

## Y-DNA and the Hunt for the Father of George H. M. Walker

(March 2022; rev. July 2023)

There is abundant evidence of George H. M. Walker's life in North Carolina and Tennessee in the early 1800s. His mother is known to have been Mary Polly Moore and that he was born in 1793 in Rutherford Co., NC. However, there is no reliable information as to the name of his father. His unwed mother apparently had another son (John Osborn Roberts, b. 1791) and daughter (Elizabeth Moore, b.1786) by fathers George Bates and Andrew Miller, respectively, before marrying William Battles, Sr, in 1796. Many family trees on Ancestry show George H. M. Walker to be a son of William Walker, who lived in Rutherford County in the late 1700s. But Y-DNA evidence has shown that he was a Burnett and not a Walker, as described in the story [\*Is a Burnett the Father of George H. M. Walker?\*](#)

Y-DNA testing for genealogical research is based on the occasional changes in the Y-chromosome as it is passed down from father to son. These variations or mutations can be detected by analytical laboratories and then used to identify the generation of the most recent common paternal ancestor for two or more closely or very distantly-related males.

The most widely-used testing company for this purpose, [FamilyTreeDNA](#), supports group projects where members can compare and share DNA test data and family tree information. I am a volunteer administrator for the Rutherford NC Burnetts Project, which is focused on determining the ancestors and descendants of Thomas, Jesse, Joseph and John Burnett, the first three of whom moved from Brunswick Co., VA, to Rutherford Co., NC, in the 1780's, and their countries of origin. The project currently has 52 members, 32 of whom have taken a Y-DNA test as shown on the [Rutherford NC Burnetts webpage](#) at FTDNA. If you are a Burnett with ties to Rutherford County and interested in researching your paternal Burnett line, I highly recommend joining the project. Females can also participate by having brothers or male Burnett uncles, cousins, etc. test for them as their proxy.

Current Y-DNA test results for our project are shown in the FTDNA Block Tree on the next page. Three of my maternal-side Walker cousins have completed Big Y-700 testing. Their results, as named haplogroups, have placed them in a block of "Virginia Burnetts" that possibly descend from a Joseph Burnett who lived in Virginia in the mid-1700s. But the Y-DNA results are not conclusive and more testing of other Burnett descendants is needed, along with primary source documentation, before names can be assigned with confidence to the Burnett ancestors of my cousins and me. Note that Y-DNA evidence has also identified several International testers who share common ancestors with many others in the project. These common ancestors are believed to have been born in Scotland and must have been related to the immigrants who came to Colonial America in the late 1600s and were the fathers of our project's Burnetts - and Walkers!

Block Tree No. -

