

American Revolution Biography about John Bridge Jr.

John Bridge Jr. was a member of Capt. Parker's company, and was at the Battle of Bunker Hill. His military background goes back to the French & Indian war!

The Bridge family lived on concord line north and west part of Vinebrook, Lexington, and was considered as one of the earliest settlers of Lexington. His father had a farmhouse across from today's Bridge School on Middleby Rd. This is where John Jr. was born. The old house burned in the early 1800's and was replaced and a replacement was built on the site circa 1835, now numbered 172 Middleby.

Indeed the 1775 tax list has two John Bridges, both of whom own real estate. It does not give a specific location of his land other than the designation "South"

It is possible that John Jr. inherited his fathers farmhouse in '76! (the question is Northwest vs. Southwest, I believe this is the same land noted in two different areas, west of Vine Brook.)

John Bridge Jr. born Dec. 17, 1737 to John and Sarah Tidd. At the age of 20 John signed up for war, at that time it was customary to serve. He was a soldier under Capt. Blodgett, who marched for the relief of *Siege of Fort William-Henry* during the French and Indian war in 1757.

John married April 14, 1761 to Hannah Reed, daughter of William

and Sarah. Hannah was twenty-one and born Oct. 21, 1740. Customary for rev war times the eldest son often received land from his father, and it believed that John Jr. had the southern part of the family homestead. John and Hannah had five children, John (born July 12, 1762), Eliab (born July 2, 1764 died young), during this time Boston had an outbreak of smallpox epidemic, I don't know if this is what caused Eliab's death, but is probable.

They had three more children, and only one survived to adulthood. Hannah who was born April 30, 1771 (she married three times in her life), Mary born 1776 and died two years later, Sarah born June 20, 1780 and died 6 months later.



John Bridge Jr. was ready in a minutes notice to stand along side Captain Parker and parade with the rest of the Lexington Company on that fair, windy and chilly morning. It rained the day before leaving the ground damp and cold. In the predawn light of April 19, the beating drums and peeling bells summoned between 50 and 70

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militiamen to the town green at Lexington.

As the Militia lined up in battle formation the distant sound of marching feet and shouted orders alerted them of the Redcoats' approach. Soon the British column emerged through the morning fog and the confrontation that would launch a nation began.

"Lay down your arms, you damned rebels..."

John Bridge later along with thirteen members of the Lexington Militia Company gave a collective deposition...

"Whilst our backs were turned on the troops, we were fired on by them. Not a gun was fired by any person in our Company on the regulars to our knowledge, before they fired on us".

He was several times called into active service during the revolution. (During rev war was Quartermaster) Sometime during his career he rose to the rank of Maj. in the militia.

John Bridge Jr. was on the muster roll of Capt. Parkers Co. who were called to Cambridge June 17, 1775, the Bunker Hill battle. British troops head uphill, where they are frustrated by fences, pits, and tall grass. In dust and heat, the

continental militias wait behind their walls. They hold fire until the British are in within 150 feet of the redoubt. The colonists slaughter the King's troops with their fire. John Bridge held the office of Lieutenant at 38 yrs old.

Later for the eighth campaign to the Jerseys in 1776 John served as Capt. Bridge. (The Jersey campaign was a series of battles for control of New York City and the state of New Jersey in the American Revolutionary War between British forces under General Sir William Howe and the Continental Army under General George Washington in 1776 and the winter months of 1777.)

Also at some point placed on the 'Committee of Correspondence and Safety' in 1776, His military trail stops here, no further information is documented.

During the years following his father died age 76 in 1776, his fathers third wife *Mary (Porter of Woburn) Bridge, d. 1778, aged 77* (Below is a typical will of revolution era)
- widow, self identifies as such
- "In consideration of the love I bear to my well-beloved son-in-law Benjamin Merriam of said Lexington, Yeoman, and for the may good offices and services done by the said Benjamin in providing for me and supporting the said Mary for a Number of Years, I give and Bequeath unto him the said Benjamin Merriam all the Estate that I shall die Seized of .whether in Money, Bonds, Clothing, Household Goods etc.
widow of John Bridge, 1st decile

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It is likely that John gave up his military career to take over the family homestead being the eldest male in the family! The Lexington farm was thought of as a “household manufactory”; the land provided the raw material that the family transformed into the food, clothing, shelter and fuel they needed for a “comfortable subsistence” – their term for the essentials of daily life. Colonial Lexingtonians thought of their land as their sustenance, their security, and their guarantee of status and rights within the community

John’s wife Hannah died Oct. 26, 1782. John then married Mary Moore in 1787; she died April 1, 1788, leaving infant one year old infant Mary.

His siblings were Anna, died early infancy, Mary who married Isaac Reed, Sarah, who married Oliver Reed. Younger brother Josiah was ordained as a clergyman at East Sudbury (now Wayland) in 1761.

John Bridge Jr. filled many posts of honor in the town of Lexington, he was chosen Deacon in the Church in Oct. 1787; was selectman 1787-8-9-90-4-5 and assessor in 1778, 90, 92. He was also had charge of public schools for a period, and was for a long time a leading magistrate, and solemnized more marriages than any other Justice in town. The record shows that John Bridge

appointment as Justice of the Peace in 1795.

John Jr. himself died Dec. 6th, 1806 at age 69.

The Bridge’s have a family plot in ‘ye Old Burial Ground’, John Bridge Jr., along with his family and siblings may all buried there in Lexington?

Sources; His. of Lex, Hudson, His. Of John Bridge Sr. property, by Mr. & Mrs. Arthur W. Hurley, LMM card file, by Edwin B. Worthen, Tracing the past, Worthen, Genealogy of the John Bridge Family in America 1632-1924, Epitaphs in the Old Burying Ground of Lexington, Massachusetts by Francis H. Brown, M. D. 1905, Data collected with the help of Sam Doran, Lexington Historical Society & drafted by Larry Conley, LMM

