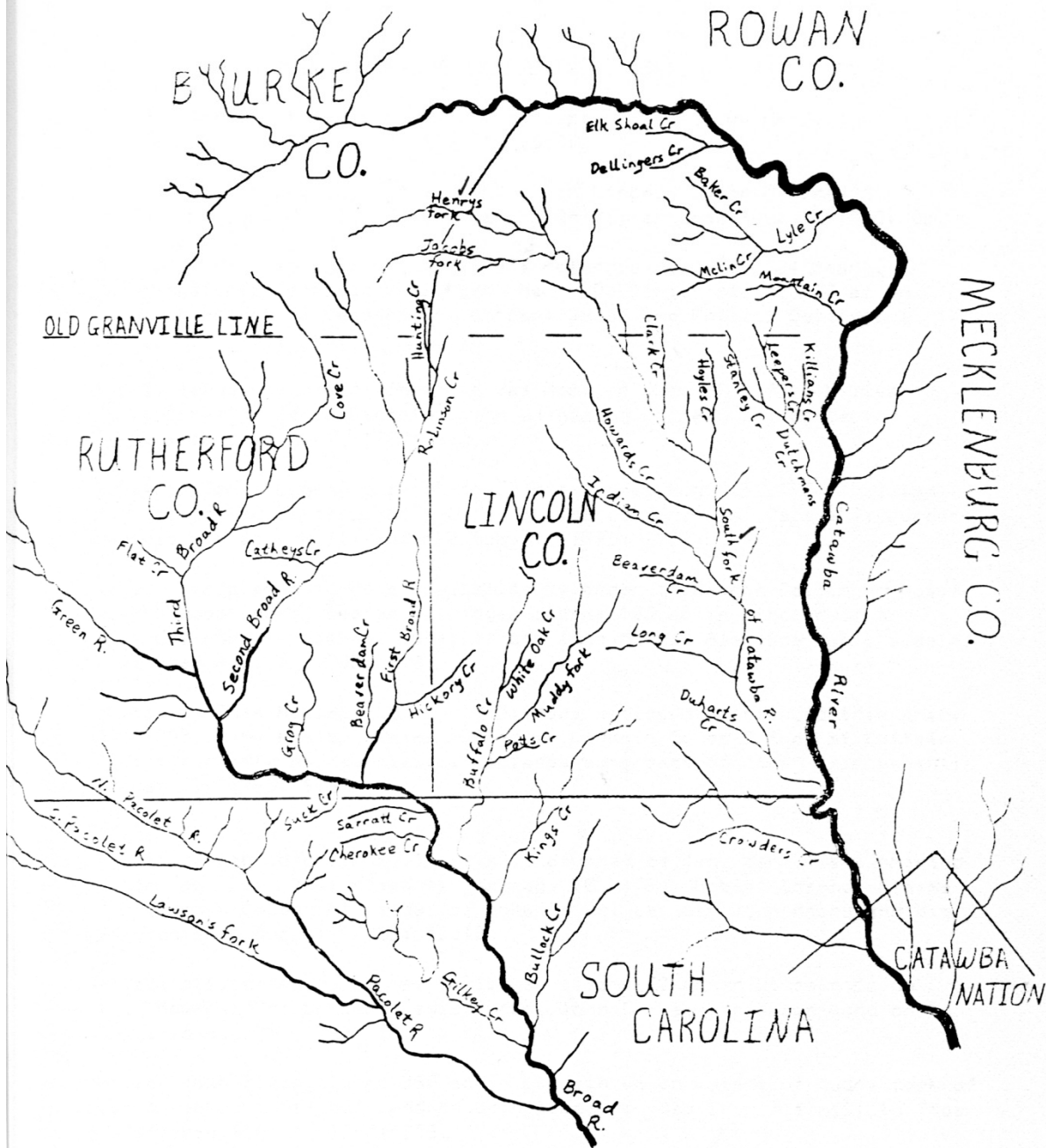
Ambrose Mills, Col. (c1721–1780)

Spouse 1: Mourning Stone

Spouse 2: Ann Brown

¹⁸⁰ David McCorkle, *NC Land Grant Images and Data* (<http://www.nclandgrants.com> : accessed 7 July 2018), imaging Bppl 100: 264; citing Rutherford Co. file no. 1741, NC microfilm reel S.108.160.26N, frame 155, State Archives.

APPENDIX:
The Broad River Water Route Linking
Craven Co., SC, to Rutherford Co., NC



A. B. Pruitt, ABSTRACTS OF LAND ENTRIES, LINCOLN CO., NC, 1783-1795 (N.P.: n.p.), 1987), iv.

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Elizabeth Shown Mills, “Ambrose Mills, Col. (c.1772–1780): Research Notes,” a working file updated 8 April 2021, p. ____.

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