

# John Brown – Clothier

By M.A. Schaefer, 9 August 2015, Boulder CO

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NOTE: This is a draft document and contains only my own analysis, conjecture, and opinion. It should not be considered proof of anything at this point.

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We know about this JB mostly from his will and that of his wife, Charity Chew:

Here is the will of a John Brown written in 1727, which was later proved in 1736.

1727, 11 mo. (Jan.), 26 da. Brown, John, of Town and County of Gloucester; will of. Wife, Charity, to have all of real estate and personal excepting £200 to my sisters, Mary (wife of Robert Chambers, living in Mechlon Hampton, near Strowdewater, "Gloucester Shire," Old England; Ruth (wife of Charles Karsey), of same place, and her son, Charles Karsey; Ann Brown (not knowing whether she be married or not); and my brother, Charles Brown. Wife empowered to sign deed of conveyance to George Ward, or his heirs, for the fulling mill. Sole executrix – wife Charity. Witnesses – John Wood, Priscilla Flemingham, Thomas Sharp. Proved 21 Dec. 1736. Lib. 4, p. 101.

1737, May 28. Whereas John Brown, late of Gloucester Co., yeoman, died in Philadelphia and left a last will, dated 26 Jany., 1727, and it has been proved in due form in Pennsylvania, letters of adm. within Province of New Jersey issued in due form. Lib. 4, p. 102.

Two important details in this will are:

- in 1727, this John Brown was from the town of Gloucester, and Upton was located in the township of Gloucester
- the direction for his wife to convey to George Ward the fulling mill

Next we follow with the will of John's wife, Charity Chew Brown, written 1736, proved 1739.

Important details include:

- to sister Elizabeth Jones, wife of Andrew Jones, the plantation in Gloucester County where they live
- mention of Joseph and Charles Brown, brothers of deceased husband John Brown
- mention of brother Thomas Chew (making her maiden name Chew)
- \$\$\$ to Congregation of Christ Church in PHL to finish building church (Episcopal)
- executor, Samuel Mickel Esq. of PHL, merchant
- inventory includes bonds from: Edward Williams, Ebenezer Tomlinson (surnames adjoining Brown property in Upton), William Tatum, Amariah Ballinger (father of Sarah Ballinger, wife of Jonathan Brown)

Here is a record that shows this JB was of Gloucester (second reference; I'm still not certain who the first reference applies to):

... of the City, Gloucester Ferry. The Loan Office Commissioners made their annual report.

Freeholders present 1730: Wm. Harrison, John Hinchman, John Tomlinson, John Brown, Jonathan Ladd, Hans Steelman, Jacob Cozens, Wm. Cooper, John Kaighn, John Cock, Alex. Morgan, Edw. Doughty, and Edw. Sommers.

October 13, 1730. A negro named Ceasar was tried and executed, expenses of which amounted to two pounds ten shillings. Ceasar was brought from Salem.

In 1732, John Brown of Gloucester, and Sarah Norris were taxed as merchants.

The mills taxed were: Borton, Coles, Childs, Kays, Mullicas, Shivers, T. Cheesmans, R. Cheesman, Coe, Wood, ...

and another reference, showing him of Gloucester as a merchant:

of freeholders, as at present constituted, on the 10th of February, 1798. On the minutes of the county legislative board under the date of Dec. 11, 1733, appears the subjoined act for repairing Timber Creek bridge:

"The justices and freeholders have appointed George Ward, and Constantine Wood to be managers to repair Timber Crick Bridge; and also that fifty pounds shall be raised to defray the charge of the said repair, and for and towards other county charges, in the manner following, viz: Single men, one shilling and six pence each; servants, four pence each; *Merchants* as followeth, viz: John Brown of Gloucester, ten shillings; Sarah Norris, five; Timothy Matlack, ten; Michael Fisher, five; C. Taylor, ten. *Mills* as followeth, viz: Bennet's Mill, four shillings;

However, before his merchant days, I believe he was involved in the fuller trade: What follows is an excellent history about the ownership of the fulling mill mentioned in John Brown's will:

(from *WARD'S FULLING & GRISTMILLS* on

<http://www.westjerseyhistory.org/books/farrwatermills/W.shtml>)

surveyed to the father, but the writer has not been successful in finding the record of the survey. The next day, 2 December 1701, Thomas Bull, the son, sold 250 acres "at Upton" (Deptford Township) to George Brown, alias Ward (Colonial Deeds, G1 2-29 & 30). The deed contained no legal description.

By 16 July 1715, Ward had built a gristmill and a fulling mill. On that date, for £105, he sold to John Royton of Bucks County, Pennsylvania, a one-half interest in both mills, at Upton, on the southerly side of the South Branch of Timber creek. It stood on the land joining the plantation purchased by Ward from Thomas Bull, where Ward lived. The deed included "one-half of the stream banks, race and water, all belonging to the said mill...utensils proper and necessary for the carrying on of said works of grinding, fulling, dyeing and pressing" (Colonial Deeds, A-19)

The writer has found no reconveyance by Royton. There is no indication that the deed was intended as a mortgage, nor is there any mention of him in the Calendar of Records (NJA XXI), nor in the Colonial Deed Index. However, the Burlington County, N. J. probate records show that Royton died intestate 21 October 1717, a fuller and dyer, resident in Bristol, Pennsylvania, and administration was granted in Burlington County on his estate 2 November 1717 (1717 C).

By a deed of 5 May 1721, Ward conveyed the 100 acres and the fulling mill (no mention made of the gristmill) to John Brown, a clothier, and Brown was assessed for it in 1721 and 1722 (Gloucester County Freeholders' Minutes). On 4 October 1726, Brown conveyed the fulling mill back to George (Brown) Ward, except three acres of meadow at the mouth of Bulls Run (according to deed, Blackwood to Heaton [below]). George Ward, the elder, was assessed by the freeholders for one mill in 1731, 1732 and 1733; and two mills in 1736 (Gloucester County Freeholders' Minutes, pp. 62, 69, 73, 78).

According to the 1767 deed from Blackwood to Heaton, on 29 January 1736 Charity, wife of John Brown, conveyed the three acres of meadow to George Ward Jr. John Brown died leaving a 1727 will (194 H), proved in Philadelphia 21 December 1736, leaving all real estate to wife, Charity, and authorizing her to transfer the fulling mill to George Ward [notwithstanding he had already conveyed it in 1726, before he made his will]. It is not evident why she transferred the three acres of meadow to George Ward much earlier in the year 1736 than Brown's will was probated, unless his death had preceded her making the deed, she knew the contents of the will, and something delayed the probate.

Note: I am still trying to locate the 1721 and 1726 deed mentioned involving John Brown.

## A Sidetrack Looking at Jones

The will of Charity Brown gave to her sister, Elizabeth, w/o Andrew Jones, the plantation in Gloucester “where they now live”. Charity wrote her will in 1736 and it was proved in 1739. She also mentioned her nephew, John Jones.

Question: Where was the Brown-Chew plantation in Gloucester County mentioned in the will of Charity Brown?

I checked the conveyances on West Jersey History website, and found nothing for Andrew Jones. Checked on the New Jersey State Archives website which has an index of Early Land Records, and I found the following:

TO: Andrew Jones FROM: Thomas Langly CONVEYANCE. Mantua Creek, Gloucester County. OTHERS NAMED: LOCATIONS: West Jersey; Gloucester; Mantua Creek (also Mantos, Little and Great)	18 Oct 1716	Glo A : Folio 133
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I looked up Langly on the West Jersey website, got one match:

1699 Dec. 30. Do. Susannah, widow of John LANGLY of Woodbury Creek, Gloucester Co., to John TATEM (as above), for 50 acres on Woodbury Creek, N. W. Wm. WARNER, S. E. John TEST, half of the 100 a. lot sold by Wm. SALSBURY to Jonathan WAINEWRIGHT September 7, 1689, and 50 a. thereof of him bought by said John LANGLY September 14, 1689. 263

Note that Charity's will also mentions her sister, Mary Langley, now living in Cohansey, NJ.

Humpf. So now we have added to the mess. The fact that Andrew Jones acquired property in 1716 on Mantua Creek does not necessarily mean that was where his brother-in-law John Brown's plantation was. Add to that, the Langly family (the surname of Andrew's sister-in-law, Mary) seemed to have owned property around Woodbury Creek which was associated with other names we recognize (Tatum and Salsbury).

What about John Jones?

TO: Charles Read FROM: John Jones CONVEYANCE. Little Timber Creek, Gloucester County. OTHERS NAMED: LOCATIONS: West Jersey; Gloucester; Timber Creek (sometimes called Gloucester River, Gloucester)	26 Feb 1745	G-H : Folio 327
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If John Jones acquired any of Brown-Chew plantation that was willed to his parents, Andrew and Elizabeth Jones, this location on Timber Creek would be more in line with where John Brown of Upton might have lived back before 1700 (although LITTLE Timber Creek might be of interest if it refers to the area near Cedar Swamp). What a tangled web this is!

## ***Thoughts about this JB***

I think the evidence still leans in the direction that JB-Clothier was the son of JB of Upton. The one thing that seems to say he was not is that he had two brothers, Joseph and Charles. They also would have been heirs to JB-Upton, but they were apparently not in the area (except for Joseph). Does this mean we eliminate JB-Clothier as son of JB-Upton?

Here are reasons we might consider that John Brown who married Charity Chew and died in Philadelphia in 1736 was the son of John Browne of Upton who died in 1700:

- Location Location Location. The location of Upton is just right there (very close) where the fulling mill was located.
- All the names that appeared on conveyances with JB of Upton before 1700 appear as witnesses of the marriage of George Ward of Upton (along with JB himself, of course).
- The probate record of JB of Upton said his son John was of the same place - so Jr. knew that area too, no doubt.
- George Ward acquired his plantation very shortly after a John Brown Jr. was selling his father's property in Upton. Coincidence?
- The deeds between Ward and Brown could be just a random fuller and a clothier doing business. But some things are not coincidence, methinks:
  - George Ward appeared in the early records as “George Brown alias Ward”. There is no provable explanation about how George was a Brown and then a Ward, but George was at some point a Brown who later started doing business with a Brown.
  - The will of JB-clothier gave the fulling mill to George Ward. The relationship between John and George was not stated, but I question whether John was leaving the will to just a business partner.

The one and only problem with this hypothesis is that this 1731-JB had siblings, both brothers and sisters according to the wills of both 1731-JB and Charity Chew Brown. We know John Brown Jr. was named as administrator of his father's estate – but was he the only heir? Question marks all over the place.

Nevertheless, the fact is that neither the will of John Brown nor Charity Brown mentions any children. So whether or not he was a son of JB-Upton, he was not, apparently, the next generation of our line.

## ***Research To Do***

- Look for any family connections with Joseph and/or Charles Brown.
- Need to locate deeds from 1721 and 1726 (involving fulling mill) – are there others?
- Where was the “plantation” in Gloucester where Andrew Jones lived?

## About Joseph Brown

**Inns and Taverns of a Century Ago**—Approximately one hundred years ago the principal inns and taverns and proprietors in Gloucester County were: Franklin Hotel, Washington Hotel, owned by Marmaduke Wood; Woodbury Hotel, also known as the Spread Eagle or Munyans; John D. Scott, John Dunham, Joseph Brown, all of Woodbury. John Dyer's Bull's Eye Hotel was destroyed by fire in 1817. The taverns and inns outside of Woodbury were: Paul Sears', at Squancum; John Cadd's, at Chews Landing; White Horse Tavern, near Clementon Glass Works; Enoch Gabb's, at Center Square in Westwich Township. George J. ...

from SJAH, p.453, on ancestry.

Every other reference I find says he is a brickmaker and from 'close to Philadelphia'. He inherited land from William Higgins along with xxx Bywater. Sold to Holt of Mantua Creek.