

Errors perpetuated on Critchfield origins based on the book (*The Critchfield Race*, 1896) by Bird Critchfield, and other notes regarding Amos, and the 4 Critchfield men who had Revolutionary War Pension (This analysis by Kathryn Bassett, May 2011)

To keep quotes easier, I'm indenting authors and other researchers. This mainly is regarding Amos Critchfield who was born circa 1720, died before August 1778 in Hampshire county (West) Virginia, and that he is not born in Wales.

Bird starts his book with a page on Amos Whitfield which is quoted here:

Amos Whitfield was born in Wales in about the year 1725, and emigrated to America about the year 1745, being then about 20 years of age. He was pressed into the British naval service on the eastern shores of New Jersey in the spring of about the year 1746, and was determined to make his escape.

He, in company with two other soldiers, obtained leave of the officers of the ship upon which they had been stationed about one mile from the shore, to get into a small boat which was on the ship and row about for exercise. This did this for two or three days, and each day returning to the ship. About the third day they ventured within a few rods of shore and were hailed by the officers to return, but instead of returning to the ship they struck for the shore amid a volley of shots fired from the ship. They landed unhurt and separated, each taking a different course inland. Critchfield, whose name up to this time has been Whitfield, continued inland on a journey of three days, when he came to a cabin in which lived an old Quaker, and then gave his name as Critchfield, only changing the first syllable as was the custom in those days when running away from their native country. He made application to the Quaker farmer for work, and as he was a stone mason by trade, was given a job of building a stone chimney. This he did with credit, and was soon a citizen known by the name of Critchfield. He was married in a short time and settled in Delaware where were born to him and his German wife five sons, viz: William, John, Samuel, Joseph and Nathaniel.

Of the after life and death of Grandfather Whitfield, afterwards Critchfield, the writer has been unable to learn, except that he lived and died in the state of Delaware.

In the book, Bird gives information on "son" John (Bird's great grandfather) on page 5, "son" William on page 27, and "son" Nathaniel on page 32. He doesn't talk about Samuel or Joseph. Based on the information he gave, he is talking about the same John, William, and Nathaniel who have Revolutionary War pensions. More on the pensions, and how they prove the error of their being brothers, later.

Both *A History of Knox County, Ohio* by Anthony Banning Norton (1862) and *History of Knox County, Ohio* by Norman Newell Hill (1881) have perpetuated Bird's theory about their being brothers.

Genealogy of the Brown family, of Prince William County, Virginia by James Edgar Brown (1930) is also widely quoted, and that is also based on Bird's book (quoted, in fact).

Before his death, I was in touch with a Critchfield researcher who sent me an email 19 Aug 2007. He said:

On Bird Critchfield's (*Biography of the Critchfield Race* 1896) "History", according to Zora Shields letters to me, she quotes him as saying, the early "history" he (Bird) wrote (Amos Whitfield, etc.) was a fabrication. Nathaniel, Sr. the son of William Critchfield Jr. (1686-1772) ran off from NJ to Virginia with borrowed money (actually went to what became Cumberland Co., Pennsylvania). The MD-PA border had not yet been surveyed, the NJ Court record says He (Nathaniel) "went to Virginia" where he purchased 282 acres of land. When Bedford Co. was divided from Cumberland, the same land was in Londonderry Twp, Bedford Co. In 1800 when his part of Londonderry Twp. was split off, those 282 acres fell into Somerset Co (the County name was changed from Somerset by the 7/11/2002 plane crash). I have forgotten the new name for Somerset Co. It was from here that Nathaniel Sr.'s eldest son, John Critchfield (1758-1850), walked "down to Winchester," PA, to enlist in the Revolutionary War with Capt. Daniel Morgan. It took me decades to unravel this fragment of Critchfield history. Bird's history mentions an Amos Whitfield Critchfield. That man (in his father's will, Wm Jr. 1686-1772) had a son of Wm. who went to VA/MD and had six sons (one DAR record) went from NJ to South Carolina then back to Bedford Co., where he stayed with his brother Joshua (Rev. War blacksmith) before going west. If you think the above is confusing, imagine the mass of misinformation I waded through to filter out fact from fiction over 52 years of research. It wasn't easy.

I did not find out from him who Zora Shields is, but in all probability, she's Zora Inez Shields, 1879-1969 because she was into genealogy. <http://www.nebraskahistory.org/lib-arch/research/manuscripts/family/shieldszi.htm> Someone with more time than I could research those files and find the letter(s) that Bird wrote to her. In any case, since he has other errors in the book, the errors about Amos being from Wales is not surprising.

That Amos is the son of William, (who was born in this country, son of another William) is proven by his father's will.

Index of wills, inventories, etc. in the Office of the Secretary of State prior to 1901 (1912) <http://www.archive.org/details/indexofwillsin1279newj> pg 698 entry reads Crihfield, William, Sr., 870J (J being Hunterdon County). B. 16, p. 141. W. 1773. Inv. 1773.

Calendar of Wills 1771-1780 Volume 5 <http://www.archive.org/details/calendarofnewjer06newj> pg 120-121 reads 1772, June 5. Crihfield, William, of Lebanon Township, Hunterdon Co., mason; will of. Eldest son, John Crihfield, 20 shillings. Son, Jesper, my lands and moveable estate, to be maintained out of them till his death, and my son, Arther, is to have the use of the lands to provide for his brother, Jasper, who is to be buried in a decent manner. Son, Arther Critchfield, the said lands, and he is to pay £50 to my son, William, and £50 to my son, Joshua. My son, Nathaniel, has had his portion, as also my daughter, Susanna, also my daughter, Ruth, deceased, had her portion. The chattels that remain, after the death of Jasper, I give my children, **Amos**, Catharine, Elizabeth, Abigail, Hannah and Rachel. Executors - son, William, Joshua Crichfield and Casper Eick. Witnesses - Robert Collver, John Bell, Henry Fonger. Proved May 6, 1773. 1773, May 5. Inventory £81.6.1. made by Philip Schuiler and John Swackhamer. Lib. 15, p. 520.

The other major error that Bird has in his book is that he has three of the four Revolutionary War pensioners as brothers, (doesn't mention the 4th) instead of two sets of brothers that were cousins.

<http://www.genealogy.com/users/s/u/t/Ken-E-Sutphin/FILE/0002text.txt> has this info:

"Amos Scritchfield's Inventory: Pursuant to an order of the Court tous directed being first sworn he have appraised the above articles to use produced of the estate of Amos Critchfield, deceased. Witness outhands--John Vanboskirk, Jacob Slagle, Thomas Anderson, at a Court held for Hampshire County the 13th day of March 1781. this inventory and appraisement of the estate of Amos Critchfield deceased was returned and ordered recorded. Test: Gabriel Jones [Hampshire Co., West Virginia, Will Book # 2, pages 26, 27.]

Pursuant to an order of the Court directed to us, we settled the estate of Amos Critchfield deceased and find in the hand of the Executor the balance above sat down. Signed Abr. Johnson and Okey Johnson.

Ben Critchfield was named in the settlement, the balance being 45.8.101/2 {Hampshire Co., W.V., Will Book 2, page 66.

That led to having a researcher find the the originals.

I searched several indexes but could find no evidence of Amos having a will in Hampshire County. Inasmuch as your reference mentions inventory & appraisals, I wonder if the record is actually from a book limited to those kinds of documents. In checking the catalog, I don't see that we have them in those earlier years.

I did find a deed in Hampshire mentioning Amos' heirs [see below] so will also send that separately. It was the only mention I saw of him in either the grantor or grantee indexes (index images attached). Hampshire indexes begin in 1757. I also checked both indexes in Cumberland County, PA, but saw no mention of him through 1900. Those indexes begin in 1750. I checked CRI- and CHRI- variations only for now.

That deed had the Grantor index showing the Grantor to be "Crichfield, Amos heirs".
Summation: Indenture made 14 Apr 1830 between Mary Crichfield, William Crichfield, Ruth Crichfield, Emmer Stalcup, Thomas Leece (sic, Lease) and Sibbel his wife, and Thomas Johnson and Darcas his wife, to Thomas and John Howser. \$350 "land on Plum Run, it being part of two original tracts viz one of 404 acres granted to Amos Crichfield by patent dated the 23rd day of July 1792, the other of 150 acres patented to John Nicholas dated the

19th day of June 1762 bounded as following". One of the corners is the "SE side of a ridge of Knobly mountain" (by the way, Emmer Stalcup Sr, with the spelling Emer, is age 60 in 1850 census of Hampshire Co. VA, seemingly widowed as no wife with him. Although reasonable to assume his wife was a Critchfield, there are a number of online trees for him, with various wife names, there are none named with a Critchfield variation. Someone else can research that angle.)

After my asking the researcher if she had checked the actual Will Book 2, pgs 26-7, 66 without regard to the index since what I found on internet specifically cites that reference, she replied:

According to the FHL catalog, we have 3 separate sets of "will" records for Hampshire County w/ the County Court as the "author". I checked 2 of those plus a couple of separate will indexes. I see, however, that the 3rd one does have a volume 2. (*And then,*) Congrats! Your persistence paid off. Am at a loss as to why he did not appear in the indexes.

After reviewing what she sent, I noted to her: The first entry on page 26 calls him Scritchfield, as do some of the descendants, so it might be indexed that way. I've got a feeling that there might have been more as the first entry on page 66 says "to cash sent August 1778, next is September 1779. Unfortunately it just refers to him as deceased. The guy following him on page 27 says deceased and the date he died. Too bad they didn't do that for Amos.

Now, on the next challenge. Pg 66 debits shows a total of 33.4.3+ against a credit of 78.3.1 leaving a balance due of 45.8.10+. The pg 26 inventory doesn't show a total but isn't even close to 78. That, combined with that cash sent in 1778, logic says there is more to this inventory at an earlier date.

I scoured the Hampshire County probate records that we hold but did not find any additional inventory. Below are the films that I searched. On those that I found no mention of Amos, his surname, or the variations that you suggested, no comment is made. (*I rearranged her list to put the no comment ones at end of list*)

In comparing notes w/ [another researcher] as to reasons why the inventory amount & the settlement differed, we came up w/ the following possibilities. One could be any land that Amos owned. Another could be any promissory notes. Neither of those would likely be included in an inventory. Still another, although to probably a much smaller degree, would be that the schilling/pound system was supposedly not based upon the .10/.100 per schilling/pound as is our cents/dollar system. What their system was back then is not certain.

163719 (typed extracts): Amos CRITCHFIELD, p. 183. Page 183: Settlements, 17 Aug 1783.
Witnesses: Abram & Okey JOHNSON

220954: chronological cards. I checked 1775-1781. Env. 11, County Court, Hampshire County.
1781. Re: Levitchfield, Amos, dec.-- 2 appraisements, 14 accounts

249994 (typed extracts): Amos SCRUTCHFIELD, pgs. 178 & 282. Page 282: Appraisalment, 13 Mar 1781. Witnesses: John VANBAKER, Jacob SLAGLE, Thomas ANDERSON. Page 178: Inventories, 13 Mar 1781. Witnesses: John VANBASKIRK, Jacob SLAGLE, Thomas ANDERSON

464941: Apparent duplicate of 163719.

1440396, item 5 (index only): Joseph SCRITCHFIELD, 1821 Appr, 1822 Sale

975.495 P28c

220952

220953

1853710, item 1: wills only, not indexed.

1853710, item 2

I have those listed in this analysis in case anyone wants to follow through on anything for Amos. Now on to the Pensioners.

There are four Critchfields that have Revolutionary War Pensions: John, Nathaniel, Joshua, and William (Wm's surname spelled Crihfield).

Bird gives these names as sons of Amos: William, John, Samuel, Joseph, and Nathaniel. He expands enough on John, Nathaniel, and William to show that he's assuming that they are the ones who served in the Revolution. Problem is, that those three, plus a Joshua, have pensions. From the pension records, there are relationships clearly stated. Joshua clearly states he's brother to William. Nathaniel states he had a brother John. But Nathaniel also states that he is COUSIN to William. Thus, there are TWO sets of brothers, not four brothers.

Amos does have a son Nathaniel, but he is not the Rev War pensioner. Nathaniel the pensioner and his brother John are the sons of another Nathaniel who is the brother of Amos.

There are other Critchfields of other spelling variations with pensions, for instance John Crutchfield who died 31 Dec 1841 with pension S10498 who served from Surry County North Carolina, and Arthur Crutchfield (widow Lucy) with a rejected claim R2554, wherein she states that Arthur also served from Surry County and that his brother John took his place. Arthur died 29 Aug 1814, and they were married 10 Feb 1777. According to some internet sources that I won't try to verify, John was born circa 1753 in New Jersey and is the man who is buried Vevay, Switzerland County, Indiana. One person says the father of this John (and thus Arthur) is Joshua, the brother of Amos and Nathaniel. I leave it to others to see who this set of brothers descended through, as I only wanted to clear up the two sets of brothers above.

In case you found this file via a search engine, you can go to <http://babcockancestry.com/SS2-o/ui52.htm> to see what we have for the first 6 generations. Click on the name you are interested in to see more.