

William Nichols Cook
(c1730 – c1810)

Possible Ancestry of William Nichols Cook:

Descendants would want to more thoroughly check the records of Brunswick and Lunenburg Counties, but it appears that William Nichols Cook may have been the son of a Robert Cook. Robert Cook patented 296 acres on Cook's Creek in Brunswick County, Virginia on 20 March 1745, in what would later be Lunenburg County.¹ He was probably in Brunswick earlier, as John and Robert Cook were among the creditors of the estate of Peter Brewer in 1743. Robert Cook's will, dated 4 December 1747 in St. John's Parish, Brunswick County, and proved in early 1748, names several children, one of whom was "Nicholas Cooke", evidently a younger son.² [If he was the same Robert Cook earlier in Prince George County, then Nicholas Cook was probably the son mentioned in the parish vestry book as born 28 July 1731.³] Unfortunately for this theory, another son named in the will was "William Cooke". He gave his son Reuben Cook five pounds "to secure the land in Carolina" The real estate was split among four of the seven sons: Reuben, Nicholas, Frederick and Buryman Cooke. He named his son Reuben Cook and his brother Reuben Cook as executors. When the executors qualified on 7 April 1748, a "William Nicols" reserved the right to join in the executorship.

On the 1751 tithables lists of Lunenburg County (which was formed from Brunswick in the meantime) is presumably the same "William Nickolls" with a "Nichols Cook" in his household. In 1752, the tithables include "Wm. Nichoals and "Nichoals Cook" together. In 1750 William Nichols had been a single tithable. [This William Nichols may have been the same one who was a son of John Nichols and Susannah Rains. He died in early 1762 in Lunenburg County leaving a will naming a wife Mary, a son named William Nichols Jr., and a daughter named Elenor Hight.] Although his will does not mention a wife, Robert Cooke and wife Winifred sold half of the 296 acre grant on 5 March 1746 and the rest on 5 November 1747. This may explain the name of the Winifred Cook, wife of Obediah Martin, who was probably a daughter of William N. Cook.

It is also conceivable that William N. Cook was a son of the William Cook. Son of Abraham Cook Sr., who so mysteriously died in Cumberland County, Virginia circa 1750. If so, this would have made him a first cousin of William Cook. There is no evidence at all for this theory other than the fact that some residents of Cumberland County did later migrate to Surry County. I note, for example, that the Olive Roberts whose land claim adjoined William N. Cook in Surry was married to Sarah Woodson, daughter of Sanborn Woodson of Cumberland County. And Ambrose Bramlett, another early land claimant, was married to her sister Jane Woodson.

William Nichols Cook in Surry County

¹ Virginia Patent Book 25, p1.

² Lunenburg County Will Book 2, p145.

³ *The Vestry Book and Register of Bristol Parish, Virginia, 1720-1789*, Churchill Gibson Chamberlayne, contains entries for the births of three children: John (29 September 1724), Nicholas (28 July 1731), and Frederick (15 December 1734)

“Wm. Nichols Cook” appears on the 1768 Rowan County tax list of Jacob Laesch, located in or near present Yadkin County. Another undated Rowan tax list by Gideon Wright for the same area, perhaps for 1769, lists him as “Nichols Cook”. There is a record of a debt suit by Edmund Fanning (a local Tory merchant operating mainly in Orange County) against “Nicholas Cook” of Rowan County dated 11 May 1770, before Surry had organized itself into an operating county. The 1771 tax list, the first for Surry County, lists “William Nichols Cook” and in the 1774 tax list he appears as “William Nickles Cook & John Cook” with two taxables. In 1775 he is listed as “Nichols Cook” on the list of Gideon Wright. It is possible that he was related in some way to the John Cook who appears on most of these same lists (see separate page)

On 22 March 1775 “Nicholas” Cook sold to Andrew Martin the “personality and improvement where sd Cook now lives”.⁴ This improvement is apparently that which is mentioned in a claim entered by William Ramsey on 6 October 1778, which included “the improvement Nicholas Cook formerly lived on.”⁵ It was located on Beaverdam Creek, probably the one in northwestern present-day Yadkin County. Note that he did not sell the land, but rather the improvements to it. We can explain why he did not hold title to the land with a brief diversion, which also explains the rash of claims in 1778-9:

Note: Old Surry County was part of the Granville District, a band of land roughly 60 miles wide bordered by the Virginia border and stretching (in theory) to the Pacific Ocean, which had been granted to John Carteret, Earl Granville, in 1744. From 1748 through 1763 Granville made grants of this land. When he died on 11 April 1763 his land office was closed, never to reopen. For a period of fifteen years, from early 1763 through early 1778, settlers moving into the Surry County area had no means of obtaining title to their land, and were literally squatters. On 15 November 1777, the North Carolina General Assembly passed the “Confiscation Act”, giving the state authority to sell Granville's land, along with land confiscated from Loyalists. County justices were charged with appointing an entry taker to accept claims for State grants. Surry County appointed Joseph Winston, who began taking entries in April 1778. Newly formed Wilkes County appointed a separate entry taker. Naturally, this created a land rush, which was largely a “first come, first served” affair. Squatters who had settled on and improved their land were given little protection; only those who had lived on their land for at least seven years could claim “prior rights”, and had only until the end of 1778 to make their claims. Speculators, the most notorious of whom was William Terrell Lewis, immediately began claiming large numbers of tracts which were already occupied by others. The settlers on the land were allowed three months to file a caveat, which was adjudicated by the county court. As a practical matter, few squatters filed caveats. In part this was due to a combination of low expectations and the absence of a notification process. Others of these claims were for lands occupied by Loyalists. Before one could make an entry, an oath of allegiance to the Patriot government was required. This oath required the taker to defend the “Independent Government” against the King, this at a time when the Revolution's outcome was still very much in doubt. Loyalists and the more prudent fence-sitters therefore did not make entries, and their lands could easily be acquired by other claimants.

I don't find an immediate record of his buying or claiming substitute land, though he apparently was occupying land nearby just south of the Yadkin. There is an undated claim (ca 1778 by

⁴ Recorded much later in Surry County Will Book I. p58.

⁵ Joseph Winston, His Entry Book, Surry County, NC Land Entries 1778-1781, Wells, Phillips, and Leonard, p73, entry 820.

context) by a William Cook, perhaps him, for 400 acres on the Yadkin River adjoining Olive Roberts, Joseph Johnson, and Francis Calloway.⁶ This claim was evidently never granted to a Cook. [My William Cook's separate 1778 claim included Joseph Johnson's land and residence, so it was very nearby.⁷] It appears Nicholas Cook was already occupying land in that location. On 20 May 1778, Olive Roberts entered 200 acres bounded by a line "agreed upon between Nicholas Cook".⁸ [This land was later seized and sold to William T. Lewis.] On 11 August 1778, Jacob Hedden entered a claim for 200 acres on the south bank of the Yadkin "adjoining Nicholas Cook below".⁹ On 13 August 1778, as Nicholas Cook, he finally entered a claim for 100 acres adjacent Olive Roberts.¹⁰ The grant was recorded four years later, in late 1782, and he would pay tax on this land for the next 22 years.¹¹ An undated claim by John Hurt (c1779 by context) was for 100 acres adjoining Nicholas Cook.¹² Another undated entry (late 1779 by context) by Henry Speer was for 100 acres on the Yadkin River joining Nicholas Cook on the south and Olive Roberts on the west.¹³ All of this land was on the southern bank of the Yadkin in the northwestern part of present-day Yadkin County. Not all of these claims resulted in warrants, but in the 1782 tax list, John Hurt and William N. Cook are consecutive, with Olive Roberts, my William Cook, William Cook Jr. and John Cook enumerated nearby. They are the only Cooks within twenty miles and are evidently physically located quite close to one another. They would all continue to be close neighbors for the next twenty years.

By 1778 or so, my William Cook and his son William Cook Jr. had moved into Surry and located in the same militia district as William Nichols Cook. It was thus necessary for the county clerk to differentiate the William Cooks. Beginning about this time, his name was recorded almost exclusively as either William Nichols Cook or William N. Cook in the court and deed records, in which he appears several times annually for the next thirty years. Beyond an anomaly or two in other records, only in occasional tax records does his name appear as "Nicholas" (which may have been a misreading of Nichols by the transcribers of the tax lists).

As "William Nichols Cook" he entered a claim for 200 acres on the north side of the Yadkin in an undated claim, but late 1779 by context.¹⁴ He paid tax on this land from 1782 through 1785, but not thereafter. The warrant was apparently transferred to Robert Lanier, a land speculator.

The court records for Surry County are mostly missing until 1779, after which William Nichols Cook appears on a regular basis. The most interesting citations are for his service in several public offices. On 14 May 1779 William Nichols Cook was appointed constable in the militia district of Salathiel Martin.¹⁵ The following year, on 10 May 1780, William Cook was appointed

⁶ See Winston, entry 1408. The warrant was granted not to Cook but to Robert Lanier. Apparently the same William Cook claimed 300 acres in the next consecutive entry, but later withdrew the claim.

⁷ My William Cook's 1778 claim included the houses of Ambrose Bramlett and Joseph Johnson. Allegedly, Joseph Johnson was married to a Cook and Ambrose Bramlett and Olive Roberts were brothers-in-law, both having married sisters named Woodson.

⁸ See Winston, entry 131

⁹ See Winston, entry 429

¹⁰ See Winston, entry 547

¹¹ Surry County Deed Book B, p214.

¹² See Winston, entry 1489

¹³ See Winston, entry 1698

¹⁴ See Winston, entry 1861

¹⁵ Surry County, North Carolina Court Minutes, (Volumes I and II combined), Mrs. W. O. Absher, p14, p16.

the Justice for Salathiel Martin's District, William Nichols Cook was reappointed constable, and William Terrell Lewis was appointed assessor.¹⁶ On 16 August 1780 William Nichols Cook was appointed tax collector for Martin's district, but the following May was replaced as both constable and collector.¹⁷ He may have been temporarily incapacitated for some reason, for in August 1782 he was reappointed as constable and tax collector in Martin's district.¹⁸ In 1783 Martin's district was redefined into two other districts (Atkins and Lewis), and William Nichols Cook was appointed assessor for Atkin's district.¹⁹ He was apparently made the constable in Lewis' district in 1784 (the court records are lost for that year) for he resigned the post in May 1785.²⁰ He was again mentioned as a constable in 1787, but does not appear to have held any further public offices.²¹ He did, however, serve more or less constantly on juries through the mid-1790s.

William Nichols Cook appears infrequently in the will and deed records, but those few citations show he was well know to the family of William Cook. On 10 July 1782, he witnessed a power of attorney from John Cook of Charlotte County, Virginia to his father William Cook of Surry. This is the first of several surviving signatures for him, all as "William N. Cook", although when he proved the deed in court the clerk entered his name as "William Nichols Cook."²² On 10 May 1785, he was security for William Cook and Nathan Allen's guardianship of the orphans of William Ridge, which would later make him a party to one of the several lawsuits over the orphans' estates.²³

In the meantime, he appeared in the tax lists of 1782, 1784, 1785, and 1786 – the only surviving lists for that decade. For 1782-85, he was charged tax on both his 100 and 200 acre plots but only for the former in 1786. The 1782 list does not enumerate polls, but he was charged for one poll for 1784, two for 1785, and one for 1786. In 1784 Stage Cook began to appear in the lists, enumerated consecutively with William Nichols Cook that year. John Cook appeared for the first time in the same district in 1786. There are no further tax lists until 1790.

He is not in the February 1786 state census of Surry County. However, neither Adkins' and Lewis's districts, covering northern Yadkin County, were turned in and are missing from the census.

The 1790 census, returned in August, has William N. Cook in what by then was called Meredith's district. The household consisted of two males under 16 (Peyton and Grove?) and two males over 16 (William N. and Phillip?) in the household, with only one female. Whatever daughters he had were evidently married before 1790. No apparent sons are in the census – but it appears that several Cooks are missing (as in 1786). For example, John Cook who appears in

¹⁶ Absher, p23. [William Cook and William Terrell Lewis would serve as justices for the next decade or more. William Terrell Lewis, a grandson of the William Terrell who had lived adjoining Abraham Cook in New Kent, was a fascinating character.]

¹⁷ Absher, p25, p27.

¹⁸ Absher, p45.

¹⁹ Absher, p57.

²⁰ Absher, p68.

²¹ Absher, p146.

²² Power of attorney is recorded in Will Book 2, p8 and the court record is in Absher, p51.

²³ Absher, p64.

the same district in the 1790 tax list is also missing from the census. Stage Cook was apparently in Tennessee in 1790 (see below).

Between 1790 and 1800 he appears less often in the records, and was no longer holding public office, perhaps reflecting his advancing age. He appears on jury lists for most of the decade, and as plaintiff or defendant in a few suits. He was a witness for William Cook's suit, as guardian of the Ridge orphans, against William Terrell Lewis in 1790 and both a party and a witness to the suit by Jonathan Haines against William Cook, William T. Lewis and others.²⁴ William N. Cook and Phillip Cook witnessed the will of Mildred Meredith on 2 February 1796 and both proved it in court on 13 August 1796.

There are surviving tax lists for Surry County for each year 1790-1800. William N. Cook was apparently exempted from the poll tax, though no record of it was found in the court records. [Exemption due to age was left up to the local tax authority until 1801, when the age was set by state law at 50.] He appears in these lists with 100 acres and no polls – except for 1796. In 1796 he appears with one poll, most likely Stage Cook who was missing himself that year. [He was originally charged with two polls in 1796, but was relieved of one poll by the court on 10 May 1797.]

He is in the 1800 census, as head of a household of two persons: one male and one female both over 45. The last reference to him in Surry County is a deed proved in court on 12 November 1806 from "William N. Cook" to John Spencer, on the oath of Airs Hudspeth. I haven't found this deed, but I assume it was a sale of his 100 acres. [As an interesting coincidence, Stage Cook sold land in 1809 to a (different) William Cook, who a couple years later sold it to the same John Spencer. The implication is that Stage Cook's land was near or adjacent to that of William N. Cook.]

There are no records of his death in Surry County, nor are there any records mentioning his wife. It could be that he accompanied some of his children to Kentucky, though he does not appear to be in the 1810 Kentucky census. Peyton Cook, however, has a female over 45 in his 1810 household who might be the wife.

The eleven children of William Cook Sr. are identified in his 1801 will. The language of the will implies that all children are named, and his long experience as a judge would likely make him careful to name all his children. The several other Cooks in the same small geography are therefore likely to be children of William Nichols Cook. They include the following:

1. **John Cook ?** (c1755 – 1804) It is not at all clear that John Cook belongs here, but I include him only as a reminder that it is possible the John Cook of Surry was the son of William N. Cook. Since the evidence is somewhat confusing, I have devoted a separate page to this person.

²⁴ This is a very complicated story, spanning more than 25 years, better told elsewhere. William N. Cook was a witness because he was a near neighbor of William Cook, William Terrell Lewis, Jonathan Haines, and the others involved. He was also a security for a guardian bond, which further involved him in the suits.

2. **Stage Cook** (c1760 - ?) His name is found mainly as “Stage”, and the few signatures I’ve found are as “Stage Cook”, but occasional records refer to him as “Astage” and similar variants. The earliest record of him in Surry County is his witness to a bill of sale in early 1780 executed at the house of William T. Lewis.²⁵ He appears on the 1784 Surry tax list listed next to William N. Cook, and appears on tax lists in the same district thereafter through 1800. [He was not on the 1782 list, which does not include polls.] He witnessed a deed from Stephen Williford to William Terrell Lewis on 14 February 1783, and proved it in court in 1792. He is not in the 1786 state census (which is incomplete) or the 1790 federal census. Although he is on the 1790 tax list, he may have been temporarily out of the county for the census, for he made a deposition in Green County, North Carolina (now Tennessee) on 20 March 1790.²⁶ On 10 October 1791 he, James Downey, and Obediah Martin, witnessed a deed from William Terrell Lewis to William Cockerham for land adjoining the Olive Roberts claim next to William N. Cook.²⁷ I could not find a record of a purchase, but he paid tax on 225 acres in 1798 through 1800, the last surviving tax list until 1812. He married Mary Shores by bond dated 4 May 1799, with William Holleman of Stokes County as his surety. Either Stage or Mary apparently had children by an earlier marriage, for he is in the 1800 Surry census with a wife and two females 10-16. He may have been the father of a bastard son named Alford Perkins, by Betsey Perkins; he was issued a citation on 14 May 1800 to show cause why the fifteen month old child should not be bound out. He bought 125 acres from the Sheriff, formerly the land of Joel Lewis, in 1800.²⁸ He appears on several jury lists, notably one of 13 February 1801 and again on 12 August 1801 which was to view the bounty lands of Jonathan Haines adjoining Allen’s old ironworks. Stage Cook proved a deed from William Cockerham Sr. to William Cockerham Jr. on 9 February 1802 for the land bought in 1791. He witnessed the will of John Person on 29 March 1802 and proved it in court on 11 May 1802. On the same date Obediah Martin processioned 184.5 acres of Stage Cook. On 16 February 1803 Joel Riggs sued Stage Cook [successfully] for 20 pounds. William Cook [probably the former Jr.] and Stage Cook were securities for William Burch’s performance as constable on 13 August 1803. A deed from Stage Cook to Thomas Johnson was proved on 17 February 1804 by the oath of William Cook. He also witnessed the will of John Cook on 18 February 1804 and proved it in court on 15 May 1805. On 5 May 1805 Stage Cook sold land to John Andress, and on 31 August 1809 sold William Cook the 125 acres on the Yadkin, with William McBride and Isaac Cook [son of John] as witnesses.²⁹ His final appearance in Surry was on 15 November 1809 when he proved his own deed to William Cook. He does not appear in the 1810 census of Surry, nor on the 1812 tax list. He appears to have gone elsewhere, but I found no sign of him.
3. **Phillip Cook** (c1765 – c1809) He was appointed constable in Meredith’s district [the district at the time where William Cook and William N. Cook lived} on 1 February 1790, and was later paid for his services in August of that year. On 13 August 1790 he was paid one pound as commissioner for warning Capt. Benges district to give in their taxables for the

²⁵ See footnote below.

²⁶ The 1800 deposition of Joel Lewis (brother of William Terrell Lewis) includes the statement that he took a deposition from “Stadge Cook” at the Green County courthouse in March 1790 regarding Stage Cook’s witness to a bill of sale in Surry County in 1780.

²⁷ Surry County Deed Book E, p225.

²⁸ Surry County Deed Book H, p264

²⁹ Surry County Deed Book L, p3 and M, p200 respectively.

year. Despite clearly being in the county, he is not in either the 1790 tax list or the 1790 census, a circumstance difficult to explain. He first appears in tax lists in 1791, in Burch's [formerly Meredith's] district, with no land. In 1791 and thereafter he seems to be located in the same area of northern present Yadkin County as both William and William N. Cook, and their children. Phillip Cook married Jane Meredith [the daughter of William Meredith and granddaughter of James Meredith] by bond dated 20 December 1790, with John Critchfield the bondsman.³⁰ There is no record of his claiming or buying land, and it appears he must have lived on or near his father-in-law's plantation. On 6 April 1795 Thomas Crawley filed a claim for 300 acres adjoining John Burch and William Meredith which was described as including the plantations of Peter Corn and Phillip Cook. Phillip Cook was charged a tax on 150 acres in 1794 but the source of that land is unclear. Phillip Cook, William Meredith, and John Burch were all witnesses to a deed dated 14 October 1795 from John and Frances Meredith to William Burch Jr.³¹ He, with William N. Cook, also witnessed the will of Mildred Meredith [widow of James Meredith] on 2 February 1796 and proved it by his oath in court on 13 August 1796. He was also a witness for William Meredith in court on 14 February 1797. Along with several neighbors he was on a road jury 15 August 1798 to lay out a road from Hudspeth's mill north to cross the Yadkin at John Cook's. He is in the 1800 census of Surry County, he and his wife both 26-45, with three males and two females under 10. He was a bondsman for the administrators of Peter Downey on 8 August 1803 and on a jury on 15 May 1804. He is not mentioned in Surry records after jury duty on 9 February 1808. He "moved to Kentucky", according to records of the 1809 estate of Reuben Grant, of which he was a debtor.³² His widow was surely the Jane Cook who appeared in the 1810 census of Garrard County, Kentucky along with his brothers Grove and Peyton Cook. Her household consisted of two males under 10, two males 10-16, one male 16-26, one male 26-45, a female 10-16, a female 16-26, and a female 26-45. [Note that the male 26-45 is a mystery, as is one male under 10.] Within a few years she had moved to Pulaski County where her father was living, for a daughter was married there in 1813. In 1820 she was in the Pulaski County census. In 1850 she was in the household of her son William Cook in Stewart County, Tennessee. Phillip Cook's children, according to descendants, included Peyton S., William, Meredith, John, Elizabeth, and Ann Cook.

Note: Some descendants of this family constructed a flawed genealogy based on an abstracted marriage record for a daughter of Phillip Cook in Pulaski County. The abstract suggested that permission for her marriage was given by a "James Cook" for "my daughter, the mother", which led researchers to presume he was a grandfather. The actual marriage record shows the permission was given by "Janey Cook, the mother."

4. **Grove Cook** (c1773 – aft1850) He appears first on the 1795 tax list, and is on subsequent tax lists through 1800. [There is no Cook with an "extra" poll in the 1794 tax list, thus I conclude he turned 21 between mid-1794 and mid-1795.] In each case, he is enumerated

³⁰ The marriage bond is difficult to read, but seems to give her name as "Janey" rather than the "Jenny" that appears in some abstracts of the Surry marriage records.

³¹ Surry County Deed Book F, p290.

³² *North Carolina Genealogical Society Journal*, Vol. 22, No. 4, pp382-4. Reuben Grant died in Jonesville, Surry County, in 1809. His administrator, Jesse Lester, filed an accounting of more than 290 debts owed to the estate which were uncollectible owing to the disappearance of the parties. Phillip Cook owed three debts, and Lester noted that he had "moved to Kentucky." One of the debts was listed as "Peyton & Phill Cook", the other two as "Phillip Cook".

near William N. Cook and his presumed brothers. Grove Cook bought 300 acres on the south side of the Yadkin on Roberts Branch adjacent William McBride from James Hathorn on 10 May 1798, with Zadock Riggs and William Cook as witnesses.³³ [From other records, this land was within half a mile of all the other Cooks, evidently having common neighbors with some.] He paid tax on this land in 1798 through 1800. He appears in a few court records, mostly as a juror, beginning in 1799. He is in the Surry 1800 census, aged 16-26, with a wife 26-45 and two males under 10. On 13 May 1801 he was made constable in the district, with William Cook Jr. and Obediah Martin his securities. He witnessed a deed from William Cockerham to William Cockerham Jr. and proved it in court on 9 February 1802. On 9 November 1805 he sold the 300 acres purchased in 1798 to William Cook, with Samuel and William McBride as witnesses.³⁴ Having sold his land, he apparently removed to Kentucky within a few months. His last appearance in the Surry records was an appearance in court to prove a deed on 11 February 1806, though he was named a son-in-law in the will of Peter McMickle dated 5 October 1806.³⁵ He appears on the 1810 census of Garrard County, Kentucky he and his wife both 26-45, with two males 10-16, and one female under 10. In 1820 he and his wife are both over 45, with a male under 10 and three young females in the household. He subsequently appears in the 1830-40 censuses, and was still alive in 1850, when he is enumerated in the 1850 Garrard County census with a wife named Polly. He is age 78 and she aged 80, both born in North Carolina. Whether this “Polly” was the original (McMickle) wife is unknown. Grove Cook clearly had three sons and three daughters, but I do not know their identities. Two of the sons were probably named Grove and William.

5. **Peyton Cook** (c1777 – aft1850) He may have been the poll of William N. Cook in 1796. If so, he evidently was born about 1774. He was certainly born before 1778, for he appears by himself in the tax lists 1798 through 1800. He was a witness for William Meredith in a suit against William Cockerham on 14 February 1797. He married Mary Cook [whose identity is unknown, but perhaps a daughter of John Cook] by bond dated 13 November, probably in 1799, with Zadock Riggs as bondsman. [The year is not written on the bond.] He does not appear in the 1800 census as “Peyton Cook” but is highly likely to have been the “Peter” Cook enumerated consecutively with William N. Cook (probably a clerical copying error – see footnote.)³⁶ He appears first in court records as a juror 15 May 1800 and again on 15 May 1804. He was security for James and Samuel Downey’s administration of the estate of Peter Downey in 1803. He does not seem to have owned land in Surry County, and does not appear in any records after a court appearance on 14 May 1806. It seems likely that he, Grove and Phillip Cook all went to Kentucky at about the same time. He and Phillip Cook were debtors of the estate of Reuben Grant, whose administrator noted in an 1809 accounting that he had “moved to Kentucky.”³⁷ He was in the 1810 census of Garrard County,

³³ Surry County Deed Book H, p124.

³⁴ Surry County Deed Book L, p100.

³⁵ Surry County Will Book 3, p75.

³⁶ “Peter” Cook: 00010-10100-1 All the Cooks in the 1800 tax list appear in the 1800 census except Peyton Cook. There was only one Peter Cook in the tax list. Ergo the second Peter Cook in the census must actually have been Peyton Cook. I’d note that the 1800 Surry census appears to have been recopied from several district lists, so a copying error is not implausible.

³⁷ *North Carolina Genealogical Society Journal*, Vol. 22, No. 4, pp382-4. Reuben Grant died in Jonesville, Surry County, in 1809. His administrator, Jesse Lester, filed an accounting of more than 290 debts owed to the estate

Kentucky with a household of one male 26-45, one female 26-45, one female over 45, four males under 10, one female under 10, and one female 10-16. He was still there in 1820, with six males and six females in the household. By 1830 he was apparently in Jefferson County, Indiana. The 1850 census of Jefferson County gives his age as 73 and his wife Mary as 66, both born in North Carolina. Censuses suggest he had as many as fourteen children. These evidently included the Jefferson Cook (age 40) and Martin Cook (age 45) enumerated adjacent to him in 1850.

6. **Winifred Cook** (c1765 – aft1840) Obediah Martin married Winifred Cook on 25 September 1785 in Surry County, the marriage performed by Salathiel Martin, JP according to the widow's pension application.³⁸ At the time, Obediah was living in Martin's District, where William Cook was a justice and William N. Cook the constable. Winifred Cook must have been a daughter of William N. Cook, for there are several reasons to exclude her as a child of William Cook.³⁹ Obediah Martin was a brother of Salathiel Martin, proven by a variety of records. He appears in each Surry tax list and census until his death. His will, dated 4 July 1822, names his wife Winifred and children David, William, Alfred, Joseph W., Elizabeth, Tennessee, Mary, Vianna McMickle, and Sarah Spencer. Winifred Martin was still alive in 1840 when she applied for a widow's pension. Winifred is not mentioned among the eleven children of William Cook in his 1801 will, thus is almost certainly a daughter of William N. Cook.
7. **Mary Cook** (23 August 1763 – 3 March 1858) Mary Cook married Salathiel Martin on 23 April 1782 in Surry County according to her Revolutionary pension application, which says they were married by William Cook, Esq. Salathiel Martin lived near both William Cook and William Nichols Cook, and appears in multiple records with both men and with some of their children. He left Surry County for Tennessee shortly before 1800. Salathiel and Mary Martin had children named David, Thomas, Elizabeth, George Washington, William, Nancy, James, Wilson, and Robert according to the pension file, which gives their birth dates taken from Mary's family Bible.

Note: She is widely thought to have been the daughter of William and Keziah Cook. However, that would require quite a convoluted explanation, since William Cook's holographic will of 1801 lends a slave to "*my eldest daughter Mary*" to be distributed after her death to "*her three daughters Nancy, Polly, and Elizabeth Shores*."⁴⁰ Because Salathiel Martin's widow identified herself as Mary Cook and listed three daughters with those names in her pension application, some researchers have suggested that the "eldest daughter Mary" in William Cook's will was actually Mary Martin. They explain the Shores surname with the theory that the daughter Elizabeth was already married to a Shores. While that is possible, it is not very plausible. First, William Cook's will did give the surnames of his other married daughters, suggesting that Mary's surname was Shores. Second, Mary Martin's daughter Elizabeth had turned fourteen only a month before William Cook wrote his will, thus could hardly have been married to a Shores. Finally, there is no evidence anywhere in the Surry records that Salathiel Martin was related to William Cook – depositions by Salathiel Martin and the

which were uncollectible owing to the disappearance of the parties. Phillip Cook owed three debts, and Lester noted that he had "moved to Kentucky." One of the debts was listed as "Peyton & Phill Cook", the other two as "Phillip Cook".

³⁸ Part of Obediah Martin's own file, Pension No. R6976

³⁹ First, she was not named in the will of William Cook, which appears to name all eleven of his children. Second, Obediah Martin was among those appointed to audit the executors of William Cook, an appointment that legally could not have been given to anyone related to the deceased or to the executors themselves.

⁴⁰ Surry County Will Book 3, p44.

pension application by Mary Martin both mention William Cook but fail to indicate any relationship to him. In fact, a deposition by Salathiel and “Polly” Martin in the suit by Jonathan Haines vs. William Cook identifies Haines as Salathiel’s father in law (his mother’s husband) but says nothing about a relationship to William Cook. Presumably William Cook’s will should be read as written – meaning that the daughter Mary and her own three daughters were all named Shores. Indeed, a Mary Shores does appear in Surry records associated with this family, when Mary Shores and William Cook witnessed a deed to his son Samuel Cook in 1795.⁴¹ She seems considerably more likely to have been the wife of Reuben Shores Jr., whose eldest daughter was named Nancy. The bottom line is that, having eliminated William Cook as her father, the most obvious remaining candidate is William Nichols Cook.

8. **Anna Cook** (c1765 - ?) Samuel Downey married Anna Cook by bond dated 5 April 1786, with his father Peter Downey as his surety. Peter Downey was of Guilford County when he bought land in 1783 at the mouth of Pipes Creek, making him a close neighbor of both Cook families.⁴² [He would later sell this land to William Cook Jr.] Samuel Downey, his son, later appears several times in records associated with one or another Cook, and served as patroller and constable in Benge’s and Lewis’s districts. He is in the 1790 census with two males under 16 and three females. In 1800 he and his wife are both 26-45, with three males and a female under 10 and one male and one female 10-16. He disappears from Surry records before 1810 and apparently removed to Abbeville District, South Carolina. Anna Cook seems nearly certainly to have been the daughter of William N. Cook. A descendant reports that their children included Peter, Mary, Margaret, Peyton, and Calvin.

⁴¹ Surry County Deed Book F, p158. The deed was proved in court on the oath of “William Cook Esq.”

⁴² Surry County Deed Book C, p453.