

MY FERGUSON ANCESTORS  
IN AMERICA  
1680-1993

by

James Edward Ferguson

with major contributions by

Walter Whatley Brewster

For my children, Laura, Steven and Lynda and my grandchildren William, Gregory, Stephani, Eric, Claire, Katherine, and Madaline, and other family member, that they may have some knowledge of their Ferguson ancestors whose accumulated experiences have helped to shape our lives.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

But for my wife, Delane, this work would have never been. Her example in genealogical research, her constant encouragement, and her unfailing readiness to help, have made it possible.

Nor would it have been possible without Walter Whatley Brewster whose encouragement, support, and generosity in sharing his research and the many stories told to him in his childhood by his grandmother, Mary Arabella Josephine (Ferguson) Brewster (my great-aunt "Mollie"). The first two chapters were prepared by him and Mrs. Jean Agee for the Chester District Genealogical Society, and are reproduced as they wrote them, with minor editing. Mrs. Agee is the Research Director for the Chester District Genealogical Society. Chapter III and parts of Chapter IV are also the work of Mr. Brewster. He also provided invaluable assistance in proof reading and editing of the manuscript, as did Mr. Paul Mosher.

Special thanks are also due Mrs. Agee for sharing so generously of her time and knowledge of Chester Co., SC and escorting Delane and me to visit cemeteries and other sites important to the Ferguson family. She also was instrumental in the erection of markers at the graves of my great-great-grandparents Jane and Matthew Johnston.

The research of Barbara Brewster Owen also contributed to this work, especially her abstract of the minutes of Enon Baptist Church at Rye, AR and the information on where James L. Ferguson died as a prisoner of war during the Civil War.

## PREFACE

I first became interested in my family history about 1976 while living in Connecticut. During a visit with my Mother in Little Rock, she told me that there were many old documents in the trunk of my grandfather, Joseph Edwards Ferguson, which were still in her attic. He had lived in our home from 1932 until his death in 1937.

Upon inspection, I found Family Bible pages listing births, marriages, and deaths as early as the birth of John Ferguson "Lieut." in 1773. Also, deeds, tax records, a diary of James Lawrence Ferguson, and much more.

As I began putting this information together, I remembered that I had been told that my second cousin, Walter W. Brewster, had been researching the family for many, many years. I contacted him in 1979 and we began to share information and research. It turned out that he had made notes from stories told him by his grandmother, Mary Arabella Josephine Ferguson Brewster when he was quite young. His notes indicated that her great grandfather's name was "George" Ferguson, and Walter had never been able to find a "George" in all of his researching of genealogical sources. Once I was able to provide him proof that her great grandfather was James Ferguson a Tory Colonel in the Revolutionary War, it opened the way for his research to find an original immigrant.

I did research in Chester Co., SC, and in the SC Archives at Columbia, AR Court houses, the AR Archives, National Archives, census records, etc. and completed the line back through James Ferguson, the Tory Colonel. Walter Brewster, who lives in VA, was able to trace the rest of the line from NC to VA and to our original immigrant. His task was vastly more difficult than mine, since he had no "roadmap" of prior information as I had from my grandfather's papers.

It is interesting to note that in all the documents we have found on the Ferguson men, they signed their own names, and that the inventories of some of their estates listed books, both of which are indications of significant education in their times.

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## CHAPTER I

### JOHN FERGUSON, SR.

My Ferguson line in America can be traced back to John Ferguson, Sr. John was an early settler in America, as shown by his first known purchase of a tract of land in VA on 5 Nov 1680. In Deed Book #6, of Old Rappahannock Co., is recorded the following transaction: "To all Christian people to whom these presents shall come, I, Joseph Goodrich, of the County of Rapp'oc . . . send greetings know you that I, the said Joseph Goodrich for . . . the sum of three thousand pounds of tobacco & casks in hand paid, the receipt whereof I do hereby acknowledge . . . have sould (sic) unto John Fargusson and his heirs one parcel of land . . . on the South side of Piscataway Creek . . . which said parcel of land is part of a dividint of land formerly granted by patent unto Col. Thomas Goodrich . . . in witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 5th day of November 1680.

/s/Joseph Goodrich"

It appears that he lived at this site for the remainder of his life. His second son, James<sup>1</sup> Ferguson was born here. In 1780, John Croxton, a son-in-law of James<sup>1</sup>, replaced the original Ferguson home with a lovely brick structure called Cherry Walk. To reach it today, one traveling west on US 360 from Tappahannock, VA, must turn right at Millers' Tavern onto State road 620 for a distance of four miles. The house sets back from the road in a small grove of trees.

In all probability John Ferguson had been in VA for some time prior to this purchase. On page 13, Volume II, of CAVALIERS AND PIONEERS, Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants, by Nell M. Nugent, is the abstract of a patent by Robert Whitehaire, John Bowler, & Charles Edmonds, in which John Fargeson is listed as a headright. This patent was recorded 25 Apr 1667, for land situated in New Kent Co. which shared a common boundary with Old Rappahannock Co. Although we have no proof that the John in 1680 is the John Fargeson listed in the 1667 patent, it is a reasonable assumption that they could have been the same person.

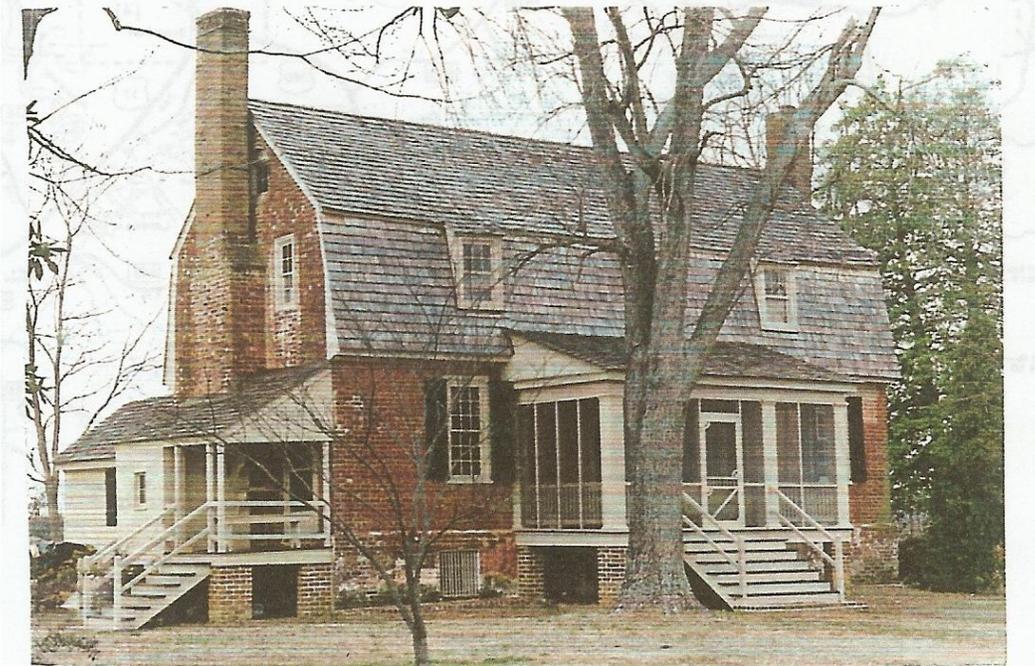
In any event, unless our John arrived in the colonies with means of his own, he had to have been here several years in order to save the then considerable sum represented by the three thousand pounds of tobacco and cask required for his land purchase.

The exact date of his marriage to Ann Stubbleson is another unknown, but it occurred prior to the sale of the land she inherited from her father, Stubble Stubbleson. The Deed of Sale was recorded in August 1684 in Old Rappahannock County DEED BOOK #7, pp. 128-131. In it, John Fargisson of Farnham Parish states ". . . I, the said John Fargisson as marrying Ann, the only surviving daughter and heir of Stubble Stubbleson, deceased, do hereby . . . make over unto . . . William Jewill . . . with . . . the voluntary consent of the said Ann, my now wife, all mine and her right . . . unto a certain piece of land . . . formerly sold by one Thomas Rawson unto the said Stubble Stubbleson . . . we John Fargisson and Ann Fargisson have good right, full power, and lawful authority, to sell . . . same [to] William Jewill . . . and [he] yielding and paying unto our Sovereign Lord the King, his heirs and successors, all such rents, duties, and services that shall hereafter become due for the said land . . . we have hereunto set our hands and affixed our seals this 12th day of February 1682/3 . . . 1684."

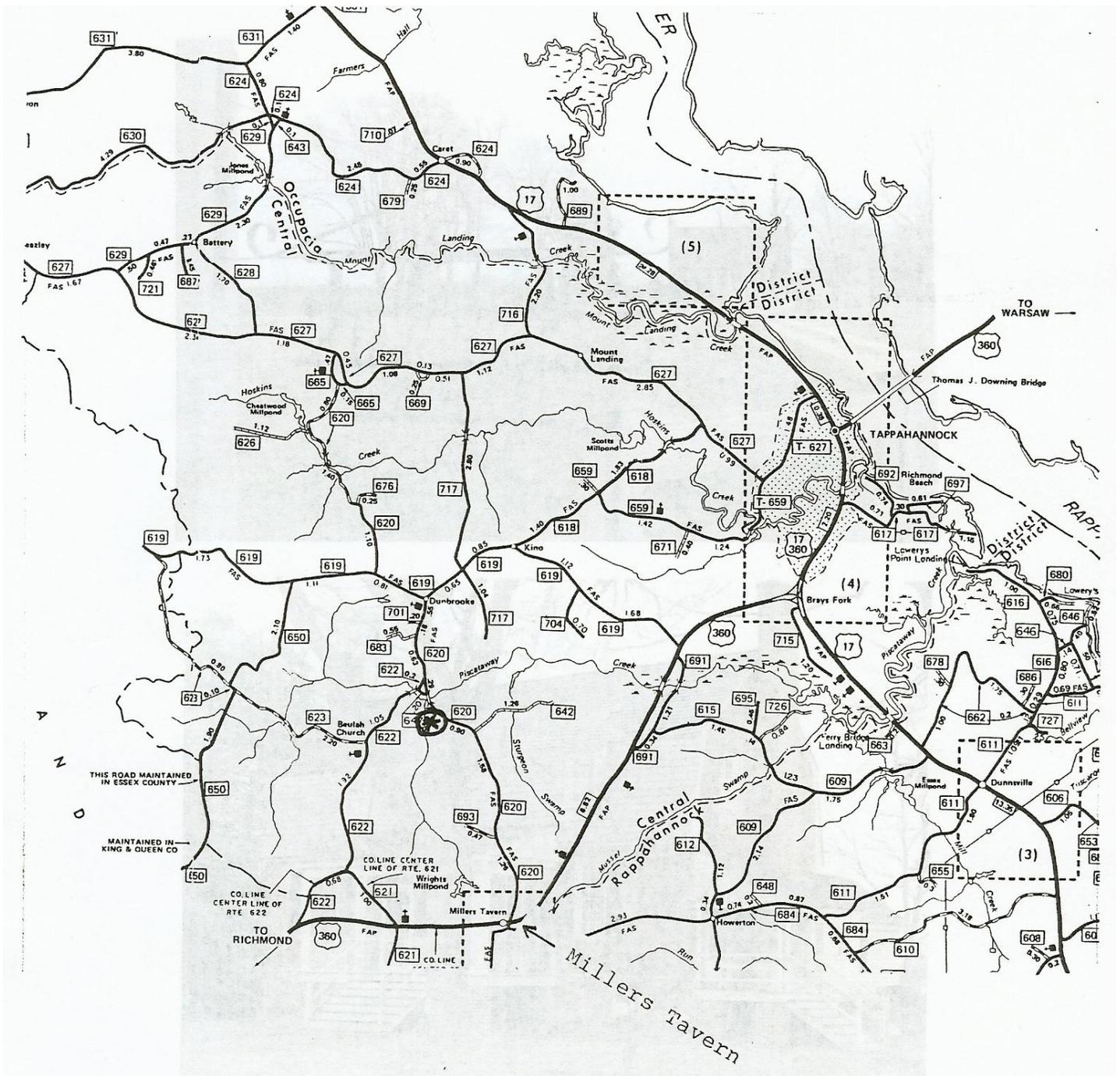
Although the date of John Ferguson's arrival in VA has not been determined, it appears that he was probably here in the period of Bacon's Rebellion, which was over by January

## CHERRY WALK PLANTATION

Site is the Plantation purchased by John Ferguson, Sr. in 1680, and where his son James<sup>1</sup> Ferguson was born. The home was built by John Croxton, son-in-law of James<sup>1</sup> Ferguson in 1780.



# PARTIAL MAP OF ESSEX CO., VA



To reach Cherry Walk Plantation, drive north on state road 620 from Millers Tavern for 4 miles.

1676/7. Old Rappahannock was one of the counties that had suffered from the depredations by marauding bands of Indians. After the rebellion ended, the colonial government appears to have been anxious to protect the frontier settlers. At least, in the case of Rappahannock Co., we have two records of an event involving John Ferguson, that indicate this to be the case. "At a Court held South Side of River 2 April 1684, it did appear that Jno. Fargisson was Imprest in the Countrys Service with himself & horse by the ord[er] of Col. Jno. Stone to bring down corn and lumber belonging to the Rapp'a Indians from their fort to the River side In which he was employed nine days, for satisfaction whereof is referred to the assembly." This quote is found in Order Book #1, 1683-1686, p. 23.

Action of the Assembly on the matter is found in the JOURNALS OF THE HOUSE OF BURGESSES OF VIRGINIA, 1659/60-1693, p. 253, as follows: "ATT A GENERALL ASSEMBLY begun att James Citty the 16 day of Aprill in the Thirty sixth yeare of His Maj 'ties Raigne And in the yeare of our Lord 1684. These following Orders of Publique Charge and Levy were made:

Rappahannock County

...

To Rich'd Cowthorne Chiefe of the men Imprest by the late president's Order for the Removall of the Rappahannock Indians for ten days service himselfe and horse allowance for Caske Included 324 [Tobacco lbs.

...

To ffrancis Brown Jun'r for [nine days]	243
...	
To Jno ffgarrison for nine days	243
To Abraham Browne for nine days	243
To Daniell Browne for nine days	243 . . .

Considerably more men than those whose names have been copied here were involved in the job of removing the Indians. We have included the Browns because they were closely involved with the Fergusons, and John Ferguson's youngest son, Samuel, married the daughter of Daniel Brown.

The earliest equivalent of a census in VA is the Quit Rent Roll of 1704, which exists in two parts. The roll with which we are concerned includes the fourteen counties of VA that paid their tribute to the Crown. Essex, the home of the Fergusons, was one of those counties. In 1704, John owed quit rent on 150 acres; at least, he admitted to having that much land.

Apparently he had prospered since arriving in VA, since he was able to make a gift of land to his daughter and her husband, Class Caston, as evidenced by the Deed of Gift found in Essex Co., VA, Deed Book #12, 1704/07, page 208; "To all Christian People to whom these presents shall come John ffargisson . . . of the County of Essex, planter . . . know ye, that I . . . for the love and affection I bear unto my Son-in-law Class Caston . . . grant . . . unto the said Son-in-law Class Caston and Cary his wife . . . and after their deaths, to my grandson John Caston . . . one hundred acres of land . . . it being the plantation whereon . . . Class Caston now liveth . . . lying up the branches of Dragon Swamp . . . part of a dividend of land formerly granted by patent unto Edward Hudson . . . which was later conveyed by deed to Roger Smith and since his death was, at my petition, found to escheat to our Sovereign Lady the Queen, etc . . . I do oblige myself to acknowledge my Deed of Gift . . . unto my Son-in-law . . . and . . . his wife . . . and further her right of dower . . . Witness my hand and seal this eleventh day of March Anno Domini 1705/6/ and in the fourth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Ann, by ye grace of God, Queen of England, etc.

/s/ John fargesson(Seal)

Signed, sealed & Delivered)  
in the presence of  
/s/ James Baughan, Jr.  
/s/ John Burt

Acknowledged by John ffargesson to Class Caston (and right of dower relinquished by Ann ffargesson, wife to the said John). In Essex County Court ye tenth day of Aprill 1706 and is recorded.

Test.: /s/Richard Buckner Clk Cur"

In the Deed of Sale, Ferguson to Jewell, John Ferguson refers to his wife as ". . . the said Ann, my NOW wife . . .". In his Deed of Gift to Class and Cary Caston he makes the statement ". . . and further oblige myself to CAUSE my wife, Ann Fargisson to acknowledge her right of dower . . .". These two statements and the fact that we will find that in his will he did not mention his Son-in-law and daughter, Cary, lead one to speculate that Ann Stubbleson may have been his second wife and not the mother of Cary.

Class Caston was not destined to enjoy the ownership of this gift of land for long. On 8 July 1714, Cary Caston, his administratrix presented the appraisal of his estate. His death had occurred prior to 6 July 1714 for that was the date on which the appraisal was made. [NOTE: Class and Cary Caston are the ancestors of the Glass Caston who settled in Lancaster Co., SC, about the same time that James and Agnes (Adams) Ferguson settled in Chester Co. In Landcaster Co., the Christian name Class became Glass. An item in TYLER'S QUARTERLY MAGAZINE, Vol. 14, entitled "Governor J. Hoge Tyler' Family" includes the following statement: Henry Perkins, Jr. . . married Cary, daughter of Jno and Ann Ferguson and widow of Class Caston (d. 1714) . . . When Henry Perkins, Jr. . . died in 1739, Wm Tyler and her (Cary's) son-in-law, Richd. Brown, went on Cary Perkin's bond as guardian for her dau. Sarah Perkins."]

In his will recorded in Essex Co. Will Book #3, 1717-1722, pp. 8 & 9, on 19 March 1717, John Ferguson mentions all of his children, except Cary Caston:

"In the name of God, Amen: I, John Fargeson, of Essex County, being in perfect sense and memory and good health, God Almighty be prayed, therefore considering the transitoriness of this life and being willing to settle my temporal affairs before I goe (sic) hence have, and do make, ordain this to be my last will and testament in the manner following, vizt. In Primus, I bequeath my soul into the hands of Almighty God who gave it, hoping through the merits, death, and passion, of my blessed Saviour Jesus Christ to receive full and free remission of all my sins at the last day.

ITEM. I do bequeath and give unto my eldest son John Fargeson all my land that lies on the North side [of] Piscataway Rolling Road. to him and his heirs forever. ITEM. I give and bequeath unto my son James Fargeson my plantation whereon I now live and all my land on that side of the aforsaid rolling road after his mother's decease, to him and his heirs forever, only reserving for my son Joseph Fargeson free liberty to live and work thereon till he can better provide [for] himself.

ITEM. I do give and bequeath unto my daughter Sarah Redd, the wife of Thomas Redd, 5 shillings to buy her a Bible.

ITEM. I do give and bequeath unto my grandson John Rogers one young cow and calf.

ITEM. it is my will and desire that my well-beloved wife Ann Fargeson have and enjoy the house [and] the use of the rest of my estate, both real and personal, during the time she shall continue my widow without any interruption or disturbance of any of my children, and that she shall not give nor convey any of my estate [to]

any other person than as this by will directs. ITEM. it is my will and desire that if my wife do marry that then immediately after such her marriage, my two Negroes, Nacher and Bess, and all my personal estate shall be appraised and the whole value thereof be equally divided (after my just debts and funeral charges are paid) between my loving wife and my two youngest sons, Joseph and Samuel Fargeson, but if my wife dies my widow it is my will and desire that my Negroes and personal estate as aforesaid be, immediately after such her death, appraised and the value thereof be equally divided between my two aforesaid youngest sons Joseph and Samuel Fargeson, and lastly, I do hereby ordain my wife Ann and my son Joseph Fargeson executors of this my last will and testament, hereby revoking disannuling, and making void all manner of wills and testaments heretofore by me made and, of which, I hereunto set my hand and seal this 10 day of May 1715.

/s/John Fergisson (Seal)

Signed, sealed and )  
published in the )  
presence of )

/s/ Daniel Brown

/s/ James (X) Sams

/s/Elizabeth (X) Brown

At a Court held for Essex

County on Wednesday, the

19th day of March 1717 this will was presented in Court by Ann

Fargisson, the Executor (sic) wherein named who made oath thereto and was further proved by the oath of Daniel Brown, Elizabeth Brown, and James Sams, witnesses thereto and is admitted to record.

Teste: /s/ Will. Beverley ClkCur

The year 1717 was not a good one for the Ferguson household, which experienced two tragedies. John, the patriarch, and his third son, Joseph, both died within the year. Perhaps the statement in his father's will that Joseph should have . . . "free liberty to live and work thereon till he can better provide (for) himself", was a clue to his poor health. On the same day that his mother presented his father's will to the Court, his older brother James presented Joseph's will. As he was not married, he left his younger brother Samuel ". . . all my land as I have in Beverley Park Patent . . . "and " . . . the rest of my estate to my brother James Fargisson . . . saving only one horse. I give and bequeath unto John Caston . . . ". His brother, James, was the Executor of his estate. The will is recorded in Essex Co., VA Will Book #3, 1717-1722, on page ten.

On page 208 of Will Book #3 is recorded the fact that on 20 September 1720, Cary (Ferguson) (Caston) Perkins presented to the Court an inventory of the debts that were owed to the estate of Class Caston. Among the debtors was Ann Ferguson who paid eight shillings current money.

During the period between the deaths of John and Joseph and the death of Ann (Stubbleson) Ferguson, there are many entries in the Essex County Records concerning the activities of John, Jr., James, and Samuel Ferguson. On 16 December 1735, Ann Ferguson's will was recorded, as follows, in Will Book #5, page 386.

"In the name of God, Amen: I, Ann ferguson, County of Essex and Parish of South Farnham . . . make my last will and testament in manner following . . .

ITEM. I give and bequeath and order that, first of all, my husband's estate be made good as if it was at his decease and all the rest . . .both real and personal after [his] estate is made good. I give and bequeath as follows:

ITEM. to my grandson John Caston a Negro boy named Mature . . .

ITEM. unto my daughter Sarah Redd my cloak and hood.

ITEM . . . . the rest of my estate . . . be equally divided between my four children.

ITEM. I . . . appoint my two sons John and Samuel . . . . Executors. In witness whereof I set my hand and seal this first day of October . . one thousand seven hundred and thirty-one.

/s/Ann (O) fargesson (Seal)

Signed and sealed in the        )  
presence of us                    )

/s/ Thomas Barker

/s/ Thomas Red

/s/ Ann (A) Fargeson

Recorded XVIth day of December

A. D. MDCXXXV

Teste: W. Beverley Clk ct"

The four children between whom the rest of her estate was to be divided would have been John, Jr., James, Sarah Redd, and Samuel. She did not mention Cary, but did name "my grandson" John Caston. When Ann (Stubbleson) Ferguson signed her will, she made her mark as follows: (O): and, when her witness Ann Ferguson signed, she made her mark this way - (A). It is reasonable to assume that the witness Ann (A) Ferguson was the wife of second son, James Ferguson. Ann (Stubbleson) Ferguson was the last of the immigrant generation, and her death marks the real beginning of the story of the descendants of John and Ann Ferguson.