

CONCLUSIONS DRAWN FROM THE LUCY HANKS CERTIFICATE

by Louis A. Warren

"wi" I observe before the letter "d" three downward strokes slanted at about the same degree as the downward strokes of the letters in the body of the certificate and of about the same length. I observe approaching the top of the first downward stroke a lighter line, also a lighter line leaving the bottom of the third downward stroke and joining the letter "d" about midway of the lower part of the letter. Where this line joins the letter there is a slight shaded place which shows the joining of the two lines. Fainter still I see upward strokes leaving the bottom of both the first and second downward strokes.

"doy" The word "day" is written in two different places in the certificate and in each instance there is a natural downward stroke after the completion of the enclosed portion as there is in all the other "a's". That the second letter in the word is "o" cannot be disputed if it is compared with the other letters "o". It does not appear to me that the word is "day" but "doy."

"day - usage" I have looked through hundreds of old papers dated in various ways but I have yet to find one using the form "April 26th day 1790." The most common form at that early date was; "This 26th day of April, 1790," or "26th April, 1790," or April 26, 1790." I cannot think Lucy intended to write "Given under my hand this day April 26th day 1790."

"day - position" The most convincing evidence against the word "day" if it were "day" would be its unnatural position. If it were an afterthought it would have been placed either following "th" or between "26" and "1790" at a point on the line below. There is no occasion for placing it between "April" and "26".

"widoy" If the word is not "day" but "doy" it can mean nothing by itself, but it is something and it is written to represent something. It cannot be related to "Robert," because of a higher position, but the sequence would be correct with the following and lower word "Lucy." In the upward flourish in closing the "y" in "doy" there is a general direction which would allow the writer to begin the "L" in "Lucy" with the same flourish of the hand. Admitting the prefix "wi" the word "widoy" is easily connected with the signature.

"Objections" (1) The "y" is not "w" but it is not a serious violation of euphony, as associated with the word widow as pronounced in pioneer days. (3) "Dimness of letters 'wi'" - Lucy had finished writing the certificate and date, she then hesitated to make some inquiry about the signature. She was using a goose quill pen. She wrote the first two letters of her signature "wi" beginning "widoy" and found the ink about gone so dipped her pen and started with the letter "d" which accounts for the heavy lines.

"Lucy Hanks" There is no documentary proof that she was not a widow but many well established traditions that she was,