

## Ancestors of Levi Empson Walker and Ida Kernodle Walker by James Franklin Walker (1937 -)

July 10, 2014



I have detailed genealogy charts of my grandparents, L.E. and Ida Kernodle Walker. But there are interesting stories that should be told before they are lost. I will tell this tale as if I were talking to my first cousins. So when I say, Grandma, everyone will know that I'm talking about our Grandmother Ida Kernodle Walker. Or Aunt Lillian means Lillian Walker Boswell.

This is the first draft of a work in progress. I hope that readers will be able to contribute additional information. Any small piece of information will be valuable. Please let me know if you see errors or have meaningful additions to make to this paper.

Luckily, I am not the first person to trace our ancestors. Edith Walker Anderson's "Walker Roots" provided a basis for the Walker ancestors. Kara Graham and John Fox wrote about the Grahams of Union Ridge. Dr. Douglas Kernodle documented the "Kernodle Family Tree". My daughter, Sheri, interviewed Daddy and read these documents to produce a school report. I will use all these documents and expand upon them where I can.

My "Family Tree Maker" file is available on the Walkergenealogy web page for those who have the Family Tree Maker program. <http://walkergenealogy.walkerfamily.name/family1.ftm>

Several specific trees are printed as PDF files on the web page as well for those who don't have the program. <http://walkergenealogy.walkerfamily.name> and click on the file you would like to see.

## The Walkers

I am going to start with the Walkers. We didn't hear much about the Walker family when we were growing up. The Kernodles and Grahams got all the attention. I think the reasons are relatively simple. Grandpa Emp Walker died six months before I was born. John was only 4 years old when he died. Only John, Glen, Janet and Martha were born before he died. Emp's mother died when he was 5 years old, and his father, Anderson Bruce Walker died two years before Aunt Bruce was born. So none of our parents knew their Walker grandparents. I believe that Grandpa bought his farm from Sheriff Kernodle. Grandma grew up just across Jordon Creek from her homestead. The Grahams and Kernodles were all around us. Great grandpa Sheriff Kernodle died after Grandpa Walker. So it is easy to see why we didn't hear much about the Walkers. But theirs is a very interesting history that needs to be told.

### John Walker (1736- 1810) and Nancy Ashford (1725-1796)

John Walker is the earliest Walker mentioned in "Walker Roots". John married Nancy Ashford. It isn't clear to me where they were born. Some sources say they were born and married in Ireland around the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

John Fox who worked with Kara Graham on the Graham history thinks that this account does not quite ring true. He believes that John was a first generation American who migrated from Delaware and Virginia. He bases his beliefs on the Ashford genealogy and the Graham genealogy.

According to John Fox, Winston Salem:

*I am a descendant of John Graham and his second wife, Mary Bird, daughter of James Bird and his wife, Mary Ashford. I strongly believe Mary and Nancy Ashford were sisters; both daughters of Michael and Ann Ashford of Maryland and Virginia, who at the time of their almost simultaneous deaths, held land on the Potomac, which was sold by a son, George Ashford, who administered the estate, to George Washington to add to his Mt. Vernon Plantation. Mary Ashford and James Bird were married in New Castle, Delaware in 1745 in Old Swede's Church; and I am pretty much of the opinion that perhaps John Walker was of that part of the country as well. The Walker lineage had stated that John Walker was born in Ireland and had immigrated to American, but that does not seem to ring true for me. It would seem more likely that he were a first generation American*

Both John and Nancy were members of the Cross Roads Presbyterian Church and are both buried in the church cemetery. In fact, Nancy was the first person buried in the cemetery and there is a historical marker by her grave documenting that fact. John is buried next to Nancy in plot 191 in the left front section of the cemetery.

I found some unsubstantiated additional information about John on Joel Hager's gercircles web page, but unfortunately that page no longer exists. It says that John's father was **William Walker**, and his mother's first name was **Mary**. William is said to have died in Orange County about 1769, but I don't know where he is buried. Remember that Alamance and Caswell counties were part of Orange county in those days. The web page also said that John and his brother Phillip lived near each other along the

Jordan Creek. Their property was in an area is near what later became the Alamance- Caswell county line.

We are familiar with the Jordon (we called it Jerden) Creek which ran behind Uncle Robert's farm. This all makes sense. This area is approximately 6 miles from Cross Roads Church. That was probably at least a two hour ride by carriage. I presume that Cross Roads was the only Presbyterian Church in the area, and perhaps the only church. The Red House Presbyterian Church in Semora was built at about the same time as Cross Roads, but it was much further away. So was the Hawfields church which was south of Mebane. I'd be happy to update this section if someone wants to research Orange County land records to provide me better information.

John was a distiller. And I presume a prominent and successful member of the community. He must have had some education because he became an officer in the Continental Army.

*From the American Biographical Library, The Biographical Cyclopoedia of American Women, Volume II. Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army During the War of Revolution, Alphabetical List of Officers of the Continental Army (W) Fifteenth Virginia, Pg 565  
Walker, John (N.C.) Captain 1st North Carolina, 1st September, 1775; Major, 26th April, 1777; Lieutenant-Colonel Continental Army and Aide-de-Camp to General Washington, 17th February 1777; resigned 22nd December, 1777. (Died 2d December, 1809.)*

John and Nancy had eleven sons. Four lived in what is now Caswell County, five in Alamance County, and two, Ashford and George, went West (Haywood County, Tennessee).

Nancy's ancestry is better known than John's and can be traced 3 or more generations. Her sister, Mary, was the mother of Mary Bird, wife of John Graham. John and Mary are Grandma's great-great grandparents.

According to John Fox of Winston Salem:

I strongly believe Mary and Ann Ashford were sisters; both daughters of Michael and Ann Ashford of Maryland and Virginia, who at the time of their almost simultaneous deaths, held land on the Potomac, which was sold by a son, George Ashford, who administered the estate, to George Washington to add to his Mt. Vernon Plantation. Mary Ashford and James Bird were married in New Castle, Delaware in 1745 in Old Swede's Church; and I am pretty much of the opinion that perhaps John Walker was of that part of the country as well. The Walker lineage had stated that John Walker was born in Ireland and had immigrated to American, but that does not seem to ring true for me. It would seem more likely that he were a first generation American

I won't go into more details of Nancy's ancestry here but you can look at the genealogy charts for more information. She was at least second generation American.

### **Aaron Walker (1762 – 1833) and Sarah Byrd (1779 – 1843)**

I believe that Aaron was the second oldest of John and Nancy's children. He and Sarah Byrd were married on November 23, 1799 in Wake County, NC. They had six children to my knowledge, but I only have information on two of them. I suspect that Aaron was a distiller like his father but have no information to substantiate that. He must have been relatively affluent because his oldest son, Levi, our great-great grandfather went to medical school at the University of Pennsylvania.

We have a lot of information about Sarah's ancestry that goes back 6 or more generations. Her great-great grandfather was Cornelius Empson. Cornelius served in the Pennsylvania Supreme Court 1689-1701. I have a lot of information about him which I won't include here. But this is where the Empson name that became common in our family originated.

Aaron and Sarah are buried in Cross Roads Cemetery. Cemetery records give the row and grave number but I can't make out the headstones to be sure which graves are theirs.

Two of Aaron and Sarah's sons are our great-great grandfathers. So we will pay special attention to Levi and Empson. This might give you a clue as to how Grandpa got his name! I never really called him Grandpa, but our parents called him Papa so Grandpa seems appropriate.

### **Levi Walker (1798 – 1844) and Rachel Hurdle (1805 – 1884)**

I don't know much about Levi's early years, but he must have had a basic education. I think it is possible that he attended the Bingham School which operated 10 miles North of Mebane from 1815 to 1826. There was no SAT in those days. The recommendation of a respected educator was required to get accepted to a prominent school like the University of Pennsylvania Medical School in Philadelphia where he received his MD degree. The first requirement of that school was proficiency in Latin.

*According to the NC Historical Marker web page:*

*The Reverend William Bingham (1754-1826), a native of Ireland who was educated in Scotland, became principal of Hillsborough Academy in 1813, but departed by 1815 in order to establish his own school. Bingham wished to raise his children in the country. Known as Mount Repose, Bingham's school was about ten miles northwest of Hillsborough. At Mount Repose, the thirty-five to forty male pupils lived and studied in log cabins. The school's classic curriculum and reputation for academic excellence drew students from as far away as Louisiana.*

Levi received a Doctor of Medicine degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1826. Cousin Burton Goodson has his original Latin and English diplomas, as well his membership certificate in the Pennsylvania Medical Society. The Walker genealogy web site has high resolution copies of these certificates. <http://walkergenealogy.walkerfamily.name>



From the University of Pennsylvania history web page (<http://www.archives.upenn.edu/histy/features/1700s/medsch.html>) I found the following information on requirements.

Requirements and courses for medical students also underwent change with the reorganization of the new medical school under the University of Pennsylvania. On March 1, 1792, the Trustees abolished the M.B. degree and set out the new qualifications for the M.D. degree. All degree recipients now had to be at least twenty-one years of age and had to have studied medicine for a minimum of three years, with at least two years of this study taking place at the University of Pennsylvania. The required course included anatomy, surgery and midwifery; chemistry; institutes and clinical medicine; and practice of physic. A course in natural and experimental philosophy was also necessary, unless they had attended these lectures in another educational institution. In the year he was to graduate, a student was to be examined privately by the medical professors and then again by the University faculty and trustees; finally the candidate wrote a thesis on an approved topic, paid for its printing, and finally defended this thesis at the annual May commencement.

I was able to contact the school and received the following information.

We can confirm that Levi Walker from North Carolina received his Medical Degree in 1826, and the topic of his thesis was Opium. He resided in Philadelphia during the 1824 and 1825 academic years – so two years of study.

Dr. Levi was a mason and belonged to the Bingham Masonic Lodge in Mebane. Daddy had his Masonic ring and apron. He gave the ring to Carolyn, but gave the apron back to the lodge when he moved to Hawfields Retirement Home in about 1994.

Levi's will is on page 161 Caswell County digital archives, Caswell county wills at 2A 314-315 in MARS data base. The box number is 220.74.1. Apparently you have to go to Raleigh to see it. He is buried in Cross Roads Cemetery on NC 119 just North of Mebane, NC.

Dr. Levi Walker married Rachel Hurdle sometime after he returned from Philadelphia. I was able to locate a picture of Rachel through a Hurdle web page. She was at least a third generation American. I have no pictures of Dr. Levi, and there probably were none since he died in 1844.



Dr. Levi and Rachel had eight children I think, but I can only name seven of them. Our great grandfather, Anderson Bruce was their oldest son. He would have been about 13 years old when Dr. Levi died. I believe he became the man of the house at that point. But before we talk about Anderson Bruce, let's look at Levi's brother, Empson, who is also our great-great grandfather.

### **Empson Walker (1803 – 1876) and Martha Currie (1804 – 1865)**



Empson and Martha were married on September 11, 1825 in Caswell County, NC. In 1842 they joined a wagon train to Haywood County Tennessee, where two uncles had settled a decade earlier. Empson is a unique name. Several of his descendants were given this name. This enabled me to connect with Charles Walker, his great-great grandson, and our third cousin, via the internet. Charles sent me information compiled by his first cousin, Jo Ann Rice.

From Charles Walker notes:

Married Martha Currie on 5/12/1831 @CaswellCounty,NC;b. 11/11/1804; d. 9/4/1865. Empson and Martha settled one mile from the Walker home place about 10 miles north of Hillsborough, NC. Martha's grand parents came to America from Ireland in 1758 and settled in VA, later moving to Caswell County, NC. Empson and Martha lived in NC until 1842 when they left for Haywood County, TN by wagon train. They raised three sons and four daughters. We do not know all their names and the order of their birth. We have listed Aaron Walker first. He made the trip to West Tennessee with his family when he was 14 years old.

.In 1842, when Aaron was 14 years old, his father moved his family to Haywood County, TN. Aaron's uncle, Ashford Walker had moved to Haywood County, TN about 12 years earlier, in 1830. It took the Empson5 Walker family 33 days to make the trip by wagon from Orange County, NC to Haywood county, TN. When passing through Nashville, the Walker family stopped

at the Hermitage for water and General Andrew Jackson came out to greet them and wish them well on their journey. When they arrived in Haywood County, Aaron's family settled two miles northwest of Brownsville (In direction of Nut Bush). Aaron and Martha had nine known children: (1) Matie<sup>3</sup> Walker, (2) Pattie<sup>3</sup> Walker, (3) Bettie<sup>3</sup> Walker, (4) Estelle<sup>3</sup> Walker, (5) Pettus<sup>3</sup> Walker, (6) Aaron<sup>3</sup> Walker, (7) James<sup>3</sup> Walker, (8) Empson<sup>3</sup> E. Walker, and (9) Charles<sup>3</sup> S. Walker

Empson, Martha and their family made it to Haywood County, Tennessee in 33 days by wagon train. That's a distance of at least 700 miles, so that's more than 21 miles per day. It is surprising to me that a wagon train could move that fast. The notes above don't include our great grandmother, Henrietta (Harriet), who according to my records was born in Orange County in 1833. So she would have been 9 years old when the family took the wagon train West.

### **Benjamin Crawford Walker(1840- 1863) and Henrietta Walker (1833-1871)**

Daddy said that Levi and Rachel's son Benjamin joined the confederate army and was shipped west. While there he visited his Uncle Empson and married his first cousin, Henrietta (Harriet). Ben was killed in the battle of Vicksburg and their daughter, Ben Anna, was born soon after his death. After the war, our great grandfather, Anderson Bruce took a mule and cart to Haywood County, married his brother's widow, and brought her and Ben Anna back to North Carolina. Most of us remember Aunt Ben Anna who died in 1952. She is the grandmother of our Goodson cousins, Gwen, Burton and Margaret.

On closer examination, I have my doubts about parts of this story. Haywood County, Tennessee is about 300 miles from Vicksburg. I doubt that confederate troops got much if any leave, and even if they did they probably didn't travel 300 miles to visit relatives.

Just based on logic, I suspect that it happened somewhat differently. Remember that Benjamin's father, Levi, died when he was just 4 years old. Our great grandfather, Anderson Bruce, I believe became head of the family. AB was a miller. There were several older children in the family who could help AB run the mill. And I don't think that running a mill was a tremendously labor intensive occupation. But Great grandfather Empson was a farmer. Kids made good workers on a farm in those days.

So I'm suggesting that Benjamin went West to live with his Uncle Empson and Aunt Martha on their farm, perhaps in the early 1850's. And that Benjamin enlisted in the confederate army with a Tennessee unit. He probably married his cousin, Harriet before enlisting in the Confederate Army.

I checked confederate death records for the Battle of Vicksburg and found several Benjamin Walker's from both North Carolina and from Tennessee. First of all this was quite a revelation that so many people with the name Benjamin Walker perished in just this one battle of the Civil War. We know that more people died in this conflict than in all other wars this country has fought combined. But when you put names on the dead it hits home. Or at least for me.

### **Anderson Bruce Walker (1831-1895) and Henrietta Walker (1833 -1871)**

I feel sure that Anderson Bruce, our great grandfather, became man of the house when his father, Dr. Levi Walker died in 1844. He would have been only 13 years old at the time. AB (as he apparently was known, that's what is on this tombstone) became a miller. His mill was on Tom's Creek on the Kerr Chapel Road. In 2001 you could still see the outline of the stone mill pond dam on the West side of the

road near coordinates N36 15.574 W79 22.336. I assume that Dr. Levi owned the property where the mill was located, and that his estate provided funds to build the mill. In any case, AB's mother Rachel was buried next to AB in Kerr Chapel cemetery rather than in Cross Roads cemetery next to her husband. Actually there may not have been a place for her at Cross Roads. When Daddy showed me her grave, he said there is Papa's grandma's grave; she is the one who raised him.

I wonder how Rachel and AB found out that Benjamin had been killed. The confederacy operated a mail service but I would doubt that it was very reliable. Samuel Morse sent his famous message "What hath God Wrought" from Washington to Baltimore in 1844. By 1860, at the beginning of the war, there were more than 50,000 miles of telegraph wires in this country, a fact I found totally amazing. So I assume that telegraph messages were possible from West Tennessee to Central North Carolina, although sending a message would have been very expensive. So I'm guessing that AB and Rachel got the word of Benjamin's death through a combination of telegraph and mail.

I doubt that AB just took a mule and cart to west Tennessee to marry his brother's widow, and his own first cousin, without some sort of a proposal and expectation of acceptance. I guess that he would have used the telegraph for this purpose, and would have received an acceptance before beginning such a journey.

So when did this journey take place? Daddy said it happened after the war. And that makes sense. If he had attempted the trip during the war, he could have been conscripted into the army, or his mule could have been confiscated. I think he would have definitely waited until after the war for this journey. The war ended in April 1865. Grandpa was born in January 1867. So by my calculations, the trip must have been between May 1865 and April 1866. I think that August through October would have been the best times. The weather would have been warm to moderate, food would have been more plentiful than at other times, and perhaps most important the creeks and rivers would have been at lowest levels and easiest to ford.

How long would the journey have taken? We know that the wagon train that took Empson's family West took 33 days. I presume that a man with a mule and a cart could have made the trip somewhat quicker. If he could have covered 33 miles per day then perhaps AB could have made the Western trip in 3 weeks. I suspect the Eastern trip with and Ben Anna and all their belongings would have taken longer.

I suspect that AB had never been further from home than perhaps Danville, which was less than 30 miles from his home. So planning a 700 mile trip to West Tennessee must have been a significant task for him to undertake. There were no reliable maps. In fact it is hard for me to imagine how he would have found his way. And there were no Holiday Inn's, or McDonalds. He was pretty much on his own.

What route would he have taken? I'm guessing that he went to Danville and followed the Danville Pike, a trail that eventually became US58 in Virginia. This would have taken him to Martinsville, Stuart, Meadows of Dan, Hillsville, Galax, Abingdon, to the Wilderness Road. Wilderness Road would have taken him through Cumberland Gap. I suspect that like the wagon train, he went through Nashville, but I'm not as familiar with the roads in Tennessee as in North Carolina and Virginia. I believe that North Carolina trails were far more difficult to cross than this route through Southern Virginia.

I wonder what AB would have taken with him on this journey. Not what would have been ideal, but what he would have had available. First of all, I doubt that he had much if any money. Confederate

money would be worthless. Maybe he had some US money from before the war but probably not very much. Daddy had a Confederate States \$500 bond in his safety deposit box, along with North Carolina \$.50 paper money and other confederate money. He probably told me where he got these, but I don't remember. They could have come from Anderson Bruce, or they could have come from Sheriff Kernodle. In any case, these bonds point out that people in the south probably didn't have much if any hard currency. None of the interest coupons on the \$500 bond had been cashed. Maybe AB had some federal money he saved from before the war, but my guess it was limited.

AB would certainly have taken several bushels of grain, probably oats, for the mule. This is fuel. I doubt that the mule could graze at all along a relatively well traveled road, and even if that were possible the mule would need more substantial food for such a long journey.

I think he would have also carried a tarp if he had one or could have borrowed one. A tarp could protect the contents of the cart during rain storms, and could provide protection from the elements at night.

He would need to have taken food with him on the journey. But what kind of food? I'm not thinking about the ideal food, but what he had.

I searched the internet to see what civil war troops ate during the war. Staples included hard tack (white flower cracker, sounds a lot like a thin hard, cold biscuit), rice (probably not available in central NC), cornmeal, Johnnie Cakes (beef and cornmeal fried with bacon grease), dried beans or peas, molasses, and fresh vegetables.

I know that Grandpa Emp Walker grew a lot of sweet potatoes, so I'm assuming that AB would have also had sweet potatoes. When we grew up, everybody had a couple of pigs. They were the garbage disposal, and provided meat in the fall. And salted pork wouldn't spoil. Since AB was a miller I presume he had flour and cornmeal. So I suspect he took what was available to him to eat. My guess is that he took cornbread, baked at home; baked sweet potatoes; and perhaps some ham or fatback. He would have picked up fresh vegetables where available along the way. That may not seem like much, but I don't see many additional options.

I'm less sure about provisions for the return trip. I presume that AB, Henrietta and Aunt Ben Anna would have been able to re-stock. But the cart would have been more heavily loaded for the return trip. Remember that Great grandma Henrietta would have been bringing all her possessions with her back to North Carolina.

My details of this trip may not be very accurate. But I think we can all agree this trip was difficult, courageous, and probably dangerous. I am hoping that some of Aunt Ben Anna's grandchildren can remember some more details. Aunt Ben Anna died in 1952 so we knew her when we were growing up. Perhaps some of my cousins remember something about the trip. Even a few words about the trip would be useful.

Unfortunately we don't know much about Great grandfather Anderson Bruce or Great grandmother Henrietta. She died five years after the trip back to North Carolina after giving birth to Grandpa Levi Empson, and his brother Anderson Bud Walker. Great grandma Rachel then raised Grandpa, Aunt Ben Anna and Uncle Bud. We owe a debt of gratitude to these ancestors who lived far more courageous lives than we could have imagined.

I have no pictures of either AB or Henrietta. Maybe there were some that burned when Grandpa and Grandma's family home burned in 1925. If anybody has pictures of them, or of any other of the people described in this paper I would love to have a copy.



Ben Anna Walker

## **The Kernodles**

Dr. Douglas Kernodle authored the "Kernodle Family Tree" which documents the Kernodle genealogy in this country. This document is available on the web page at <http://walkergenealogy.walkerfamily.name>

### **George Kernodle (1762 - 1840) and Rettie**

George Kernodle was born in Philadelphia in 1762. He settled in eastern Guilford County, NC, but moved to McNairy County, Tennessee in later life.

### **John Kernodle (1793 - 1866) and Lucretia Lambeth (1799 - 1832)**

John and Lucretia lived in eastern Guilford and western Alamance counties, probably in the Gibsonville area. John was a farmer. I have notes that said he fought in the Civil War. They had seven children, the last of which was born the year Lucretia died.

### **Josiah Kernodle (1823 - 1869) and Isabelle Jane Cummings (1827 - 1899)**

I know little about them except that they had eight children. They were the grandparents of Dr. Charles (Charlie) Kernodle and great-grandparents of the Kernodle doctors in Burlington.

## Robert Thomas Kernodle (1855–1938) and Martha Elizabeth Graham (1857–1876)



From Alamance County Biographies web page:

Robert Thomas KERNODLE: born June 28, 1855 and died on July 12, 1938, having spent 83 years of active living in the Union Ridge area. He was one of the best loved of all the men in Alamance Co. and was helpful to many. He was Sheriff of Alamance Co. in the 1880s and 1890s. In 1894 he was elected Sheriff and again in 1896. After ten years, in 1906, he was again elected sheriff and served two years. He was not a politician, but was a popular citizen. He was one of the largest landowners in Alamance Co. with over 2500 acres of good farmland. Sheriff KERNODLE, as he was called, was the first person to ever give Elon College \$5,000 at one time; he counted the \$5,000 out in gold and gave it to Dr. W.A. HARPER, President of Elon College. He was a member of Bethlehem Christian Church. When Sheriff KERNODLE was approached by someone wanting to rent a farm, he would always go and look at the prospective tenant's woodpile. If he didn't have a good pile of wood he wouldn't rent to him, having the philosophy that anyone who wouldn't work for himself, wouldn't work for anyone else. He was married twice, first to Miss Martha GRAHAM, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John A. GRAHAM. To this union were born four children: Ida Estelle KERNODLE, who married L.E. WALKER; Nannie KERNODLE; Fannie KERNODLE, married to Willis A. DAMERON; and Walter G. KERNODLE, who married Wyona SOMERS. Sheriff KERNODLE's second marriage was to Mrs. Nannie TAPSCOTT GRAHAM, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. Marion TAPSCOTT. Sheriff KERNODLE also served in the Legislature representing Alamance Co. in 1916 and 1917. One of his great interests was fox hunting. He belonged to a club that had a lodge on what is now Fort Bragg. One of the last few hunts he went on was to Wayne Co. after he was 81 years of age. Sheriff KERNODLE has many prominent descendants now living in Alamance Co.

To our parents, Sheriff Kernodle was Grandpa. He was the only grandpa they knew. He obviously was quite wealthy. Aunt Frances said that he lost \$90,000 in the stock market crash in 1929. That was a lot of money in those days. He simply said he wasn't going to worry about it, and that he was going fox hunting.

Daddy said that when he was building his house, Sheriff came by and told him that he should insure it. Daddy responded that Sheriff had never insured anything in his life, to which Sheriff responded, "right, but I never owned anything I couldn't replace."

Sheriff and Martha had five children. Grandma, Aunt Nannie, Aunt Fannie, Uncle Walter, and Robert Thomas, Jr. I don't have birth or death dates for Robert Thomas, Jr, and I presume he may have died at birth.

They are buried in Union Ridge cemetery and share a headstone with her parents, John Alpha and Lucinda Graham, on the opposite side of the road from the church.

## The Grahams

Kara Graham and John Fox published "The Grahams of Union Ridge" which provides a wealth of information on the Graham family. I don't have an electronic copy of this book but several cousins have a copy.

### John Graham (1741 - 1809) and Mary Bird (1758 - 1841)

Notes from John Fox web page: <http://worldconnect.rootsweb.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?db=johnfox38>

Note: It is likely that the people from Pennsylvania were very much influenced by the following notice:

Note: "December 5, 1771

Note: The Pennsylvania Gazette

Note:

To be SOLD in small Tracts, ABOUT 30,000 acres of land, in Orange county, North-Carolina, commonly called the Haw-fields; the quality of these lands is so generally known, that it is needless to say any thing in recommendation of them, only this may be proper to mention, that they produce as good wheat as any in Pennsylvania, and being a strong soil, will bear extraordinary hemp, flax, and tobacco; there is navigation within 70 miles, several reputable merchants having lately established stores at Cross-creek, the want of which formerly obliged the inhabitants of Orange county to carry their flour sometimes 180 miles by land; this inconvenience being obviated by the settlement at Cross-creek abovementioned, and the peace of the country being now happily restored, and settled upon a solid foundation, there is no doubt but this part of it will shortly become as flourishing as any in America.

Note:

WANTED, a person who is perfectly master of the cultivation and management of hemp, with regard to the water rotting. &c. Any one so qualified, and willing to go to North Carolina to superintend a hemp plantation for such a part of the profit as shall be agreed upon between him and the proprietor of the land and negroes, may apply to Mr. JOHN BIDDLE, at the Sign of the Indian King, in Market-street, Philadelphia.

Note:

N. B. The proprietor may be met with at the Secretary's-Office, at Newbern, in North-Carolina, during the winter months, and in the summer season at Hillsborough, within 12 miles of the Haw-fields, and Mr. JOHN WOOD, who lives upon the land, will shew any of the tracts to those that are inclinable to become purchasers."

Note:

FROM THE ORANGE COUNTY LAND ENTRIES 1778-1795, Entry 636 8 September 1775 James Tenian(Tinning?)(husband of Elizabeth McAdams) enters 420 ac in Orange county on the branches of little Cain Creek of Haw River; border: on the S by claim of John Graham an on N by claims of Wm Morrow; includes improvement where David Rea lives. Entry 644. 10 September 1778 James Elliott enters 400 ac in Orange Co on W side of Little Cain Crk of Haw R; border: the claims of Robert Melicum, widow Stallworth, John Graham, & his "other" claim where widow Simmons lives. Warrent issued 19 December 1778. Entry 833. 7 December 1778 Wm Dobbins enters 150 ac in Orange Co on waters of Haw Cr of Haw R; border Alexander Mebane , Saml McAdams, Robt Johnston, includes improvements where Robt Dobbins lives; warrent issued 12 August 1779. Entry 832 7 December 1778 Mary Taylor enters 200 ac on branches of Haw R; border: Simeon Taylor, John Elliott, James Elliott, includes her improvement; warrent issued 17 August 1779; John Graham set up a claim to part of this entry.

Note:

Entry 883. 23 December 1778 John Graham enters 426 ac in Orange Co on waters of Little Cain Cr of Haw R; border John Murray; includes his improvement; warrent issued 14 October 1779 Entry 1048. 23 January 1779 John Graham enters 468 ac in Orange on both sides of Jordan Crk includes improvements where Thomas Bracken lives. Warrent issued 7 December

1779, located in the northwestern portion of Orange County, very close to the Caswell County, North Carolina border. These entries would indicate that John Graham first settled in the southern part of Alamance County known as the Hawfields section in close proximity to Alexander Mebane's holdings. Robert Graham, the youngest child of Frances Mebane and John Graham did marry a Thompson, many of whom settled in the southern part of Alamance County. The Census of 1850 has Robert living in the southern district of Alamance County, probably on land which had been claimed by John Graham in the early land entries.

Note:

John Graham did have to re-enter his application for his land grant in 1798 which allowed him to re-establish his interest in the parcel of land on the banks of Jordan Creek, containing some 466 and 1/2 acres. In this last land transaction, it is most conceivable that he purchased the land upon which he had been living, brought about by the missrecording of land deeds at the State level. This land did provide the possibility of making available sizeable plots of property for his children by his second marriage. He also received in the will of Elizabeth McAdams Tinnen, a legacy of real and personal property, although the will does not identify the location of any land if there were any to transfer.

Note:

John Graham was listed in the 1790 Census as being a cooper, or barrel maker. This would indicate that he considered himself a skilled tradesman rather than a farmer, although he and his family must have practiced such to provide for the large family. Cooper's tools are a major item which he included in his will, to be left "for the use of my three sons, James, George, and Thomas. (His other sons John and Robert had moved elsewhere and William had been killed by Indians by the time that his will was written.) This legacy of skill in crafting with wood can be found in every generation since. According to the records from the Graham family Bible, John was born in January of 1741 and married on 25 December 1770, which indicates that he did not marry until the age of 29. It is quite possible that he earned his livelihood as a cooper during his early years before marriage and land ownership and during the married and productive years of his life. In the 1850 Census, both James Graham and George Graham list themselves as coopers, indicating the value these men placed upon the valuable skills they had been taught, and were imparting to their succeeding generation.

Note:

Note:

Life was difficult, apparently, since his first wife, Frances Mebane, daughter of Alexander Mebane, Sr., died at an early age sometime before 1782, when he was married a second time to Mary Bird, daughter of James Bird of nearby Caswell County. His eldest son, William was killed by Indians in 1794 and a little daughter, Sarah, died within a few months of her birth. Their religious faith, significant to their ancestors so recent to Ulster, Ireland, must have been as essential in their will to survive and succeed in this new and sometimes difficult environment. We can find the church records of this early period full of the names and deeds of these brave and industrious members and decedents of this Orange County family - the Grahams. One of John's sons, James, donated the land upon which the Church at Union was organized. The past, present and future rolls of this church owe much of their existence to this family.

Note:

Note: John had twelve children from his two marriages and their descendents proliferate the population of the county, state, and nation.

Note:

Note: John B. Fox

Change Date: 3 NOV 2003

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The Graham's Lament

as posted on "the Grahams of Chester County" web page.

Our banishment to Ireland inspired a ballad, which is preserved in the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border. It was written to be accompanied by the Scottish air titled: "I Will Awa' And Will Not Tarry." It is sometimes called "The Graham's Lament." If anyone ever finds the music to this song, I would be most obliged to know.

John Graham     jdarylgraham@wmconnect.com

#### "Sweet Ennerdale"

Now fare thee well, sweet Ennerdale,  
Baith kith and countrie, I bid adieu.  
For I maun away, and I may not stay,  
To some uncouth land which I never knew.

To wear the blue I think it best  
Of all the colours that I see.  
And I ll wear it for the gallant Grahams

That are banished from their an countrie.

I have no gold, I have no land,  
I have no pearl nor precious stane,  
But I would sell my silken snood  
To see the gallant Grahams come hame.

In Wallace days, when they began,  
Sir John the Graham did bear the gre;  
Through all the lands of Scotland wide,  
He was the Lord of the south countrie.

And so was seen full many a tim;  
For the summer flowers did never spring.  
But every Graham in armour bright  
Would then appear before the king.

They all were dressed in armour sheen,  
Upon the pleasant banks of Tay,  
Before a king they might be seen  
These gallant Grahams in array.

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John Fox also writes:

>>James I of England "planted" the area of Ulster, Ireland with Lowland Scots in an effort to make "Ireland a civil place." Thousands of Scottish lowlanders moved to North Ireland. They transformed Ulster into a prosperous region. This group of energetic and determined people, however, faced serious ostracism with the passage of the Test Act which severely limited these devout Presbyterians from important civil and military offices, made it illegal for them to practice law or teach school, and denied them many other civil and religious rights; and were fined and imprisoned for exercising their form of worship; and the doors of many of their churches were nailed shut.

The great English historian, James A. Froude, eloquently described the causes of the large exodus of Scot-Irish to the New World: "Men of spirit and energy refused to remain in a country where they were held unfit to receive the rights of citizens....Religious bigotry, commercial jealousy, and modern landlordism (they were charged high rents for land usage) had combined to do their worst against the Ulster settlement...Vexed with suits in ecclesiastical courts, forbidden to educate their children in their own faith, treated as dangerous in a state which but for them would have no existence, and associated with Papist in an Act of Parliament which deprived them of their civil rights, the most earnest of them at length abandoned the unthankful service. They saw at last that the liberties for which their fathers had fought were not to be theirs in Ireland..."

Mary Bird's family had been in this country for several generations. Her brother, Empson Bird was the father of Sarah Byrd, husband of Aaron Walker. Apparently the spelling of the Bird name changed over time to Byrd.

John and Mary lived near the intersection of Union Ridge Road and McRay road, just West of the current Union Ridge Church. They had 8 children. They were buried in a family plot on the Graham farm. This plot has not survived but has long since been plowed under.

## **James Graham (1792 - 1856) and Martha Douglas (1791 - 1848)**

Notes from John Fox.

James, donated the land upon which the Church at Union was organized. The past, present and future rolls of this church owe much of their existence to this family.

James was a barrel maker. He is buried in Union Ridge cemetery. His broken headstone is shown below.



## **John Alpha Graham (1817 - 1894) and Lucinda Herndon (1825 - 1898)**

John and Lucinda were first cousins. His mother was Elizabeth Graham, daughter of John Graham. As far as I can determine, great grandmother Martha was their only child.

John Alpha was a master carpenter and furniture maker. I have his carpenter tool box. Daddy kept it for years in his tool shed where it was covered with oil and grease. I have had it restored and it now is the bear case in our mountain cabin.



Mary Alice has a chest built by John Alpha. It had been painted at some point. When she was 5 or 6 she helped Uncle Thomas scrape off the paint. It is beautiful today.



JA Graham Chest of Drawers. Mary Myers Walnut chest of drawers by JA Graham, Carolyn Hamel

Carolyn has a solid walnut chest of drawers that he hand built. Glen and I each have one of his straight chairs. I also have a stool he built as well as his wallet from about 1850.



Stool built by John Alpha Graham



John Alpha Graham's wallet

Grandma was brought up virtually next door to her grandpa John Alpha and grandma Lucinda. Her mother was their only child so I would imagine they would have given a lot of attention to Grandma Ida and her siblings.

## Levi Empson Walker (1867 - 1937) and Ida Estelle Kernodle (1877 - 1966)



This brings us to Grandma Ida Estelle Kernodle and Grandpa Levi Empson Walker. I think it is easy to see why we didn't hear much about the Walker family, but heard a lot about the Grahams and Kernodles. I always thought that we were close relatives to the Grahams in the neighborhood, but that wasn't really the case. Our parents were just third cousins to Kara Graham and her siblings. But I think Grandma just had a lot of Graham in her.

I think we can recognize Grandma from the picture above, unlike the earlier picture of her when she was 18. We never really knew Grandpa. He died just before I was born. I doubt that any of my first cousins really remember him.

Grandpa attended Wake Forest College for one year. The picture of him at the beginning of this paper shows a pin in his lapel that looks like it could have been a fraternity pin. Grandma went to Elon for a year and remained an Elon supporter throughout her life. I know nothing of their early education, but I'm sure they were either home schooled or went to a one room school.

Grandpa became a tobacco farmer. As far as I know no one took over operation of AB's mill. I suspect that the introduction of the steam engine made small mills on small creeks obsolete before the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Tobacco was becoming the best cash crop to grow in Eastern and Central North Carolina. Uncle Robert and Uncle Preston had small tobacco allotments, and tenants on Grandma's farm also raised tobacco. All of us cousins worked in tobacco when we were growing up, but I'm not sure that any of us really liked it.

Grandpa was sick on and off for many years. When daddy was 4 years old, Grandpa was sick in bed for a long period of time. Daddy sat by his bedside and Grandpa taught him his multiplication tables through 15. He remembered those tables for all his life. In the 30's they thought that Grandpa had tuberculosis and he spent some time in the TB sanatorium in Burlington, but I don't believe that he was ever absolutely diagnosed with TB.



Walker home that burned in 1925



Grandma's house as we remember it.

## Children of Levi Empson Walker and Ida Kernodle



Grandpa and Grandma had nine children; three boys and six girls. As shown in the picture above they are: **Bruce, Frances, Robert, Alice, Estelle, Lillian, Thomas, Mamie, Claude.**

The document “Descendants of Levi Empson Walker and Ida Kernodle Walker” describes my Uncles and Aunts and my first cousins. I am reluctant to write about my uncles and aunts. I’d prefer that one of their children take on this task. I will write a short note about Aunt Bruce and Aunt Mamie, and about Daddy. Hopefully my cousins will write about their parents. I will be happy to add their notes to the document.

Please let me know if you see errors in the information I have provided in this paper. This is a work in progress. I will be happy to add additional information that you might have. I’m sure many of you have stories or facts that I don’t have. Give them to me; I’ll be happy to add them.

I really need my cousin’s help in writing “Descendants of Levi Empson Walker and Ida Kernodle Walker”. Not only do I want to document our parents, but I want to describe what it was like to grow up on NC62 North of Burlington in the 1940’s and early 1950’s. I have some ideas, but I’m sure my cousins also make valuable contributions to this.

### Who Are We

So who are we? I’d say our ancestors were farmers and teachers. Of course most people were farmers in those days. But our ancestors were far better educated than the average person from the mid 1700’s through our parents. Both Grandpa and Grandma and four of nine of their children went to college.

Many families had no one who even went to high school. We certainly weren't soldiers. Patriot John Walker fought in the Revolutionary War. Benjamin Walker fought in the Civil War. Uncle Boyd served in the army in WW2. Uncle Aubrey fought in the Pacific in WW2. John Boswell served in the Air Force in the 50's. Glen served in the Army in Germany during the cold war. I was commissioned through ROTC in the Army and served in France after the Berlin Wall was built. Tommy served in Viet Nam. But you couldn't call any of us career soldiers.

There are few farmers left today although many of us prefer a rural lifestyle. But there are still teachers in most branches of the family. There are also engineers and computer scientists. And our children and grandchildren live all over this country from coast to coast.