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Matthew Gleaves

About 1725 - 1760

The known history of the Family begins in the New World. The lineage can definitely be traced back to 1760, in what was at that time, the American Frontier; Augusta County, Virginia. The patriarch, Matthew Glaves, is the earliest known direct ancestor of the family. Very little is known about Matthew's life, a single entry on the tax rolls is the lone record during his lifetime. Court records involving his wife and children do provide valuable insight and are covered in detail later in this chapter.

Despite extensive research by several individuals, no authenticated documentation of Matthew's life has been found prior to 1760. Although we lack hard evidence, several versions of the family history, handed down over time, suggest that he was born in England and immigrated to America as a young man.

Matthew's Roots: British Ancestry?

A book by Mary B. Kegley, contains a biographical sketch of Matthew's oldest son, William. The sketch begins; "*The Gleaves family of Cripple Creek were descended from the Gleaves of Cambridgeshire, England. William Gleaves, the first of the name to come to this part of Virginia, migrated to Pennsylvania and then down the valley of Virginia where he bought lands in 1770 as recorded in Augusta County records.*" The sketch, printed in its entirety in Chapter 3, makes no mention of William's father, Matthew. *Glimpses of Wythe County Virginia*

Some time prior to June 2, 1925, Dr. Edgar Lee Gleaves of Nashville, Tennessee took notes during an interview with J. Miller Turner as he recited in great detail, the family history of Michael Gleaves, Matthew's middle son. Mr. Turner was the great grandson of Michael Gleaves. Dr. Gleaves then compiled and subsequently updated a document titled *The Gleaves Family*. It begins: "*The original family by the name of Gleaves came from Dillingham, England, to America, the exact date being unknown. Several years prior to the Colonial War they settled in Virginia near Roanoke where several descendants still live.*" If Mr. Turner was aware of the name of Michael's father, he did not mention it in the interview. Although the document contains several inaccuracies, it provides fascinating detail and portions of the document are included in Chapters 4 & 9, which deal with Michael and his descendants.

Coming to America

Additional research into Matthew's early life in the New World has provided several possible connections, without the elusive definite proof researchers are seeking. Most reports list his older children being born in England, which would have him emigrating in the late 1740s or 1750s. Other than family oral history, there is no proof that any of Matthew's children were born before he came to America.

It is quite possible that Matthew immigrated to America through the Port of Philadelphia. The Port was very active during this period, and processed more immigrants than the Port of New York. No record or ship's manifest has been found to document the exact date or location of Matthew's entry into the New World.

It is even possible that Matthew's parents could have come to America before he was born. There are documented records of several individuals with the Family surnames coming to the colonies before 1700. It appears that they immigrated to Pennsylvania through the Port of Philadelphia (Chester County).

“George GLAVE (*GLEAVE*) of *Knutsford*” and his wife Ann Duncalfe of Hale Bowden Parish came to Bucks County, Pennsylvania in 1682 aboard the ship “*The Friends Adventure*”. George and Ann had been married in 1679 and came to the New World with their son, John, born September 14, 1680. George appears in Bucks County Court Records in 1686 where he was fined 10 shillings for assaulting Edmund Bennett. More than 60 years transpire before the next entry is found. In 1752, a report of a wedding at the Concord Meetinghouse in Chester County, Pennsylvania lists among the guests, “*Elizabeth GLEAVES*” and “*John GLAVES*”. If this was George and Ann’s son he would have been 72 years old at the time. John and Elizabeth were married in the Goshen Meetinghouse in Chester County, Pennsylvania in 1728. Both had lost their first spouses. John’s Will, dated 1751, mentions one son (Isaac) and two daughters. Elizabeth died six years later. Her estate was left to her children of her first marriage. There is no record of any Matthew Gleaves found associated with this family.

The Pennsylvania Colony

A second “George *GLEAVE*” settled in Chester County, Pennsylvania in 1683. He and his wife Isabella, along with their son George, arrived in Philadelphia in September of 1683 aboard the ship “*Friendship*”. George and Isabella were indentured servants to John Hough for a period of four years and their son George until he turned 21. They eventually settled in Burlington County, Pennsylvania where he was a wheelwright by trade. George and Isabella both died prior to 1690 and their son George moved to Shrewsbury Parish, Kent County, Maryland prior to 1703. George married a woman named Sarah and the christening dates of their seven children are documented in local church records there. These seven named children were born between 1703 and 1725, although none were named Matthew.

The Pennsylvania Colony

The name is also found in New Jersey during this same period. On August 26, 1691, there is an entry in the minutes of the Salem Friends Meeting House in Salem County, New Jersey. On that date, “*Joseph Ware and, Hester GLAVES Passed Meeting*” or were granted permission by the congregation to marry. The marriage usually took place a few days later. The record also indicates that Hester was a widow from Chester County, Pennsylvania.

Salem Friends Meeting Minutes Marriages

<http://ftp.rootsweb.com/pub/usgenweb/nj/salem/vitals/marriages/salemfriends.txt>

By 1700 the surname had spread to Lancaster County, Virginia. In 1699 the will of “*Joseph GLAVE*” was probated. It appears that he was a recent immigrant and unmarried as he lists his home as Cheshire, England and leaves all his possessions to his mother, Mary Hill.

The Virginia State Library Website

Beginning in 1751, “*Isaac GLAVES*” (some times spelled *GLEAVES*) shows up in court documents in Lancaster and Bedford Counties, Pennsylvania. His is the only name uncovered at this time.

Pennsylvania in 1780

None of these reports reference a Matthew in the family.

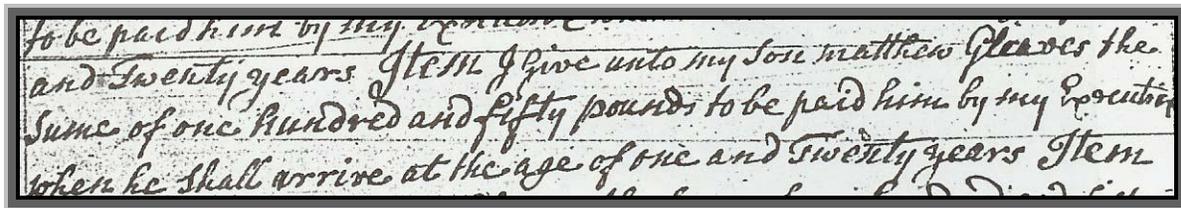
The Most Likely Link

The most promising clues to Matthew’s origins begin in England, as family history suggests. Robert Allen, a very meticulous genealogist from California, has done the most detailed research of English court and church records pertaining to the family. He has uncovered the most promising link to Matthew’s early years. His paper, published in 1999, entitled *Ancestry and Descendants of Matthew Gleaves, Augusta County, VA* and subsequent documents contain his findings.

“Family tradition is that Michael Gleaves was born in Willingham, England (although the story says “Dillingham”, England, but there is no such place). There are a lot of Gleaves from Williamham, England in the late 1600s and early 1700s. Research of Williamham, England records has discovered a Matthew Gleaves who married Amy ___? ___ and who was buried on 3/27/1709. He had the following children: Alice, baptized 1675, Ann, baptized 1688, Thomas, baptized 1/23/1680/81, and Elizabeth, baptized 1677.”

“Thomas, who was baptized 1/23/1680/81, married Anne Sneesby on 9/29/1718 and was buried on 6/22/1740. Thomas had the following children: Thomas, baptized 11/16/1720, Joseph, baptized 1/5/1724/25, Matthew (no information) and John, baptized 3/13/1734/35. Thomas wrote a will in 1740 in which he mentions his sons Thomas, John (“when age 21”), Mathew (“when age 21”) and Joseph. This is the only Matthew Gleaves in Willingham in the right age bracket to have emigrated to America and died in Augusta Co., VA in 1760.”

Bill Gleaves has obtained a copy of the Thomas Gleaves’ will and reports that Matthew was to receive the sum of 150 pounds “at age 21 years”. This would mean that the earliest he could have been born is 1720.



The will of Thomas Gleaves and the specific provision dealing with his son Matthew

The names “GLAVES” and “GLEAVES” appear in numerous records in several areas of England and to a lesser extent, in Ireland. At this time, there does not appear to be any hard evidence that would definitely link Matthew to a particular location, family or surname. The will of Thomas Gleaves appears to be the most plausible. If additional documents are uncovered, this question may be answered. Today it remains an unsolved mystery.

Several Pennsylvania court records appear more promising, although neither can be absolutely authenticated. In October of 1745, there are at least two documented records in Pennsylvania relating to an individual named “Matthew GLEAVE”.

In a book about early Pennsylvania, there is a document entitled “*Account of Servants Bound and Assigned Before James Hamilton, Mayor of Philadelphia*”. An entry dated October 12, 1745 states that “Matthew GLEAVE assigns John Marley (a servant from Ireland on the “Snow George”) to serve four years, from September 22. Consideration 20 pounds, with customary dues.”

Emigrants to Pennsylvania

A “Matthew GLEAVE” also appears in a book listing marriage records in Pennsylvania. While most entries have a complete date and list both spouses, Matthew’s entry is dated “October __, 1745” and does not list a spouse. There is no explanation for the missing information. It is possible that a portion of the record was destroyed or it may be that this Matthew took out a marriage license but never filed it after the ceremony. Either theory is plausible since they are consistent with the birth of his first child Mary, in 1746. There are reports that the license was actually taken out in Lancaster County, where Isaac GLAVES appears in 1751, although this author has not been able to document this fact.

Pennsylvania Marriages Prior to 1790

If either of these entries pertains to our Matthew, then all his children would have been born in America.

Augusta County, Virginia

“From Pennsylvania the Scotch Irish spread southward by means of the Great Philadelphia Wagon Road, across the Potomac and through Maryland to the Great Valley of Virginia, the beautiful Shenandoah. German settlers dominated the northern reaches, but many Scotch Irish stopped in the central and southern parts, some for good, others until the urge to seek something better prodded them onward.”

The Road to Guilford Courthouse

The Shenandoah Valley of Virginia was considered to be the frontier of the American Colonies during this period and Indian raiding parties were still common occurrences. As stated above, the Valley was settled largely by the Scotch-Irish and Germans, most of who came from Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware beginning in 1732. The Virginia colonial government encouraged them to settle in the Valley, partly to act as a buffer between the English settlements east of the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Indians to the west and north. A number of small farming communities sprang up throughout the Shenandoah’s 200-mile length. The valley served as a natural migration route for settlers who could avoid crossing the Blue Ridge Mountains by entering the valley from the north in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

Framed by the Blue Ridge on the east and the Appalachian Mountains on the west, it extends nearly the full length of the present day boundary between Virginia and West Virginia. At the southern end of the valley, the Cumberland Gap would be used by Daniel Boone and others to spread the westward expansion of settlements into Tennessee beginning in the 1780s.

Augusta County, Virginia was created in November of 1738, from Orange County. Until 1770, when Botetourt County was set off, Augusta was the largest county in the world, stretching to the Mississippi River on the west and north through Illinois and a corner of Wisconsin. The name Augusta was given to the county in honor of Princess Augusta, mother of George III of England.

During the 1730–1750 timeframe, much of the land in the valley was deeded by Lord Fairfax of Virginia to land speculators. In exchange for grants of hundreds of thousands of acres, these men agreed to attract settlers to the region. Much of the current County of Augusta was contained within the boundaries of the Beverley Manor Grant obtained by William Beverley of Essex County, Virginia in 1736. A partial map of the Beverley Grant appears in Chapter 2. This grant abuts portions of the Borden Grant to the South.



The settlers, under the rule of the British Crown, were organized into the colonial militia. All male landowners were required to enlist in one of the companies of militia, which were formed in their local communities. The militia served two purposes, the first was for the protection of the settlers, and a second was to provide the British government with a method of identifying taxable individuals within the colonies.

The first verifiable fact about our Matthew is that he came to Augusta County, Virginia prior to 1760. “*Matthew GLAVES*” is listed on the county tax rolls for that year as delinquent with the notation “*too poor*” next to his name. No location of the property is given. There are undocumented

reports that Matthew settled on the banks of the South River, which runs through present day Rockingham and Augusta Counties. The South River is formed when the South Fork of the Shenandoah River divides in Rockingham County near the present day town of Waynesboro. The area is known as Crimora and is on the western side of the Blue Ridge Mountains. This description is consistent with the land dealings of Matthew Glaves Jr. in 1785.

Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish Settlement in Virginia

It is not known if Matthew Sr. came to Augusta County with other family members, although this appears unlikely. No other occurrence of the names “GLAVES” or “GLEAVES” appears in court records other than those of his children. A single entry in May of 1770 names “David GLASE” on a land patent. This author is inclined to think this to be a misspelling of “Glass”, of which there were several in the County during this period.

As reported earlier in this chapter, there is no documented record of Matthew’s marriage, although the Pennsylvania marriage license appears to be highly plausible. Indeed, no other records of the family appear until 1771, more than 10 years after the initial Augusta County tax entry. Up until this point we know nothing about his wife or children. In 1771, things begin to change.

1771

On March 22, 1771, court records contain an entry where “William GLAVES is appointed guardian ad litem for Esther GLAVES, orphan of Matthew GLAVES, deceased.” A guardian ad litem was a person of legal age appointed to litigate a cause of action for a minor child or incompetent person. At this point there is no information as to William’s relationship to either Matthew or Esther.

Augusta County Court Order Book #14

Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish Settlement in Virginia

Lyman Chalkley's three-volume *Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish Settlement in Virginia, 1745-1800* (Rosslyn, Virginia, 1912-1913) is the most often quoted reference work that contains abstracts taken from the Augusta County Court records. This work is not without serious flaws.

The document was reviewed before publication by the Daughters of the American Revolution, who found that the abstracts contained an abundance of transcription errors, erroneous dates, misspelled names, material omissions, and other serious mistakes. They concluded that the abstracts were “condensed to the point of mutilation” and that many entries misrepresented the contents of the original documents. It was also pointed out that Chalkley had abstracted only some of the records that pertained to persons and families in which he was interested. “Publication of the abstracts could easily lead to the erroneous conclusion that the absence in the abstracts of information about a person or a family meant that there was no information on the person or family in the county court's records”. Despite this criticism, Chalkley published his extract and it serves as principal resource for research in Augusta County, Virginia.

For many years, researchers had no other clues to the Matthew Glaves family. These two small references were the only records of the family’s presence in Augusta County. Bob Allen, a Turk family researcher, uncovered an error that sheds additional light on our ancestors.

Turk vs. Raferty

Chalkley reports a lawsuit titled *Turk vs. Raferty* under “County Court Judgments, March 1772,” Vol. I, p. 365. The case involved a dispute over the estate of “Matthew GROVE”. Bob Allen obtained a copy of the original records in the Augusta County, Virginia Courthouse that Chalkley viewed in writing his abstract of this lawsuit. The actual record reveals that the family involved in the

lawsuit was *GLAVE*, not *GROVE*. Although the document is quite lengthy and overly verbose, the key points are listed below.

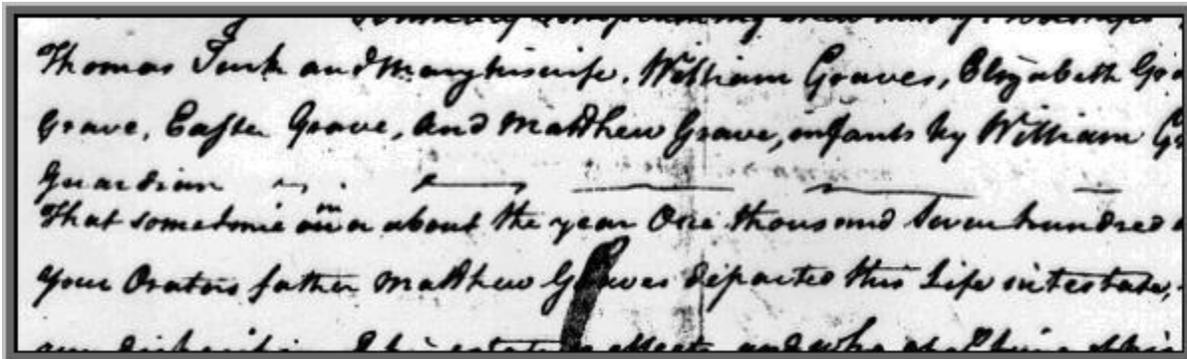
Most documents from this time period were drafted using little or no punctuation and sometimes random capitalization. This document is no exception to that trend. This author has attempted to transcribe this text exactly as it appears in the original lawsuit. You will notice that the spelling of the name appears with and without the "S".

Turk & wife
v
Raferty & wife

"George the Third by the Grace of God of great Britain France & Ireland King Defender of the Faith To the Sherif of Augusta County Greeting we command you that you summon Thomas Raferty and Esther his wife

To appear before the Justices of our said County Court at the Court House of the County on the third Tuesday in next month to Answer a Bill in Chancery (illegible) whereby Thomas TURK and Mary his wife, William GLAVE and Elizabeth GLAVE, and Michael GLAVE, Esther GLAVE and Matthew GLAVE. Infants by William GLAVE their guardian of this they shall in no wise omit under the penalty of 100 (pounds)"

"To The Worshipful his Majesties. Justices of the County Court of Augusta (illegible) on Chancery Humbly Complaining their (illegible) of the Worships Your orator, Thomas TURK and Mary his wife, William GLAVES, Elizabeth GLAVE, Michael GLAVE, Easter GLAVE, and Matthew GLAVE, infants by William GLAVE their guardian -- That some time on or about the year one thousand seven hundred and sixty your orators' father Matthew GLAVES departed this life intestate without making any disposition of his estate or effects and who at the time of his death was possessed of a very considerable personal estate. Orators having been informed consisting of Horses, Cattle, Hog's, Sheep, Household goods, and all kind of implements of Husbandry. That upon the Orator's father's death their mother Esther, since intermarried with Thomas Raferty the Defendants hereafter named possessed herself of the whole estate (your orators then being infants of very tender years) without ever taking out Letters of administration, soon after which before she disposed of the same intermarried with the other Defendant Thomas Raferty by virtue of which intermarriage he took the whole of your Orators estate into his custody and possession and used possessed and disposed of the same without ever rendering any account to either of your orators or to this worshipful Court. Your Orators Mary TURK and William GLAVES since having come of age have often and in a friendly manner requested him so to do as such on his own account as on behalf of his infant brothers and sisters...."



A copy of the actual complaint in *Turk vs. Raferty* reveals how Lyman Chalkley could have interpreted the surname as "GROVE". The actual document is 2 ½ legal pages in length.

Although there is no record of a judgment, this single document provides a wealth of information about the Matthew Glaves family. It establishes Matthew's approximate date of death and names his wife Esther and his children. It tells us that Matthew died intestate, having no will. The document mentions "*horses, cattle, pigs and household items*", but no land. The family had probably settled on unclaimed land but had not had the necessary survey done in order to patent it and gain title. The actual lawsuit was dated August 20, 1771, although the case was not heard until the following March.

During the Colonial period, the death of a husband required that a guardian be named for any minor children, even if the wife were still alive. The English Laws of Primogeniture were still in force in the Colony of Virginia at the time. Under this law, unless a will stipulated otherwise, the entire estate passed to the oldest son, in this case William. It was not until 1790 that a wife in Virginia was entitled to a third of her husband's estate, now known as her "*Dower Rights*". The guardian (or guardians) was to ensure that the children's portion of the estate was managed properly until they reached majority. In many cases the guardian was a relative. The lawsuit claims that Esther never appeared before the court to have a guardian named for her children.

Mary and William are listed as "*having come of age*" meaning they were no longer considered minors by the court. Male children reached the age of majority at 21 and females at 18. According to the Bible of James Turk, his mother, Mary Gleaves, was born on June 12, 1746, meaning that she was 25 at the time of lawsuit. If William was named as Guardian for his sister, Esther in 1771 the latest he could have been born would be 1750.

If third child Elizabeth, was still a minor when the lawsuit was filed in August of 1771, the earliest she could have been born would be 1753.

Boys over the age of fourteen and girls over the age of twelve were allowed to choose their own guardians and many court records reflect this action. Younger children had guardians appointed by the Court. It appears from the 1771 entry that Esther had not yet turned twelve since William was appointed, not chosen by her. This would place her birth year as 1759 or after. The one question remaining is whether William being named "*Guardian ad litem*" would have negated her ability to choose. The "*ad litem*" entry was not very common in court records.

The Matthew Glaves Family

If Matthew's children are listed in the lawsuit according to age, we can make a fairly accurate guess as to when they were born.

	Born
Mary	June 12, 1746 (James Turk Family Bible)
William	1747 – 1750
Elizabeth	After 1753
Michael	After 1753
Esther	Late 1750s
Matthew Jr.	Late 1750s or very early 1760s

It is not known if there are any other errors or omissions in Chalkley's volumes that deal with the Matthew Glaves family. Until someone publishes a more complete extract, we may never know.

Esther ***About 1728 – After June 1820***

The early life of Matthew's wife Esther has been a mystery and the subject of a good deal of research with very limited results. If Esther were born in 1730, she would have been just 16 when her oldest child, Mary, was born in 1746. It is likely that she was born some time before that date, although no proof exists. As we will document, Matthew was the first of Esther's three husbands.

The Mitchell Controversy

Esther's maiden name is unknown, although a number of researchers list her as "*Esther Mitchell*". Thus far, nothing can be found that would clearly identify her as a Mitchell. There was a Mitchell family in Augusta County in the mid-1700s and John Mitchell was a prominent citizen appearing in numerous court records. John appears on early maps of the Beverly Patent owning 609 acres in the southern end of the grant in an area known as Greenville.

John Mitchell was in the Augusta County area as early as 1743 where he is listed in Orange County Court Records (Parent County of Augusta) as turning in a "*wolf's head*". There must have been some form of bounty paid for destroying predators. A second record that may pertain to another John Mitchell appears November 21, 1754 in a simple entry; "*John Mitchell indented servant to John Hanna*". There is no other evidence to suggest that our John Mitchell was an indentured servant.

Orange County Court Records

If Esther was the daughter of John Mitchell, the 1743 entry places them in the area early enough for her to marry Matthew Glaves prior to the birth of their oldest daughter Mary in 1746. Now comes a curious entry that has yet to be explained by those discounting the family connection.

John Mitchell made his will on September 23, 1780 and died in 1783. His will lists several individuals named Russell receiving inheritances as well as an "*Esther Turk*". Esther is positively identified when later in the will the following appears; "*Thomas Turk, father of Esther, is to control her legacy until she is of age*". Thomas was the husband of Mary Glaves, oldest child of Matthew and Esther. There is no explanation included in the will documenting what, if any, relationship the younger Esther had to John Mitchell. Esther would have been about 13 years old at the time the will was written. There were three witnesses on John Mitchell's Will, John Reaugh, Margaret Kirk and Mary Turk.

It would appear that Mary is Mary Gleaves Turk, wife of Thomas and daughter of Matthew and Esther Glaves. Turning to the other two witnesses, "*John Reaugh*" appears to be John Rhea who married Margaret Turk, daughter of Thomas and his first wife Margaret around this same time. Rhea family records list the surname with both spellings. If this is in fact the case, could "*Margaret Kirk*" actually be Margaret Turk? The signature on the will is definitely "*Kirk*".

Augusta County, Virginia Will Book #6

If there is any connection between Matthew's widow, Esther and John Mitchell, he made no mention of it in his will. Esther had remarried and moved to Washington County, Virginia during the previous decade.

John Mitchell's connection to the Thomas Turk family remains a mystery but provides researchers with countless interesting connections that only heighten the Mitchell controversy.

Life after Matthew

As reported earlier, Esther remarried after the death of Matthew. Augusta County Court Records show that she and "*Thomas Rafferty*" were married on June 6, 1762. This marriage and the 1772 lawsuit are the only known references to Thomas Rafferty in Augusta County.

Some time in the late 1760s or early 1770s, Thomas and Esther moved further south to Washington County, Virginia on the North Carolina border. They were among the earliest settlers of the area and the "*Thomas Raferty Family*" is listed as being in the county previous to 1772. He is listed with other heads of families in Rev. Charles Cummings' Congregation at Sinking Spring, a Presbyterian Church.

Historical Sketches of the Campbell, Pilcher and Kindred Families

After the French and Indian War (1750-1763) the southwestern part of what is now Virginia, within the Shenandoah Valley, was given to the Shawnee & Cherokee Indians as hunting grounds. In 1770, the treaty was repealed and a land rush ensued.

The first great migration to Washington County was from the Augusta County area, so it is presumed Esther and Thomas Rafferty traveled with others to this new region. If this report is true, then they had already left Augusta County when *Turk vs. Raferty* was filed.

Thomas Rafferty died testate in Washington County, Virginia in 1780. His will, dated October 21, 1779, mentions "his wife", although Esther's name does not appear on the document. It also mentions "daughters, Elizabeth and Margaret" with no last names given. The will does not make it clear if these were Esther's daughters or children of Thomas' from a previous marriage. Esther made a motion to become the Administrator, with the Will annexed on March 20, 1780. Esther's oldest son, William Gleaves, by now living in nearby Montgomery County, was one of the securities for the administrator's bond. *Washington County Virginia Will Book 1*

At least one Rafferty Family researcher reports that the two daughters mentioned in the will were children of this second marriage. A posting on *Genforum.com* lists Margaret's birthday as October 12, 1769. If this is true, it would make Margaret more than 23 years younger than Esther's oldest child, Mary Gleaves Turk. No information on Elizabeth Rafferty is listed.

<http://genforum.genealogy.com/va/augusta/messages/223.html>

The relationship between Esther and Margaret is confirmed through a letter that has been transcribed and posted on the Gleaves Family Association website. On March 26, 1832 a man named Jess R. Siler of Macon County, North Carolina corresponded with James Turk Gleaves of Wythe County, Virginia inquiring about his mother's (Margaret Rafferty Siler) relatives. "That you may more readily know the relationship we bear to each other my mother was the daughter of Thomas Rafferty, her mother was three times married to Gleaves – Rafferty & Woolman your father & my mother were consequently half Brother and Sister from which if we could see each other we might in these fashionable times claim a relationship as cousin."

http://gleavesfamily.com/letters/index.cgi?Key=510&Field=key_field&cdisplay=1

On January 9, 1786, Esther Rafferty received a Land Grant in Washington County from the Commonwealth of Virginia. "Know ye that by virtue of a certificate in Rights of Settlement given by the Commissioners for adjusting the titles of unpatented lands in the District of Washington and Montgomery and in consideration of the Ancient Compensation of two pounds sterling paid by Esther Rafferty into the Treasury of the Commonwealth, there is granted...a certain tract of land containing four hundred acres...on a branch of the Southfork of the Holstein River, called Mill Creek adjoining Francis Whitney and John Gross' land." The grant goes on to describe the boundaries of the property measured in "poles". The Grant was signed Patrick Henry, who was the Governor of Virginia at the time. It's not clear if he actually signed the document or if some other official signed for him. It was somewhat unusual for a woman to receive a Land Grant although not unheard of. A scanned copy of this and many other documents pertaining to Virginia family land records may be found on the Virginia State Library Internet site at: <http://image.vtls.com/>. *The Library of Virginia Land Records*

On March 14, 1786, in Washington County, Virginia, Esther married for the third time, to Elias Woolman. It is not known how long they remained in Washington County since upon Elias Woolman's death in 1795, his widow, Esther, was granted her motion to be the Administrator of the estate back in Augusta County, Virginia. The motion was granted on December 15, 1795. It is unclear if Elizabeth and Elias had returned to Augusta prior to his death or if she traveled there subsequently. Most of her children had moved away from the area more than ten years prior. The only known family members remaining in Augusta County at that time were her daughter and son-in-law, Thomas and Mary Turk. *Augusta County Court Records, Order Book #23*

By now, Esther had outlived three husbands. Researcher Bob Allen reports the last direct link to Esther. It occurred when she executed a Power of Attorney in Buncombe County, North Carolina on April 19, 1797. The document was later recorded in Washington County, Virginia on February 19, 1799.

Present day Buncombe County is in the Asheville, North Carolina area, some distance from Washington County, Virginia. Esther's move to Buncombe County had been puzzling until the above referenced posting on *Genforum* went on to say that. "*Margaret Rafferty m. Weimer Siler and moved to Buncombe County, North Carolina.*" It would appear for at least a time Esther lived near her daughter. Jess Siler's letter explains the move. "*My father Winier Siler moved from Buncombe Cty in this state to Macon Cty N.C. five years ago. In Feby. 1831 he died mother now lives four miles from Franklin where father died with John the youngest son*". This would add credence to the claim that Esther had children by Thomas Rafferty and may have lived with her daughter, Margaret, during this period. <http://genforum.genealogy.com/va/augusta/messages/223.html>

Esther appeared to still be living on August 3, 1808 when her son-in-law, Thomas Turk, Sr. wrote his will in Augusta County, Virginia and provided therein for her support; "*I desire that my wife's mother, Esther Woolman shall have a decent support out of my estate during her natural life or widowhood*". *Augusta County Will Book XI*

The final reference known about Esther's life again comes from a family letter. On June 12, 1820, James Turk Sr. of Waynesboro, Augusta County, Virginia, a son of Esther's oldest daughter Mary Gleaves Turk wrote to his cousin James Turk Gleaves Sr. (although he wrote "*Dear Nephew*"). The recipient is the same family member who would receive the letter from Jess Siler. Although Esther is not mentioned by name, it appears that she was still alive on this date. "*I will now provid to give you some information respecting the situation of our family. (G)randmother has been very low so much so that we despaired of her recovery but she at this time is better and able to set up but she is very weak and I am of the opinion that she cannot last long. (T)he thread of life appears nearly exhausted.*" Again, the entire letter can be found on the Gleaves Family Association website. http://gleavesfamily.com/letters/index.cgi?Key=431&Field=key_field&cdisplay=1

It appears that she was living with her daughter Mary when this letter was written. James Turk goes on to describe his mother's health in the letter and states that she was 74 years old. Mary Turk was also a widow. Estimates of Esther's age at the time would be about 90 or older.

Records pertaining to Esther's death or final resting-place have yet to be found although it is likely that they occurred in Augusta County. These details, along with her maiden name, remain mysteries

The Children Of Matthew and Esther

The children and grandchildren of Matthew and Esther are documented in detail in Chapters 2-6. These three generations span the first one hundred years of the Family's presence in the New World. As you will see, many unanswered questions remain for others to discover.