

Which Gideon Babcock of South Kingston Rhode Island Was the Revolutionary War Soldier?

There were two men named Gideon Babcock who lived in South Kingston Rhode Island in the Revolutionary War era. One of them served in the Rhode Island militia. Examination of the available evidence will enable a conclusion to be reached as to the identity of the Revolutionary War veteran named Gideon Babcock.

Revolutionary War Service of Gideon Babcock

Gideon Babcock was appointed Lieutenant of the first company of the South Kingstown Militia in June 1775. The Captain of this company was Samuel Seagar and the Ensign was Daniel Williams.¹ Gideon Babcock served as a 1st Lieutenant in the 1st Company of the South Kingstown RI Militia in October 1775, December 1776, and May 1777. In 1777, the Captain of the 1st Company of the South Kingstown Militia was Samuel Potter and the Ensign was Jonathan Card. He was also a 1st Lt. in the 'Kingston Reds' of Rhode Island in May 1793 and May 1794.² The consistency of his rank and location indicates these records all refer to the same person.

Evidence of the Service of Lt. Gideon Babcock from the Men Who Served in his Company

Five records have been found describing service in the 1st Company of the South Kingstown Militia from men who served under Gideon Babcock in the South Kingstown Militia Company:

¹ Rhode Island, Revolutionary War Names Index, Gideon Babcock, Lieutenant, First Company, South Kingstown Militia, June 1775, film 16752230, image 202 of 5818.

² Smith, Joseph Jencks, Compiler, Civil and Military Records of Rhode Island, 1647 – 1800, Providence: Preston and Rounds, 1900, pages 322, 333, 351, 522, and 537.

1. Stephen Sweet of South Kingstown submitted a deposition in a pension file that described his 2 months of service beginning in April 1779 in a company commanded by Lt. Gideon Babcock. They were quartered 'about 6 miles from home' according to Sweet.³
2. Jeffery Champlin of South Kingstown RI made a declaration in support of his application for a pension on September 6, 1832 in Washington County RI. Champlin stated that he served under Captain Gideon Babcock in the fall of 1779 for 3 months.⁴
3. Shadrach Card, resident of New Shoreham, Newport County RI, age 84, made a declaration in support of his pension application dated June 4, 1839. He stated that he served under Lt. Gideon Babcock in Captain Samuel Seager's 1st Company of the 2nd Rhode Island Regiment of Militia in the spring of 1776. He was on guard at the shore and on alarms.⁵

Gideon J. Babcock 1757 – 1807

Gideon Babcock was born April 28, 1757 in South Kingstown RI to parents John and Jemima Babcock.⁶ John Babcock died November 1, 1763 and is buried in South Kingston RI.⁷ Jemima, widow of John Babcock, married John Shelden of South Kingstown and in 1775 John and Jemima Shelden sold the former house and land of John Babcock deceased to John and Jemima Babcock's son John Babcock.⁸

³ U.S., Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application Files, pension W.28625, Veteran Moses Parr, service RI, pensioner Mary Parr, deposition of Stephen Sweet, no date, images 41 – 43 of 87, NARA publication M804, NARA catalog ID 30022, record group 15, 87 images, www.fold3.com.

⁴ U.S., Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application Files, pension S.15401, Veteran Jeffery Champlin, service RI, declaration dated September 6, 1832, images 3 - 4 of 26, NARA publication M804, NARA catalog ID 30022, record group 15, 87 images, www.fold3.com.

⁵ U.S., Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application Files, pension W.25396, Veteran Shadrach Card, service RI, declaration June 4, 1839, images 46 - 48 of 69, NARA publication M804, NARA catalog ID 30022, record group 15, 87 images, www.fold3.com.

⁶ Arnold, James N, Ed., Vital Record of Rhode Island, Volume 5, Washington County, South Kingston Births, birth of Gideon Babcock, April 28, 1757, parents John and Jemima Babcock, Providence: Narragansett Historical Publishing, 1894, Photoduplication program, New England Historic Genealogical Society, images 157, 181 of 623.

⁷ FindaGrave Memorial, John Babcock, died November 1, 1763, burial Babcock Lot, South Kingstown RI, www.findagrave.com.

⁸ Genealogical Collection of Marjorie Webster and other Rhode Island Families, RI State Archives, May 20, 1775 Deed of John Shelden of South Kingstown RI and Jemima his wife, the former widow of John Babcock, to John Babcock, son of John

The name of Gideon Babcock's wife is identified as Hannah in the birth records of their children Amie, Hannah, Charles, and Lydia. A list of their known children is shown in the table below:

Children of Gideon and Hannah Babcock of South Kingstown Rhode Island⁹			
Name	Birth	Marriage	Death/Burial
Amie Babcock	Dec 27, 1777		July 31, 1796
John Babcock	1780	Sally Watson	
Hannah Babcock	Jul 1, 1786		Mar 9, 1809 Newport RI
Charles Babcock	July 24, 1791		Mar 22, 1866 Newport RI
Lydia Babcock	Aug 12, 1795	William Cranston	Feb 21, 1866 Cincinnati OH

Gideon Babcock was a resident of Newport Rhode Island in 1800.¹⁰ Gideon J. Babcock was the Deacon of the Second Baptist Church of Newport Rhode Island when he died at age 50 in Newport on March 7, 1807.¹¹ Gideon Babcock born 1757 is recorded in some records as Gideon J. Babcock and his middle initial is engraved on his headstone. Also of note is that birth records exist for 4 of his 5 children, and the headstone of his son John identifies his father as Gideon J. Babcock.

Gideon Babcock 1744 – 1826

Gideon Babcock was born in 1774 in South Kingstown RI to parents David and Dorcas Babcock.

David Babcock served as an Ensign from South Kingstown in 1759.¹² On November 14, 1794, Gideon

and Jemima Babcock, the house and land formerly of John Babcock, deceased in South Kingstown, film number 4739500 1A, images 277 – 279 of 515.

⁹ Arnold, James N, Ed., Vital Record of Rhode Island, Volume 5, Washington County, South Kingston Births, Providence: Narragansett Historical Publishing, 1894, Photoduplication program, New England Historic Genealogical Society, image 158 of 623.

FindaGrave Memorial, Hannah Babcock, died March 9, 1809, burial Common Burial Ground, Newport Rhode Island, www.findagrave.com.

FindaGrave Memorial, John Babcock, died March 5, 1827, burial Common Burial Ground, Newport Rhode Island, www.findagrave.com.

¹⁰ U.S. Census, 1800, Rhode Island, Newport, Newport, household of Gideon Babcock, Year: 1800; Census Place: Newport, Newport, Rhode Island; Series: M32; Roll: 46; Page: 296; Image: 153; Family History Library Film: 218681.

¹¹ Common Cemetery Records, Gideon Babcock, Deacon of the Second Baptist Church of Newport, died March 7, 1807, Newport RI, page 180, roll 599849, image 572 of 836.

Babcock of Washington County Rhode Island purchased 250 acres in the Township 18, later named Brookfield, Madison County, but then in Herkimer County New York, for consideration of £125.¹³ Gideon Babcock purchased a grist mill and saw mill on the Beaver Creek in Brookfield in 1806.¹⁴

Gideon Babcock died September 14, 1826 in Brookfield New York and is buried there. He was 82 years old.¹⁵ The probate file of Gedeon Babcock of Brookfield, who died September 14, 1826, primarily concerns the Dower rights of his wife Mary. Mary Babcock stated in her petition that her late husband sold the lots on the Unadilla River in 1808 that he purchased in 1794 without any provision for her dower rights. There is no mention in this file of any other children or heirs.¹⁶

There is no direct evidence for the children of Gideon and Mary Babcock.

Census Records Pertaining to Gideon Babcock of South Kingstown Rhode Island

Rhode Island conducted a Military Census in 1777 to assess how many men were able to bear arms. There is one Gideon Babcock found in in South Kingstown. Several other men are listed consecutively adjacent to the entry for Gideon Babcock as shown in the table below:

Men with the Surname Babcock who Appear in the April 18, 1777 Military Census of South Kingstown RI, April 18, 1777¹⁷			
Image	Name	1777 Military Status	Military Service¹⁸

¹² Smith, John Jencks, Civil and Military List of Rhode Island, 1647 – 1800, Providence: Preston and Rounds, 1900, page 201.

¹³ New York, Oneida County, Deeds, 1793 – 1795, November 14, 1794, consideration £125, deed of John T. Morgan of Herkimer County NY to Gideon Babcock of Washington County Rhode Island, 250 acres, lot 70 of township 18, Herkimer County, film 364856, image 359 of 478.

¹⁴ New York, Madison County, Deeds, Volume A, pages 3-4, deed of Joshua Sambro Carpenter of Brookfield to Gideon Babcock of Brookfield, saw mill and grist mill on ½ acre on Beaver Creek, film 404290, image 13-14 of 614.

¹⁵ FindaGrave Memorial, Gideon Babcock, died September 14, 1826, burial Dickey Cemetery, Brookfield New York, www.findagrave.com.

¹⁶ New York, Madison County, Probate Estate Case Files, 1826 – 7, estate of Gideon Babcock, Brookfield, died September 14, 1826, film 425304, images 640 – 650 of 1155.

¹⁷ Rhode Island, Military Census, 1777, South Kingstown RI, Rhode Island State Archives; Providence, Rhode Island; *Men in Rhode Island Able to Bear Arms Census, 1777*; Series: C#00196, 16 images.

¹⁸ Smith, John Jencks, Civil and Military List of Rhode Island, 1647 – 1800, Providence: Preston and Rounds, 1900.

3	David Babcock Jr.	Age 16 – 50, able to bear Arms	None found
3	David Babcock 3 rd	Age 16 – 50, unable to bear Arms	None found
7	Cyrus Babcock	Age 16 – 50, able to bear Arms	None found
7	Ephraim Babcock	Age 16 – 50, able to bear Arms	None found
7	David Babcock	Age 60 and upwards	Ensign 1758 S. Kingstown
7	Gideon Babcock	Age 16 – 50, able to bear Arms	1775 – 1777, 1794, Lieutenant, S. Kingston
7	Asa Babcock	Age 16 – 50, able to bear Arms	None found
7	Bristol Babcock	Negro	None found
7	Cesar Babcock	Negro	None found
8	George Babcock Jr.	Enlisted into the service of the state for 15 months	None found
12	Abijah Babcock	Age 16 – 50, able to bear Arms	None found
13	Paul Babcock	Age 16 – 50, able to bear Arms	None found
14	Simeon Babcock	Age 16 – 50, unable to bear Arms	Records found in Charlestown RI
14	Stephen Babcock	Age 16 – 50, able to bear Arms	Captain 1776-1778 S. Kingstown
14	Samuel Babcock Jr.	Age 16 – 50, able to bear Arms	Records found in Kings County
15	Job Babcock	Age 16 – 50, able to bear Arms	1759 North Kingstown
15	Job Babcock, Taylor	Age 16 – 50, unable to bear Arms	
15	John Babcock	Age 16 – 50, unable to bear Arms	
15	Samuel Babcock	Age 50 – 60, unable to bear arms	

The names David Babcock through George Babcock Jr. in images 7 and 8 are listed consecutively in these records. None of the Babcock entries have more than one man in the household who were assessed as to the ability to bear arms. The entry for John Sheldon shows only one man ages 60 and upwards.

The State of Rhode Island conducted a statewide census in 1782. There are two records for Gideon Babcock in South Kingstown:

1782 Rhode Island Census: Household of Gideon Babcock, South Kingstown ¹⁹						
Males over 50	Males 22-50	Males under 16	Females Over 50	Females 22-50	Females 16 - 22	Females under 16
1	3	1	1	3	1	3

1782 Rhode Island Census: Household of Gideon Babcock Jr., South Kingstown ²⁰			
Males 22 - 50	Males under 16	Females 22 - 50	Females under 16
2	2	2	1

John Sheldon, who married Jemima, mother of Gideon born 1757, had a household in South Kingstown RI in 1782 with this configuration:²¹

1782 Rhode Island Census: Household of John Sheldon, South Kingstown		
Males over 50	Males under 16	Females over 50
1	1	1

John Babcock, brother of Gideon Babcock born 1757, had a household in South Kingstown in 1782 with this configuration:²²

1782 Rhode Island Census: Household of John Babcock, South Kingstown			
Males over 50	Males under 16	Females 22 - 50	Females under 16
1	1	1	2

There are two 1790 U.S. Census records found for Gideon Babcock in South Kingstown RI:

1790 Household of Gideon Babcock South Kingstown, Washington County Rhode Island ²³			
Males 16 & over	Males under 16	Females	Other Free Persons
2	7	3	3

¹⁹ Rhode Island State Census, 1782, South Kingstown, household of Gideon Babcock, Rhode Island Historical Society; Rhode Island, USA; *Providence, Rhode Island, Census Collections - 1791-1882*.

²⁰ Rhode Island State Census, 1782, South Kingstown, household of Gideon Babcock, Rhode Island Historical Society; Rhode Island, USA; *Providence, Rhode Island, Census Collections - 1791-1882*.

²¹ Rhode Island, State Census, 1782, South Kingstown, household of John Sheldon, Rhode Island Historical Society; Rhode Island, USA; *Providence, Rhode Island, Census Collections - 1791-1882*, image 165 of 323.

²² Rhode Island, State Census, 1782, South Kingstown, household of John Babcock, Rhode Island Historical Society; Rhode Island, USA; *Providence, Rhode Island, Census Collections - 1791-1882*, image 154 of 323.

²³ *U.S. Census, 1790, Rhode Island, Washington, South Kingstown, household of Gideon Babcock, The National Archives in Washington, DC; Washington, DC; First Census of the United States, 1790.; Year: 1790; Census Place: South Kingston, Washington, Rhode Island; Series: M637; Roll: 10; Page: 104; Family History Library Film: 0568150*, image 7 of 8.

1790 Household of Gideon Babcock South Kingstown, Washington County Rhode Island ²⁴		
Males 16 & over	Males under 16	Females
1	4	3

Analysis and Correlation

The 1777 Military Census shows Gideon Babcock listed next to David Babcock, Asa Babcock, and two free men of color: Bristol Babcock and Cesar Babcock. David Babcock was the father of Gideon Babcock born 1744 and Asa Babcock was a son of Gideon born 1744. David Babcock served as an Ensign in the South Kingstown militia in 1758. Gideon the Revolutionary War veteran served as a Lieutenant.

The 1782 Rhode Island Census record for Gideon Babcock Jr. likely refers to Gideon born 1757. Junior in this era did not necessarily indicate a family relationship, but often rather a younger man of the same name.

One of the 1790 census records shows Gideon Babcock living in a household with three persons of color. This is very likely the household of Gideon born 1744 since he was listed next to 2 free men of color. Gideon born 1744 purchased land in Brookfield NY in 1794, was a resident there in 1810, and died there in 1826. There is only one census record for Gideon Babcock in Rhode Island in 1800 in Newport. That is where Gideon born 1757 died in 1807.

The 1775 deed selling the land and house of John Babcock, deceased indicates that John's children lived in that house with their mother Jemima. Both John Babcock, the brother of Gideon who bought their father's property, and John Sheldon who married Gideon's mother Jemima had their own households in South Kingstown in 1782. It is uncertain where Gideon Babcock born 1757 lived until 1782 when Gideon Babcock Jr. had his own household in South Kingstown.

²⁴ U.S. Census, 1790, Rhode Island, Washington, South Kingstown, household of Gideon Babcock, *The National Archives in Washington, DC; Washington, DC; First Census of the United States, 1790.; Year: 1790; Census Place: South Kingstown, Washington, Rhode Island; Series: M637; Roll: 10; Page: 104; Family History Library Film: 0568150, image 4 of 8.*

Conclusion

The evidence found supports the conclusion that Gideon Babcock who served as Lieutenant in the militia company from Kingstown RI was born in 1744 and died in Brookfield NY in 1826. The evidence that supports this conclusion is summarized as follows:

- Gideon Babcock was first appointed Lieutenant of the 1st Company of the South Kingstown Militia in June 1775. At that time, Gideon Babcock born 1744 was 31 years old. Gideon Babcock born 1757 was 18 years old.
- Daniel Williams, Ensign (a subordinate rank to Lieutenant) in the 1st company of the South Kingstown Militia was born April 2, 1744, making him 31 at the time of his appointment in 1775.²⁵
- Samuel Seager, the Captain of the 1st Company, was married in South Kingstown in 1756, indicating a birth prior to 1740.²⁶
- Jonathan Card, Ensign who served under Lt. Gideon Babcock, was married in 1757, indicating a birth prior to 1740.²⁷
- David Babcock, father of Gideon Babcock born 1744, served as an Ensign in the South Kingstown Militia in 1758, the period of the 7 Years War.

²⁵ Arnold, James N, Ed., Vital Record of Rhode Island, Volume 5, Washington County, South Kingston Births, marriage of Samuel Seager and Hannah Hull, November 17, 1756, Providence : Narragansett Historical Publishing, 1894, Photoduplication program, New England Historic Genealogical Society, page 29.

²⁶ Arnold, James N, Ed., Vital Record of Rhode Island, Volume 5, Washington County, South Kingston Marriages. marriage of Samuel Seager and Hannah Hull Providence: Narragansett Historical Publishing, 1894, Photoduplication program, New England Historic Genealogical Society, page 29.

²⁷ Arnold, James N, Ed., Vital Record of Rhode Island, Volume 5, Washington County, South Kingston Marriages, marriage of Jonathan Cardand and Sarah Mattison, march 16, 1757, Providence: Narragansett Historical Publishing, 1894, Photoduplication program, New England Historic Genealogical Society, page 48.

- Officers in the Revolutionary War were often older than common soldiers, and were often drawn from influential families in their communities who had a history of military leadership. It is much more likely that a lieutenant would have been in his 30s rather than a teenager.
- The 1777 Military Census had only one entry for Gideon Babcock in South Kingstown.
- Correlation between the 1777 military census and the 1790 U.S. Census indicates that the 1777 Military Census record refers to Gideon born 1744. This is indicated by the presence of David Babcock next to his son Gideon born 1744 and the presence of 2 free men of color (Bristol Babcock and Cesar Babcock) on the military census next to Gideon and David and to the 1790 U.S. census that had 3 people of color in the household of Gideon Babcock.
- The 1790 Census of the household of Gideon Babcock born 1744 includes a total of 15 people, including 3 people of color. Evidence found does not indicate that Gideon and Mary Babcock had enough children to account for 7 males under 16. This implies that Gideon Babcock had several people who were not his children living with him, perhaps apprentices or boarders. This would be evidence of a higher economic status.
- Gideon Babcock purchased 250 acres in Brookfield New York in 1794 for £125, a significant sum for that era.
- Gideon born 1744 was in his 30s the period 1775 - 1779, his father had been an officer, and he was relatively well off. Gideon born 1757 had lost his father as a child, had lived with his mother and stepfather until 1775, when he was 18 years old, and his whereabouts are uncertain for the period 1775 – 1779.

The evidence found supports the conclusion that Lieutenant Gideon Babcock of the 1st Company of the South Kingstown Rhode Island Militia was born in 1744 in South Kingstown RI and died in 1826 in South Brookfield NY.