

MOODY ABBOTT and FAMILY
Son of Joseph Abbott of Halifax County, Virginia

Research Report by Joan Horsley
Based on Research as of December 2013
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MOODY ABBOTT

Son of Joseph Abbott and wife Frances
Born: Bet. 1775-1777, Halifax County, VA
Married: 31 May 1826, Prince Edward County, VA to Martha W. Lindsey
Died: 1862, Halifax County, VA

MARTHA W. LINDSEY

Daughter of William Lindsey
Born: Abt. 1805, of Prince Edward County, VA
Died: Bet. 1828-1830, Halifax County, VA

CHILD of MOODY ABBOTT and MARTHA W. LINDSEY
Elizabeth M. Abbott (m. Jesse Thomas Robertson)

MOODY ABBOTT was born in Halifax County, Virginia abt. 1775, based on later records for him and on his siblings' ages. Moody is named as a son in the 1787 will of his father, Joseph Abbott, who devised 100 acres of his land to Moody after the death of Moody's mother, Frances Abbott, the last of Joseph's apparently three wives. [HWB2:298] Moody was the eighth of Frances' ten children. His father died in 1788, when Moody was abt. 13 years old, but his mother lived until 1823, when Moody was abt. age 48 and still unmarried. He lived until 1862 and was the last of Joseph Abbott's sixteen children to die. Moody Abbott lived all of his 87 years surrounded by sisters and brothers and their families at Difficult Creek where his father had settled the family 100 years before, just east of today's Crystal Hill, VA in north-central Halifax County.

Moody is first enumerated along with his brother John in their older brother Richard Abbott's personal property tax list in 1796, when Moody likely was 21 years old, as John was when first listed in Richard's tax lists in 1794. Richard Abbott was their oldest brother living at home and acted as head-of-house after their father's death in early 1788. They lived with their mother, who later appears in the tax lists in her own name, and as late as 1815, Moody's taxes occasionally were included in hers. As we shall see, a Halifax Court case in 1798 proves Moody was a legal adult at least by then, thus born no later than mid-1777.

Of Joseph and Frances Abbott's 10 children, only Moody has a record of serious legal trouble (although Joseph's oldest son, Benjamin Abbott, by Joseph's first wife, had multiple such cases brought against him throughout his life). When Moody was in his early 20s, a "peace bond" was ordered against him. The complaint was brought by Thomas Owen, a brother-in-law of Moody's sister Mary Abbott Owen and the brother of Mary's husband Hatcher Owen. The Owen family had long been close friends of the Abbotts and lived only a

short distance down the road. Mary Abbott and Hatcher Owen married in 1787, and in 1806, Hatcher and Thomas' father William Owen appointed Moody's older brother John Abbott to be a co-executor of his estate along with sons Hatcher and Thomas. [HWB7:263]

Nevertheless, on 24 Sep 1798, Thomas Owen appeared in Halifax Court and "made oath that he was in fear of his life or some bodily hurt to be done him or precured [procured] to be done him by the said Abbott and requiring security of the peace against him." [HPB18:513] Moody was ordered to be bound by a bond of £100 to keep the peace and "be of good behaviour towards all the good Citizens of this Commonwealth but especially towards the said Thomas Owen for and during the term of one year and a day." Moody also was required to have two securities on his bond, bound by £50 each. One of Moody's securities was his older (half) brother William Abbott, who lived next to Moody and the other Abbots at Difficult Creek and was closely involved with all his younger siblings. (Even though William was Frances Abbott's step-son, she had raised him from abt. age 9.) Moody's second security was Hatcher Owen, Moody's brother-in-law and the brother of the complainant. One gets the impression that between them, William and Hatcher planned to make sure Moody shaped up and kept to both the spirit and the letter of this court ordered peace bond.

Only once more does the General Index to Halifax Court Records show Moody with serious legal problems. The details of this case have not been viewed, but according to the Index, in 1811, Moody was summoned to appear in Superior Court regarding a case brought against him by the Commonwealth of Virginia. [HSC1:94] The case was continued in 1812 [HSC1:133], and there was a "trial and conviction" in 1813. [HSC1:138] However, Moody is listed in the 1813 tax lists in his own name and is included in his mother Frances Abbott's household in 1814 and 1815. In 1816, Moody is listed as being responsible for his mother's taxable personal property as well as his own. Also in 1816, Moody was the sole security on his brother John's executor's bond for \$8000 (as discussed further below). Thus, life and prosperity did not seem interrupted by the Commonwealth's case. Whatever that case involved, thereafter Moody's court record is exceptional by his absence, especially since routine debt cases often seem to be a normal way they handled their accounts, and many other kinds of court suits seem to be an acceptably normal part of their communal life.

After 1813, Moody Abbott had only one case against him, and that was in 1820 for a debt shared with his brother Richard. [HPB36:317] Otherwise, Moody appears in the court records almost exclusively in routine "road orders" assigning him and his nearby neighbors to that term's group of landowners responsible for maintaining the road by their land. These include his 1842 appointment as road surveyor (ie, group leader and coordinator), rather ironically to serve in place of William Owen, Moody's nephew and son of Hatcher and Mary Abbott Owen. [HMB11:42] (Hatcher's brother Thomas Owen also had a son named William a few years younger than Hatcher's son William, but the only William Owen in the North District in the 1840 census seems to be Hatcher's son William.)

Moody's brother John (b. c1773) and sisters Elizabeth (b. c1768) and Martha/Patsy (b. c1772) did not marry, and after their mother died, Moody apparently shared his land with them where they built the house the three lived in together life-long. Moody's older brothers William Abbott (b. 1756, a half-brother), Richard Abbott (b. c1770), and Leonard Abbott (b. c1771) inherited the other parts of their father's original 500 acres, and the four brothers raised their families next to each other. Moody's older sister Mary Abbott Owen (b. c1767) and her family lived nearby just to the south, as did Moody's older (half) brother Joseph

Abbott Jr. (b. c1750) until 1810, when Joseph moved his family to southeastern Halifax. The records show that all these Abbott siblings stayed closely involved. Even though Moody's sister Frances Abbott Robertson had lived 25 miles away in southwest Halifax for a number of years, her brother William Abbott applied for and was granted administration of her husband's estate when he died abt. 1814. [HPB31:67]

Moody's family experienced a number of untimely deaths in the first two decades of the 1800s, when Moody was in his 30s and early 40s. His youngest brother, Fleming Abbott (b. c1784) may have died as early as 1804 or 1805 but was deceased at least by 1815. Mary Abbott Owen perhaps died not long after her last child was born 1803-1804, when Mary was 36-37 years old. Joseph Abbott Jr. died unexpectedly in 1811, and his wife, Magdaline Lacy, died bet. 1813-1814. Frances Abbott's husband John Robertson also died bet. 1813-1814. Leonard Abbott died at abt. age 45 bet. 1814-1815, the same time Benjamin's son James Abbott died at abt. age 40. Most left small children for their widowed spouses to raise.

Moody's next younger brother Moses Abbott (b. c1776) died unmarried in late 1815 or early 1816, after living many if not all of the previous 11 years in Richmond, VA. Even though he lived abt. 120 miles away, he stayed connected to his family. Moses was in adjacent Charlotte County apparently en route to Halifax for Christmas with his family when he died. In his will written 24 Dec 1815, Moses left a lifetime gift to "my dear mother" Frances Abbott, then after her death, Moses' significant estate was to be divided among "my three brothers Moody, John and Richard" (his only surviving full brothers) and "my two unmarried sisters Elizabeth and Patsy" (the nickname Martha used). [Henrico WB5:71] Moses appointed his brother John Abbott an executor. Moody Abbott was the sole security on John's executor bond for \$8000, showing that by age 40, Moody had accrued the assets to cover such a large sum if payment became necessary.

Records show that throughout Moody's life, he was the most affluent of his siblings. This may be due in part to the fact that he did not marry for many years and after that had only one child to support. Nevertheless, by other indications he was careful with his funds, and his investments were wise and as safe as possible in a deteriorating economy. His first and only land purchase, which he made in 1819, is a good example, as we shall see.

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Date: 2 Nov 1819

From: John K. Linn

To: MOODY ABBOTT

For: \$3,891.00

Description: 654 acres on Difficult Creek, being the same tract purchased by John K. Linn from William Williams

Bounds: None

Signed: John K. Linn

Witnesses: Samuel Williams [Clerk of Court]

Recorded: 2 Nov 1819

[Source: Halifax Deed Book 28, p. 174. LVA Reel 13. Abstract by J. Horsley. Comments in brackets added.]

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Although this deed gives no details of the land Moody purchased, later deeds show it ran north to south along the east side of today's Crystal Hill, VA almost to Clay's Mill. It seems to share a bound in common with his father's land Moody was to inherit, where his mother and unmarried siblings still lived and where Moody himself had been living and working the land up to this time.

The 1820 census is the first U.S. census to survive for Halifax County, and at least four Abbott households and numerous other Halifax families are missing. Frances Abbott's household is among the missing, but her son Moody Abbott is included: He was 44-45 years old this year and is listed as the only white in his household, so apparently Moody was living in his own residence on part of his land purchased from Linn the previous year.

1820 - Halifax County, VA - Marseilles District [should be Meadsville District]
Moody Abbott - Males: 1(26-44); Females: none - slaves: 3

Due to confusions in the original census and miscoding by some online indexes, the districts assigned to Halifax households in the 1820 census are not reliable indicators of where a family actually lived as proved by deeds and tax districts. This certainly is true for Moody's listing. He lived in the northern part of the county, which is called Meadsville District this census, while Marseilles District, where Moody is oddly listed, covered the southern half of the county. The town of Meadsville was about 12 miles west of where Moody lived, but Marseilles (which no longer exists) was in far southwestern Halifax over 20 miles from Moody. (His brother Richard Abbott's land was next to Moody's in northern Halifax. One indexer labels Richard in Marseilles, another in Meadsville, exemplifying the confusion.)

By 1820, economic conditions were changing nation-wide as industrialization increased. However, in Halifax the situation was exacerbated as a relatively small group of interconnected merchants gained control over the mercantile stores, tobacco warehouses, granaries, and other sources for vital supplies and services in the county. As a result, debts to one creditor or one group of creditors accumulated, forcing residents in all economic brackets to place their properties and assets in trust to secure payment of current and future debts. Moody did not escape this burden. James Bruce, to whom Moody was indebted, was at the top of the Halifax merchant class and is said to be one of the wealthiest men in America at his death in 1837.

Moody used the land he purchased in 1819 from John K. Linn to secure his debt. Like most deeds of trust to Halifax merchants (as opposed to many earlier deeds of trust and those made between family members, friends, or neighbors), the trust contract specifically grants the trustees the right to the use, and thus to the profits, of the land or other assets placed in trust, and the trustees often had ties to the merchants. (Eg, a John Chappell was a business partner of James Bruce.)

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Date: 24 Jul 1820 - Deed of Trust

From: MOODY ABBOTT

To: John C. Chappell and Adam Toot, Trustees, to secure debt owed to James Bruce

For: \$2.00

Description: 654 acres on waters of Difficult Creek - use of said land to the trustees, the survivor of them, and his heirs

Bounds: John Hunt, Willis Chandler, John Fulkerson's Estate, and Daniel Roberts' Estate

Purpose: Moody Abbott is justly indebted to James Bruce for \$2476.37 by bond of this date bearing interest from 8 May last [8 May 1820] until paid. This indenture is to secure payment thereof.

Conditions: If Moody Abbott fails to pay the full debt with interest and expenses within 12 months of this date, land subject to public sale by the trustees at the request of James Bruce, advertising such sale for at least four weeks in one or more Richmond newspapers. If any surplus remains from the proceeds after payment of debt, interest, and all costs and expenses, remainder to go to Moody Abbott, his heirs, etc.

Signed: Moody Abbott, Jn'o Chappell

Witnesses: Rich'd Camp, Jas A. Luck, D. E. Parker, Micajah Boyd, Joshua (+) Coats (his mark), JOHN ABBOTT [Moody's brother], James P. Roberts

Recorded: 22 Dec 1823 - Proved in Halifax Court by the oaths of three witnesses to be the act and deed of Moody Abbott and ordered recorded, "and afterwards" in the County Clerk's Office on 25 Dec 1823, John Chappell acknowledged the above to be his act and deed and was admitted to record [Source: Halifax Deed Book 32, p. 33-35. Halifax Courthouse, Halifax, VA. Abstract by J. Horsley. Comments in brackets added.]

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This deed of trust at least does us the favor of naming the bounds on the land, which were missing in the 1819 deed of purchase. John Fulkerson was the father of Catharine Fulkerson, who married Moody's brother Richard Abbott in 1818. John and his father Fulker Fulkerson had lived next to or one tract removed from Moody's Abbott family since the mid-1760s, and Moody's brother Fleming Abbott witnessed John Fulkerson's will in 1803.

[HWB6:545] John Fulkerson's wife and Catharine Fulkerson Abbott's mother, Sally Roberts, was a sister of Daniel Roberts, whose land, including a mill and mill pond, is the southern bound on this land. Daniel's wife was related to Moody's brother William Abbott by family marriages, and Daniel Roberts' sons (including the above witness James P. Roberts) and grandsons are on later Abbott records. Several branches of the Chandler family also had lived next to and near the original Abbott land since the early 1760s, and one branch lived near Joseph Abbott Jr.'s family in southeastern Halifax.

Three years after Moody's deed of trust, he sold over half of the land from Linn. Apparently the proceeds of this sale enabled Moody to pay off his outstanding debt and interest owed to James Bruce, who was made a party to the sale along with the former trustees. Moody sold this tract at slightly more per acre than he paid so was not forced to sell at a loss.

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Date: 5 Dec 1823*

From: MOODY ABBOTT, with the consent and approbation of James Bruce and trustees John Chappell & Adam Toot

To: John M. Bartee

For: \$2335.31 "paid or Secured to Be paid" by Bartee to Abbott

Description: 352-1/2 acres "by recent survey" on Difficult Creek, part of a tract of 654 acres from Doctor John K. Linn to Moody Abbott by deed dated 2 Nov 1819, and subsequently the whole tract was conveyed by Moody Abbott to John Chappell and Adam Toot in trust to secure James Bruce the payment of \$2476.37 "with interest from the date the said deed having been dated about the 24th Feby 1820 [sic; deed of 24 Jul 1820 states the interest is from 8 May 1820]

Bounds: beginning at the mouth of the Double Branch where it empties into the main Difficult Creek, "up the same" as it meanders to the mouth of a branch, then up that branch to Fulkerson [John

Fulkerson dec'd], thence [southeast] to Chandler [Willis Chandler], then [basically south] to Roberts mill pond [Daniel Roberts dec'd], thence along the north margin of the pond and mill creek to the beginning. [most metes missing]

Signed: Moody Abbott, James Bruce

Witnesses: James P. Roberts, William D. Roberts [both sons of Daniel Roberts dec'd], James Fulkerson, John Fulkerson [both sons of John Fulkerson dec'd], WILLIAM ABBOTT [brother of Moody Abbott]

Recorded: 22 Dec 1823

*The date of this sale is written at the end of the document as "this 5th day of Decem'r Eighteen hundred and Twenty four," with "four" underlined by the examiner as an error, as proved by the record date and entered into the deed book under "December Court 1823."

[Source: Halifax Deed Book 32, p. 35-36. Halifax Courthouse, Halifax, VA. Abstract by J. Horsley. Comments in brackets added.]

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Moody may have purchased such a large tract originally as an investment to lease out part and later sell. Whatever his intent, it served him well, and as of 1823, he still owned over 400 acres. Of the three land-owning Abbott brothers who survived to 1823--Moody, William, and Richard--only Moody did not have to make later deeds of trust, even with the Halifax economy continuing to worsen (although William had 11 children, and Richard had six).

Moody's mother, Frances Abbott, wrote her will 18 Nov 1820 and died the end of 1822 or early 1823, with her will proved in Halifax Court 22 Sep 1823. [HWB13:30] She was around 80 years old when she died, and Moody was abt. age 48. Frances bequeathed her personal property that was not part of Joseph Abbott's lifetime loan to her two unmarried daughters, Elizabeth and Patsy (Martha), consisting mainly of her household furniture and kitchenware. Frances designated her son John Abbott as a co-executor with a local merchant (likely the estate's largest creditor). However, they both stepped aside so that administration could be granted to Elizabeth Abbott, then age 55 and the elder of the two legatees. Moody Abbott and his brother Richard Abbott were securities on Elizabeth's administrative bond.

Moody Abbott married for the first and only time when he was abt. 51 years old. (His older brother Richard Abbott was 48 when he first married in 1818, and their father was around 55 when he married their mother, although Frances apparently was Joseph's third wife.) Moody married by bond dated 31 May 1826 to Martha W. Lindsey. [PE Marriage Bonds 1822-1829] The bond names her "Martha W. Lindsey daughter of W'm Lindsey dec'd of Prince Edward County." (William Lindsey died in 1825.) Moody's bondsman was William Seay of Prince Edward. William Seay also made oath that "Martha W. Lindsey is twenty one years old as far as he knows or believes." This same wording also meant the person was at least 21 (thus no parental or guardian consent was required) rather than exactly age 21. However in this case, William Lindsey's 1820 census (below) indicates Seay's statement could be literal.

Moody and Martha married in her home of Prince Edward County, VA, two counties northeast of Halifax. At that time, spouses normally lived close to each other, either knowing each other as neighbors or meeting through local friends, church, or community activities. In Moody and Martha's case, they obviously met through family relations. Martha was a sister of Thomas G. Lindsey who married in Halifax in 1818 to Moody's niece Susanna/Susan Abbott, a daughter of Moody's older brother William Abbott and wife Mary Parker. After their marriage, Thomas and Susan Abbott Lindsey settled in his home in Prince Edward County.

In 1820, six years before Moody's marriage, the census lists three Lindsey families in Prince Edward County: 1) Martha's father William Lindsey, whose household indicates Martha's mother was still living; 2) Susan Abbott's husband Thomas G. Lindsey with their first son; and 3) Aaron Lindsey (marked in error as a female under age 10 that obviously should be marked in the previous column for males age 45+) with no wife or children and likely William's brother of that name. William Lindsey's household is enumerated as:

1820 - Prince Edward County, VA

William Lindsay[sic] - Males: 1(16-25), 1(45+); Females: 1(10-15); 1(26-44), 1(45+) - 24 slaves

Martha W. Lindsey apparently is the youngest female in William's 1820 household, born abt. 1805 and thus age 21 at her marriage in 1826, as William Seay's statement affirms. The younger male is William's son Aaron J. Lindsey, then 19, who married 8 Nov 1826 to Mary F. Allen. In the 1830 census for Prince Edward, Martha's brother Aaron J. Lindsey and Moody's bondsman William Seay are listed near each other and also near a John Goode (age 50-60) and Philip Goode (30-40).

Online files list William Lindsey's wife as Frances "Fannie" Elizabeth Goode, daughter of Thomas Goode, although no source or documentation is included, so the evidence cannot be evaluated here. However, these files also list William's daughter as "Martha Ann Lindsey" born 6 Nov 1801, which does not concur with Martha's name on the marriage bond or with the age of either daughter in William's 1820 household. Census ages can be wrong and occasionally a name may be wrongly recorded, but the conflicts do raise questions about the reliability of the online information. There is at least one proved error in these widely-repeated Lindsey files. They all mistakenly list Susanna/Susan Abbott's name as Susan Shay Abbott. The original Family Register kept by her father and included in her widowed mother Mary Parker Abbott's pension application clearly names her "Susanna Sharp Abbott," not "Shay." ("Susan" was a shortened form of "Susanna.") [NARA File W5616]

Moody and Martha Lindsey Abbott settled on Moody's land in Halifax County among his Abbott family. Moody sold some of his adjacent land to his brother Richard Abbott in 1827, and Moody's wife "Martha Abbott" (with no middle initial) is included in the deed. [HDB35:77] This deed and the marriage bond are the only records found with Martha's name.

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Date: 15 Sep 1827

From: MOODY ABBOTT and wife MARTHA

To: Richard ABBOTT

For: \$53.81

Description: 53-1/4 acres "by survey" on waters of Difficult Creek

Bounds: Nathaniel Barksdale & Richard Abbott

Signed: MOODY ABBOTT, MARTHA ABBOTT

Witnesses: None

Release of Dower by Martha Abbott, wife of Moody Abbott certified 31 Oct 1827 by James Bruce & John K. Linn, Justices of the Peace for Halifax County. Witnessed by Benjn [Benjamin] Anderton & Wm. H. Anderton

Recorded: 31 Oct 1827

[Halifax Deed Book 35, p. 77-79. LVA Reel 16. Abstract by J. Horsley. Comments in brackets added.]

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Moody Abbott and wife Martha W. Lindsey had one child, a daughter named Elizabeth M. Abbott, born in Halifax County, VA abt. 1828. Sadly, Martha Lindsey Abbott died either in childbirth or shortly after, as she is deceased by the 1830 census:

1830 - Halifax County, VA

MOODY ABBOTT - Males: 1(40-50)*[sic]*; Females: 1(under 5) - 14 slaves

Although motherless, it seems the young Elizabeth was not bereft of mothering. In addition to her two nearby aunts who were wives of Moody's brothers, Moody had two unmarried sisters living with their brother in their own home but probably built on part of Moody's land. Out of all their nieces and nephews who had grown up or were still living around them, Moody's daughter was obviously special to them. The wills of Moody's sisters Elizabeth Abbott and Martha "Patsy" Abbott made Moody's daughter, Elizabeth M. Abbott, the eventual sole legatee of their considerable personal estates.

The legacies Moody's brother Moses Abbott left in 1815 to Moody and his siblings were worth over \$3000 at the time. However, there were debts due to Moses that seventeen years later still had not been recovered. This significantly reduced their inheritance but also was costing the estate to try to recoup. As a result, by a deed of 12 Jan 1833, Moody Abbott joined his sibling legatees John, Richard, Elizabeth, and Patsy in selling all their interests in Moses' estate for \$250. *[HDB40:493]* (See report on Moses Abbott for details.) Fortunately, personal property tax lists and later probate records show all five siblings were well-off for their time and place and not dependent upon the legacies for their welfare.

Moody's sister Elizabeth Abbott died in late 1837 or early 1838 at abt. 70 years of age. She wrote her will 22 May 1836, but her last tax list is dated 27 Feb 1837, and her will was proved 26 Feb 1838 in Halifax Court. *[HWB18:334]* Elizabeth bequeathed two slaves to her 8-year-old niece Elizabeth M. Abbott, Moody and Martha's daughter. Elizabeth Abbott left the rest of her estate to her sister Martha Abbott, with whom she had shared a home along with their brother John Abbott, and she appointed her brother Moody Abbott as executor. Moody declined so that administration was granted to Martha Abbott, the primary legatee, with Moody Abbott and their nephew Wesley M. Abbott (son of William Abbott) as securities on Martha's administrative bond. The only "items" listed in the inventory of Elizabeth's estate were 10 slaves, valued at a total of \$3,350.00. *[HWB19:175]* The two young female slaves Elizabeth bequeathed to her niece were not included but probably valued at \$350-\$400 each, and that could increase significantly after the girls reached child-bearing age. In other words, it was a generous bequest.

Around the time Moody's sister Elizabeth died, his sister Martha Abbott wrote her own will dated 27 Jan 1838. Martha lived another six years and died at abt. 72 years old in 1844. (She returned her last personal property tax list on 28 Feb 1844, and her will was proved in Halifax Court 26 Aug 1844). *[HWB20:519]* Martha left the whole of her estate, which included her inheritance from Elizabeth, to Moody and Martha Lindsey Abbott's daughter Elizabeth M. Abbott. (However, Martha's will stipulated that her estate and home be kept in tact with her brother John Abbott in charge until after his death, which came in 1849.) Martha, like Elizabeth, appointed her brother Moody Abbott as executor. Once again, Moody declined, this time in favor of his nephew Wesley M. Abbott, for whom Moody was security on the administrative bond. By the time Martha Abbott died, Wesley was related to Moody's daughter Elizabeth M. Abbott by marriages as well as by blood, as we shall see,

Moody never re-married after his wife Martha died. The 1840 census shows Moody, age abt. 65 this year, raising their daughter, then abt. age 12.

1840 - Halifax County, VA - North District

MOODY ABBOTT - Males: 1(50-59)*[sic]*; Females: 1(10-15) - 17 slaves

By bond of 30 Jan 1843, Moody and Martha Lindsey Abbott's daughter, Elizabeth M. Abbott, married in Halifax to Jesse T. Robertson. Moody Abbott was the bondsman. Jesse Thomas Robertson was born in Halifax County, VA abt. 1816. Jesse was a brother of Eliza Ann Robertson (b. c1814) who married Moody's nephew Wesley M. Abbott in 1834. Jesse and Eliza were children of Christopher Robertson "by my first wife," as stated in his will written 15 Jul 1857 and proved in Halifax Court 26 Oct 1857. *[HWB25:479]* (Christopher's first wife is not named. He married his second wife, Elizabeth Penick, in Halifax by bond of 15 Oct 1822.) Jesse and Elizabeth Abbott Robertson named their first son William W. Robertson, the name of Jesse's brother and another son of Christopher Robertson and his first wife. (The fourth sibling by Christopher's first wife named in his will was Pleasant C. Robertson.) Jesse and Elizabeth named their second son Christopher Moody Robertson. *[Full middle name is documented by the 1904 birth record for a son of Christopher. See his Notes for details.]*

Shortly after Moody's daughter Elizabeth married, Moody gave her 200 acres of his Halifax land.

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Date: 9 Jun 1843

From: MOODY ABBOTT

To: Elizabeth M. Robertson

For: "the natural love and affection I bear for my daughter Elizabeth M. wife of Thomas Robertson" [Jesse T. Robertson]

Description: 200 acres to be cut off the tract on which I now reside commencing at Jas. P. Roberts' line

Signed: Moody Abbott

Witnesses: None

Recorded: 9 Jun 1843

[Source: Halifax Deed Book 48, p. 557. LVA Reel 23. Abstract by J. Horsley. Comments in brackets added.]

Note:

The only adjacent landowner named in the deed, James P. Roberts, was a son of Daniel Roberts, whose land was adjacent to the land Moody purchased in 1819. James P. Roberts is on a number of Abbott records. For example, he witnessed Moody's 1820 deed of trust; he witnessed the 1833 deed from Moody and his siblings selling their interests in their brother Moses Abbott's estate; and he helped appraise the estates of Moody's sisters Elizabeth in 1839 and Martha in 1844. James P. Roberts also was a cousin of Richard Abbott's wife, Catharine Fulkerson, and by 1844, their son John J. Abbott was working for James' widowed sister-in-law, Mary R. W. Roberts. Her husband (and James P. Roberts' brother), William D. Roberts, witnessed Elizabeth Abbott's will in 1836 and helped appraise her estate in Mar 1839 but was deceased by the 1840 census, when his wife Mary was a widowed head-of-house..

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Moody's brother William Abbott died in Jan 1848 (age 91), and his brother John Abbott died in late 1849 (abt. age 76), both in Halifax County. His brother Richard Abbott died abt. Dec 1848 (abt. age 78) in adjacent Pittsylvania County, VA, where he and most of his family had moved five years before. Thus by 1850, Moody was the only one of Joseph Abbott's sixteen proved children still alive.

Moody suffered another loss between 1846-1850, when his only child, Elizabeth M., and her husband Jesse T. Robertson along with their first child moved 60 miles southwest to settle in Rockingham County, NC. (Two of Moody's nephews, Richard M. Abbott and Joseph M. Abbott, sons of Richard Abbott, moved to Rockingham from Pittsylvania County, VA in the mid-1850s. In 1880, Joseph's daughter Georgia Abbott, a school teacher, was living with Moody's then-widowed daughter Elizabeth and her family in Rockingham, again showing how the Abbott family in general kept in touch. See Notes for Elizabeth M. Abbott for more details.) After Moody's nephew John J. Abbott left Halifax abt. 1851, Moody's only close relative still in Halifax was his nephew Wesley M. Abbott (son of William Abbott and now related by marriage to Moody's son-in-law), who had lived near Moody all his life and stayed involved with his Abbott relations throughout his adult years.

1850: Halifax Co, VA - Northern District
MOODY ABBOTT - 70^[sic] - Farmer - Real Est: \$1200 - VA - 10 slaves

1860 - Halifax Co, VA - Northern District - PO: Scottsburg
MOODY ABBOTT - 73^[sic] - Real Est: \$3500; Pers. Est: \$8256 - VA - 9 slaves

Moody lived to see the start of the Civil War that began in April 1861. He died the next year at abt. 87 years old. Moody left no will, but since his daughter was his only child, no will was needed. The inventory and appraisal of Moody's estate was taken 23 Sep 1862. Like all affluent Virginians at the time, the bulk of his personal property wealth was in slaves. (Land was not included in the probate process, but Moody still owned abt. 150 acres.) Comparing the values of slaves to the values of all other personal property assets in the appraisal gives a graphic picture of the economic upheaval experienced by all Southerners after emancipation, a correction long-overdue, which made the adjustment all the more difficult, particularly in light of the general economic devastation of the war itself..

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Inventory and Appraisal of Estate of MOODY ABBOTT, dec'd
Taken 23 Sep 1862 - Recorded 26 Jan 1863

Includes: 7 slaves (t=\$4,900): negro boy Dodson (\$1000), negro woman Mary (\$800), negro woman Suckey & child (\$1500), negro woman Eliz. & 2 children (\$1600)

Also: 2 horses (\$250), 29 hogs (\$40), yoke of oxen (\$75), ox cart (\$34), 4 beds & [bed] furniture (\$110), "other household furniture" (\$70), 2 shotguns (\$15), "crop of corn, fodder, oats, and tobacco in field" (\$485), 50 bu. wheat (\$100), 30 gal. brandy (\$180), 1 30-gallon still (\$30), 1 bushel guano (\$2.50), cash on hand (\$85), misc. house and farm items, and bonds for \$626 owed to him

Total value of whole estate: \$7,584.89

Signed by appraisers Wm. H. Walthall, Peter S. Cardwell, Ambrose E. Brown

[Source: Halifax Will Book 28, p. 320. LVA Reel 48. Abstract by J. Horsley. Comment in brackets added; comments in parentheses part of the original]

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Estate accounts recorded 22 Feb 1864 show that Elizabeth M. Abbott's husband "J. T. Robertson" was administrator of her father Moody's estate. [HWB28:421] A series of deeds in 1858 show that Jesse and Elizabeth Abbott Robertson sold his share of land devised by his father's will to Wesley M. Abbott, also a devisee of Christopher Robertson's will by right of Wesley's wife Eliza. [HDB57:480] However, no deed was identified whereby Jesse and Elizabeth sold the remainder of Moody's Halifax County land, and Jesse and Elizabeth continued to live in Rockingham County, NC.

For more information on Elizabeth M. Abbott Robertson and her children, see individual notes for them.

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Joan Horsley. *Moody Abbott and Family, Son of Joseph Abbott of Halifax County, Virginia*. (Raleigh, NC: J. Horsley, 2013) Available online at [www.joanhorsley.org](http://www.joanhorsley.org).

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