

PURITANS, PATRIOTS, AND (YES) A FEW CROOKS – SETTLERS OF MORRIS COUNTY

John Ford (1659 – 1721) & Elizabeth Freeman (1671 – 1772) /
Daniel Goble (1669 – 1733) & Sarah Houghton (1672 – 1783) /
Abraham Hathaway (1685 – 1754) & Sarah Chase (1690 – ?) /
Robert Goble (1700 – 1783) & Mary Malatiah (? – ?) /
Benjamin Conger (1700 – 1762) & Experience Ford (1711 – 1784) /
Abraham Hathaway (1710 – bef. 1787) & Sarah _____ (? – ?) /
Simeon Goble (1726 – 1777) & Abigail Conger (1732 – 1810) /
Abraham Hathaway (1755 – 1831) & Sarah Goble (1757 – 1827) /
John Budd (c. 1696 – c. 1757) & Mary Prudence Strange
(c. 1695 – aft. 1745)

— *Bradley Rymph*

Visits to Morris County, New Jersey

October 28–30, 2011

June 30, 2012

Sometime in the late 1600s, European-ancestry colonial Americans first began settling in the portion of northwestern New Jersey that was to become Morris County. In

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Historical marker commemorating the initial settlement in 1685 of what is now Whippany in Morris County, New Jersey.

the decades that followed, members of six primary family lines in our Rymph ancestry settled in the then-largely-wilderness county. Four of these lines — the Fords, the Congers, the Gobles, and the Hathaways — settled in or around what was to become the county seat of Morristown and, in the generations that followed, merged their lines through marriage. The fifth line — the Budds — became owners of large parcels of land to the west and southwest of Morristown and made their home in the areas that became known as Chester, Mt. Olive, and Budd's Lake. Distant cousins through another key Rymph family line — the Schuylers — also moved from their homes in New York to Morris County.

Between these six family lines, our ancestors and distant cousins became key participants in the early social, industrial, religious, military, and (unfortunately) criminal development of Morris County,

INITIAL MORRIS COUNTY SETTLEMENT

An early *History of Morris County, New Jersey*, published in 1882, states that “the first actual settlement by the whites was probably in the northeastern part of the county, near Pompton Plains.” On June 6, 1695, a group of colonists led by an **Arent Schuyler** (1662–1730) purchased from the native Indians all the land between Passaic River on the south, the Pompton River on the north, and the foot of the hills to the east and the west. In November of that same year, Schuyler and his partners bought another 5,500 acres east of the Pequannock River, then in 1696 purchased 1,500 acres west of that river. Arent Schuyler was the nephew of our ancestral immigrant, David Pieters Schuyler (see separate profile, “The Establishment of New Netherland: II—Fort Orange (Albany)”), through David’s brother Philip Pieterse Schuyler, another prominent early Dutch immigrant to New Netherland. In addition to being a land speculator, during his

lifetime Arent Schuyler was a surveyor, an “Indian agent,” miner, and merchant.

In addition, Puritans whose ancestors had earlier settled New England began moving south to eastern New Jersey (for example, to Newark and Elizabeth), and then moved further west across the Passaic River into Morris County. Whether this settlement began before or after Arent Schuyler’s purchases elsewhere in the county is unclear. The 1882 *History of Morris County* states that these Puritan settlements were established “following closely upon the heels of the Pompton Plains [i.e., Schuyler party] settlers.” However, a historical marker (*see photos*) in Whippany, New Jersey, commemorates the “Settlement of Whippanong / Hanover Township” in 1685 as the “first settlement in Morris, Sussex, and Warren counties.” The marker notes, “The first settlers were attracted by the river, iron ore, and the fertile land.”

The settlement and development of the western portions of Morris County began in earnest between 1710 and 1715.

JOHN FORD / ELIZABETH FREEMAN AND FAMILY

Sometime around 1710, a major landowner in Morris County, a man named John Budd,* made an offer to one of the wealthiest residents of Woodbridge in eastern New Jersey — our ancestor **John Ford** (1659–1721). The two men had met each other while they were in Philadelphia at a meeting of their presbytery (the governing regional body of Presbyterian congregations). According to the *History of Morris County*, “Budd offered Ford a large tract of land if he would remove to Monroe, between Morristown and Whippany, an offer which was accepted.”

Once Ford, with his wife **Elizabeth (Freeman) Ford** and their children, had made the move

* This John Budd was of no known relationship to the Budds in our family line. He was descended from a Thomas Budd, who had emigrated to New Jersey from England and was not known to be related to our immigrant ancestor, John Budd (c. 1599–1670), who had been among the original settlers of New Haven, Connecticut; Southold, Long Island, and Rye, New York, after his immigration from England.



Historical marker designating the approximate location at which John Ford and John Budd set up the first-known iron forge in Morris County.

“BLACK SHEEP” OF THE FAMILY: Abraham Hathaway, Samuel Ford, Jr., and Their “Money-Making Affairs”

Perhaps one of the less well-known features of colonial life in the half century immediately preceding the American Revolution was the rampancy of counterfeiting as a criminal activity. This was especially the case in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.

In the eyes of the British government, counterfeiting was a serious crime, punishable by the death penalty. In the eyes of the American colonists, however, it frequently was seen as far less serious. What punishments were meted out to counterfeiters were, in almost all cases, far less serious than the law technically prescribed.

The reason may have lain in the unsatisfactory currency system that the colonists faced. Most citizens conducted their business using a barter system, rather than payment with money. Britain prohibited the colonists from producing their own money, and the amount of English money in circulation was in very short supply. One result was the eventual widespread use of “Pieces of Eight” — i.e., Spanish coins from their colonies to the south. Another approach for some colonies was for individual colonies to produce their own paper script, not calling it money but instead saying that it represented the official British metal coins which “backed” it as collateral. This script was only good within the specific colony which issued it.

A third approach — one in which two branches of our Morris County ancestors engaged — was to create counterfeit currency, either metal coins or paper money that looked like either the official British currency or the various colonial scripts.

One such counterfeiting ring emerged in the 1740s. Its ringleader was a John Pipes, Sr., who had married a Susanna Hathaway. At least her brother **Abraham Hathaway III** (1710 – bef. 1787) — and possibly also her father **Abraham Hathaway, Jr.** (1685–1754) — was also involved in the scheme. These Abraham Hathaways were my great-great-great-great-great-great-grandfather and great-great-great-great-great-great-grandfather, respectively.

Their actions are described in some detail by Theodore Thayer in *Colonial and Revolutionary Morris County*:

When counterfeiting was rampant in Morris County, it was difficult to convict the perpetrators. Many of the counterfeiters were popular young men with many influential relatives and friends. Furthermore, many of the inhabitants did not look upon the crime as inimical to their interests; rather, they viewed the actions of the counterfeiters as clever and smart. In fact, to perhaps the great majority, the counterfeiters were popular heroes. They did not perceive the great harm which this form of lawbreaking could cause to a community.

As early as 1744 there were several indictments against counterfeiters for altering paper money, but no arrests appear to have been made. Then in 1747, a whole ring of counterfeiters and passers of counterfeit bills were arrested and jailed. The number and good station in life of most of the men reveal the prevailing disposition toward counterfeiting. The names of the arrested were: Timothy Conner, Seth Hall, Jonathan Hathaway, John Pipes, Job Allen, Andrew Morrison, Abraham Southerd, Samuel Blackford, Sylvanus Totten, and David Brant, all of Morristown. In addition there were Abraham Hathaway, Jacobus Vanetta, John McNeal, Joshua Robins, Abraham Anderson, Robert Livingston, Court Timery, and Isaac Woortman. Through the laxity of Sheriff Caleb Fairchild, all the prisoners broke jail and escaped to the homes of friends and relatives. Governor Jonathan Belcher and his Council agreed that counterfeiters could not be convicted in Morris County and proposed that henceforth they be removed from the county for trial. The Assembly, however, disagreed, and the proposal was dropped. Chief Justice Robert Hunter Morris wanted Sheriff Fairchild prosecuted for allowing the prisoners to escape but no action was taken.

It was not until the Court of Oyer and Terminer was established in Morris County in 1750, with Chief Justice Nevill presiding, that some of the counterfeiters were again arrested and brought to trial. David Brant was found guilty, fined £25, jailed for three months, and put on good behavior for seven years. Ebenezer David was fined £5, ordered to stand in the pillory one hour, jailed for six months, and put on good behavior for nine years. Jeremiah Wright received a fine of £10 for assisting the counterfeiters and was put on good behavior for seven years. Finally, Peter Salter was fined twenty shillings and put on good behavior for two years for counterfeiting pieces of eight. These sentences were light; after all, the law prescribed the death penalty for counterfeiters.

It was not until 1752 that the county had another session of the Oyer and Terminer Court. This time nine persons were charged with assisting counterfeiters. The culprits, almost all of whom had been indicted in 1747, were Abraham Hathaway, Jonathan Hathaway, Job Allen, Andrew Morrison, John Pipes, Timothy Comer, Sylvanus Totten, Seth Hall, and Samuel Blackford. The Court, perhaps for lack of evidence, decided not to try the men at the time. They were all released in their own recognizance and ordered to appear at the next court. When it met again in September 1753, the men simply were given small fines on charges of misdemeanor and dismissed.

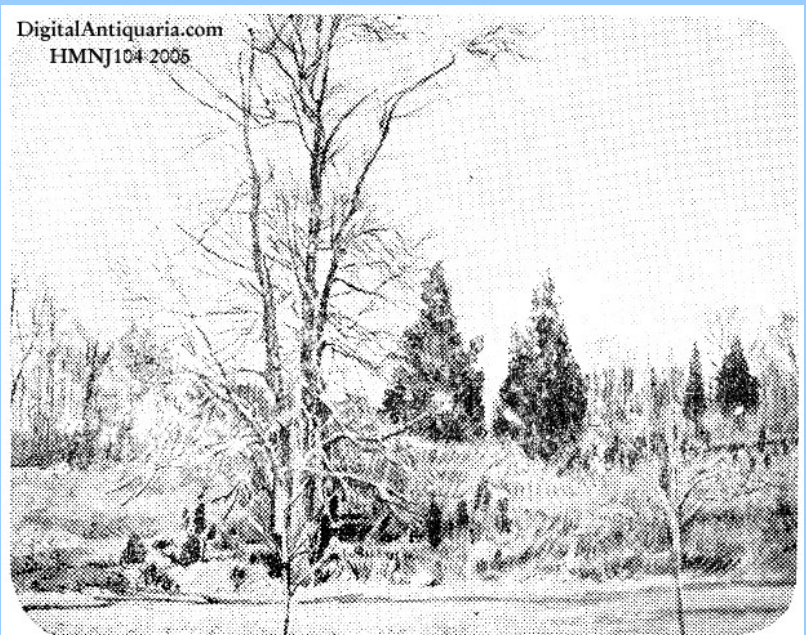
Although the punishments handed down by the Court in 1750 and 1753 were light, the actions of the Court were such that counterfeiting did not again appear in Morris County for nearly twenty years.

When counterfeiting did reappear in Morris County almost two decades later, the perpetrators were part of another branch of our family tree — the descendants of John and Elizabeth (Freeman) Ford. The 1882 *History of Morris County* relates the story of John and Elizabeth's grandson, **Samuel Ford, Jr.**, and what he called his "money-making affair":*

Samuel Ford was the leader of a notorious gang of counterfeiters, who infested this region just previous to the war of the Revolution. He was the grandson of widow Elizabeth Lindsley, the mother of Colonel Jacob Ford. His father's name was also Samuel. His mother was Grace, the daughter of Abraham Kitchel, of Hanover, and sister of Aaron, the Congressman. Her great-grandfather was Rev. Abraham Pierson sen., of Newark. His family connections were therefore of the best and most respectable. Most of his companions in villainy also stood high in society. These were Benjamin Cooper, of Hibernia, son of Judge Cooper, before whom he

*Samuel Ford, Jr., was the great-great-great-great-great-grandfather of George Walker Bush, 43rd President of the United States, through his mother, former First Lady Barbara Pierce Bush.

Site of "The Hammock," swamp-land and island owned by Samuel Ford, Jr., east of Morris County, where Ford ran his counterfeiting business.



was afterward tried for his crime; Dr. Bern Budd, a leading physician in Morristown, and a prominent member in its society; Samuel Haynes, and one Ayres, of Sussex county, both, as was also Cooper, justices of the peace; David Reynolds, a common man with no strong social connections; and others whose names will appear as we proceed.

Ford had followed the business of counterfeiting, which he pleasantly called a "money-making affair," for a number of years before he began operations in this vicinity. In 1768 he was arrested by the authorities of New York on a charge of uttering false New Jersey bills of credit; but we cannot find that he was ever brought to trial. Shortly after this he went to Ireland to improve himself in his profession, this being his second transatlantic trip in the prosecution of his business. Ireland was reputed to furnish at this time the most skillful counterfeiters in the world. Here Ford became, it is said, "a perfect master of the business." He returned to this country in 1772, and at once set to work on an extensive scale. He established himself about midway between Morristown and Hanover, in a swamp island on the Hammock. For the greater part of the year the surrounding water was a foot deep. Through this swamp Ford was obliged to creep on his hands and knees to get to his work. He would leave his house at daylight with his gun, as if in pursuit of game, and thus unwatched would attain his secret resort; for this practice was so much in accordance with the idle life he had apparently always led that it excited neither surprise nor remark. Still it was difficult for people to understand how a man whose only ostensible means of livelihood were a few acres of swampy land, the cultivation of which moreover was sadly neglected, could wear the aspect of a thriving farmer with plenty of money. In one way and another suspicion was aroused; and at last, on the 16th of July 1773, Ford was arrested and lodged in the county jail. That very night, however, or the day following, he succeeded in effecting his escape, being aided by a confederate by the name of John King, who in all probability was the same "John King" who

was "late under-sheriff of Morris county." His position gave him, of course, every facility to aid his companion in crime. Nor did Sheriff Kinney escape the charge of implication in this matter. He was afterward indicted for remissness of duty in allowing the escape of so dangerous a prisoner. The privy council regarded him as "blamable for negligence in his office, respecting the escape of Ford," and advised the governor "to prosecute the said indictment at the next court."

Ford first fled to a lonely spot on the mountain, between Mount Hope and Hibernia, and hid himself in a deserted colliery, called "Smultz's Cabin." Sheriff Kinney with a posse of men sought him there, but so leisurely that when he reached the cabin the bird had flown. From Hibernia Ford fled southward, boldly paying his way with his spurious Jersey bills and counterfeit coin. At last he reached Green Briar county, among the mountains of Virginia, where he settled and assumed the name of Baldwin. Here he followed the trade of a silversmith, forming a partnership with another man. During a severe illness he disclosed his real history to his partner's wife, who so sympathized with him that after his recovery and the death of her husband she married him, and thus became his third living wife. His first wife, as we have seen, was Grace Kitchel, of Hanover. While in Ireland, perfecting himself in his "profession," he married an Irish girl, with whom he is said to have received considerable money. She came to this country with him, and was well nigh crazed on finding that he already had a wife and children. She is said afterward to have married an Irishman, and lived for many years in Whippany.

The pursuit of Ford was not of a very diligent character. When his whereabouts became known in the course of time it does not appear that he was molested. His oldest son, William Ford, and Stephen Halsey (son of Ananias) visited him in Virginia, - where they found him with "a great property," a new wife, and some promising young Baldwins; and thus the possible ancestor, so the historian suggests of the Virginia Baldwins

who have figured in public life. To his son and Mr. Halsey he seemed to be a "most melancholy man." He professed to them a deep penitence for his sins, and a grace which led to a religious life; the sincerity of which we may however be permitted to doubt, as it did not lead him to abandon his adulterous relations and do justice to the excellent woman in New Jersey whom he had left to support herself and his family without a farthing's aid from him.

At the time of Ford's arrest and escape several other persons were taken up on suspicion of being connected with him in his "money-making scheme." On the 4th of August 1773 a special term of oyer and terminer was held for the purpose of eliciting information respecting the parties implicated and the extent of their guilt. On the 14th one of those concerned, that he might mitigate his own punishment, made a partial confession, and was followed by another who gave a full and explicit statement of all the details. The swamp was examined and the press found, together with a set of plates for printing the bills of Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey; a quantity of type and other materials, and a leather wrapper in which the money was kept. The late Sheriff Robertson of Morris county became the owner of the house in which Ford lived, on the Hammock, and in repairing it found some of Ford's counterfeiting tools in the walls, where many years before he had secreted them.

But the confessions of which we have spoken led to other results than the discovery of the counterfeiters' paraphernalia. Men who occupied high positions in society were arrested. Their names have already been given—Cooper, Budd, Haynes, Reynolds and Ayers. The last was of Sussex, and was tried in that county. The other four were arraigned in the old court-house at Morristown on the 19th of August 1773. A thousand people were thought to be within its walls, and among them all scarcely an eye could be found which did not exhibit some tokens of sympathetic sorrow. Having pleaded guilty, the sentence was now to be pronounced upon them,

viz. that upon the 17th of September following they should expiate their crime upon the gallows. One of the magistrates before whom the case was tried, was father of one of the culprits. The best families and society in the county had representatives in the number of the condemned. But the sentence thus faithfully pronounced was not to be as faithfully executed. The respectability of the culprits and their influential connections were made to bear with great effect upon the pardoning power. The day fixed for their execution arrived, and Reynolds, who seems to have been really the least guilty of the lot, but who alone unfortunately for himself had no influential friends, suffered the ignominious death to which he had been sentenced; while the other three were remanded, and finally in December, after a number of respites, Governor Franklin gave them a full pardon.

Dr. Budd continued to live in Morristown until his death, from putrid fever, December 14th 1777, at the age of thirty-nine. So great was his reputed skill in the practice of his profession that he still found many ready to employ him. One of his patients, a very inquisitive woman, the first time she had occasion for his services after his pardon, asked him very naively "how he kind of felt when he came so near being hanged." His answer is not recorded.

This "money-making scheme" of Ford and his companions has a wider than local interest from its connection with the robbery of the treasury of East Jersey at Perth Amboy, on the night of the 21st of July 1768, in which £6,570 9s. 4d. in coin and bills were stolen. Cooper, Haynes and Budd, under sentence of death for counterfeiting, as above narrated, made confessions which pointed to Ford as the planner and prime mover of this bold and successful villainy, the first of whom admitted having received £300 of the stolen money. Ford strenuously denied the charge; but his denial could scarcely counterbalance the confessions just noticed. He was never tried for the crime, having fled, as already seen, beyond the reach of the law before the confessions were made.



*Ford Mansion,
Morristown National Historical
Park, Morristown, New Jersey*

west, he and Budd opened what is believed to have been the first iron forge in the county on the banks of the Whippany River. A historical marker today (*see photo*) marks the site where this forge was located. The *History of Morris County* relates,

Mr. Green in his history of the Hanover church speaks of the old building in the Whippany graveyard as “about 100 rods below the forge which is and has long been known by the name of the Old Iron Works.” It was no doubt a very small and rude affair, where good iron was made free from the ore by smelting it with charcoal, and without any of the economical appliances even of the bloomeries of a hundred years later. The ore was brought to it from the Succasunna mine in leather bags on horseback—the only method of transportation. A single horse, it is said, would carry from four to five hundred pounds fifteen miles in a day.

In the years that followed, numerous other forges were built along Morris County’s rivers and streams. Several of these forges were built by John Ford’s son, **Jacob Ford, Sr.**,

including one described in the *History of Morris County* as “located just north of what is now called Water street and near Flagler’s mill, called the Ford forge.”

Jacob Ford, Sr., apparently was held in particularly high repute by his fellow Morris County residents. Andrew M. Sherman, the author of the 1905 volume *Historic Morristown, New Jersey*, said of him, “He was no doubt the leading man in Morristown.”

As anger at the American colonies’ British rulers grew in the 1770s, the Ford family became ardent patriots in the cause for independence from England. On June 3, 1775, a “Provincial Congress” for New Jersey passed an Act for the regulation of a militia for the colony. The act specified that two regiments and one battalion were to be recruited in Morris County. **Jacob Ford, Jr.**, the son of Jacob, Sr., was appointed colonel of the county’s eastern regiment. He would have been 37 years old at the time.*

*At least two other officers in this regiment also were part of our extended family tree: Benoni Hathaway (1743–1823), 32-year-old nephew of Abraham Hathaway (1685–1754), was a captain and, later, lieutenant colonel; and Joseph Lindsley (1735–1822), 40-year-old grandson of John Lindsley (second

In October 1775, the Continental Congress made its first call on New Jersey for troops to serve in resistance to the British forces. The Continental Congress asked New Jersey to supply two battalions, consisting of eight companies each. In January 1776, the Continental Congress followed this request with a call to New Jersey for one more battalion, and the New Jersey Provincial Congress promptly organized the requested forces.

By that time, back in Morris County, the eastern battalion under the command of Jacob Ford, Jr., had grown to about 800 officers and troops. Ford understood the importance that adequate gunpowder would have for the American soldiers to be effective. Early in 1776, Jacob, Sr., and Jacob, Jr., together had built a new mill specifically for the manufacture of gunpowder for the troops. In his 1905 *Historic Morristown, New Jersey*, Andrew M. Sherman wrote:

Ford's powder mill, as it came to be known, was erected on the Whippanong River.... The path leading to [the] mill was through an almost impenetrable thicket, and was so completely surrounded by trees as to render it very difficult of discovery by the enemy; indeed, a more

isolated spot could hardly have been chosen.[†]

(Today, the site of Ford's powder mill is marked by a historical marker. The site itself remains in a secluded wooded area, accessible only by walking a trail from Morristown's more populated areas.)

Sherman also noted that some historians before him had claimed that "most of the gunpowder used in the Revolution was made in this mill." Sherman doubted this claim, but did believe that "it may, however, be more in accordance with the facts in the case, to say that most of the gunpowder used in New Jersey during the Revolution, was manufactured in Ford's mill.

By the winter of 1776–77, independence from Britain had been declared by the 13 American colonies, but the war to secure that independence was not going well for George Washington and his forces. Between the July 1776 "Declaration of Independence" and December 1776, the British defeated the

[†]Col. Benoni Hathaway, nephew of Abraham Hathaway (1685–1754), was responsible for oversight of Ford's mill and, according to Shepherd, "supervised the removal of the powder from the isolated manufactory on the Whippanong, to the magazine in the vicinity of the [Morristown] Green, where it was stored for future use."

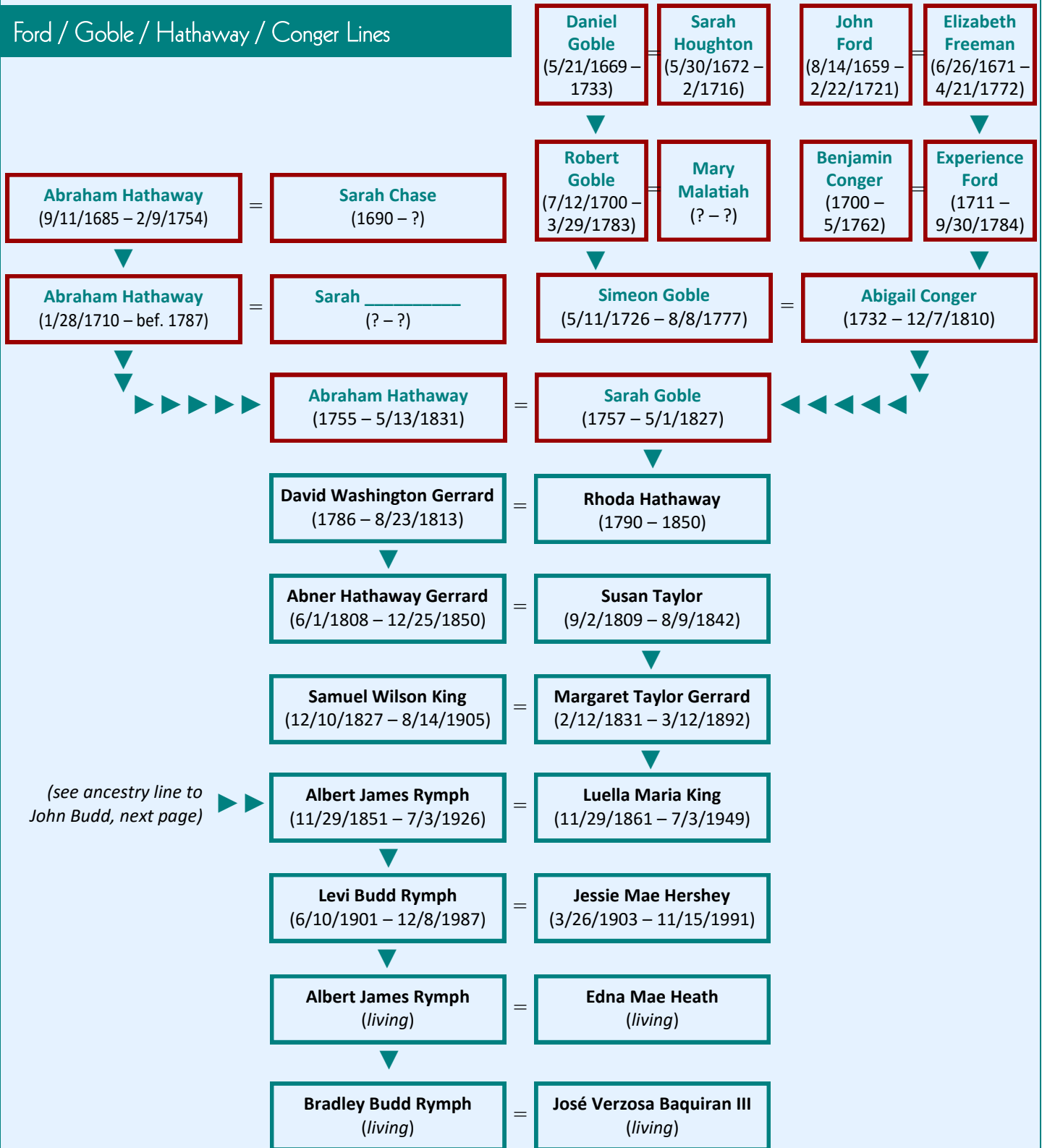
Ford-Faesch Manor House, Rockaway, New Jersey. Built 1768 by Jacob Ford, Jr., then leased in 1772 to John Jacob Faesch, who directed iron making operations that provided ammunition to the Continental Army.

husband of Elizabeth Freeman Ford), was a major.



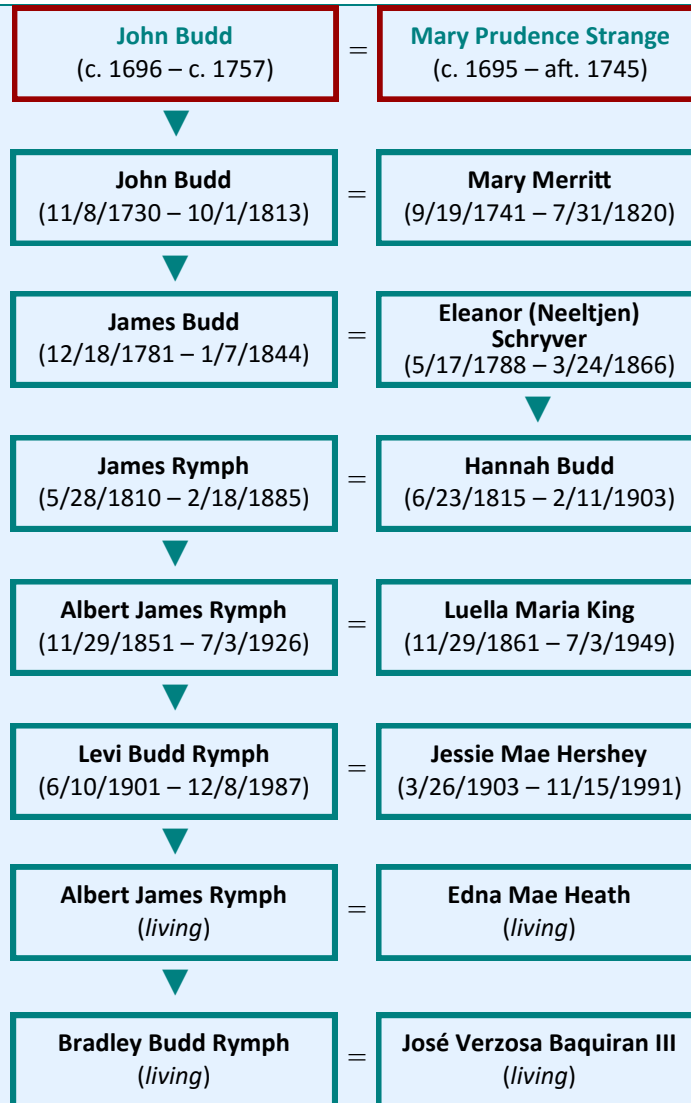
HOW WE'RE RELATED

Ford / Goble / Hathaway / Conger Lines



Abraham Hathaway (1747–1831) and Sarah Goble were my great-great-great-great-great-grandparents through my father, Albert James Rymph

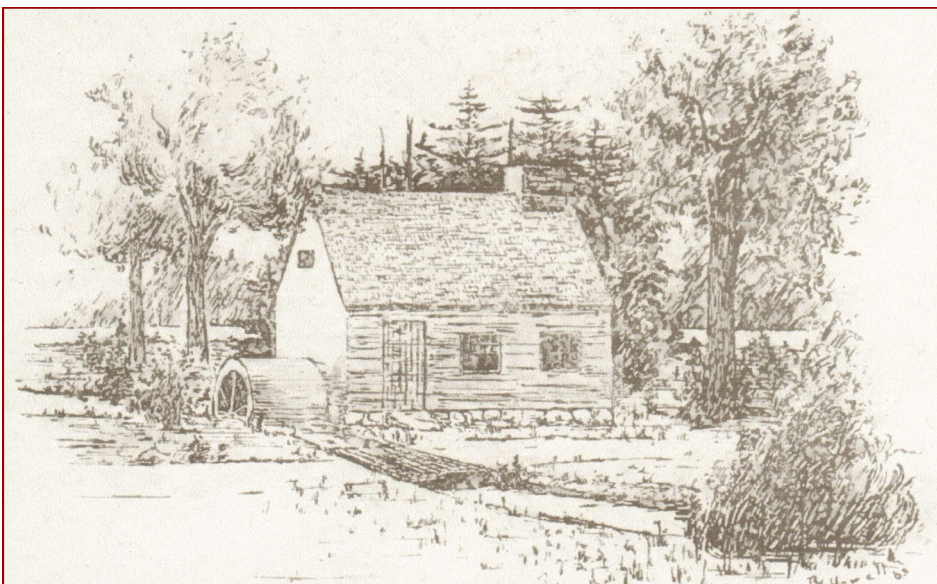
Budd Line



John Budd (c. 1696 – c. 1757) and Mary Prudence Strange were my great-great-great-great-grandparents through my father, Albert James Rymph.

Americans in numerous battles in New York state. General Washington had been forced to retreat from one New York and New Jersey location to another.

In December 1776, British forces launched a major attempt to destroy Ford's powder mill, and thereby to destroy the American force's major source of gunpowder. Colonel Ford



*Ford Powder Mill, Morristown, New Jersey, in 1776.
(Photo of historical marker at approximate site of mill from www.hmdb.org)*

learned of the advancing British troops and marched his Morris County battalion east to Springfield, New Jersey. There, on December 14, they successfully engaged the British, soon forcing the Redcoats to retreat. Ford withdrew his battalion from Springfield, back to Chatham (on the eastern edge of Morris County), where he waited and watched the further movements of the British.

Also, on December 14, 1776, the American general, Alexander McDougall, as an emissary of George Washington, visited Morristown, and three regiments of U.S. troops arrived in Morristown just three days later. In his history, Andrew Sherman theorized that McDougall was in Morristown under orders from George Washington to arrange for a winter encampment of the American army in Morristown.

On December 22, 1776, Jacob Ford, Jr., arrived back in Morristown after ending their watch in Chatham, and on December 31, Ford and his successful forces were celebrated in a parade south of the village Green. Before the parade ended, Ford became seriously ill. He was carried from the parade by a couple of his soldiers and taken to his bed. He never again rose from the bed, dying on January 11, 1777, from “lung fever” (i.e., pneumonia). By order of George Washington, Ford was buried with the honors of war.*

*The winter of 1777–78 was a brutal one in Morristown, and many town residents and encamped soldiers alike died from various diseases, including an epidemic of smallpox that spread through the town. Jacob Ford, Jr.’s father, Jacob Sr., himself died of “fever” on January 19, 1777, followed six months later by the death of his mother, Hannah (Baldwin) Ford on July 31, 1777.

Presbyterian Church in Morristown during the American Revolution. Benjamin Hathaway (1699–1762), son of my great-great-great-great-great-great-great-grandparents Abraham Hathaway (1652–1725) and Rebecca Wilbore (1665–1727), donated the land on which the church was built and its cemetery established.



Washington himself had arrived in Morristown on January 6, 1777, and soon thereafter established the Morristown tavern of Jacob Arnold as his headquarters for that winter.

In 1774, Jacob Ford, Jr., had built an impressive mansion on the family grounds on which his father and mother had raised their family. It was in this mansion that Ford died on January 11, 1777. Upon Jacob, Jr.'s, death, ownership of the mansion passed to his widow, Theodosia. When George Washington returned to Morristown to spend the winter of 1779–80 with his troops, Theodosia Ford offered Washington the use of her family's home as his headquarters. Washington accepted the offer and lived there with his wife Martha and his military family from December 1779 through June 1780. The house is now one of the central sites within the Morristown National Historical Park and is considered by many to be second only to Mount Vernon as an important residence in early American history.

BENJAMIN CONGER and EXPERIENCE (FORD) CONGER, AND FAMILY

John and Elizabeth (Freeman) Ford had other children in addition to their sons Jacob, Sr., and Samuel Sr. One daughter, **Experience Ford**, married a **Benjamin Conger**. Like John and Elizabeth Ford's family, Conger's family is believed to have moved west to Morris County from Woodbridge, New Jersey. However, unlike the Ford family roots, which are well documented, Benjamin Conger's family history seems to be unclear. One online family file, "Lineage of Eva Jane Conger" (authorship uncertain), claims that he was the son of a John Belconger (c. 1640–

1712) and his second wife, Sara (Cawood) Belconger. (This report gives the name of Belconger's first wife as Mary Kelly.) At some point, this John Belconger changed his family's name to Conger. This source claims that Benjamin's father John had been born in Woodbridge, the son of a John Belconger (1625–1678), who had immigrated to America after being born in Suffolk, England. This source claims that the Belconger family had lived in England for at least several generations before sailing to America.

However, another Conger family genealogist, Brianne Kelly-Bly, believes that the Congers of Morris County were descended from French Huguenots, who had left the province of Alsace, emigrating first to Holland, then to England, and then to America. In this version, the John Belconger who died in 1712 was himself the immigrant ancestor to America, settling in Woodbridge with his wife Mary (Sara is not mentioned in this version) in 1667. Kelly-Bly notes that Benjamin Conger is noted as a son of John Conger in Morristown records, but that records in Woodbridge contain no mention of Benjamin. Kelly-Bly says bluntly, "The genealogical question [is] whose son was he?"

Other than his marriage to Experience Ford, I have thus far located little information about Benjamin Conger. They had numerous children, including a daughter **Abigail** who married Simeon Goble. Several of Benjamin and Experience Conger's sons served in the Revolution.

PRESBYTERIAN "BURYING GROUND"

Burying Ground of Morristown Presbyterian Church, burial site of numerous Ford, Conger, Goble, and Hathaway ancestors and distant "cousins."



Grave of Benjamin Hathaway (1699-1762), my great-great-great-great-great-grand-uncle. Hathaway donated the land on which the first Presbyterian Meeting House in Morristown was built.

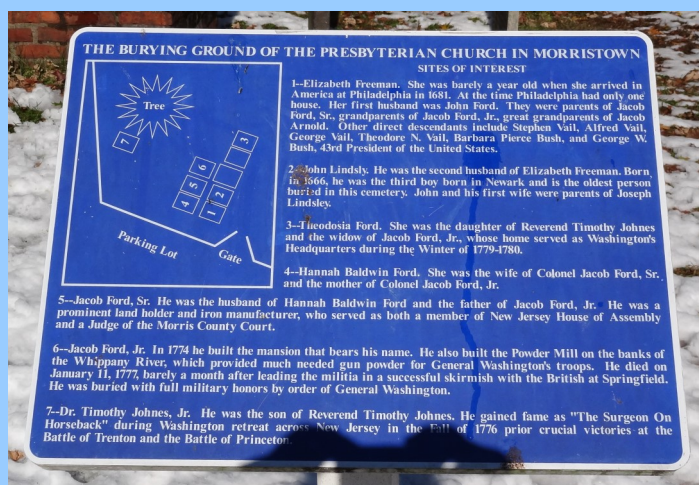
Graves of Jonathan Hathaway (1738-1814), my 1st cousin, 8 times removed, (on right) and his wife Lydia (Peck) Hathaway (1736-1802) (on left).



Grave of Abigail Goble (1680-1742), 2nd wife of my great-great-great-great-great-grandfather, Daniel Goble. She is the female with the earliest date of birth identified in the cemetery.

Grave of great-great-great-great-great-great-great-grand-uncle, Samuel Ford, Sr. (1709-1752)





Historical marker noting key Ford Family burial sites



Ford Family Memorial in midst of key Ford family graves



In front: Graves of great-great-great-great-great-great-Grandmother, Elizabeth (Freeman) Ford Lindsley (1671-1772), and her second husband, John Lindsley (c. 1666-1749).

In rear: Graves of Hannah (Baldwin) Ford (1701-1777) and her husband, great-great-great-great-great-great-grand-uncle, Jacob Ford, Sr. (1704-1777).

Front right: Grave of Theodosia (Johnes) Ford (1741-1824), wife of 1st cousin, 8 times removed, Jacob Ford, Jr. (1738-1777)

In rear: Graves of 1st cousin, 8 times removed, Jacob Ford, Jr. (1738-1777) and Timothy Johnes, Jr. (1748-1818), brother of Theodosia (Johnes) Ford



Left to right: Graves of Elizabeth (Odell) Ford (c. 1750-1819), wife of James Ford; 1st cousin, 8 times removed, James Ford (c. 1745-1827); Eunice Odell Ford (c. 1742-1830), wife of Jonathan Ford; 1st cousin, 8 times removed, Jonathan Ford (c. 1734-1817)



Original Baptist Church in Morristown, New Jersey. My great-great-great-great-great-great-great-grandparents Daniel Goble (1669–1733) and Sarah Houghton (1672–1716) and their family were among the original founders of this congregation.

GOBLE ANCESTORS:

Founding Baptists in Puritan/Presbyterian Morristown

Simeon Goble was the grandson of **Daniel Goble** (sometimes referred to as David Goble) and his wife **Sarah (Houghton) Goble**. Daniel Goble had been born in Concord, Massachusetts, in 1669. In 1676, at the age of seven, his father (also named Daniel) had been hung by his Puritan neighbors for killing Indians. This hanging was quite possibly done as part of a peace deal between the Puritans and Indians, following a massacre in 1675 by Indians in nearby Lancaster, Massachusetts. In 1692, when Daniel was 23 years old, there was a second Indian massacre. Then, in September 1697 — shortly after Daniel's marriage to Sarah Houghton and the birth of their first son, Thomas — Daniel's mother, step-father, and half-sister were killed in a third Indian massacre.

Shortly thereafter, Daniel and Sarah moved their young family from Massachusetts to South Carolina. At some point while living there, the Gobles all changed their religious identification from Puritan to Baptist. Daniel and Sarah had several children, including a son Robert. They became fairly wealthy, but the general economic times were difficult. Sometime in the period around 1715–1717, Daniel and Sarah decided to move back north, settling in the recently settled environs of Hanover in Morris County, New Jersey.

When the Goble family arrived in Hanover, the nearest Baptist congregation was about 50 miles away in Piscataway, New Jersey. Although the Gobles and other Baptists in the Hanover area did frequently travel by horseback or foot to Piscataway to worship with their fellow believers, the distance was far too great to continue doing that on a

regular basis. The Gobles began having Baptist ministers preach in their family member's homes. Daniel Goble died in 1733.

On June 8, 1752, the Baptist Church in Piscataway dismissed eleven of its members for the specific purpose of organizing a Baptist church in Morristown. Of those 11 persons, six were members of the Goble family: Daniel and Sarah's son **Robert Goble** and his wife **Mary (Malatiah) Goble**; Daniel and Sarah's son, Jonas Goble, and his wife, Malatiah; Daniel and Sarah's daughter, Jemima Goble Wiggins; and Ichabod Tompkins, the husband of Daniel and Sarah's daughter, Hannah Goble Tompkins. A historical memorandum book of the Baptist Church in Morristown includes the text, "To the Goble family belongs the credit of founding our church. David [i.e., Daniel] Goble according to the records arrived in this vicinity about 1717 from Charleston, South Carolina. He apparently had a number of children who settled in the New Vernon region. Jonas Goble gave the first meeting house on Mt. Kemble Ave. and was the first deacon, while Robert Goble was the first clerk, succeeded by Ezekial Goble."

Among the children of Robert and Mary (Malatiah) Goble was a son **Simeon Goble**, who married Abigail Conger, the daughter of Benjamin and Experience (Ford) Conger.

THREE GENERATIONS OF ABRAHAM HATHAWAYS

Abraham Hathaway, Jr. (1685–1754), was a fourth-generation descendant of Puritan immigrants who had been among the early settlers of Taunton, Massachusetts. His great-grandfather, Nicholas Hathaway (c. 1595 – ?)

had arrived in New England from England around 1639 with his wife and their son John Hathaway (? – 1705), settling first in Braintree, Massachusetts.

Little is known about Nicholas Hathaway. He may have returned to England before dying.

At some point, John Hathaway moved within Massachusetts from Braintree to Dighton and then to Taunton. He had at least six children (possibly eight) by his first wife Martha. Their second son, Abraham Hathaway, Sr. (1652 – 1725), was born in Dighton and, in 1684, married Rebecca Wilbore Pierce. He worked as a blacksmith and ferry operator. He served as a soldier in two colonial conflicts — King Phillips and Kiln Williams Wars. In addition, he served as Taunton's town clerk for 35 years.

Abraham, Sr., and Rebecca had at least nine children, including their oldest son, Abraham, Jr. At least two of their children — Abraham, Jr. and their next-to-youngest child, Benjamin Hathaway, Sr. (1699 – 1762) — eventually moved from Massachusetts to the newly settled environs of Morris County, New Jersey. At some point (probably after 1726), Abraham, Jr., married a woman named Sarah (1690 – ?). Her maiden name is not confirmed; some sources claim that it was Chase and that she was part of the prominent colonial Massachusetts family of that name.

One theory is that Benjamin Hathaway, Sr., was the first of the family to move to Morris County, where he ran one of the foundries in Whippany. Abraham, Jr., is believed to have sold his properties in Massachusetts in 1736 and then to have moved to Morris County — possibly initially to have joined his younger brother in working at the foundries.

Unraveling the specific contributions of Abraham, Jr., and Benjamin, Sr. — and their families — to early Morris County history is challenging. Abraham, Jr.'s, several children (all presumably born in Massachusetts) included a son **Abraham III** (1710 – bef. 1787) and a son Benjamin (1724 – ?). Benjamin Hathaway, Sr., also had a son Benjamin, Jr. (c. 1721 – aft. 1784). In addition, Abraham, Jr., and Benjamin, Sr., each had a son named Jonathan and a daughter named Abigail. Abraham III had a son, **Abraham Hathaway IV** (1755 – 1831).

To further add to the confusion, the wives of Abraham, Jr., III, and IV were all named Sarah. As with Abraham, Jr.'s, wife, the maiden name of Abraham III's wife is unknown. Abraham IV married **Sarah Goble** (1757 – 1827), the daughter of Simeon and Abigail (Conger) Goble.

In some cases, the nickname given to a specific Abraham Hathaway can help distinguish among them in historical texts. Abraham, Jr., was commonly called “Captain,” although it is unclear whether this signified military rank or a seafaring position. Previous generations of his family were known to be involved in the whaling and shipping businesses.

In New Jersey, Abraham, Jr., was an innkeeper. Petitions filed in 1738 in Hunterdon County (which then included what later would become Morris County) included two petitions to renew licenses to operate “public houses” in an area known then as Hanover. One petition was from Abraham Hathaway, Jr.; the other was from Jacob Ford, Sr.

Concerning Abraham III, it is known that he was involved in the 1740s in the counterfeiting ring run by his brother-in-law John Pipes (see box, “‘Black Sheep’ of the Family”). With several other members of their family, Abraham III and his wife left Morris County in 1770 and moved to Washington County in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Abraham IV and his wife either moved to Pennsylvania with his parents, or followed them west at a slightly later date. Abraham IV served in the Washington County militia during the American Revolution. He also served the new national government as a spy among the Indians, earning him the nickname, the “Patriot.”

Benjamin Hathaway, Sr., the brother of Abraham, Jr., played a key role in the early history of Morristown. In 1738, he was one of two donors of land for the erection of a Presbyterian meeting house and parsonage.

JOHN BUDD and MARY PRUDENCE STRANGE

A fifth ancestral line to play a key role in the pre-Revolution settlement of Morris County, New Jersey, was the Budd family line. John Budd (c. 1599–1670) and his wife Katherine Browne (1606–1674) had been among the initial European settlers of New Haven, Connecticut; then Southold, Long Island; then Rye, Westchester County, New York (see separate profile in “Puritan Roots”). A century later, their great-grandson, John Budd (c. 1696–c.1757) and his wife Mary Prudence Strange (c. 1695–aft. 1745) became prominent early settlers in the southwestern portion of Morris County that became the community of Chester.



After moving from Rye, New York, to Morris County, New Jersey, John and Mary Prudence (Strange) Budd became early, active members of First Congregational Church of Chester, New Jersey (current building built 1856). They established their home on lands a short distance from the church, where a couple of Roman Catholic hermitages now exist.

This fourth-generation Budd had been borne on family lands first settled by the immigrant Budd and maintained by the families of his grandfather, John Budd (c. 1625–1684), and his father, Joseph Budd (1669–1722). When his father died, John Budd (c. 1696–c.1757) inherited his lands in the Rye area; also in 1722, he married Mary, whom he had grown up with and who was the daughter of the owner of the local tavern. In 1741, he became a justice of the peace for the town of Rye (a position which his father and great-grandfather had also held).

In 1745, John Budd resigned his position as justice of the peace in Rye and began selling his lands in Westchester County.* Budd

*Included in this land was a 250-acre tract which John Budd sold to Peter Jay of New York City on March 26, 1745. Jay had purchased this land in the country for the benefit of his

moved his family south to Morris County, in the New Jersey colony, to an area then known as Roxbury (and now known as Chester). There he purchased several tracts of land from a prominent landowner in Morris County who was, coincidentally, also named John Budd but of no known relation to him.†

According to Budd family genealogist Lily Wright Budd, my ancestral John Budd who moved from Rye to Morris County became known as “the colonizer” of Roxbury. He was

children, two of whom had been blinded by small pox. Another son, John Jay, who grew up in the house that had once been the Budd family home eventually became the first Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

†As noted in a previous footnote, this other John Budd, and not our ancestor, was the John Budd who had persuaded John Ford to move to Morris County in 1710 and open the county’s first-known iron forge.

among the first settlers to perceive the areas possibilities for successful settlement. This John Budd persuaded relatives and friends from both Rye and Southold, Long Island, to also move to the area.

A few years prior to John Budd's arrival in Roxbury, the deeply religious settlers in the area had already established both a Presbyterian "meeting house" in 1738 and a Congregational fellowship sometime around 1740. The Budd family quickly became active participants in the Congregational Church and in the broader community of Roxbury. In 1746, both John Budd and his son Daniel were appointed surveyors of highways for the area.

According to historian William C. Armstrong in his book *Pioneer Families of Northwestern New Jersey*, "John Budd died at the home of his daughter, Mary, Mrs. Caleb Horton" in Chester. No published history that I have seen contains any reference to the death of Budd's wife, Mary Prudence (Strange) Budd. According to Lily Wright Budd, many of the early wills of Morris County were seriously damaged or destroyed due to being "stored

in a place that was undoubtedly subjected to water and/or moisture." Further complicating tracking "John Budd" deaths and estate distribution is the fact that my ancestor John Budd from Rye died c. 1757, John Budd from Philadelphia died in Morris County in 1753, and a cousin of my ancestor from Southold, also named John Budd, died in 1753 as well — all in Morris County.

My ancestor John Budd and his wife are believed to have been buried in the cemetery of the First Congregational Church of Chester, although their graves are no longer identifiable. The grave of their son is still marked in that church cemetery.

ELIZABETH SCHUYLER and ALEXANDER HAMILTON

When George Washington made the Ford family mansion his military headquarters in 1779, he was accompanied by his senior aide-de-camp and confidante, **Alexander Hamilton** (1755–1804). Also with Washington was the Surgeon General of the Continental Army, Dr. John Cochran.



Campfield House (aka Schuyler Hamilton House) in Morristown, New Jersey, where in 1780 Alexander Hamilton courted my Elizabeth Schuyler, my fourth cousin, six times removed. After a few months of courting, Hamilton and Schuyler became engaged, and were later married.

While in Morristown, Cochran quartered at the home of a resident named Jabez Campfield. With Cochran was his step-niece, **Elizabeth Schuyler** (1757–1854). She was the daughter of the Revolutionary War general Philip John Schuyler (1733–1804) and the great-great-grand-niece of Arent Schuyler, who had first purchased land in Morris County eight decades earlier. She was also my fourth cousin, six times removed.

Once, while visiting Dr. Cochran at the Campfield house, Alexander Hamilton met Elizabeth Schuyler. For her, according to biographer Jenny L. Presnell has said that, it was love at first sight. Within months of their meeting, the two were married on December 14, 1780.

The Schuylers were one of the most socially and financial prominent families in New York colony. By contrast, the West Indies-born Hamilton lacked wealth or social standing, and was of illegitimate birth. Nevertheless, the Schuylers welcomed Hamilton into their family's circle. Both Hamilton and General Schuyler were supporters not only of George Washington but of a strong centralized government. Despite his relative youth, the Schuylers considered Hamilton to be a political genius.

TO LEARN MORE

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