

Militia). (Certificate of Military Service of John Lester was issued by A. B. Correll, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Montgomery County, Virginia, at Christiansburg, dated July 15, 1936.)

John Lester and Catharine Plick (Plickinstalver, Blickensderfer) were married, probably in 1775 in Fincastle County. The marriage record has not been found. John was 24 years old and Catharine was 16. She was of German ancestry, the daughter of John Blickensderfer (the name of her mother is unknown), who lived on Meadow Creek in Montgomery County (see Blickensderfer).

It is not known when John Lester moved to Little River - perhaps about the time of his marriage.

John and Catharine built their log cabin home on a hill facing west (on present Rt. 602), overlooking Little River and the surrounding country. It was not far from the confluence of Brush Creek with Little River, and the Little River ford. A large bridge now spans the ford (present Rt. 617).

John's brothers, Abner and Samuel, left Montgomery County and moved west. John named his third and fourth sons for them.

John's first acquisition of land on Little River is not recorded. He obtained three land grants: 100 acres on Little River, 1785; 100 acres on Brush Creek, 1786; 100 acres on Little River & Brush Creek, 1796 (Land Office records, Richmond). He made other acquisitions.

John died in 1825 at the age of 73. Catharine died eight years later, aged 74. The inscriptions on their tombstones are now almost illegible as the stones have deteriorated over the years. They were buried on top of the knoll above their home (Lester Cemetery #1), probably the first to be buried there.

All of their eleven children left Montgomery County except Hulen, the youngest son, who established his home on Little River, below their home. Samuel went west, nothing further known of him or his family. Mary married and moved to Tennessee. John II, James, Abner, William, Susannah, Rhoda, Pamela, Catherine all moved to Floyd County. At one time the Lesters in Floyd County numbered in the hundreds. The Lesters moved back and forth across Little River (Little River formed the boundary line between Floyd and Montgomery counties) and their influence was felt in both counties. They were public-spirited men and conscientiously discharged their duties and responsibilities as good citizens. They farmed their land, raised large families and tried to ensure that their children would follow in their footsteps as honest and upright citizens.

John and Catharine Lester had 11 children, 83 (known) grandchildren, and 460 (known) great-grandchildren. Their descendants migrated to West Virginia, Indiana, Tennessee, Missouri, Iowa, Idaho and other states. If there had been a gathering of the first four generations, what a throng!