

John Brown of Deptford on Mantua Creek

By Mary Ann Schaefer

12 July 2015, Boulder, CO

Acknowledgements: A good deal of the research on this subject was conducted by and shared by T. K. O'Hare. Her work as well as her insights have provided a basis for my own observations, and I thank her.

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.

This article provides new documentation that applies to my earliest known Brown ancestor, namely John Brown, thought to be born around 1683, married Phebe Chatfield around 1720, and died in Deptford twp, New Jersey in 1736.

Let's talk about the people mentioned in these wills:

JOSEPH YOUNG:

from

<http://home.comcast.net/~adhopkins/griffith.htm>

6 Aug 1720 - Marriage of Walter Griffith and Martha Cox (both of Philadelphia)
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<i>Marriages at Christ Church, Philadelphia,</i> Pennsylvania Archives, Series 2, Vol 8, 1878, p. 58.
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Walter Griffiths paid from estate of John Brown, Sr, Deptford Twp, Gloucester County, 17 Sep 1733.

New Jersey Colonial Documents, Calendar of Wills 1730-1750, Vol 30, p. 68

1733 - Griffith's mill and Griffith's tavern were mentioned in
Gloucester County, NJ Tax Roll, 11 Dec 1733

Thomas Cushing and Charles E. Sheppard, History of Gloucester, Salem, and Cumberland Counties, p. 108. Woodbury, NJ: Gloucester County Historical Society, 1974 (1883).

Walter JR. married Susannah Young, dau of **Joseph Young (mentioned as friend of our JB-I, JY of Greenwich, will 1740)**

JOHN WOOD

So both of these “other” John Brown's can be accounted for as not being associated with our Brown family.

Records

So far, the earliest record I find which I believe can be associated with My John Brown is this one:

the two townships in question.

The township officials in 1716 for the seven townships, including Gloucester Town, were as follows:

Deptford Township—Overseers of Highways. Peter Matson, John Brown; Trustees. John Rambo. Henry Wood; Overseers of Poor, John Hopper, George Ward; Assessor, Richard Chew, Jr.; Surveyors of Highways. John Cooper, James Lord; Collector. John Rambo.

Gloucester Township—Overseers of Highways, William Sharp, Na-

from: *Southern Jersey, A History* by A. Heston, p. 406

The appearance of the name Rambo is, I believe, a link to My John Brown. It is an unusual name, but it appears in both the wills of our John Brown and his wife Phebe. So it is fair to think the Brown's and Rambo's were both neighbors and friends.

Note: The fact that he is not listed as John Brown on Mantua means, possibly, that 1731-JB was not yet in the area, so this JB was the only JB and did not need further differentiation. [remembering that in 1712, there was a JB Jr. in the Earmark Book.]

Here is another record from much later, and so it probably applies to the John Brown II who married Sarah Cooper. However, it not only gives us a nice property description but it tells us that Rambo and Brown were neighbors for 50 years:

To Be Sold,

A Lot of Land, **situate on the Great Road, adjoining Mantua Creek Bridge, Gloucester County**, containing 30 Acres, 4 whereof is Tide Meadow, banked in, and fit for the Scythe, a Dwelling-house, with a good Stone Cellar under it, a Pump at the Door, a young Orchard, containing about 100 bearing Trees, a Conveniency of fishing with a Sean for Shad, and its lying on a fine navigable Creek, renders it very suitable for a Merchant or Shopkeeper, as a Vessel that draws 7 or 8 Feet Water, may pass to and from the same to the River.

Also a Plantation, situate on Oldman's Creek, in Penn's Neck, Salem County, about three Miles from the River, containing 124 Acres, between 40 and 50 thereof Tide Marsh, all banked in, with about 25 Rods of Bank, 20 or 30 Acres thereof cleared, and 12 of Upland, a Dwelling-house, with a Spring of excellent Water, handy to the Door, a young Orchard of good bearing Trees, &c.

Any Person inclining to purchase, may apply to the Subscriber, living on the last mentioned Premises, or to **Thomas Rambo; or John Brown**, living near the first mentioned, and be informed of the Title and Terms of Sale.

David Aldridge.

— The Pennsylvania Gazette, No. 1950, May 8, 1766.

from archive.org

DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE COLONIAL HISTORY OF THE State OF New Jersey,
EDITED BY WILLIAM NELSON, VOLUIMIE XXV.

Extracts from American Newspapers, relating to
New Jersey.

VOL. VI. 1T66-1T6T.

PATERSON, N. J.:
The Call Printing and Publishing Co.
1903.

And finally regarding Rambo, here is a short biography of John Rambo which confirms that he indeed owned property at Mantua Creek:

John's father gave him a tract of land in Gloucester County, New Jersey on the **Little Mantua Creek**, adjacent to land held by his brother, Gunnar, and it was here that John and Brigitta made their home. In 1699, John & Gunnar deeded 267 acres of the West Jersey land they had inherited from their father to John Bowles of Philadelphia. In 1704, Gunnar and the rest of the family released their interests in the family to brother John and his descendants.

John was a deputy of the West Jersey Assembly in 1697 and also signed the petition to support the king. On 12 May 1701, he signed a petition to the king drawn up by the council and House of Representatives to confirm Col. Andrew Hamilton as Governor.

John was a Justice of the Peace for Gloucester County, 1695-97, 1704 & 1710. In 1710, aged 79, he gave testimony on the boundary dispute between the colonies of Pennsylvania and Maryland over the 3 lower counties that make up what is now Delaware.

John Moore [Moore?] left a legacy to a John Rambo of Dedford township on 8 Oct 1716. John Rambo, Sr. may have married Moore's daughter after the death of Brigitta, or the legacy could have been intended for his son, John Rambo, Jr., who was then about 23 years old.

On 30 September 1727 John Rambo, Sr. and Robert Lord were made trustees for William Chester's wife, Mary & his sons, Samuel & William Chester.

John died at the age of 80 in 1741 prior to proving his will on 21 November 1741. Only 4 of his children were mentioned in his will: John, Peter, Gabriel & Deborah.

According to the Beverly Rambo book, the couple had 11 children. ¹

My Comments: Note the name Mary Chester was also a witness in the will of My John Brown I.

¹ An attachment from this ancestry family tree:
<http://trees.ancestry.com/tree/143633/person/6123593888/media/2?pgnum=1&pg=0&pgpl=pid|pgNum>.

The next record belonging to My John Brown is, I believe, this one:

Presbyterian Church of Woodbury—The Presbyterian Church of Woodbury came into existence very largely through the assistance of the members of the First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia. On August 10, 1721, John Tatem, of Woodbury Creek, deeded to William Allen, Joseph Redman, and Joseph Shippen, merchants; Humphrey Morrey and John Snowden, all of Philadelphia; Peter Long, John Brown, and John and Richard Chew, and Alexander Randall, of Gloucester County, one acre of land on the King's Highway, which was soon used for a church and burial ground. Prior to the erection of the church the Presbyterians of Woodbury Creek were occasionally visited by traveling ministers. October 3, 1768, Alexander Randall, the survivor of those mentioned in the 1721 deed, conveyed the premises to John Sparks, Archibald Moffett, Silas Randall, Isaac Flaningham, William Tatem, and Robert Currie. The church erected thereon was mentioned in this deed. On August 19, 1803, Archibald Moffett, Isaac Flaningham, and William Tatem, the survivors reconveyed the premises to the same parties.

Again, I am connecting another name from My John Brown's will to the same name appearing in this church deed, namely Alexander Randall, who was named in John's will as a friend. Also interesting is the will of Alexander Randall:

1780, Nov. 11. Randall, Alexander, of Greenwich Township, Gloucester Co., Esquire; will of. I give for the repair of the houses of Worship of the Swedes Church at Rackoon, the Quaker Meeting house near Solomon Lippincott's, the Catholic Church at Berkley and the Methodist Meeting house there, and the Presbyterian Meeting house near the head of Timber Creek, £4 each. Presbyterian Meeting house near Woodbury, to have £10. Son, Jacob, £30, if not paid by his brother, Able. Daughter Sarah's 4 children, £20 each. Lands to be sold, and money given to sons, Jacob and Able, and my daughters, Eleanor and Ruth. Executors—son, Able, and son-in-law, John Sparks, and Thomas Taper. Witnesses—Thomas Boyd, Joseph Sparks, Arthur Miklewain [McIlwain]. Proved Dec. 16, 1783.

1783, Oct. 6. Inventory, £299.1.2, made by Jeffery Clark and John Room. Lib. 26, p. 11.

Isn't it interesting that Randall was clearly supportive of several faiths, but especially to the Presbyterian Meeting House in Woodbury?

So making this link is exciting because now we have good reason to believe our John Brown might have been Presbyterian, which had previously been unknown (his son, John Brown II who married Sarah Cooper became a Quaker). This is an insight that researcher TKO already gleaned, in addition to finding that the daughter of our John Brown, Mary Brown Davis, was likely married at the First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia.

New Questions for Research

This new information seems to place My John Brown very squarely on Mantua Creek. The question is when he arrived there. Email from TKO seems to suggest he arrived there in 1728 with the purchase from Peter Cox (I have not seen this deed), but the county histories show him being a freeholder from Mantua Creek as early as 1724. More deed-digging is required!

Likewise it would be great to locate some Presbyterian records to see if our Brown's show up. I'm not sure where to locate those, but they would certainly be useful.

The 1728 deed supposedly is to our family from Peter Coxe. But then later:

1771, Jan. 16. **Coxe, Peter**, of Deptford Township, **Gloucester** Co. Int. Adm'r—John Tatem. Fellowbondsmen—Joshua Lord; both of said place. Witnesses—Abigail Blackwood and S. Blackwood, Surrogate.

1771, Jan. 17. Inventory, £42.4.2, made by John Brown and Joshua Lord. Lib. 15, p. 112.

talk about 2 references to “little Mantua creek”

one was the 1728 deed,

the other? - I think Rambo description above?