

Haywood, John ^[1]

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by Jaquelin Drane Nash, 1988

1685–1758

John Haywood, engineer, legislator, and soldier, was born in Christ Church Parish, Barbados, British West Indies. His family had emigrated to that island from the parish of Bolton, Lancashire County, England, in 1662. Haywood went to New York and then to North Carolina, where, about 1741, he settled in the northern section of present [Halifax County](#) ^[2].

Haywood was made a justice of the peace in 1746, and from that year until 1752 he was also one of the county's representatives in the Assembly. An active legislator, he served on committees to examine public claims, to revise the laws of the province, to facilitate navigation in provincial waters, and to form a bill to regulate the practice of the courts of justice. He was the author of the bill "of encouragement of [James Davis](#) ^[3] to set up and carry on the business of a [Printer](#) ^[4]." Davis's press, established in 1749, was the first in the colony.

When war with Spain threatened the safety of the colony, Haywood was made commissioner to erect forts along the coast to protect the ports of entry. Because of the inconveniences caused by the [Granville District](#) ^[5], two provincial treasurers were necessary; Haywood was treasurer for the northern counties. When he relinquished this position, he became commander of the [Edgecombe County](#) ^[6] militia, which then consisted of more than 1,300 officers and men.

Later in life, Haywood and his sons served as assistants to [Francis Corbin](#) ^[7], chief agent of Earl Granville, owner of that part of the province in which Edgecombe lay. Growing dissatisfaction among those who lived in the Granville District resulted in riots and threats of armed resistance. Corbin and his assistants were accused of charging excessive [quitrents](#) ^[8] and the Haywoods of asking exorbitant fees for their services as land surveyors. At the height of the unrest, Haywood was away from home on business, and upon his return was taken suddenly ill and died. The unruly colonists, suspecting this to be a ruse to enable him to escape their fury, went to his grave, dug up his coffin, and found that the death was indeed a fact. This macabre act brought to an end the history of a useful citizen. An active supporter of the [Church of England](#) ^[9], Haywood had been a vestryman and churchwarden of his parish.

During his residence in New York, Haywood married Mary Lovatt. They had four sons and three daughters: [William](#) ^[10] married Charity Hare, Sherwood married Hannah Gray, [Egbert](#) ^[11] married Sarah Ware, and John died unmarried; Mary married the Reverend [Thomas Burges](#) ^[12], Elizabeth married Jesse Hare, and Deborah married John Hardy. All but two left descendants, among whom have been many leaders in the state.

References:

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Origin - location:

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