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Founding a Nation



***Founding a Nation** follows our Falkenburg family from the colonial era to the War for Independence. You will meet John Falkinburg, grandson of Henry Jacobs Falkinburg. I tell the story of the British attack on the Quaker community of Little Egg Harbor, New Jersey and the impact it likely had on our family. After the Revolution, John, like many Americans of his time, saw opportunity near the frontier of the nation; John moved to Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, where he purchased a saw mill and grist mill. I follow our genealogy through John's son Samuel Falkinburg, who moved even further from coastal New Jersey, settling in the Finger Lakes region of New York State. I present bio sketches of two of John's Brothers: Somers Falkinburg and Joseph Falkinburg. Joseph served as both a representative and senator in the New Jersey Legislature. A final bio sketch follows several generations of John (son of John Falkinburg). This branch of the family works in the emerging Pennsylvania oil industry. Later generations move west to the Los Angeles Valley. Here we meet Nelson James Falkinburg (Sam Nelson) a famous Hollywood movie producer from 1920s thru the 1980s.*

In 1584, the first English expedition to the new world landed at Roanoke Island on the Outer Banks in what what is now North Carolina. Sir Walter Raleigh who funded the expedition was given a charter by Queen Elizabeth I to “*discover, search, find out and view such remote heathen and barbarous Lands, Countries, and territories... to have, hold, occupy, and enjoy.*” The first permanent settlement by the English in North America was the Jamestown Colony, settled in 1607. The Pilgrims founded the Plymouth Colony in 1620. By 1640 the total population of the English colonies had grown to about 26,600. The year 1700 saw the total grow to about one quarter of a million persons with the largest numbers in Virginia and Massachusetts, which together accounted for nearly 44% of the total population. The population of the New Jersey Colony at this time accounted for less than 6% of the total in 1700. [3.1]

Who were these colonists? We have met the northern europeans and the English Quakers who settled along the Delaware River. Although New Netherlands was ceded to the English, large numbers of Dutch remained in New York, western Long Island, the Hudson Valley, and the Delaware River communities. The Plymouth Colony was established by the Pilgrims, a small Protestant sect, persecuted in England for their religious beliefs. They were followed by the Puritans who left England in larger numbers. The Puritans were members of the Church of England who sought to reform the Church and strip it of any vestige of Roman Catholic tradition. The Puritans migrated to New England embedding their beliefs in religious and political structures. In England, the mother country, rapid and radical change was taking place. The struggle culminated in the English Civil War in which forces loyal to the king battled against an army raised by Parliament. Under the leadership of Oliver Cromwell, King Charles I was defeated. ³⁻¹ He was tried and executed on 30 JAN 1649 for high treason. Under Charles, the Church of England was moving closer to its Catholic roots, but under Cromwell’s leadership, the Anglican Church found itself in the midst of its own reformation with the stripping of all decoration from sanctuaries and the investiture of Puritan re-

3-1 Charles I, the second son of James II, was named the Duke of York. New York City and State bear the legacy of his name.

form. A new stream of colonists seeking to establish the more traditional practices of the Church of England came to America. Among them was the grandfather of George Washington, an Anglican minister who found his parish taken over by Puritan reform. Those emigrating to America included all sorts of persons: enemies of the Crown marked for execution during the crisis of monarchy, gentry who established plantations in the southern colonies, and idealists who sought to unchain government from the yoke of hereditary monarchy. In Chapter 1, we introduced individualists like Henry Jacobs Falkinburg who carved out a new life in this new world. In this chapter we will learn how our family was affected by the revolutionary spirit of an emerging nation.

The period leading up to the American Revolution can only be understood if we view the larger picture of European colonialism. We so often think about the United States as emerging from the English colonies. However, the French and Spanish claims to the new world had enormous impact on the founding of our nation. The map below shows the claims made by the three European powers in the new world. England, France and Spain had been adversaries for centuries, as they struggled for control of Europe. It should not be surprising that this should



French, English, and Spanish Colonies in America

spill over into the colonies in the new world. The tension between the British and French exploded in the Ohio Valley in the early 1750s pitting the British against a coalition of French and Native American fighters in the French and Indian War. A young Colonel of the Colonial Virginia Regiment named George Washington developed military prowess in non-traditional warfare in this Ohio wilderness. He had plans to attack the French at Fort Dusquesne (Pittsburgh) but retreated and built Fort Necessity in the southwest corner of Pennsylvania—today near the Maryland boarder. The French attacked Washington at this vulnerable location and Washington had to retreat in defeat. The French and Indian War grew to a larger conflict in Europe known as the Seven Years War. When the conflict ended in 1763 much of the landscape of colonial America was radically changed. France lost its claim to the Ohio Valley and much of its presence in North America. Spain, an ally of France, lost Florida.

The war severely impacted the economies of both Britain and France. The national debt of Great Britain exploded to 4.5 million pounds. Servicing this debt consumed more than half the budget of the nation. In order to fill the coffers, the Crown shifted a tax burden to the British colonies in North America. The sugar tax placed a three-cent burden on refined sugar products as well as increasing taxes on coffee and other goods. It banned the importation of rum from the Caribbean and wine from France. The hated Stamp Act required payment on every document, newspaper or pamphlet. Finally, the Townshend Acts, whose protest every schoolchild knows led to the Boston Tea Party, placed taxes not only on tea, but also glass, lead, paints, and paper. George Washington and other colonists were angered by this and felt that this was not a just reward for help by the colonial regiments in fighting and defeating the French. Another undercurrent was at play. Many plantations in the South were being forced into bankruptcy by London brokers who managed the selling of Tobacco and at the same time supplied English goods to the colonists. The stage was set for rebellion.

The conflict of the French and Indian War did not penetrate to the coastal community of Little Egg Harbor. At most, the residents might see British regular troops sailing from New York and Boston down to Virginia to join with Virginia colonials in marches to the Ohio Valley. The French and Indian war began after

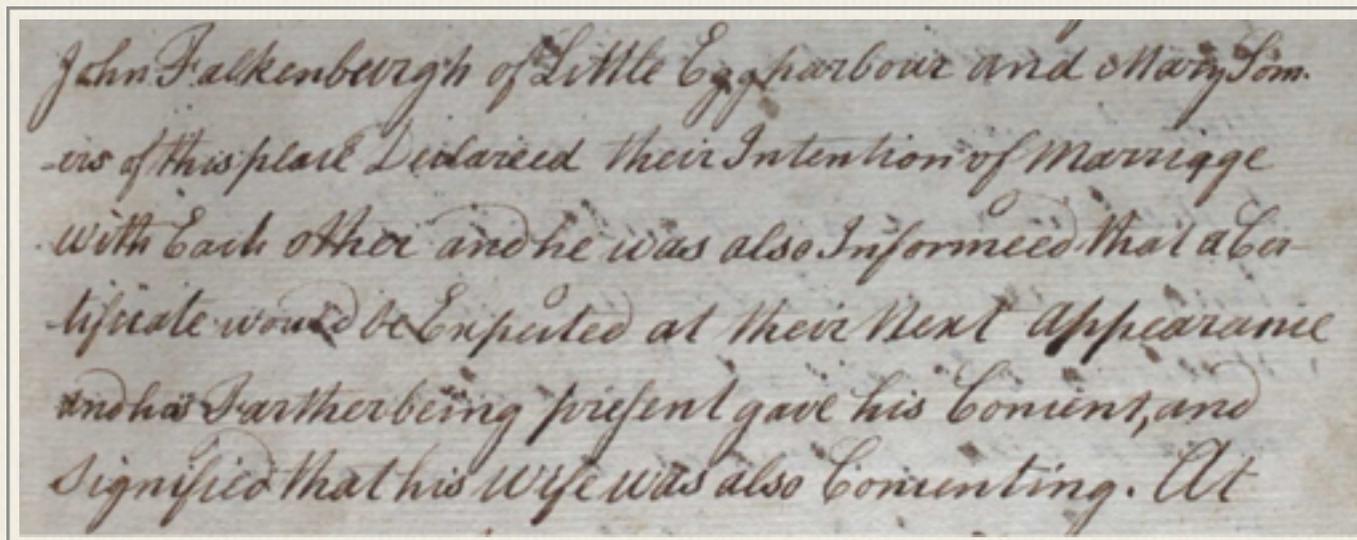
Henry Jacobs Falkinburg II and Penelope Stout raised their family in Little Egg Harbor. The families would have been affected by the new taxes imposed by Great Britain, and they would likely have grumbled at these, but in this Quaker community there was little rabble rousing. David Falkinburg, third son of Henry and Penelope was born in 1739. When he was of age, David, opened the first tavern in the town. John Mathis financed the venture and later he would help finance the American Revolution. [3.2] Taverns became a place where men from the community would gather and discuss the events of the day (as well as partake of distilled spirits). They were often places where plans of action were hatched, and I can't help but believe that David Falkinburg's tavern was a place that heard many complaints against the new taxation and eventually became a secret planning place for acts of rebellion.

Our family tree branches from John Falkinburg, the fourth son of Jacob Henry and Penelope. John married Mary Somers late in 1760 or early in 1761. Mary Somers' great-grandfather, John Somers, was born in Worcester, England, in 1640. Like many English Quakers he left the mother country to find freedom in Penn's colony. John settled at the mouth of the Great Egg Harbor River in a place that would eventually bear his name, Somers Point.³⁻² Because there were no orders of ministry among the Quakers, there was no one to officially conduct or solemnize marriages among them. The marriage ceremony was a solemn contract signed and entered into by the intended spouses in the presence of witnesses. When we read in chapter 2 that Henry Jacobs Falkinburg and Mary Jacobs married themselves according to the Friends' ceremony, it sounds strange in light of modern day custom and tradition.

The record of the marriage between John Falkinburg and Mary Somers begins in the Monthly Meeting at Great Egg Harbor, the community to which Mary and her family belonged. Here the young couple first announced their intention to marry. Since this is Mary's home meeting, her parents are present and give their consent. John is advised that he needs to bring his father to the next meeting to signify that he and his wife consent to the union. [3.3]. About two weeks later the

3-2 *Somers Point is about 20 miles south of Osborn Island, home of the Falkinburg family.*

Monthly Meeting at Little Egg Harbor (John's home meeting) approved the marriage:

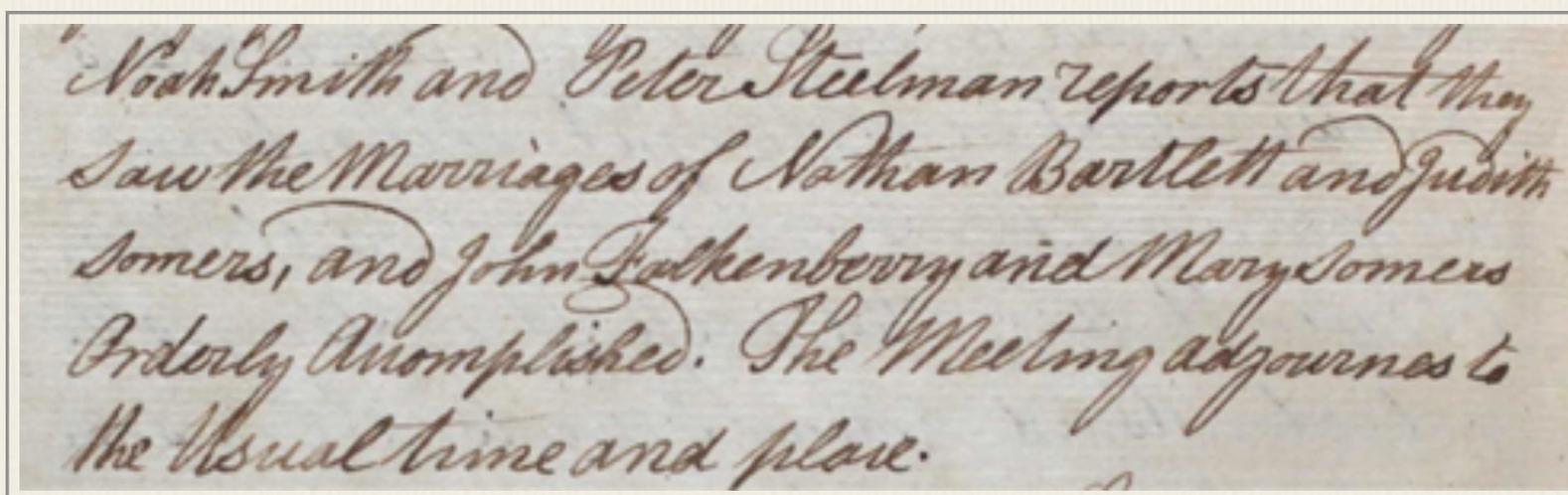


John Falkenburgh of Little Egg Harbour and Mary Somers of this place Declared their Intention of Marriage with each other and he was also Informed that a Certificate would be Expedit at their Next Appearance and his Father being present gave his Consent, and signified that his Wife was also Consenting. At

Marriage Intention: Record Great Egg Harbor

Monthly Meeting 5th da. 11th mo. 1760

The record continues Finally, on 5 d, 1 mo, 1761 the Meeting at Great Egg Harbor reports that the marriage between John Falkenburg and Mary Somers was orderly accomplished. [3.4]

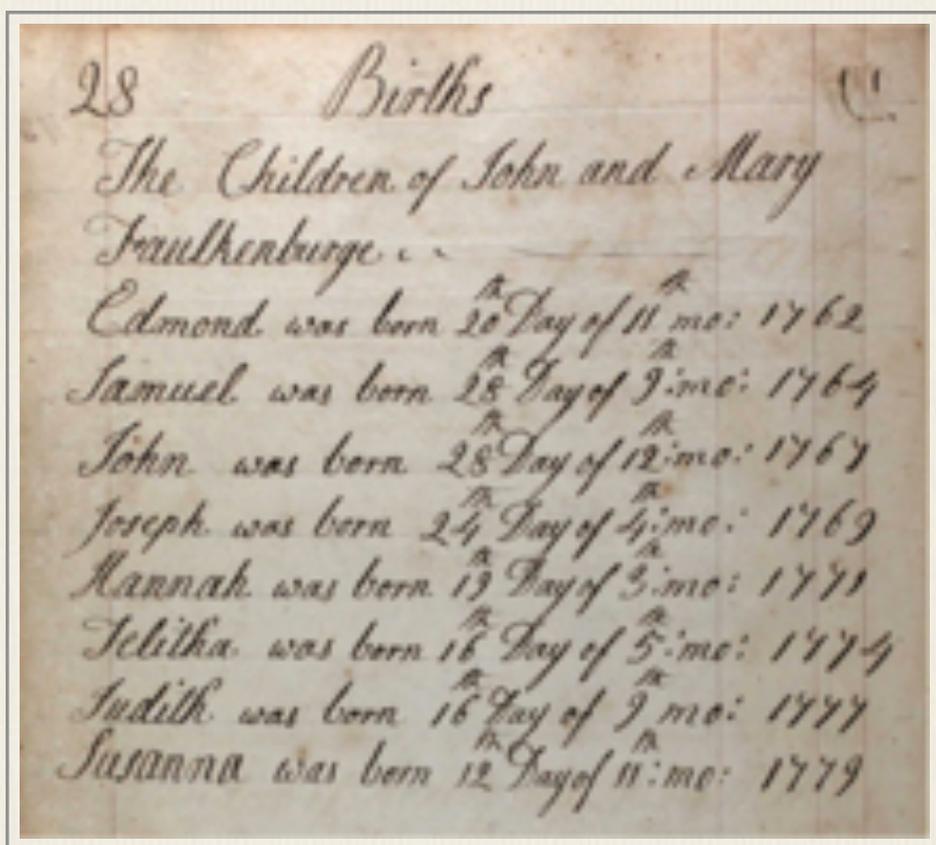


Nash Smith and Peter Steelman reports that they saw the Marriages of Nathan Bartlett and Judith Somers, and John Falkenberry and Mary Somers Orderly Accomplished. The Meeting adjournes to the Usual time and place.

Marriage is Orderly Accomplished: Record

Great Egg Harbor Mo. Meeting 5th da. 1st mo. 1761

John and Mary Falkinburg had eight children born in the community of Little Egg Harbor. [3.5] The eldest, Edmund (named after his maternal grandfather) was born in 1762. Our family tree branches from the second son Samuel, born 28 NOV 1764. Two additional sons John Jr. and Joseph were born in the coastal community, followed by four daughters Hannah, Talitha, Judith, and Susanna. The events depicted in Timeline of the American Revolution occurred during the formative years of this young family. How did these events impact our family?



How did they cope with the growing unrest? What role did John's family play in the Revolution? Our ancestor Samuel would have been twelve years of age at the time of the Declaration of Independence. The events leading to the declaration of independence are shown on the next page.

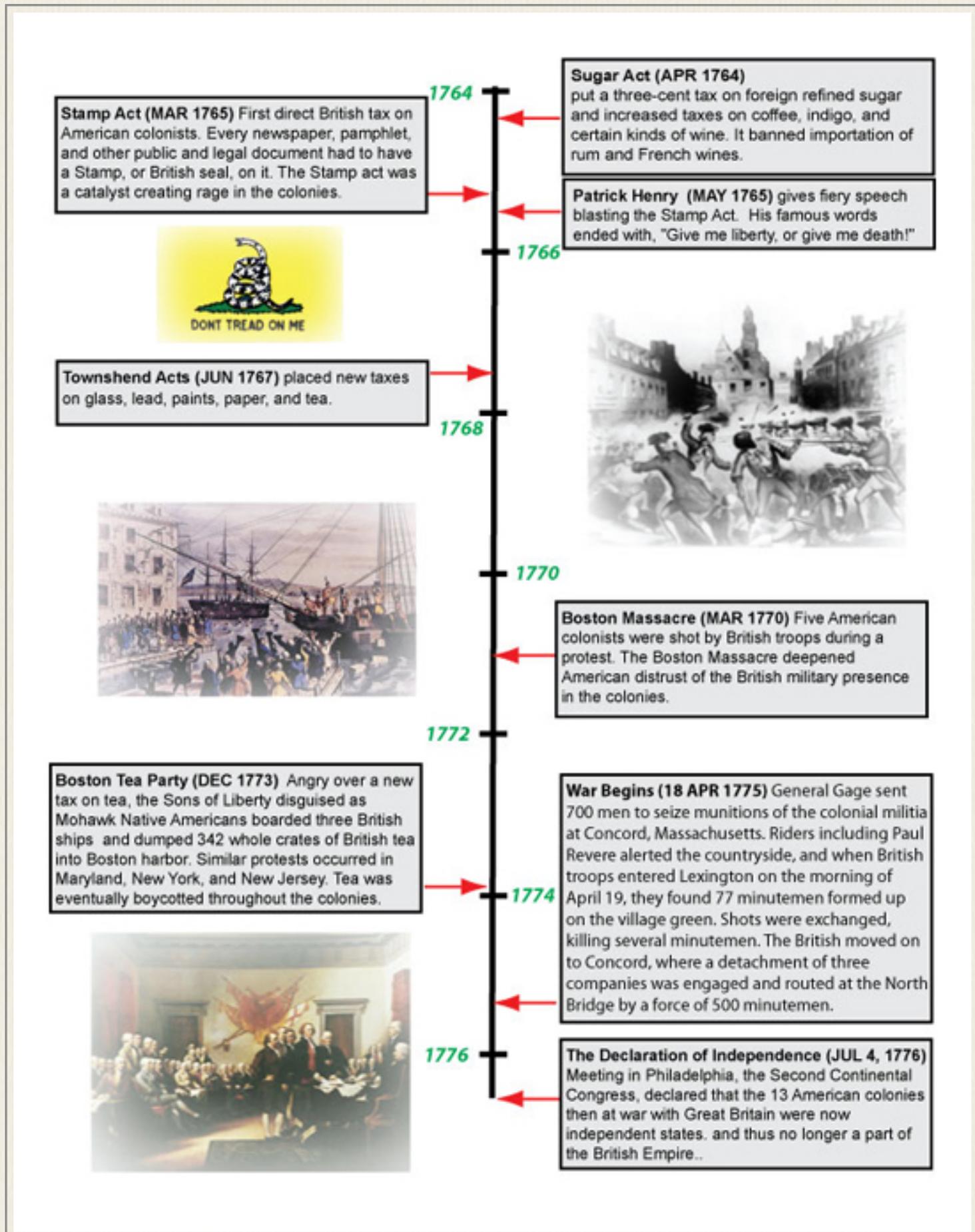
Revolution in a Peaceable Community

At the time of the Declaration of Independence, the Governor of the State of New Jersey was William Franklin. The illegitimate son of patriot Benjamin Franklin, William was a loyalist. He was disowned by his father and arrested by an act of the newly formed Provincial Congress of New Jersey. Fervor for the revolution grew in the Colony of New Jersey, and its proximity to both Philadelphia and New York, a stronghold of the British for a significant part of the war, made this an important battlefield.

John and Mary Falkinburg were Quakers. On February 22, 1775 reacting to the growing call for separation from the mother country, the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting issued the "Testimony of the People Called Quakers".

"Having considered with real sorrow, the unhappy contest between the legislature of Great-Britain and the people of these colonies, and the animosities consequent thereon; we have repeated public advices and private admonitions, used our endeavors to dissuade the members of our religious society from joining with the public resolutions promoted and entered into by some of the people, which as we apprehended, so we now find have increased contention, and produced great discord and confusion.

The Divine Principle of grace and truth which we profess leads all who attend to its dictates to demean themselves as peaceable subjects, and to discountenance and avoid every measure tending to excite disaffection to the King, as supreme Magistrate, or to the legal authority of his government; to which purpose many of the late political writings and ad-



Timeline of the American Revolution

dresses to the people appearing to be calculated, we are led by a sense of duty to declare our entire disapprobation of them—their spirit and temper being not only contrary to the nature and precepts of the gospel, but destructive of the peace and harmony of civil society, disqualify men in these times of difficulty, for the wise and judicious consideration and promoting of such measures as would most effectual for reconciling differences, or obtaining the redress of grievances.” [3.6]

It is important to note that this statement is not a Loyalist statement per se, but rather a statement against settling conflict through violence.

We do not know if the faith of the Society of Friends or the thirst for a new order in the colonies prevailed in the hearts and minds of our ancestors. We do know, however, that the revolution came to them in a very direct and personal way. Shortly after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the British fleet of nearly 500 ships and 35,000 men arrived at the mouth of New York Harbor. General William Howe, commander of the invasion, began the campaign to push General George Washington from the region. By August, Washington had left his encampment on Long Island retreating to Manhattan. By September, the small American force abandoned Manhattan withdrawing to New Jersey where they could harass the British. The British naval force dominated the seacoast. There were pockets of resistance and one of those was at Little Egg Harbor, New Jersey. Here privateers hid in marshy regions to attack British merchant ships.

“During the early years of the war Little Egg Harbor, a bay lying east of the main shore of old Burlington county, and separated from the ocean by a narrow sand dune, was, as the British officers called it, a “nest of rebel pirates”. The sea-faring patriots of that section of the State were accustomed to slip out of the bay and capture many of the rich laden cruisers which sailed between New York harbor and Delaware bay. The prizes taken were brought into Little Egg Harbor, and a vast amount of stores and other property was thus distributed among the daring sailors of that Port of New Jersey”. [3.7]

The website newjersey.com has a mock news story from the Star Ledger dated 15 OCT 1778 [3.9]. The old Willets-Andrews farm house referred to in this article is on the property originally belonging to Henry Jacobs Falkenburg, Sr. Some second and third generations of the family lived on this property. Thus, this bloody massa-

cre occurred on Falkinburg ancestral ground. You can read more about this little-documented, yet important battle in *The Affair at Egg Harbor New Jersey October 15 1778* by William S. Stryker, Adjutant General of the State of New Jersey. [\[3.8\]](#)

The Star-Ledger

Chestnut Neck, harbor and many ships destroyed

British raiders strike

Pulaski's men cut down in night attack

October 15, 1778

BY TOM HESTER

STAR-LEDGER STAFF

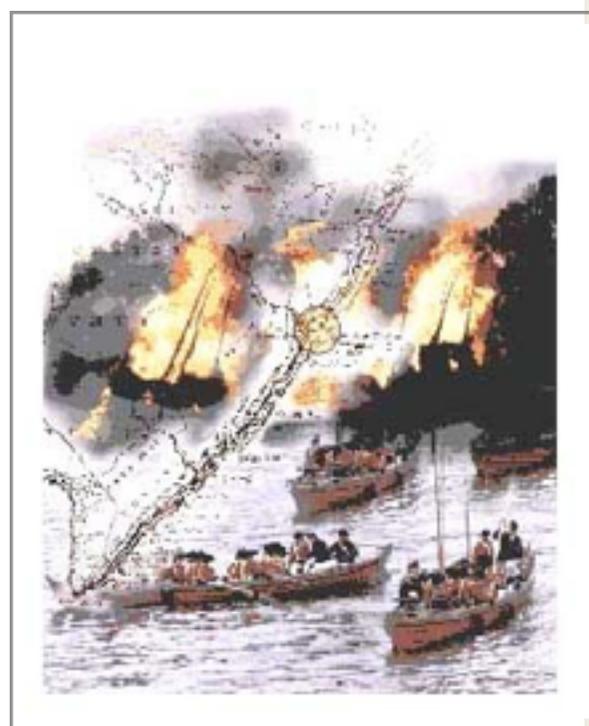
CHESTNUT NECK

A raiding party of 400 British and Tory troops sent to "clean out a nest of rebel pirates" bayoneted 40 American soldiers before returning to sea today. The attack ended a 10-day assault in which the British burned the privateering stronghold of Chestnut Neck on the Mullica River, sinking 10 ships.

The pre-dawn bayonet attack today the fourth of its kind by the British in 13 months occurred on Osborn Island near where the river meets the Great Bay.

The raiders rowed 10 miles in the dark in small boats to reach the island, then took advantage of a lax guard and stormed three houses where about 40 Americans were sleeping. American troops under the command of Gen. Casimir Pulaski, the Polish adventurer, had been sent to repel the raiders but could do little as the British regulars and Tory rangers roamed as far as 20 miles along the river through what is known as the Smugglers Woods. The raiders burned the village of Chestnut Neck in Atlantic County as well as a militia fort, a shipyard, storehouses, a saw mill, a salt works and the houses of prominent patriots. They also scuttled 10 British ships taken at sea by American privateers, but three privateer ships each armed with six to eight guns escaped before the British flotilla of nine ships and transports carrying the raiders appeared in the Great Bay.

Pulaski was at the old Willets-Andrews farm house near Little Egg Harbor and north of the island with 283 additional troops when the bayonet attack occurred today, but his second-in-command was killed.



The Affair at Egg Harbor

The events of the Affair at Little Egg Harbor are described in the following timeline and are depicted on the maps on the next page.

6 OCT 1778 A British assault force moves seven miles up the bay. Some of the ships are grounded near Osborn Island due to shallow water. At around 4:00 PM the British force reaches Chestnut Neck (A). Local militia try to defend the area, but are quickly routed out by the British regulars. The British find two pirated merchant ships. They begin the process of dismantling and burning not only the bounty of the privateers, but also eight schooners and other ships of the patriots. The invaders burn storehouses and all of the village.

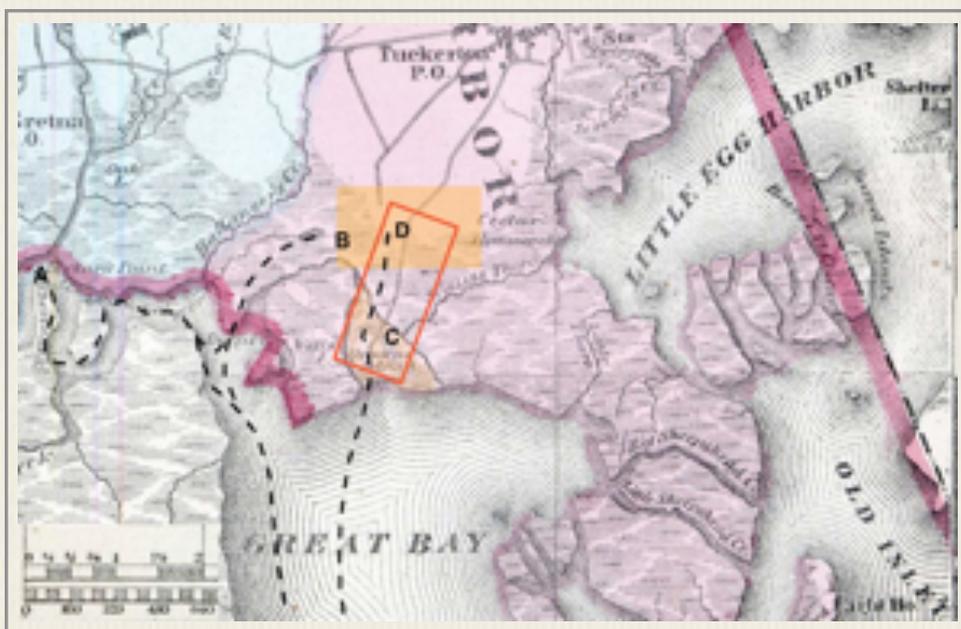
7 OCT 1778 While they could proceed upstream to the ironworks (a facility used to produce canon and musket balls) the expedition decides to withdraw since they know that reinforcements are on the way, and they are in a vulnerable position in which they could easily be cut off from escape. Instead, Captain Patrick Ferguson (leader of the assault) decides to take his force and attack the salt works near the mouth of the Bass River at the Eli Mathis farm (B). Salt was an important commodity for the preservation of food and essential to the war effort. They destroyed the salt works and torched the homes of some twelve patriots in that region. The Mathis farm was on the property once owned by Henry Jacobs Falkinburg. According to Blackman, John Falkinburg and his family lived on this farm until they moved in 1785. Imagine the fear and desperation of the Falkinburgs and other Quaker colonists as they saw their world destroyed. This must have been a wrenching experience as non-violent philosophy was challenged with such brutality.

8 OCT 1778 Under orders from General George Washington, Count Casimir Pulaski arrives at Little Egg Harbor. His main encampment is south and east of Tuckerton. He establishes a guard of about fifty soldiers down the island road nearer Osborn Island.

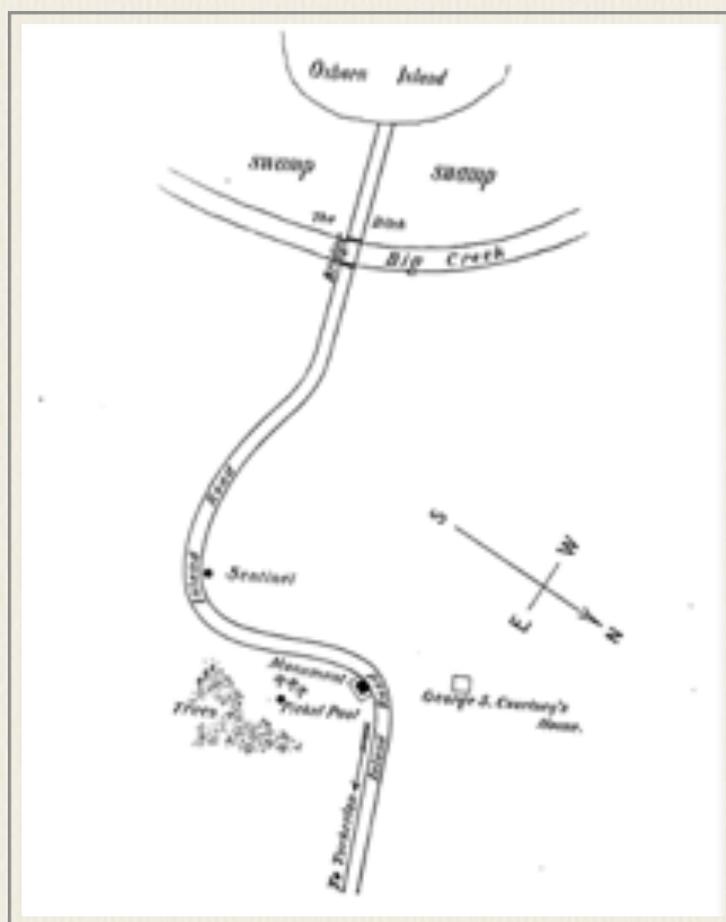
15 OCT 1778 The fleet has been waiting off-shore for about one week for the weather to break so that it could sail back to New York. From Loyalists, Captain Ferguson has heard that the morale of Pulaski's troops is low, so Ferguson decides

to make one more raid on the 'Middle of the Shore community'. At 11:00 PM on 14 OCT a contingent of two hundred and fifty men begins the seven mile journey toward shore in row-galleys. The hostile force lands between three and four o'clock in the morning. They proceed to the home of Richard Osborn, Jr. Osborn's son Thomas was threatened with a drawn sword, and under a threat to kill the family and their neighbors, young Osborn is forced to lead the invaders to Pulaski's troops.

"Marching across the island they came first to a narrow defile and then to a bridge over what was called 'The Ditch' on Big Creek (C). Here they found no sentinel... Then silently proceeding about a mile over a rough corduroy road across the salt meadows



Time-Line of Events: The Affair at Egg Harbor



Detail of Area of the Massacre (red box)

north of the bridge, they came suddenly at the bend of the Island Road, on the upland, upon a single sentry, whom they captured before he could discharge his firelock." They silently approached an American outpost of the of Pulaski's troops. "The American infantry, awakened by the shouts of the British party.. hastily seized their weapons and prepared to make a defense... some forty men, including [the] Lieutenant-Colonel [in command] were overpowered by... the enemy and cruelly butchered (D)." [3.10]

Hearing the commotion from Pulaski's main encampment, his troops came down the Island Road. They saw the murdered officers and men lying near the

burning houses, but by that time the British had made a hasty departure back to their boats. Young Thomas Osborn who had found refuge in the woods, greeted Pulaski and told him the events that led to the massacre.

For the second time in about a week the British had invaded Falkinburg family land. Leah Blackman said "On this farm was enacted that fatal skirmish between the British and Pulaski's guard, and beneath the surface of a certain part of this farm, unhonored and almost forgotten, lies the last remains of the murdered heroes of that bloody fray."

Another good resource for the Affair at Egg Harbor is found on the New Jersey pages of USGenNet. [3.11] These are notes from a talk by Franklin W. Kemp, author of *Nest of Rebel Pirates*.³⁻³

How did the Affair at Egg Harbor impact John and Mary Falkinburg and their children? Certainly, fear, anger, a desire for revenge, uncertainty about the future— all of these natural human emotions must have been at play. We do not have any historical record to inform us, so I will only raise questions. Did Quaker ideals mitigate their feelings? How did the events affect son Samuel, now fourteen years old. Although too young to enlist in the New Jersey Militia and Continental Army, did he participate in other ways to support Revolutionary causes? Was he a member of the band of privateers who attacked British shipping? Did these events contribute to a desire of the Falkinburg family to start a new life away from the down shore community that had been the home of their ancestors, and did it play a role in the move the family would make at the end of the Revolutionary War to relocate to Pennsylvania?

3-3 *The book may be ordered from the [Batsto Village Museum Shop](#).*

To Form a More Perfect Union

The birth of the United States of America was a process begun in the Rebellion against Great Britain and given life by the United States Constitution. The Constitutional Convention opened in Philadelphia 25 MAY 1787. The process of defining the new nation was not an easy one. The nation was on the verge of collapse; monetary and individual rights within the states were leading to the possibility that this new nation would devolve into a set of independent nation states. How do you make one nation out of many independent colonies. *E pluribus unum* (latin: “out of many, one”) was adopted by the Continental Congress in 1782 to be emblazoned on the banner held in the mouth of the bald eagle³⁻⁴ on the Great Seal of the United States.



E Pluribus Unum emblazoned on the Great Seal of the United States

During much of the Revolutionary War George Washington railed at the Continental Congress for its inability to provide funds to underwrite the war effort. He, and many others, favored a strong central government that could raise taxes, and fund a standing army for the defense of the nation. Others, favored a weak federal system, preferring to center decisions within the individual states. When it came to decide how the states would be represented, the argument grew more heated. A proposal was made for representation in the Congress based on the population of the state. As might be anticipated, the smaller states objected and

3-4 *About a year after the bald eagle was selected as the symbol of the new nation, Benjamin Franklin, in a letter to his daughter, voiced an objection to the selection. "For my own part I wish the Bald Eagle had not been chosen the Representative of our Country. He is a Bird of bad moral Character. He does not get his Living honestly. You may have seen him perched on some dead Tree near the River, where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the Labour of the Fishing Hawk; and when that diligent Bird has at length taken a Fish, and is bearing it to his Nest for the Support of his Mate and young Ones, the Bald Eagle pursues him and takes it from him...For the Truth the Turkey is in Comparison a much more respectable Bird, and withal a true original Native of America . . . He is besides, though a little vain & silly, a Bird of Courage, and would not hesitate to attack a Grenadier of the British Guards who should presume to invade his Farm Yard with a red Coat on."*

avored a system of equal representation. A special committee was formed to try to propose a solution to the problem. The plan put forth has been called the Great Compromise, which led to our present bicameral legislature—the House of Representatives in which representation is based on population, and the Senate composed of two delegates for each state. On 17 SEP 1787, after editing the draft documents, the Convention sent the Constitution to the States for ratification. The framers had not defined the perfect union, but a more perfect ³⁻⁵ union. The issue of slavery which so divided delegates from the north and the south was avoided. There was an agreement not to deal with this issue for at least twenty years. Failure to deal with the issue of slavery would tear the nation apart in the mid nineteenth century.

A year later, on April 16, 1789 George Washington began the journey from his home at Mount Vernon to New York City where he would be inaugurated the First President of the United States. The city in which Washington was forced to abandon during the revolution was now the capital of the emerging nation. Washington was reluctant to leave the serenity of his home and uncertain about his new position. ³⁻⁶

All of John and Mary Falkinburg's children were born before the Constitution was ratified. It would be the next generation of Falkinburgs who would live their entire lives in the new national identity embodied in the United States Constitution.

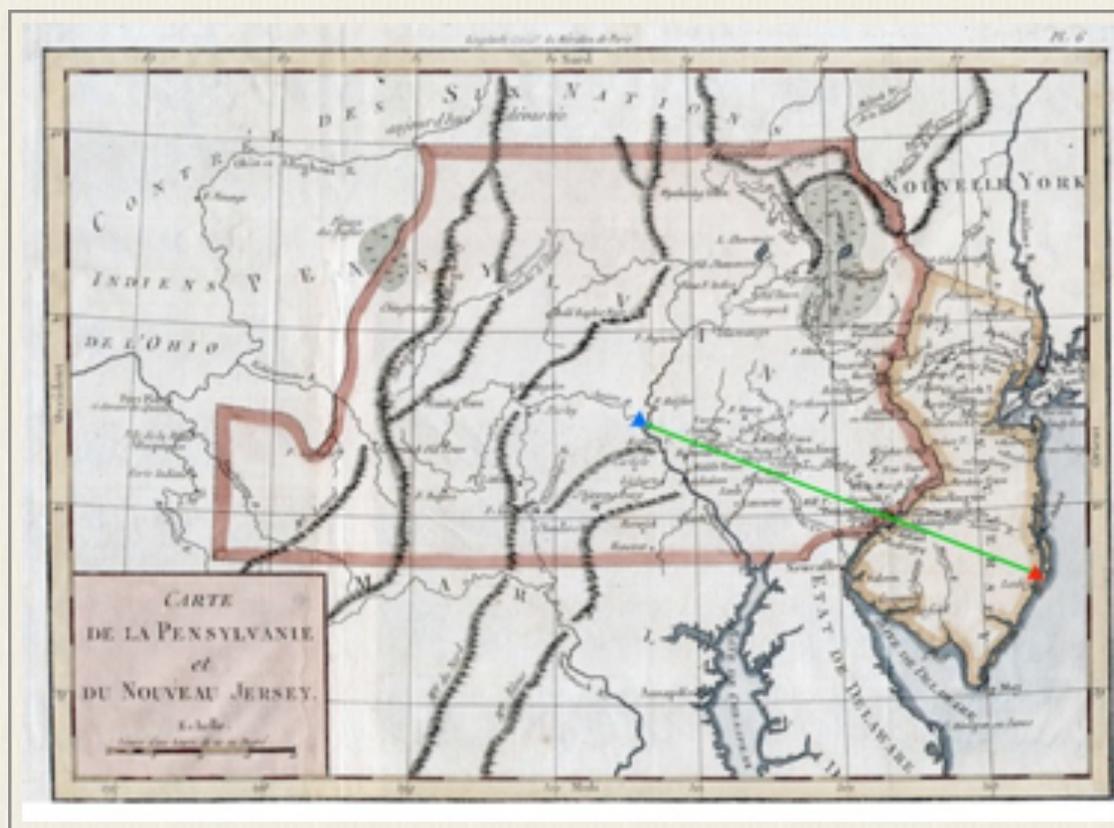
3-5 *Benjamin Franklin summarized the mood of the delegates when the document was signed. "There are several parts of this Constitution which I do not at present approve, but I am not sure I shall never approve them. ... I doubt too whether any other Convention we can obtain, may be able to make a better Constitution. ... It therefore astonishes me, Sir, to find this system approaching so near to perfection as it does; and I think it will astonish our enemies..."*

3-6 *As he set off for New York Washington wrote in his journal "About 10 o'clock I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life, and to domestic felicity, and with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New York...with the best dispositions to render service to my country in obedience to its call, but with less hope of answering its expectations."*

John Falkinburg Family Moves to Pennsylvania

About 1785, shortly after the end of the American Revolution, ³⁻⁷ John Falkinburg and his family moved from Little Egg Harbor to Rye Township, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania.³⁻⁸ The new location was west of the Susquehanna River on the Juniata River about 15 miles upstream from its confluence with the Susquehanna. The name Juniata is derived from the language of the Delaware Nation. They called the river Yuchniada or Chuchniada. [3.12]

There was new optimism across the country, and many saw opportunities near the western frontier to purchase land at reasonable prices and tap the vast natural

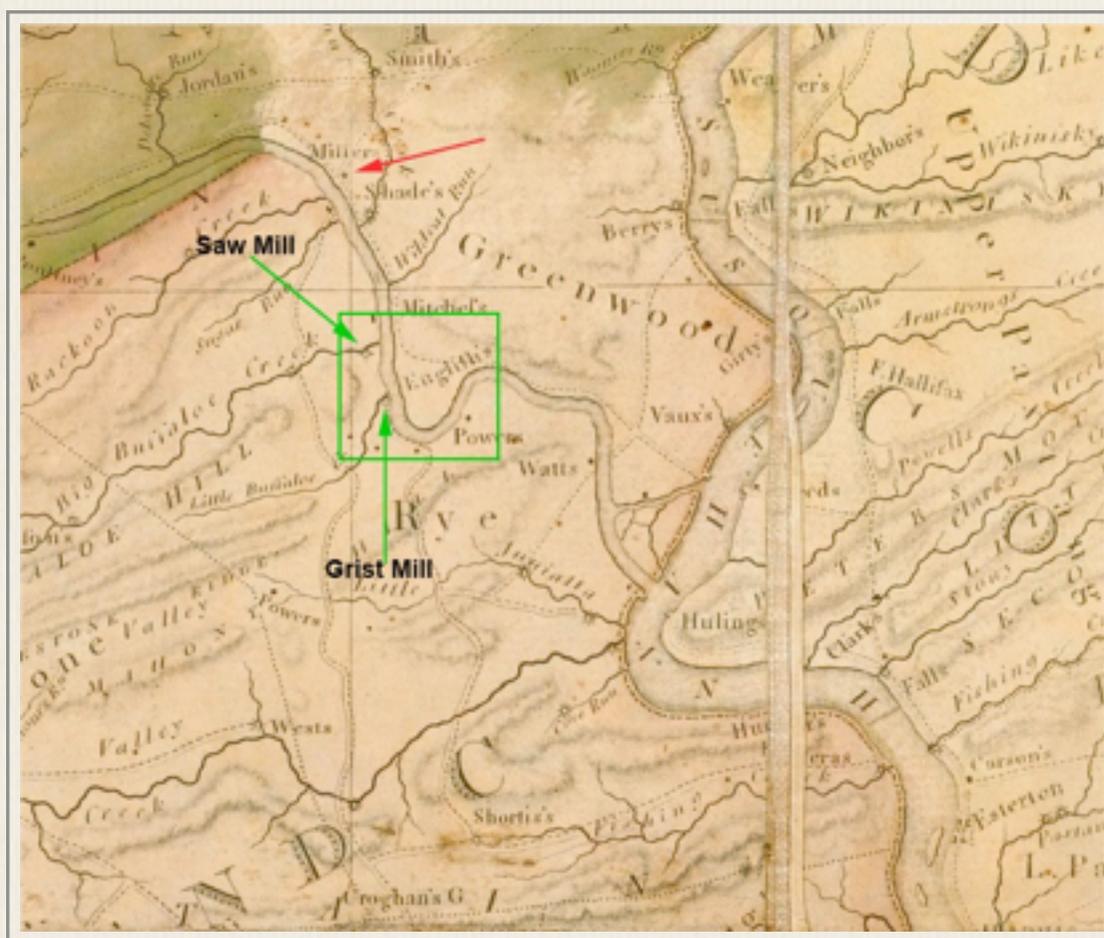


The John Falkinburg family moved to Cumberland County Pa.

3-7 *The Articles of Confederation of the United States were signed in March of 1781. The tide had turned in the American Revolution and Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, Virginia in October of that year. In July of 1782 the British evacuated Savannah GA, and by November 1782 the Articles of Peace were signed by the British. The official end of the war occurred with the signing of the Treaty of Paris on 3 SEP 1783.*

3-8 *Cumberland County was divided in 1820. Seven townships including the Falkinburg properties in Rye Township were incorporated into a new entity, Perry County. The Falkinburg's new home would be in today's Perry County.*

resources of this emerging nation. When this region was settled, about thirty years earlier, the Susquehanna was the boundary of the American wilderness.³⁻⁹ As the crow flies, the family moved about 150 miles. In the latter part of the eighteenth century this was a considerable distance. The trek required crossing long mountain ridges in the Alleghenies as well as water courses like the Susquehanna River. Wagon roads followed old indian trails; they were rutted and difficult to negotiate. Tributaries of the Juniata like the Cockalama, Raccoon Creek, Wildcat Run, Sugar Run, Shareman's Creek, and Little Buffalo³⁻¹⁰ Creek proved to be good sources of hydro power to run mills and establish industries.



Records document that on 6 DEC 1785 John Falkinburg entered into an agreement with David English to purchase a grinding mill, saw mill and plantations in Rye Township. [3.13] John agreed to pay the sum of £3,700 Lawful Money of Pennsylvania. John made a first payment on these properties using the proceeds

3-9 *To the west was indian territory and beyond the Alleghenies was the Ohio Valley, center of the conflict between the French and British in the French and Indian War.*

3-10 *Although we tend to think that Buffalo roamed the western plains of the United States, the Tyrone Valley in which Rye Township was located was home to a sizable herd of bison before white settlers arrived.*

from the sale of his holdings in Little Egg Harbor. The agreement was witnessed by John's second eldest son Samuel.

The map shown on the preceding page was published by Reading Howell in 1792. [3.14] This was only ten years after the Falkinburgs moved to the area, so it should be a reasonable representation of the landscape when John and Mary arrived. There are several mills located on the Juniata River. The symbol  represents a saw mill and the symbol  denotes a grist mill. While we don't know the exact location of the mills that John purchased, it is not unreasonable to assume that they may be ones lying in the green rectangle. In his History of Perry County Pennsylvania, H. H. Hain states "At the mouth of the Little Buffalo is English's Mill". [3.15] The map shows a saw mill on Big Buffalo Creek and a grist mill on Little Buffalo Creek. Both join the Juniata River within the green rectangle drawn on the map. This area is marked English's on Redding's map, and is almost certainly the property that John purchased. The 1785 tax roll of Rye Township lists John Falkinburg. He is taxed for 385 acres of property, a grist mill and a saw mill, four horses and two cattle. [3.16]

English, David, Sen'r,	800	4	1	1
English, Andrew,	50	2	2	..
Falkenburger, John, g. m., s. m.,	385	4	2	..
Fitzgerald, Debit, D. H. H.	200			

Tax roll 1785, Rye Township, Cumberland PA

We are fortunate to have the actions of the Monthly Meetings of the Society of Friends to help track the move of the family. On the 9th da, 2nd mo, 1785 "Mary Falkinburg, wife of John, and children, Samuel, John, Joseph, Hannah, Tabitha [Talitha], Judith, Susannah, and Summers [Somers] were granted a certificate [from the Monthly Meeting at Tuckerton] to the Monthly Meeting held in Redlands in York county, or thereaway." [3.17] I guess the word "thereaway" is a hedge made by the recorder of the minutes who was likely unsure where Redlands was located or if this would be the closest meetinghouse for the relocating family. The Redlands Meeting House is about fifty miles south of the Falkinburg's new properties, a few miles west of the Susquehanna River.

In this request for transfer, John lists another child Summers [Somers]. Somers Falkinburg ³⁻¹¹ is the youngest son of John and Mary. There is no record of his birth in the minutes of the Monthly Meeting at Little Egg Harbor leading to speculation that Somers was born after the family moved to Pennsylvania. It may very well be that John's request for removal from the roll at Little Egg Harbor did not come until the family was settled in their new community. The following citation appears in a genealogy of the family into which Somers Falkinburg eventually married:

"Somers Falkinburg, b in Millerstown, Pa., d in Harrison Co., Ind., '47". [3.18]

Millerstown is indicated by the red arrow on the Howell map, which shows the property owned by the Millers. This would eventually become Millerstown. This is yet another piece of evidence confirming the location of the Falkinburg properties. Millerstown is the oldest town in the county. According to Hain [3.19] *"Probably the first house erected in what is now the borough [of Millerstown] was the Ferry Hotel at the landing of the ferry, a stone in the chimney being marked 1778...this building was the election place of the voters during pioneer days..."* It is likely that Mary was pregnant when the family moved to Pennsylvania, and gave birth in the new community. They may very well have stayed at this hotel while they were exploring the area for a property to purchase.

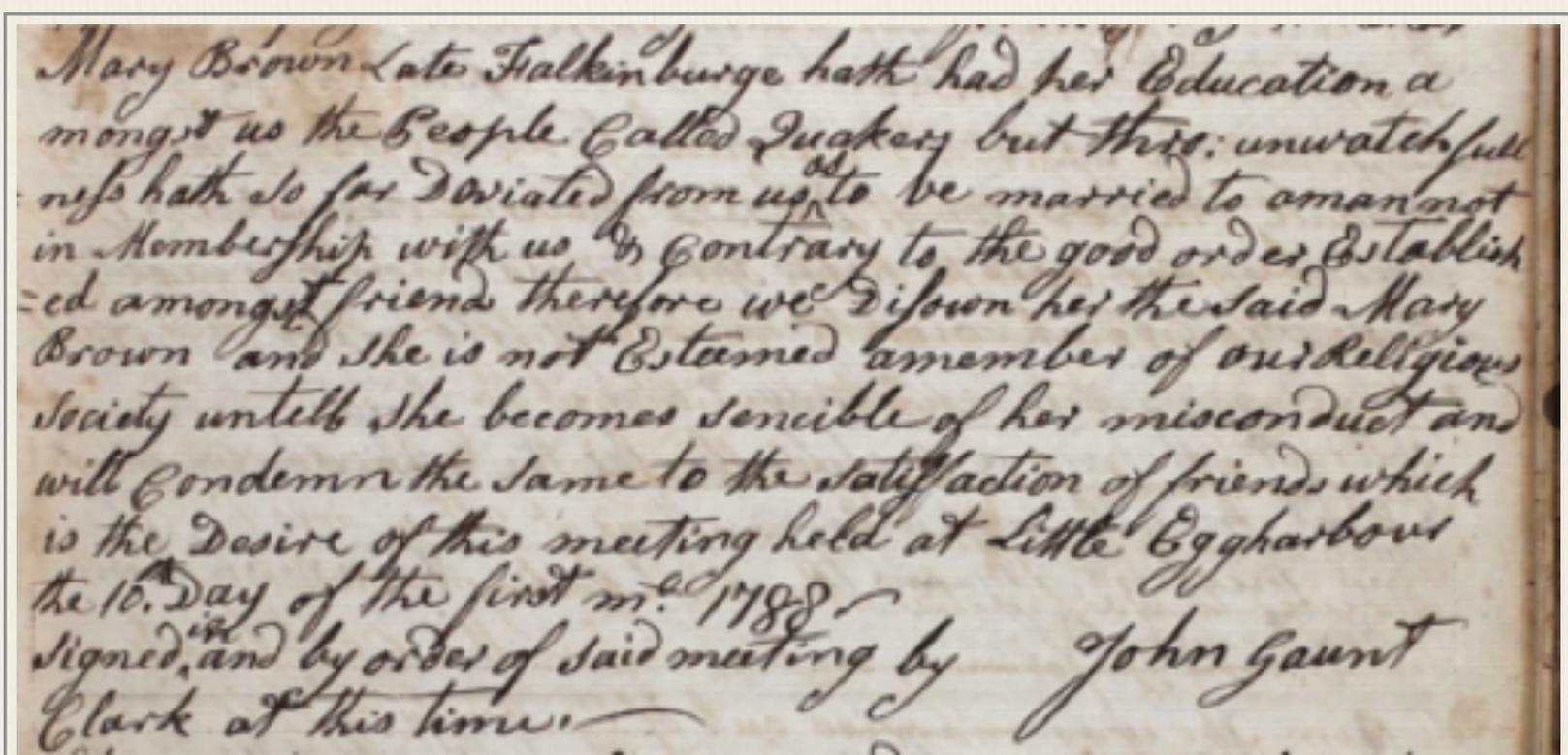
Tragedy struck the Falkinburgs at the end of January, 1786 with the death of John Falkinburg. We do not know the cause of death, but Mary was widowed about half a year after moving to Pennsylvania. Son Samuel acted as executor of the estate. It is believed that Samuel lived in New Jersey and he retained a Pennsylvania attorney named William Richardson to act on his behalf in settling his father's estate. A public auction of John's estate was held 27 FEB 1786 to help settle indebtedness that likely included the properties purchased in Pennsylvania. The Falkinburg Mill was rented in late 1786. [3.20] Our modern sensibilities find it difficult to comprehend the status that women had during the colonial era and early years of the Republic.

3-11 *To the west was indian territory and beyond the Alleghenies was the Ohio Valley, center of the conflict between the French and British in the French and Indian War.*

“Abiding by English law, married women in colonial America were legally considered as non-entities. The eastern colonial legal system originally developed under the strong influence of English law, which greatly limited women's freedoms. Colonial American jurisprudence did not allow married women to buy or sell property, run or manage a business, sue or be sued, or have ownership of even the clothes they wore.” [3.21]

Significant changes in the law did not begin to occur until the nineteenth century. There were only two choices for a widow during this period. She could live in the home of a male child who would take care of her, or she could remarry.

In 1787, Mary Falkinburg married Roger Brown. Brown had previously married and was a widower. The 1785 tax rolls show Roger Brown as a neighbor of the Falkinburgs owning 150 acres in Rye Township. [3.16] The 1778 tax record shows that Roger Brown had the taxes assessed to him for one mill and 1,600 acres. Brown was not a Quaker, and the Warrington Monthly Meeting refused to acknowledge their union. In December 1787 Warrington returned the certificate for Mary Falkinburg to the Monthly Meeting at Little Egg Harbor. Subsequently, on 10 JAN 1788 Mary Falkinburg Brown was disowned by the Little Egg Harbor Monthly Meeting for marrying outside the fellowship. [3.22] We have records from the US Federal Census of 1790 showing there were two males aged 16 & over, two males under the age of 16 and four females including heads of households. [3.23]



Mary Brown Late Falkinburg hath had her Education a mongst us the People Called Quakers but thro: unwatchfull nefs hath so far Deviated from us to be married to a man not in Membership with us & contrary to the good order Establish ed amongst friends therefore we Disown her the said Mary Brown and she is not Esteemed a member of our religious Society untill she becomes sensible of her misconduct and will Condemn the same to the satisfaction of friends which is the Desire of this meeting held at Little Egg Harbor the 10. Day of the first m^o. 1788 Signed, and by order of said meeting by John Gaunt Clark at this time.

Mary Falkinburg Brown Disowned: Monthly Meeting Little Egg Harbor 10 da. 1st mo. 1788

The reason males were divided into two categories while females were not was for the purpose of military service, should the need arise.

What did it mean for a Quaker to be disowned, and what were the reasons for such action? Disownment meant that the person no longer had the right to attend the Monthly Meeting. For the Society it meant that they no longer took responsibility for the behavior of that individual. While some groups like the Anabaptists coupled disownment with shunning, for the Quakers there was no stricture of family and social relationships following disownment. Any behavior which was contrary to the tenets of faith held by the Friends could result in discipline.

By far the most often cited ³⁻¹² reason (36% of all cases) is marrying a person outside the faith of the Quakers. [3.24] During the revolutionary period, engaging in military activity was also a common reason for disownment. When the Friends found a member delinquent, there was a procedure to adjudicate the charges. In order to avoid disownment, the accused had to admit to and condemn the offense. When the offense involved a victim, the Friends required just compensation and reconciliation with the injured party for the wrongdoing. Failing to do this, the accused chose disownment, and the Society dismissed their responsibility for the behavior of the accused.

Reason for Disciplinary Action	% cases	Reason for Disciplinary Action	% cases
Marrying contrary to discipline	36.1%	Marrying too close a relative	2.1%
Fornication with fiance(e)	9.9%	Profanity	1.8%
Drunkenness	7.8%	Quarreling	1.6%
Other fornication	5.5%	Attending irregular marriage	1.6%
Debt	4.6%	Entertainments	1.4%
Inattendance	3.9%	Incest	1.3%
Military activity	3.8%	Neglecting family responsibilities	1.1%
Showing contempt of Society's authority	3.2%	Fraud	0.9%
Assault	3.0%	Slander	0.9%
Loose conduct	2.7%	Slaveholding	0.9%

*Top 20 Reasons for Disownment:
A sample of nearly 13,000 Cases in Pennsylvania 1682 - 1776)*

What happened to the children of John and Mary? Twenty-five year old John Falkenburgh and Joseph Falkenburgh (twenty-three years of age) appear in the Muster Roll of the Second Battalion of the Pennsylvania Militia (dated 28 AUG

3-12 *From a survey of Disciplinary Cases in Pennsylvania Monthly Meetings, 1682-1776*

1793). Musters were periodic assessments of the availability of local militia to act as a defensive force when needed. The roll is listed as the *"true and exact list of the names and surnames of every free able bodied citizens of the age of eighteen years and under the age of forty five years inhabiting and residing within the bounds of the second Battalion of Cumberland County Militia"*.

Joseph, Talitha, and Somers all returned to New Jersey and settled in Dennisville, Cape May County. Joseph married Abigail Ludlum, Talitha married Enoch Stephenson and Somers married Elizabeth Sullivan. Brother John Falkinburg married Catherine Hatfield of Dauphin, Middle Paxton Twp. PA, and lived out his life in this western Pennsylvania community. Susanna married Jesse Williams and lived her life in central Pennsylvania. I can find no records of either Judith or Edmond Falkinburg after the move to Pennsylvania. In the next section of this chapter I will detail the life of Samuel Falkinburg, my 4th great-grandfather and conclude with a few interesting sketches of brothers John, jr., Joseph, and Somers.

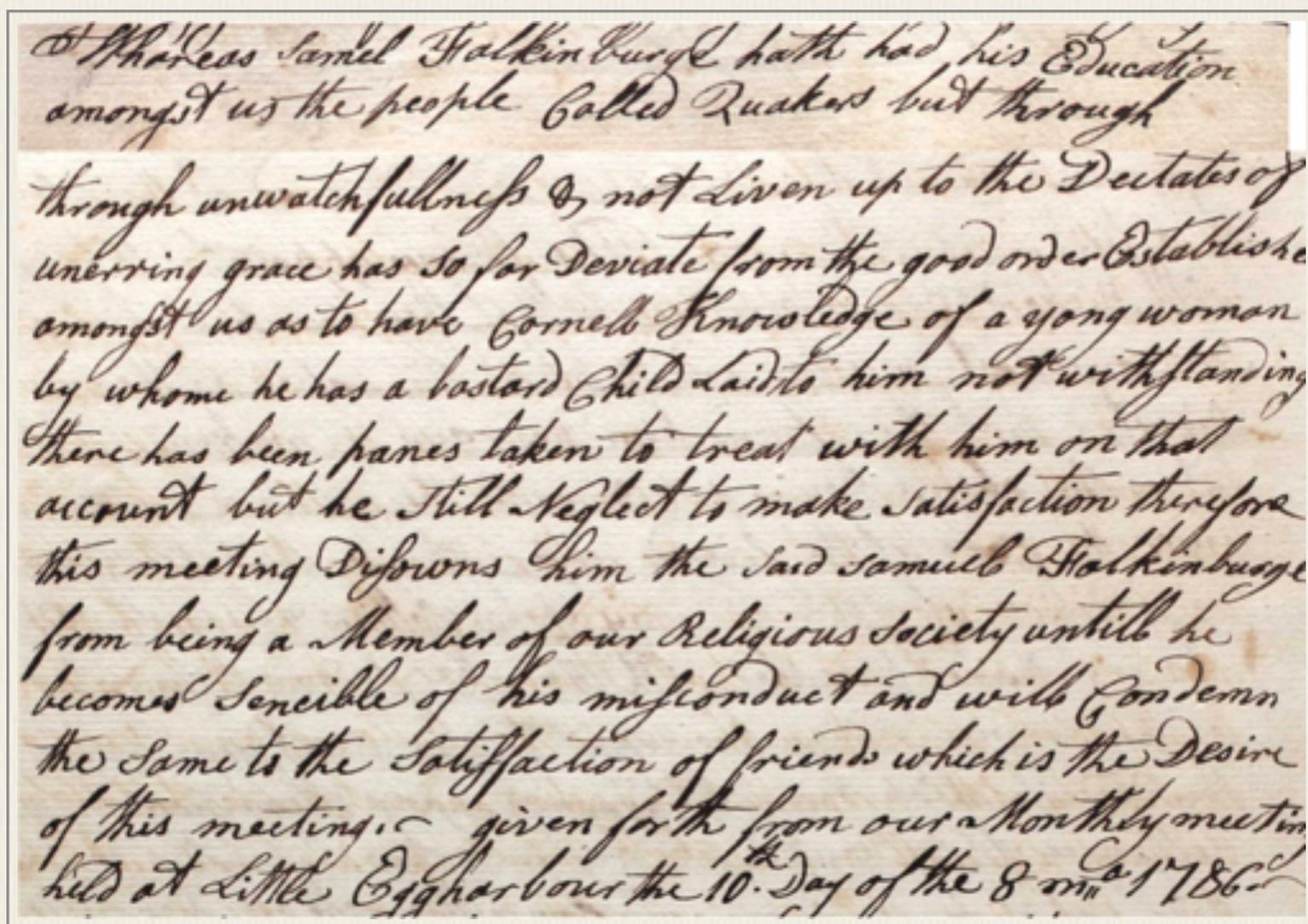
Samuel Falkinburg

Working on the records for Samuel Falkinburg reminds me of the investigations of Police Lieutenant Columbo. For those not old enough to remember this police-genre television show which debuted in the 1970s, Columbo (Peter Falk) wore a rumpled raincoat, and had an unkempt look about him. Columbo interviewed many witnesses of a crime; each person had a different story of the events, leaving the television viewer totally stumped as to what had really happened. At the end of the show Columbo took each of these seemingly unrelated threads and wove a story of whole cloth. 'Wow, how did he figure that out?' The crime unraveled, Columbo shuffled off in an almost bumbling manner to tackle his next assignment. In order to understand the story of Samuel Falkinburg, we really need a Lieutenant Columbo. In these pages I will do my best to present the evidence and put together a story that seems reasonable.

Samuel Falkinburg, second son of John and Mary was born 28 SEP 1764. We know that Samuel accompanied his father to Rye Township, Pennsylvania, where on 6 DEC 1785 he witnessed the agreement to purchase two mills from David

English. It is unlikely that Samuel lived with his parents in Rye Township. He was twenty-two years of age when his father made his purchases in Rye Township. We also know that shortly after moving to Pennsylvania, John died and Samuel who was likely in New Jersey was appointed executor of the estate.

Samuel is frequently cited as marrying Alice Mathis (b. 1752) daughter of Nehemiah Mathis and Elizabeth Cranmer. If the dates of birth for Samuel and Alice are correct, then Alice was 33 and Samuel was 22 years old. Frequently, all nine children of Samuel Falkinburg are attributed to his union with Alice. This is almost certainly not the case. In fact, it appears that the only child of Samuel and Alice was a son, Samuel Jr., likely born out of wedlock about 1785. Because he fathered a child out of wedlock, Samuel was disowned at a Monthly Meeting of the Little Egg Harbor Friends on the 10th da. 8th mo. 1786. [3.25] I am assuming that young Samuel was born by the time the disownment was executed.

A photograph of a handwritten document in cursive script. The text is written on aged, slightly yellowed paper. The handwriting is clear but somewhat slanted. The text describes the disownment of Samuel Falkinburg from a religious society due to an illegitimate child. The document is dated the 10th day of the 8th month of 1786, held at Little Egg Harbor.

Whereas Samuel Falkinburg hath had his Education amongst us the people called Quakers but through through unwatchfulness & not Liven up to the Decates of unerring grace has so far Deviate from the good order Establishe amongst us as to have Corneel Knowledge of a yong woman by whome he has a bastard Child Laid to him not withstanding there has been pains taken to treat with him on that account but he still Neglect to make satisfaction therefore this meeting Disowns him the said samuel Falkinbuge from being a Member of our Religious Society untill he becomes Sencible of his misconduct and will Condemn the same to the Satisfaction of friends which is the Desire of this meeting. given forth from our a Monthly meeting held at Little Egg Harbour the 10. Day of the 8th mo. 1786

Samuel Falkinburg Disowned: Monthly Meeting LEH 10th da. 8th mo. 1786

Alice probably avoided disownment by repenting. There appears to be no record of the birth of Samuel Jr. in the Minutes of the Little Egg Harbor Monthly

Meeting. Who cared for this baby born out of wedlock? Was the child cared for by his mother or grandmother? It is possible that as a part of her repentance Alice gave up the child? The child could have been reared by a member of Samuel's family. Possibilities include Mary, Samuel's mother and Hannah, Samuel's aunt. Since the baby was born right after John Falkinburg's death, and before Mary remarried, she may not have been prepared to take on the responsibility of a newborn. Hannah (Falkinburg) Buffin lived along the Delaware River in the town of Mansfield, New Jersey. It is likely Samuel visited here on the way to Rye Township, and it is possible that Samuel may have even lived here in the latter part of the eighteenth century. I suggest that in 1792, Penelope (now 18 years old) having played an important role in raising young seven year old Samuel, jr. married Samuel Falkinburg Sr. The records of the Monthly Meeting of Friends at Upper Springfield (home of the Buffin family) record the disownment of Penelope Falkinburg:

8th mo., 8th da., 1792... Penelope Fortenburg reported for marrying a man not in membership, he being her first cousin [3.26]

The marriage between Penelope Buffin and Samuel Falkinburg was in conflict with the precepts of the Friends on two accounts. First, Penelope was the daughter of Hannah Falkinburg (John Falkinburg's sister) and was, therefore, Samuel's first cousin. Secondly, since Samuel had previously been disowned by the Monthly Meeting at Little Egg Harbor, Penelope was marrying out of the fellowship of the Society of Friends.

Samuel Falkinburg Sr. Moves to New York State

Samuel Falkinburg Sr. and his wife Penelope moved to New York State in the region of the Finger Lakes. The following quote is taken from a book published 13 JUN 1894 to commemorate the centennial of the town of Romulus, New York.

"In that part of Romulus now in Varick, the permanent settlement began it is believed a year or two later. Benjamin Dey, who surveyed the military tract in 1790, became an owner of several lots therein and it is supposed, located upon Military Lot 49, in 1791 or 1792, having erected the first frame house in town, already in 1794. Other early settlers in the territory of Varick, prior to 1800, were James Cooley, Peter Basum, Jacob Lowden, Frederick Kistler, John King, Jr. James King, James Barr, Joseph Haynes, Robert White, Andrew McKnight, James Bennett, John Williams, Samuel Falkinburg, with the Hood, Hathaway, Beach, Karr and Woodruff families." [3.27]

We simply do not know if Samuel, Son of Samuel Falkinburg and Alice Mathis was living with his father at that time. Early census records only list the number of persons in broad age categories living in the household. These could be family members, other relatives, or farm laborers.

Serendipitously, I found the following on the web site of the Cobblestone Farm Winery (now called Varick Winery & Vineyard) located in the Finger Lakes region of western New York. The quote below is no longer on the winery website, but was previously a statement on the homepage of the former Cobblestone Farm Winery.

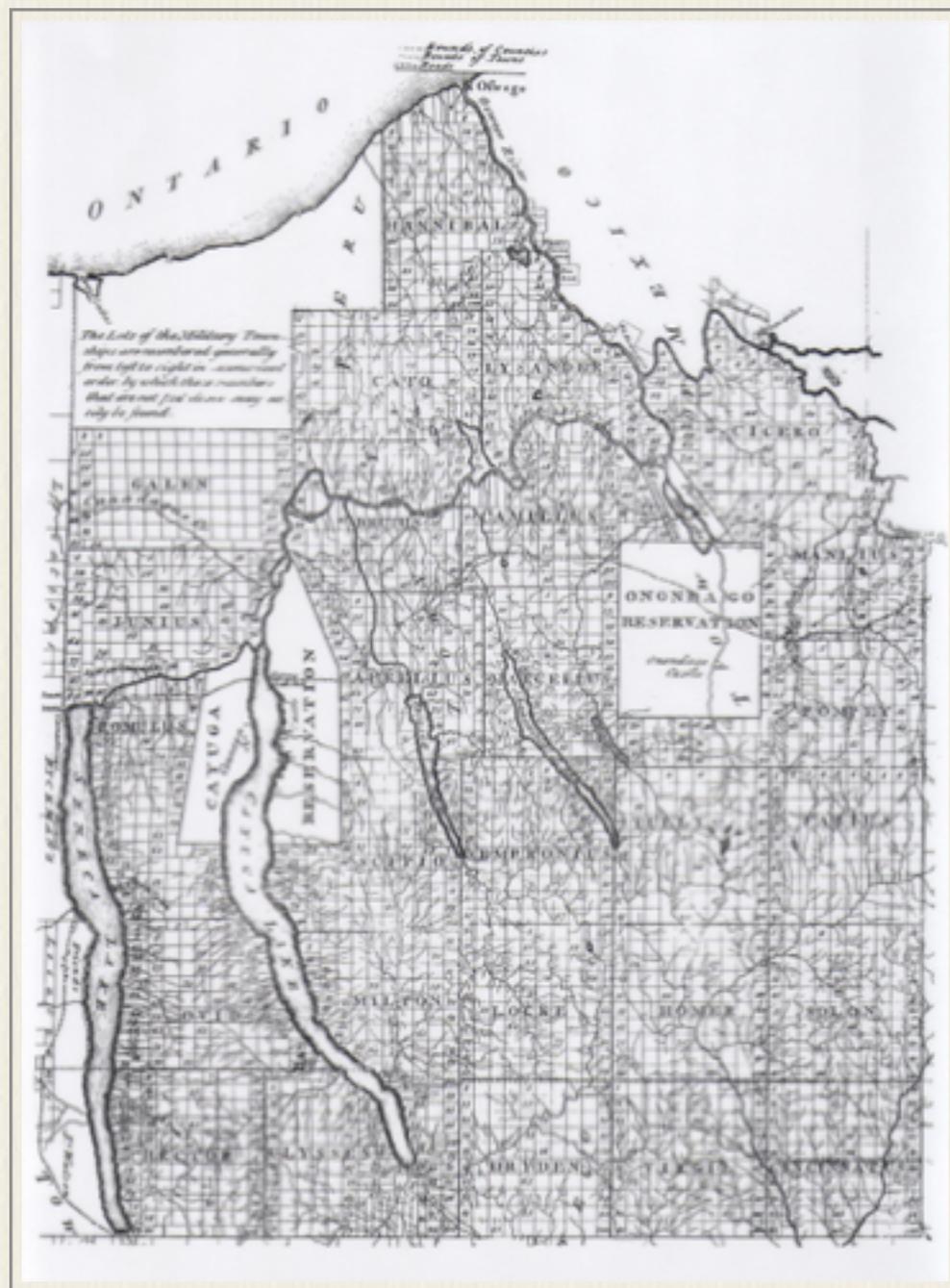
"Cobblestone Farm Winery & Vineyard is located on the northwest shore of Cayuga Lake. It is a 148 acre farm that traces its roots to January 7, 1811, "the 35th year of our independence". On that date, the state of New York gave the northern portion of the breathtaking property to Samuel Falkinburg as a reward for his military service during the revolutionary war." [3.28]

The concept of the Military Tract was established 16 SEP 1776 by the new Continental Congress. George Washington was fighting an invasion by the British on Long Island and Manhattan. General William Howe had an armada of 70 ships and a force of 32,000 which included Hessian mercenaries. The American

force was pitifully small and ill-equipped to resist the invasion. Washington pleaded with the Continental Congress to provide an incentive to attract more men to the fledgling Continental Army. The land tracts were approved for this purpose. Congress defined a quota (based on population) defining each state's participation in the war effort. Congress realized that while young men may be willing to participate in local militia's for short periods of time, they needed to re-

ward enlistees with financial bonuses and land grants that they could claim at the end of the conflict. New York was the fifth state to set aside land for these soldiers. The Military Tract included 1.8 million acres in what is now the region of western New York State. In order to complete the military tract negotiations had to begin with native tribes of Oneidas, Cayugas, Onondagas and Tuscaroras to sell portions of their lands to the State. [3.29]

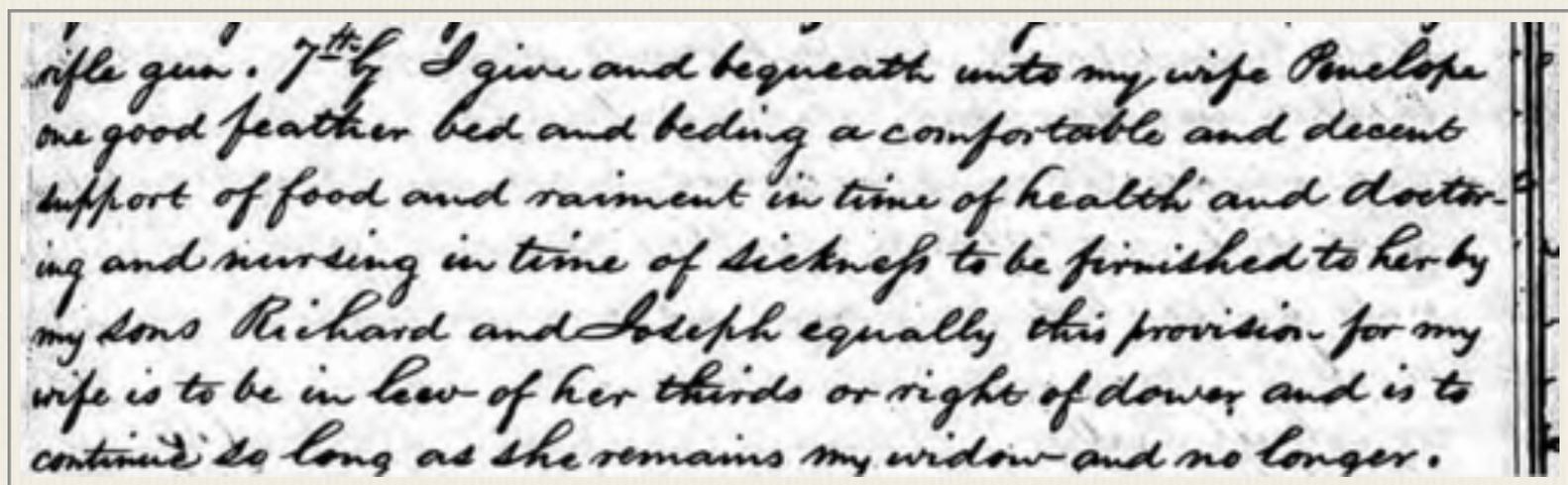
Reference [3.29] contains a list of the grantees of these military lands, but unfortunately Samuel is not on the list. In addition, Samuel's name does not appear in any index of the offi-



The Military Tract (1792)

cers and soldiers of the Revolution which I have found. There are two possibilities. First, we know that many of the revolutionary soldiers never got to claim their bounty of land. Many had died, and some just did not want to move. It is possible that Samuel bought the land from the family of such a Son of the Revolution. It is intriguing to note that the citation on the Cobblestone Winery web site, says “the

state of New York gave the northern portion of the breathtaking property to Samuel Falkinburg as a reward for his military service during the revolutionary war”. Let me suggest one possibility that Samuel ended up with land in the Military Tract— admittedly, it is a long shot. Samuel was twelve years old when the Declaration of Independence was signed. Samuel was certainly an eye witness to the events of the Revolution that unfolded at Little Egg Harbor. Samuel’s uncle owned the tavern which was almost certainly the planning place for the attacks of privateers on British shipping off the coast that led to the massacre on Osborn Island. Was Samuel involved in this activity? Or after the British attack on Egg Harbor, was he so incensed by their deeds that he became involved in other revolutionary activity? It is possible that when the tracts of land were not filled up by veterans of the conflict, they became available to others who contributed, in some way, to the cause?



rifle gun. 7th I give and bequeath unto my wife Penelope one good feather bed and bedding a comfortable and decent support of food and raiment in time of health and doctoring and nursing in time of sickness to be furnished to her by my sons Richard and Joseph equally this provision for my wife is to be in lieu of her thirds or right of dower and is to continue so long as she remains my widow and no longer.

From Samuel Falkinburg's Will: Items he bequeaths to wife Penelope.

Samuel Falkinburg died on 9 FEB 1839 in Seneca County New York at the age of seventy four. He was buried in Oak Hill Cemetery in Varick. His last will and testament is recorded in the New York Wills and Probate Records [3.30]. In this document Samuel identifies the property on which he lives (lot 72) and bequeaths it to his son Richard. Other children inherit: to son Joseph (100 acres of land, also a part of the tract); to daughter Harriet (Jones) 26-six acres of land; to daughter Alzinia (Babcock) \$207; to three daughters Mary, Maundy and Avesta (evidently not married at this time) and to two grandchildren: Samuel Falkinburg Smith and Alta Smith my land in Michigan. In addition all farming utensils, writing desk, shaving utensils, and a rifle are given to Joseph. To wife Penelope, Samuel bequeaths a feather bed and gives Joseph and Richard direction to provide for

their mother only as long as she remains his widow, and no longer. First son Samuel (born out of wedlock) is not mentioned in the will. At this time he (Samuel, jr.) is about 54 years of age. The younger Samuel is an established sea captain, sailing the Atlantic coast. He has a very large family and lives in Little Egg Harbor—the Falkinburg ancestral home.

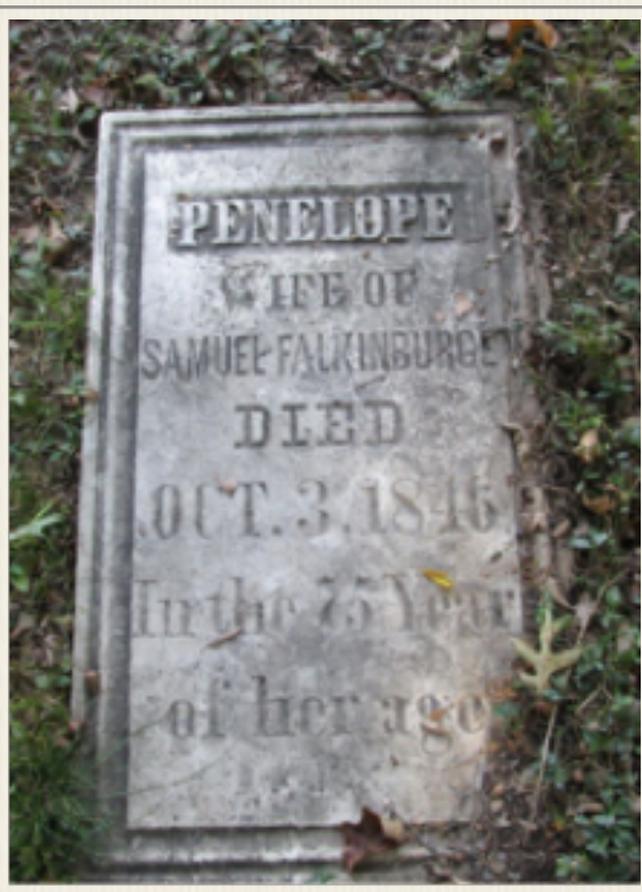
The arrangement made by Samuel, sr. for his wife Penelope is not unusual in this period of history. Clearly, Penelope has little status and is treated as a ward of her sons until she may remarry. Even the household furniture, and kitchen utensils become the property of son, Joseph. At this time Richard lives in Varick, but brother Joseph has moved to Dennisville, Cape May Co., New Jersey.

The reference to property of Samuel Falkinburg, sr. in the State of Michigan is a complete mystery. I have no records of Samuel in Michigan. Most likely, this is property that he obtained in the settlement of a debt which was owed him.



*Samuel Falkinburg's head stone
Oak Hill Cemetery, Varick, NY.*

***Samuel Falkinburg
Died February 9
1839
in his 75th year***



*Penelope Falkinburg's head stone
Oak Hill Cemetery Varick, NY.*

***Penelope Buffin Falkinburg
Died October 3,
1846
in her 75th year***

Siblings of Samuel Falkinburg

Samuel Falkinburg sr. had five brothers and four sisters. All but one of these siblings (Somers) was born in Little Egg Harbor, New Jersey. There are a few interesting stories that can be gleaned from historical records about three of Samuel's brothers.

John Jr. was born to John and Mary Falkinburg 28 DEC 1767. Three years younger than brother Samuel, John's descendants helped grow Pennsylvania's oil industry. Eventually following that industry, his offspring would find their way to California and his 2-greats grandson would be remembered as a mogul in the movie industry.

John Falkinburg married Catherine Hatfield of Dauphin, Middle Paxton Twp. PA. Dauphin is located on the east bank of the Susquehanna, fewer than 20 miles south of the Falkinburg properties in Rye Township. In the first decade of the nineteenth century John and Catherine moved to Woodcock Township, Crawford County PA. Like many families, John and Catherine moved westward looking to participate in the bounty of the new land. Five children are recorded with names familiar to the family: John Jr. (b. 1800~1810), Joseph (b. 1800~1810), Samuel (b. 1810~1820), Jay J., and Catherine. The first three boys are listed in the 1840 census for PA. The 1850 US Census for PA, Crawford Co., Conneautville shows young John is married to Mary. One of the ten children, George H. Falkinburg, born in 1841, would make his mark on the emerging oil industry south of Titusville in Crawford County. Native Americans had extracted oil seeping through the sands as a fuel source for lanterns, but in the 1850s the Seneca Oil Company began drilling for oil. This turned into a boom (as well as an environmental disaster) for the community. George Falkinburg became a part of this emerging industry. George followed the oil industry to the Los Angeles basin, and in 1888 he is listed in the Great Register of Ventura County: "born in PA, occupation: oil driller, residence: Santa Paula". [3.31] George and wife Mary (Boyle) had seven children. Their sixth child James Nelson Falkinburg was born on 18 Nov 1876 in Pennsylvania. James married Charlotte Isbell. The 1910 Census (Long Beach, Los

Angeles, California, USA) lists his occupation as Steam Engineer. James died on 18 Jun 1947 in Los Angeles, California. James Nelson Falkinburg and wife Isabel had a son whom they named Nelson James Falkinburg. Nelson James was a motion picture director, writer, producer, and actor from the 1920s through the 1960s. He took the screen name, Sam Nelson. Most of Sam Nelson's career was spent at Columbia Pictures where he was an assistant director. He worked with Frank Capra (*Dirigible*, 1931), Orson Welles (*Lady from Shanghai*, 1947), Robert Rossen (Oscar-winning *All the King's Men*, 1949), John Ford (*The Last Hurrah*

1958) and Budd Boetticher (*Comanche Station* 1960). When Billy Wilder rented space at Columbia in 1958 to film *Some Like It Hot* (starring Marilyn Monroe, Tony Curtis, and Jack Lemmon), Nelson was on hand once more. Sam Nelson also tried his hand at acting (*Rio Rita*, 1929), screenwriting (*The Last Man*, 1932) and producing (*The Menace*



The grave of Nelson James Falkinburg (Sam Nelson) is located next to Bette Davis in Forest Lawn Memorial Park, Hollywood, CA

Director on 115 movies, Director of 28, Actor on 15 titles.

Today Nelson James Falkinburg (Sam Nelson) lies in rest in Forest Lawn Memorial Park next to “First Lady of the American Screen” Bette Davis.

Joseph Falkinburg was the third eldest son of John and Mary. In later life there is evidence that Joseph worked as a tailor and a shoe merchant. It is reasonable to propose that he learned this trade supporting the Continental Army in the manufacture of uniforms at Carlisle— about 25 miles SSW of the Falkinburg property. Most likely, Joseph and his brother John went with their father on an expeditionary trip to Pennsylvania, found work at the Carlisle Barracks and decided to stay.

In 1790, at the age of 21, Joseph left Pennsylvania and moved back to New Jersey. He settled in Dennis Township, Cape May County. Joseph worked as a tailor and a merchant. In 1795 Joseph married Abigail Ludlam, eldest daughter of

Henry Ludlam and Hannah Somers Smith. Henry was an officer in Revolutionary War. The Ludlam name has a long history in Cape May. Anthony Ludlam, progenitor of the family, came from Yorkshire, England before 1640 and settled in Southampton, Long Island (New York). [3.32] Great-Grandson Henry was appointed judge and Justice of the Peace in 1797. After marrying into this influential family, Joseph Falkinburg was elected to serve as a member of the State Assembly from 1803 to 1804 and again from 1810 to 1811. He also served two terms as a senator (member of the Legislative Council) representing Cape May County in 1803-4 and 1810-11.



The Joseph Falkinburg House, Dennis Township, Cape May County, New Jersey. Built in 1805 the home is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Following the French Revolution, the Napoleonic wars once again embroiled Great Britain and France in conflict. The United States attempted to chart a course of neutrality in this conflict. However, the British impressment of American seamen and the seizure of cargo led President James Madison to ask Congress to declare war on Great Britain, June 1, 1812. Fearing the negative impact on maritime trade so vital to the region, Joseph Falkinburg was part of a state convention which met 4 JUL 1814 to name candidates to the United States Congress who would vote to discontinue the war. In his history of Cape May County, Lewis T. Stevens states: “ [Joseph Falkinburg] came to Cape May.. a poor boy, but when he died, April 30, 1846, he was the wealthiest man in the county.” This was certainly due, in part, to his marriage into the Ludlam family. [3.33]

Somers Falkinburg was the youngest child of John and Mary. Believed to have been born in Pennsylvania, Somers returned to the coast of New Jersey where he settled in Dennis Township, Cape May County, New Jersey where his brother Joseph and sister Talitha lived. David Absalom writes that like Joseph, Somers had skills as a tailor, but he was pretty much a jack-of-all-trades. “*He hooped barrels, shod horses, set wagon tires... He was able to perform most any task that needed to be*

done. ... In 1815 the Dennis Creek South Branch Meadow Company ³⁻¹³ began construction of a sluice across the creek. The day book of that enterprise states that Somers Falkinburg was hired to help in the sluice construction at the rate of \$1.50 per day.” [3.34] Somers Falkinburg married Elizabeth Sullivan of Cape May County, 23 Apr 1809. They were the parents of seven children, four sons, and three daughters. “The fifth child, Somers B. Falkinburg migrated to Indiana about 1837. [He] boated three years on the Ohio, and commenced preaching in 1843...” Somers B. Falkinburg preached in a number of communities, but in 1865 he became the financial agent of the Male and Female Collegiate Institute at Moore’s Hill, Dearborn Co., Indiana, under the auspices of the South East Indiana Methodist Episcopal Conference. This institution was founded in 1854 and exists today as the University of Evansville. Likely because their son had settled in Indiana, parents Somers and Elizabeth left Cape May County and settled in Harrison Co., Indiana. Both Somers and Elizabeth (Sullivan) Falkinburg died in Harrison County, Indiana in 1847.

³⁻¹³ Brother Joseph Falkinburg secured legislative funding for the South Branch of Dennis Creek Meadow Company, which was formed for economic development of Cape May County following the War of 1812.

Final Thoughts

John and Mary (Somers) Falkinburg and their children lived during a period of remarkable events leading to the founding of a new nation. It was not a time for the faint of heart, but it was a time that gave rise to giants like Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Franklin, Hamilton, Madison, and so many others. This band of brothers brilliantly constructed a new order, inspired by The Enlightenment, but established on a new continent. Our ancestors were a part of this awakening of new thought. They were not the leaders of the philosophical movement, but they were part of the fabric that made this new nation prosper and grow. John and Mary seized the opportunity to take advantage of new lands open to settlement. Their children began to spread across the land, building the nation as they pushed the frontier.

Was Samuel Falkinburg the black sheep of the family, fathering a child out of wedlock, then marrying his first cousin? And that young son, Samuel, Jr., did he live with his father and his new family, or was he raised by a surrogate? The data to answer these questions has been lost, and we can do nothing more than guess. What we do know is that young Samuel Falkinburg would become engaged in maritime trade and beget a very large family who would follow their father to the sea.

The Story Behind the Story

Early in my quest to tell the Falkenburg family story, I came across some very interesting facts about John Falkinburg and his family. I found these on a genealogical website which contained, what I thought to be, remarkable detail about John and his family. When I inquired about the source of the information, the owner of the site sent me a document written in 1997 by David Absalom entitled John of Rye. Quite frankly, I was astounded at the information that David was able to find. In my initial foray into my family history, I collected basic information from Ancestry.com and elsewhere, but here was an individual who somehow had found old period maps that hinted at the location of the John Falkinburg's property; he had uncovered Quaker records detailing family births, and even documented John's estate and the distribution of his properties and chattels. 'Wow, is it really possible to get this kind of information?', I thought to myself. It was that discovery that led me to imagine that perhaps I could write a family history that would be more than an extended list of who begat whom. Armed with the internet, I began to explore. When David Absalom originally did this work, it required sitting down in libraries and historical societies to unearth the facts. My search for the original sources of information was aided by a rapidly growing body of material archived on the internet, including out-of-copyright books and historical records from the colonial and revolutionary periods. I wish to thank David Absalom for the inspiration he gave to me in taking on the task of writing this book. His work was truly a turning point in my own exploration.

Electronic communication has enabled me to discuss Falkenburg family history with many who follow similar interests. Not everything can be found by exploring the internet. Samuel Falkinburg's grave was uncovered by exploring Oakhill Cemetery in Varick, New York. His headstone was overgrown with brambles and weeds. I thank Mary Hawthorne for sharing her discovery with me. It is exciting to see physical evidence of the lives of our ancestors.

Chapter 3: References

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- [3.3] Record Great Egg Harbor Monthly Meeting 5th da. 11th mo. 1760
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ancestry.com
- [3.5] U.S. Quaker Meeting Records, Little Egg Harbor Monthly Meeting, Births and Burials, 1693-1887 p. 28
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