

# **The Parentage of Abel Pasko, Sarah Ferguson, and Ichabod Smith of Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New York**

*by Ian Watson*

In the bicentennial year of 1976, the descendants of James Milton Pasko (1797–1879) of Meridian, Cayuga County, New York, held a reunion at Cayuga Lake State Park, near Seneca Falls, New York. Following the reunion, several members of the family decided to research James M. Pasko's ancestry in earnest. A quite complete family Bible-type record had been preserved in multiple branches of the family, giving the birth and death dates of James M. Pasko, his wife, children, brothers and sisters, and his parents, Abel and Sarah Pasko. As well, a fine tribute to James M. Pasko survived, which had been written for his eightieth birthday celebration by his son Ferdinand.<sup>[1]</sup>

At first, the leader of this research effort was Paul J. Pasko of Niagara Falls, New York, a grandson of James M. Pasko's son Electrus. After his death in 1984 it was carried on by his brother and sister-in-law, Donald and Ruby Irma (Quackenbush) Pasko. (The author, then a teenager, accompanied them on some of their research trips.) Paul Pasko also engaged a professional genealogist. It quickly came to light that establishing the ancestry of James M. Pasko's father Abel was problematic. According to all versions of the family record, Abel had been born on 1 June 1763. The 1850 census added that he was born in Connecticut.

It seemed very likely that Abel was descended from Hugh Pasko, who was in Salem, Massachusetts, as early as 1666 and died in Enfield, Connecticut, in 1706. Hugh's descendants account for nearly all of the Paskos and Pascos in the northern colonies.<sup>[2]</sup> Records of Abel's early adulthood reflected a close association with John<sup>3</sup> (*John<sup>2</sup>, Hugh<sup>1</sup>*) Pasko of Stafford, Connecticut, and his children John, Sarah, and Ezra. However, no direct documentary proof established Abel as a child of John<sup>3</sup> Pasko. Indeed, the record of Ezra's birth at Stafford on 26 April 1763 seemed to preclude Abel from having been a child of this family. But there was no other obvious placement for Abel.

This lack of resolution was frustrating for those involved. They had invested much time and money in their research. Optimistically, Paul Pasko began referring to Abel as "Abel<sup>4</sup> Pasko," and he corresponded with a number of interested researchers with clear lines of descent from Hugh<sup>1</sup> in an effort to gather more facts on the family. Despite this, no one ever managed to put together a plausible hypothesis linking the known facts about Abel's life to parents and siblings. The author remembers Ruby Irma Pasko saying that Abel "must have been adopted."

The goal of the present article is to review the case of Abel Pasko, to work through the many interesting clues to his birthplace and parentage (some of them new), and to propose what the most likely story actually is. In doing so, the article will bring in the case of Ichabod Smith (1782–1856), a person who is also of partly uncertain parentage, and whose descendants knew Abel Pasko as Ichabod’s uncle. This article also identifies the parents of Abel’s wife Sarah Ferguson for the first time in print.

### ***Abel Pasko***

On 3 May 1792, Abel Pasko of Becket, Massachusetts, bought ninety acres of land there from John Messenger.<sup>[3]</sup> At about the same time, Abel’s marriage to Sarah Ferguson was recorded in Becket.<sup>[4]</sup> The births of the first three of their children in 1793, 1794, and 1795 were also recorded in Becket.<sup>[5]</sup>

By 23 July 1797, Abel was in North Granville, Washington County, New York, for James Milton’s birth.<sup>[6]</sup> Abel was recorded at Granville, Washington County, in the 1800 census.<sup>[7]</sup> Abel settled near what is now Meridian, Cayuga County, New York, in 1804 or 1805,<sup>[8]</sup> and a New York State historical marker there records him as one of the first two settlers of the village.

As Ferdinand Pasko’s tribute reports, Abel and Sarah later left Meridian with their eldest son Abel Ambrose and moved farther west within New York State. Abel Ambrose Pasko bought a hundred acres of land in Stockton, Chautauqua County, New York, on 15 February 1832,<sup>[9]</sup> and Abel and Sarah (called Sally) were dismissed from the Meridian Baptist Church on 4 April 1832.<sup>[10]</sup> The 1840 census shows Abel Ambrose’s household at Stockton, including an older couple who are probably his parents.<sup>[11]</sup> On 31 October 1842, Abel Ambrose sold this same parcel of land,<sup>[12]</sup> and on 22 November 1842, described as of Chautauqua County, he bought forty acres of land in White Pigeon, St. Joseph County, Michigan.<sup>[13]</sup> In 1845 both Abel and Abel Ambrose were enumerated in the Michigan state census at White Pigeon.<sup>[14]</sup> According to the tribute by Ferdinand Pasko, Sarah died 17 December 1842 and Abel 3 July 1852, both in Michigan, but no exact place is mentioned.

The 1850 census shows Abel living with his son’s family on a forty-acre farm at White Pigeon.<sup>[15]</sup> This record lists Abel as aged 85 and born in Connecticut. Aside from the family record, this is the only exact contemporary statement of Abel’s age. Though an unreliable indicator, if we take this report at face value it would indicate that his birth was a year or two later than the family record says. The 1810 census is the only other one which could potentially throw any light on the year of Abel’s birth (its official enumeration date was 6 August 1810). Abel is listed as aged forty-five or above, suggesting only that his birthdate must have been sometime before 6 August 1765.<sup>[16]</sup>

### *Sarah Ferguson's parentage*

The same family record that gives Abel's birthdate as 1 June 1763 gives a birthdate of 15 January 1765 for his wife Sarah Ferguson. Circumstantial evidence strongly suggests that Sarah was the daughter of James Ferguson and Hannah McConoughey, who both came as children to Blandford, then in Hampshire County, Massachusetts, and were married there on 22 September 1759.<sup>[17]</sup> Both James and Hannah were (like most Blandford residents at the time) of Ulster Scots ancestry and had parents who had come to New England in the 1710s or 1720s.<sup>[18]</sup> James was born at Hopkinton, Massachusetts, 28 June 1733 and Hannah at Waltham, Massachusetts, 2 February 1741/2.<sup>[19]</sup>

James Ferguson served in the French and Indian War from Blandford in 1757 and 1758, participating in the events connected with Fort William Henry in August 1757.<sup>[20]</sup> Called a blacksmith, he purchased twenty acres of land in Blandford on 15 May 1759, was mentioned six times in the Blandford town records between 1759 and 1764, then sold this land jointly with Hannah on 12 April 1765, and disappeared from town records.<sup>[21]</sup> On 22 April 1765, called of Blandford, he bought two forty-acre home lots in the neighboring town of Becket (then known as "Plantation #4") from Joseph Ball of Springfield.<sup>[22]</sup> In 1783, called of Becket, James sold a part of one of these lots.<sup>[23]</sup> On 28 November 1791, called of Becket, he bought two parcels of land in nearby Partridgefield from Rufus and Weltha Tyler of that town, totalling a little more than forty acres; Roger Abbe, presumably James's son-in-law, witnessed the deed.<sup>[24]</sup> On 16 April 1793, James Ferguson, now called of Partridgefield, conveyed the remainder of the two Becket home lots purchased in 1765 to Jabez Wadsworth of Becket.<sup>[25]</sup> On 14 February 1803, James sold the two parcels he had purchased in 1791 to Abner Richmond of Partridgefield.<sup>[26]</sup> James died at Partridgefield 25 February 1803, and a Hannah Ferguson, presumably his widow, died there 14 March 1805.<sup>[27]</sup> James appears, as expected, both in the 1790 census of Becket and the 1800 census of Partridgefield.<sup>[28]</sup> From these records, we can conclude that James moved from Blandford to Becket probably in 1765, and from Becket to Partridgefield between 1791 and 1793.

While I have found no direct record of James having children, strong circumstantial evidence permits the conclusion that the three Ferguson marriages recorded at Becket in 1788–1792 and one Ferguson marriage recorded at Partridgefield in 1794 involve his son and daughters. These marriages are Samuel Ferguson to Gemima Abbe, Hannah Ferguson to Roger Abbe, and Sarah Ferguson to Abel Pasko in Becket, and Rachel Ferguson to Abner Richmond in Partridgefield.<sup>[29]</sup> Significantly, Roger Abbe witnessed James's land purchase in Partridgefield, moved there himself, had children and died there. Abel and Sarah (Ferguson) Pasko named their second son James. Abner and Rachel (Ferguson) Richmond

named a son James Ferguson Richmond,<sup>[30]</sup> and Abner purchased James's land shortly before his death. Samuel Ferguson is enumerated next to James in the 1790 census, and he later went west.<sup>[31]</sup> Gemima and Roger Abbe were siblings, children of Obadiah and Zeruah (Balch) Abbe of Ashford, Connecticut,<sup>[32]</sup> which makes it more likely that their spouses, Samuel and Hannah Ferguson, were also brother and sister. Samuel and Hannah Ferguson shared their names with James's father and wife.

Some genealogists have wanted to connect Sarah (Ferguson) Pasko to a different Ferguson family from Torrington, Connecticut, but no evidence other than similarity of names supports this.

### ***The other Paskos in Becket***

Four other adult Paskos appear by name in the Becket records: John<sup>3</sup>, John<sup>4</sup>, Sarah<sup>4</sup>, and Ezra<sup>4</sup>. It is easy to trace them to Stafford, Connecticut, where John<sup>3</sup> was born 19 May 1722. On 4 July 1744, he married Deliverance White, who was born at Norton, Massachusetts, 20 July 1721.<sup>[33]</sup> The last of eleven recorded births to this couple at Stafford are of John<sup>4</sup> on 8 July 1759, Sarah<sup>4</sup> on 30 April 1761, and Ezra<sup>4</sup> on 26 April 1763. In the Barbour Collection of Connecticut Vital Records, citing volume 2, page 15, Ezra's year of birth is given as 1764.<sup>[34]</sup> But there are no vital records on that page in volume 2. The original record is in Book A, page 15. It says 1763.<sup>[35]</sup> The 1764 date may simply be a typographical error.

In the 1770s and 1780s, the family's transition from Stafford to the area around Springfield, Massachusetts and then to Becket is visible in land and vital records. John<sup>3</sup> bought land in Ludlow (then part of Springfield) in 1772, selling it in 1784.<sup>[36]</sup> John<sup>4</sup>'s marriage to Abigail Frost in December 1785 was recorded in the Springfield vital records, but the birth of their first child Levi<sup>5</sup> in November 1786 was recorded at Becket.<sup>[37]</sup> In 1788, John<sup>3</sup> was called of Becket when he quitclaimed his portion of his father's estate in Stafford to his brother Joseph.<sup>[38]</sup> John<sup>3</sup>, John<sup>4</sup>, and Ezra<sup>4</sup> appear in the 1790 census of Becket.<sup>[39]</sup> Abel, as yet unmarried, is not listed, but could be the second adult male listed in John<sup>3</sup>'s household. The Becket vital records record the births of John<sup>4</sup>'s and Ezra<sup>4</sup>'s elder children, as well as Sarah<sup>4</sup>'s marriage to recent widower John Oderick Dirlam on 1 November 1795 and the birth of a son to them on 28 July 1796.<sup>[40]</sup> According to research by Paul Rathje, Dirlam was a German mercenary soldier in the British Army, who was listed as having been captured by the American forces in 1778 and by 1780 had settled in western Massachusetts,<sup>[41]</sup> marrying his first wife, Sarah Snow, in Becket in 1781.<sup>[42]</sup> Sarah<sup>4</sup> Pasko married him when she was already in her mid-thirties; the likely explanation for this will become apparent shortly.

In the fall of 1796, these Pasko and Dirlam families moved from Becket to Granville, Washington County, New York, just at the same time as Abel Pasko

did.<sup>[43]</sup> John<sup>3</sup>, Ezra<sup>4</sup>, and Abel appear together in the 1800 census in Granville, and Sarah<sup>4</sup>'s husband John Dirlam is listed not far away.<sup>[44]</sup> Neither of the names Pasko and Dirlam appear in the Washington County deed indexes. From Granville, the family dispersed: John<sup>4</sup> to Warren County, New York; Ezra<sup>4</sup> first to Warren County and then to Seneca County, New York; and the Dirlams apparently to Essex County, Vermont.

These Becket and Granville records show that the lives and moves of John<sup>4</sup>, Sarah<sup>4</sup>, and Ezra<sup>4</sup> Pasko parallel those of Abel Pasko. The simplest inference would be that Abel, too, was a child of John<sup>3</sup> Pasko. But, as explained earlier, the Stafford vital records fail to list Abel, and show Ezra's birth on 26 April 1763. As family records give 1 June 1763 as Abel's birth date, that would appear to preclude Abel's membership in John<sup>3</sup>'s family.

Why is it that Abel appears to have been part of this family, but cannot actually be placed in it? The rest of this article evaluates three hypotheses which could potentially resolve this question.

#### ***Hypothesis 1: Ezra Pasko's 1763 birthdate is in error***

According to this hypothesis, Abel was indeed a son of John<sup>3</sup> and Deliverance Pasko and was indeed born on 1 June 1763, and Ezra<sup>4</sup> Pasko's birthdate, as recorded in the Stafford vital records, is incorrect. Though attractive, this hypothesis is weak to begin with, since there is no other reason to doubt the accuracy of the Stafford vital records, which record regular births of John<sup>3</sup> Pasko's children from 1745 to 1763. What speaks most against this hypothesis are the dates on Ezra's gravestone in the Hubbard Cemetery on Dunham Road in Waterloo, Seneca County, New York, which the author photographed in the summer of 2013.<sup>[45]</sup> The stone has fallen and is now quite worn, but one can see that Ezra died in May 1844 at the age of 81 years, zero months, and a hard-to-read number of days. This is consistent with a birthdate of 26 April 1763. An earlier reading of this stone, reported by the late Ray Pasco of Billings, Montana in a letter dated about 1980, was that his death date was 8 May 1844 at the age of 81 years, 15 days.

#### ***Hypothesis 2: Abel's original last name was Abbey***

On 27 September 1764, "Ensign John Paskow" of Stafford married the "Widow Abigail Abbey of Windsor" at Stafford.<sup>[46]</sup> This record suggests the hypothesis that Deliverance White, John<sup>3</sup> Pasko's wife, might have died (without any record) after Ezra<sup>4</sup>'s birth in 1763, with John<sup>3</sup> then remarrying the following year. If so, Abel might have been a son of Abigail Abbey by her previous husband. He could have been born in 1763 just like Ezra, have been brought into the Pasko family after Abigail's marriage, and have ultimately taken the Pasko name. That three Fergusons in Becket around 1790 married two Abbey siblings and a Pasko lends extra romance to this idea.

The first problem with this hypothesis is that the John Pasko of Stafford who was called “Ensign” appears with fair certainty to have been John<sup>2</sup>, born in 1689, not John<sup>3</sup>, born in 1722. The evidence for this is that a deed of 1766 mentions land of “Ensign John Pasko”<sup>[47]</sup> that appears from other Stafford land records to have belonged to John<sup>2</sup>. The author has analyzed the Pasko entries in the Stafford land records in detail and finds that John<sup>3</sup> owned no land in 1766. As well, Stafford records record the death of John<sup>2</sup>'s first wife Rebecca in 1755. In John<sup>2</sup>'s will, written 8 March 1773 and probated 11 August 1775, he gave an unnamed wife “ten pounds lawful money . . . which I promised her by bargain or Jointer at my marriage to her . . . [and] one good silk handchief to be levied out of my estate.”<sup>[48]</sup> This is clear evidence of a second marriage, and makes it even more likely that Abigail Abbey married John<sup>2</sup> Pasko, not John<sup>3</sup>. This conclusion does not technically rule out the possibility that Abel could have been Abigail Abbey's son by her previous husband, and that, after the marriage, he became practically like a sibling to her stepgrandchildren. But it does make it less plausible.

Abigail Abbey's identity is not yet clear. The name Abbe/Abbey is completely absent from the Windsor vital records before 1838,<sup>[49]</sup> and one wonders whether “Windsor” could have been the Stafford clerk's error for Windham, where the family was numerous. Judging solely from the published Abbe-Abbey genealogy, the only even potentially plausible candidate for a widow named Abigail Abbey in 1764 is Abigail, wife of #44 Ebenezer Abbe Jr. of Windham, whose death date is not given.<sup>[50]</sup> If this completely speculative identification happened to be correct, it would be impossible to imagine her having had a child in the 1760s, as she married Ebenezer in 1730.

The idea that Abel might have been an Abbey seemed unlikely at best. After DNA research became possible, the author was able to show that this hypothesis was false.

### ***Pasko DNA research***

The author recruited four male Pasko family members who were willing to undergo a 37-marker Y-chromosome test through Family Tree DNA. Two were great-great-great grandsons of Abel Pasko (via two different sons of Abel's son James Milton). One was a descendant of Ezra<sup>4</sup> (*John<sup>3-2</sup>, Hugh<sup>1</sup>*), in the ninth generation counting from Hugh. The other was descended from James<sup>2</sup> (*Hugh<sup>1</sup>*) in the tenth generation.

The results (shown in the table on page 200) showed that all four men did in fact belong to the same male line, whose Y-chromosome is in haplogroup R1a. As well, the profiles for the descendants of Abel and Ezra<sup>4</sup> are more similar to each other than they are to the profile of the descendant of James<sup>2</sup>, as one would expect

if Abel and Ezra<sup>4</sup> were brothers. Clearly Abel *was* a Pasko, genetically speaking, and not only that, the most parsimonious reading of the data suggests that he was part of the Stafford branch of the family rather than the East Windsor branch founded by James<sup>2</sup>.

*37-marker Y-DNA results for four living male Pasko descendants, showing only the markers which were not identical across all four tested individuals.*

| Tester's descent   | DYS390 | DYS548 | DYS449 | YCAII | DYS576 | CDY   | DYS442 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|
| Abel   | 25     | 16     | 32     | 19-23 | 19     | 35-39 | 14     |
| Abel   | 26     | 15     | 32     | 19-23 | 19     | 35-39 | 14     |
| Ezra <sup>4</sup> (John <sup>3-2</sup> , Hugh <sup>1</sup> ) | 26     | 15     | 33     | 19-23 | 19     | 35-37 | 14     |
| James <sup>2</sup> (Hugh <sup>1</sup> )                      | 26     | 15     | 32     | 19-22 | 18     | 36-37 | 13     |

This is the last nail in the coffin for the hypothesis that Abel was really an Abbey. It remains theoretically possible that the widowed Abigail Abbey and the over seventy-year-old John<sup>2</sup> Pasko could have been Abel's parents (with Abel having been born either before or after their marriage). But there is no positive evidence to support this hypothesis, and if evidence of Abigail Abbey's identity and age ever surfaces, it may become possible to dismiss it conclusively.

### ***The puzzle of Ichabod Smith***

Ichabod Smith, who died in Peoria County, Illinois in 1856, had fifteen children by two wives and a large number of descendants. On Christmas Day, 1877, his widow, children, and descendants held a reunion in Elmwood, Illinois. They also compiled and privately published a short family history which started with Ichabod as the progenitor. The book reported that

Ichabod Smith was born in Springfield, Mass., July 19th, 1782. His father dying in his infancy, he was taken and reared by his uncle, Abel Pasko, who lived near Sandy Hill [now Hudson Falls], N.Y. In 1803 he went to that part of Tioga Co., Penn., that was afterwards Covington Township.<sup>[51]</sup>

By and by this record became known to Abel's descendants, but for a long time neither the Pasko nor the Smith descendants had an explanation for Ichabod's supposed relationship to Abel. The 1850 census confirms Ichabod's age and state of birth.<sup>[52]</sup> The author, among others, searched the then poorly accessible Springfield vital records fruitlessly for an Ichabod Smith birth in 1782. Unfortunately, nowhere else but in this family record did anyone find documentary evidence of a connection between Abel Pasko and Ichabod Smith. There was, however, an otherwise unexplained male of Ichabod's age in Abel's 1800 census record, which lent credence to the story.

Later, when the Springfield vital records were published and made available electronically, we were able to discover Ichabod's birth record easily by searching under his first name and birthdate. The last name of his mother was read as Passue in the published Springfield vital records and Pasene in the online index at *FamilySearch.org* — not hard to do, as the already unusual name Pasko had been written in a way that was particularly difficult to decipher. The original record reads:

Ichabod Pascue Son of Sarah Pascue of Springfield was born July 19th Anno Dom 1782<sup>[53]</sup>

This completed the picture of Sarah<sup>4</sup> Pasko's life and offered an explanation for her late marriage to John Oderick Dirlam: she had had an illegitimate child at



the age of 21, which surely reduced her marriageability for a time. It is difficult to believe that Ichabod would have been reared by Abel from a very young age, but one can easily imagine Ichabod going to live with Abel after Abel's marriage, when Ichabod would have been about ten. This also helps explain John<sup>3</sup>'s entry in the 1790 Becket census, which shows two males over 16 (likely John<sup>3</sup> and Abel), two females (likely Deliverance and Sarah<sup>4</sup>), and two males under 16 (one likely Ichabod, the other unidentified).

This also gives us strong evidence that Abel Pasko was a brother to Sarah<sup>4</sup> (*John*<sup>3-2</sup>, *Hugh*<sup>1</sup>) Pasko. Of course, there are other potential explanations for the use of the term "uncle" to describe Abel's relationship to Ichabod Smith. For example, Abel's wife Sarah Ferguson could have been Ichabod Smith's aunt. Or the word might have been used in an even looser sense. But such explanations would be much more complex than the hypothesis that Abel was simply Sarah's brother.

DNA research might shed light on Ichabod's paternity. The report that his father died "in his infancy" may be true, or may be a kind of cover story for an out-of-wedlock birth. There were a number of Smiths in and near Springfield in the 1600s and 1700s, and even some Ichabod Smiths, so it is quite plausible that Ichabod's father was indeed a Smith. Some Springfield Smith descendants have made Y-DNA profiles public. The author has located male-line descendants of Ichabod Smith, but so far has not been able to convince them to test.

### ***Hypothesis #3: Abel's 1763 birthdate is in error***

So far the evidence we have available shows that Abel Pasko did carry Pasko Y-DNA and that he was very likely a brother to Sarah<sup>4</sup> Pasko. How can we reconcile that with his family record's statement that he was born 1 June 1763 — impossible if he was really a child of John<sup>3</sup> and Deliverance Pasko?

At this point we have to consider the hypothesis that the family record is simply wrong (despite its appearance of reliability). The one piece of positive evidence which speaks in favor of this hypothesis is the 1850 census, which gives Abel's age as 85. Though such ages are often imprecise, they are also often correct, and the enumerator was inquiring enough to record Abel's state of birth as Connecticut despite his many subsequent moves. The enumeration took place on 14 August 1850, but according to instructions, the enumerator was supposed to record Abel's age at his "last birthday previous to the 1st of June."<sup>1541</sup> Of course, the first of June was in fact Abel's birthday, according to the family record. If we assume that this is accurate, and if the enumerator followed instructions to the letter, Abel would have been born on 1 June 1764. But the enumerator could have easily recorded Abel's age on the day of enumeration instead of on his last birthday previous to 1 June. Even an enumerator who was following instructions could have misunderstood them slightly and recorded Abel's age as of his birthday on 1

June 1850 rather than 1 June 1849. This would then give us a birthdate of 1 June 1765. Given Ezra's birth just over two years before, the author finds the 1765 date more believable.

Three other minor points favor this hypothesis. One that there is a discrepancy between Sarah Ferguson's reported birthdate in the family record (15 January 1765) and her reported age in the 1810 census (26 to 44, suggesting a birthdate after 6 August 1765). This raises the possibility that her age in the family record could also be off by a year or two, and casts more doubt on the accuracy of the record in general. Another minor point is Abel's age at marriage. If he was born in 1763, his marriage would have been at the age of 28 or 29. This would not be troubling — but probably marriage at the age of 26 or 27 would have been slightly more usual. And finally, if we assume that Abel was born 1 June 1765 as the last child of John and Deliverance Pasko, Deliverance would have been 43 at the birth of her last of twelve children, which is just as plausible if not more so than her having been 41 at the birth of her last of eleven children.

If Abel was born to John and Deliverance Pasko in 1765, why was his birthdate not recorded? Of course, the reasons could have been trivial. Unfortunately, the author has not been able to familiarize himself in detail with the institutions responsible for vital record keeping in Stafford in the mid-eighteenth century. But it may be significant that in 1761, after some years of controversy, the western section of Stafford (where the Pasko family lived) was set off as a separate ecclesiastical society.<sup>[55]</sup> Then, “John Paskoo iuner” (i.e. John<sup>3</sup>) with his brother Joseph signed a petition dated 1 May 1764 in support of the Baptists in northern Connecticut who wished to be exempted from paying for the support of the established ministry.<sup>[56]</sup> Their names were, however, not found on the actual lists of Baptists. Still, one wonders whether either Baptist sympathies, the establishment of a second Congregational church in western Stafford, or both may have contributed to the failure to register Abel's birth in the previously customary way.

This third hypothesis seems to be the only tenable one. DNA evidence shows clearly that Abel's father was a Pasko, the Ichabod Smith reference suggests that he was a son of John<sup>3</sup> Pasko, Ezra<sup>4</sup> Pasko's birthdate as given in the Stafford vital records appears genuine, it follows that Abel Pasko's birth year as given in family records must be in error, and other records suggest (albeit weakly) that Abel's correct year of birth may have been two years later. The author thus concludes that there is enough evidence to place Abel<sup>4</sup> Pasko as the last, unrecorded child of John<sup>3</sup> and Deliverance (White) Pasko of Stafford, Connecticut.

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## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Copies of several versions of the family record are preserved in the Ian Michael Watson Papers, Mss. 392, at the New England Historic Genealogical Society. The tribute is titled “History of the Pasco family as written by Ferdinand Milton on the 80th birthday of his father.” The author worked from a mimeographed typescript of the handwritten original, in possession of Margery R. Pasko of Hammond, N.Y. Note that the spelling Pasko is used in this article, but some members of the family have regularly used the spelling Pasco or Pascoe.
- <sup>2</sup> See the author’s article, “The Pasco family in early New England,” *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 150 (1996):131–40.
- <sup>3</sup> Berkshire County Deeds, Middle District, 34:624–25. Although there were, as we will see shortly, three other adult male Paskos living in Becket at the same time, this is the only land sale or purchase by a Pasko recorded in the Berkshire County deed books. No sale of this land is recorded.
- <sup>4</sup> *Vital Records of Becket, Massachusetts to the End of the Year 1850* (Boston: NEHGS, 1903), 55, 71, which report two conflicting dates: a marriage in 1791 and an intention of marriage on 15 September 1792.
- <sup>5</sup> *Vital Records of Becket*, 27.
- <sup>6</sup> Ferdinand Pasko’s tribute gives the date and place of his birth. 1855 and 1875 New York state census records also confirm that James Milton was born in Washington County.
- <sup>7</sup> 1800 U.S. Census, Granville, Washington Co., N.Y., roll 26, p. 538.
- <sup>8</sup> Elliot G. Storke, *History of Cayuga County, New York* (Syracuse: D. Mason & Co., 1879), 289, 291, which gives 1804; Ferdinand Pasko tribute, which gives 1805.
- <sup>9</sup> Chautauqua County Deeds, 9:401.
- <sup>10</sup> Letter dated 14 November 1978 from Anna Meacham, former town historian of Cato, N.Y., in the Ian Michael Watson Papers, Mss. 392, at the New England Historic Genealogical Society, Box 4, Subgroup I, Series C, Folder 16. Anna May Meacham, *The Baptist Church at Meridian New York 1810 to 1988, The Survival of a Rural Church*, William H. Havens, ed. (Salem, Mass.: Higginson Book Co., 2006) is a history of the church which transcribes many records and frequently mentions Paskos, but it does not include dismissals.
- <sup>11</sup> 1840 U.S. Census, Stockton, Chautauqua Co., N.Y., roll 272, p. 256, as A. A. Pasco.
- <sup>12</sup> Chautauqua County Deeds, 42:289.
- <sup>13</sup> St. Joseph County Deeds, 14:113–14, Elijah West and his wife Amy West of LaGrange Co., Ind., to Abel A. Pasco,.
- <sup>14</sup> 1845 Michigan State Census, White Pigeon, St. Joseph Co., Mich., p. 58, online at [seekingmichigan.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/p16317coll6/id/55/rec/1](http://seekingmichigan.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/p16317coll6/id/55/rec/1).

- <sup>15</sup> 1850 U.S. Census, White Pigeon, St. Joseph Co., Mich., roll 362, p. 281; agricultural schedule for White Pigeon, NARA T1164, roll 5, p. 305.
- <sup>16</sup> 1810 U.S. Census, Cato, Cayuga Co., N.Y., roll 31, p. 1165.
- <sup>17</sup> Frederic W. Bailey, *Early Massachusetts Marriages Prior to 1800*, 3 vols. (New Haven, Conn.: Bureau of American Ancestry, 1897–1914; repr. 3 vols. in 1, Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1968), 3:159.
- <sup>18</sup> See Sumner Gilbert Wood, *Ulster Scots and Blandford Scouts* (West Medway, Mass., 1928).
- <sup>19</sup> *Vital Records of Hopkinton, Massachusetts to the Year 1850* (Boston: NEHGS, 1911), 74; *Vital Records of Waltham, Massachusetts, to the Year 1850* (Boston: NEHGS, 1904), 63.
- <sup>20</sup> Wood, *Ulster Scots and Blandford Scouts*, 383–84.
- <sup>21</sup> Hampshire County Deeds, 3:621, 5:707–08; Blandford “Miscellaneous Records 1737–1773,” images online in “Massachusetts, Town Clerk, Vital and Town Records, 1627–2001” at *FamilySearch.org*, images 22, 33, 34, 35, 38, 39.
- <sup>22</sup> Berkshire County Deeds, Middle District, 2:604–05.
- <sup>23</sup> Berkshire County Deeds, Middle District, 30:231–32.
- <sup>24</sup> Berkshire County Deeds, Middle District, 38:457. Note that the name Partridgefield was changed to Peru in 1806.
- <sup>25</sup> Berkshire County Deeds, Middle District, 39:118.
- <sup>26</sup> Berkshire County Deeds, Middle District, 40:282, 286.
- <sup>27</sup> *Vital Records of Peru, Massachusetts, to the Year 1850* (Boston: NEHGS, 1902), 103.
- <sup>28</sup> 1790 U.S. Census, Becket, Berkshire Co., Mass., roll 4, p. 117; 1800 U.S. Census, Partridgefield, Berkshire Co., Mass., roll 15, p. 187.
- <sup>29</sup> *Vital Records of Becket*, 55; *Vital Records of Peru*, 67.
- <sup>30</sup> *Vital Records of Peru*, 40.
- <sup>31</sup> See Cleveland Abbe and Josephine Genung Nichols, *Abbe-Abbey Genealogy* (New Haven: Tuttle, Morehouse, & Taylor, 1916), 117.
- <sup>32</sup> Abbe and Nichols, *Abbe-Abbey Genealogy*, 58.
- <sup>33</sup> *Vital Records of Norton, Massachusetts, to the Year 1850* (Boston: NEHGS, 1906), 154; Nicholas J. Lothrop, *The Nicholas White Family 1643–1900* (Taunton, Mass., 1902), 27.
- <sup>34</sup> Barbour Collection of Connecticut Vital Records, citing Stafford Vital Records, 2:10, 11, 15.
- <sup>35</sup> Book A is not on Family History Library microfilm. A typescript on FHL 1,319,712, p. 55, takes Ezra’s birth from A:15. This typescript also transcribed the family births from Book 1, p. 6.
- <sup>36</sup> Hampshire County Deeds, 11:601, 13:618, 24:43, 24:55, 25:608.
- <sup>37</sup> Clifford L. Stott, *Vital Records of Springfield, Massachusetts to 1850* (Boston: NEHGS, 2003), 435, 459, 1849; *Vital Records of Becket*, 27.
- <sup>38</sup> Stafford Deeds, 9:258.

<sup>39</sup> 1790 U.S. Census, Becket, Berkshire Co., Mass., roll 4, p. 117.

<sup>40</sup> *Vital Records of Becket*, 18, 54, 72, 93.

<sup>41</sup> See Mr. Rathje's research reports online at *finddirlam.blogspot.com*.

<sup>42</sup> *Vital Records of Becket*, 53, 79.

<sup>43</sup> The last recorded Pasko and Dirlam births in Becket were in June and July 1796. John Dirlam sold his land in Becket on 5 December 1796 (Berkshire County Deeds, Middle District, 36:437). In John<sup>4</sup> Pasko's Revolutionary War pension file, #W19953, his son Levi<sup>5</sup> deposed that his "Father & Mother resided [in Becket] until the Fall of the year I was ten years old"; Levi was born in November 1786 and presumably means fall 1796. Note too, as discussed above, that Abel Pasko's son James Milton was born in Washington County, New York in July 1797.

<sup>44</sup> 1800 U.S. Census, Granville, Washington Co., N.Y., 537 (as John O. Durlam), 538 (the three Paskos, listed right together).

<sup>45</sup> Photograph (partly illegible) of the gravestone online at *FindaGrave.com*, posted by this author, with an annotation as read from the stone.

<sup>46</sup> Connecticut State Library Church Record Abstracts, Stafford First Congregational Church, 62.

<sup>47</sup> Stafford LR 4:13.

<sup>48</sup> Stafford District Probate, File #1625.

<sup>49</sup> Barbour Collection, Windsor Vital Records.

<sup>50</sup> Abbe and Nichols, *Abbe-Abbey Genealogy*, 34.

<sup>51</sup> Henry C. Smith and Amelia R. Gibbs, *Family Record of Ichabod Smith and Descendants from July 19, 1782, to December 25, 1877* (Peoria: J. W. Franks & Sons; typescript copy by Mrs. Charles B. Robison, Park Ridge, Ill., 1974), 1.

<sup>52</sup> 1850 U.S. Census, no township listed, Peoria County, Illinois, roll 123, p. 275B.

<sup>53</sup> "Springfield Vital Records, 1638–1887," digital collection at *FamilySearch.org*, image 476.

<sup>54</sup> See the instructions to marshals and assistant marshals for the 1850 census, available at *usa.ipums.org/usa/voliii/inst1850.shtml*.

<sup>55</sup> Connecticut Archives, Series 1, Ecclesiastical Affairs, XI:207–13, Connecticut State Library.

<sup>56</sup> Connecticut Archives, Series 1, Ecclesiastical Affairs, XVI:278–280, Connecticut State Library.