

Individual Narrative of Mary⁶ Penfold [84] Daughter of Richard Penfold and Mary⁵ Leverich [24] Wife of John Lawrence

Mary Penfold was born circa 1749 at Newtown, Queens Co, New York, Her gravestone says she was in her 80th year when she died in 1829. Mary was the daughter of Richard Penfold and Mary Leverich.^{1,2} Mary, daughter of Richard Penfold, was baptized 15 June 1755 at the Newtown Presbyterian Church. Also baptized the same day were Mary's siblings William Leverich, Elizabeth, Edmund and John.³

Mary Penfold married John Lawrence on 27 Feb 1776 at Newtown, Queens Co, New York.⁴ John Lawrence was born 15 December 1755, based upon his age at the time of death. The same birth date based upon a family bible is cited by John in his 1832 Revolutionary War Pension application.^{5,6} The parents of John Lawrence, husband of Mary Penfold, have not been identified with certainty. Some Family Trees posted at Ancestry.com or FamilySearch.org identify his parents as William Lawrence (1730-1794) and either his first wife Anna Brinckerhoff or his second wife Mary Palmer. Available evidence however does not support this conclusion.^{7,8}

The 1824 will of Thomas Lawrence Jr includes a legacy made to Mary Lawrence the wife of John Lawrence. This indicates that John Lawrence, husband of Mary Penfold, was living in 1824. The will does not specify the relationship between Thomas and John, but Thomas was likely a first cousin of John.⁹

William Lawrence and Anne Brinckerhoff did indeed have a son John Lawrence, but this John Lawrence was born in 1758 and died in 1817. The will of William Lawrence proved in Queens County, New York in 1794 names sons *John*, Richard, *Isaac*, and William. The will of John Lawrence proved in New York County, New York in 1817 names a brother *Isaac*. This suggests that John Lawrence who died in 1817 was the son of William Lawrence, not the John Lawrence, the husband of Mary Penfold, who was alive in 1824.^{10,11}

James Riker, in his *Annals of Newtown*, identifies without citing a source John Lawrence born 5 July 1758 and died 29 August 1817 as the son of William Lawrence and Anna Brinckerhoff.¹² The same identification is made by James L. Howard in his *Seth Harding, Mariner*, an excerpt of which titled "John Lawrence, Captain's Clerk" is posted at the web site <<http://continental.navy.com>>.¹³

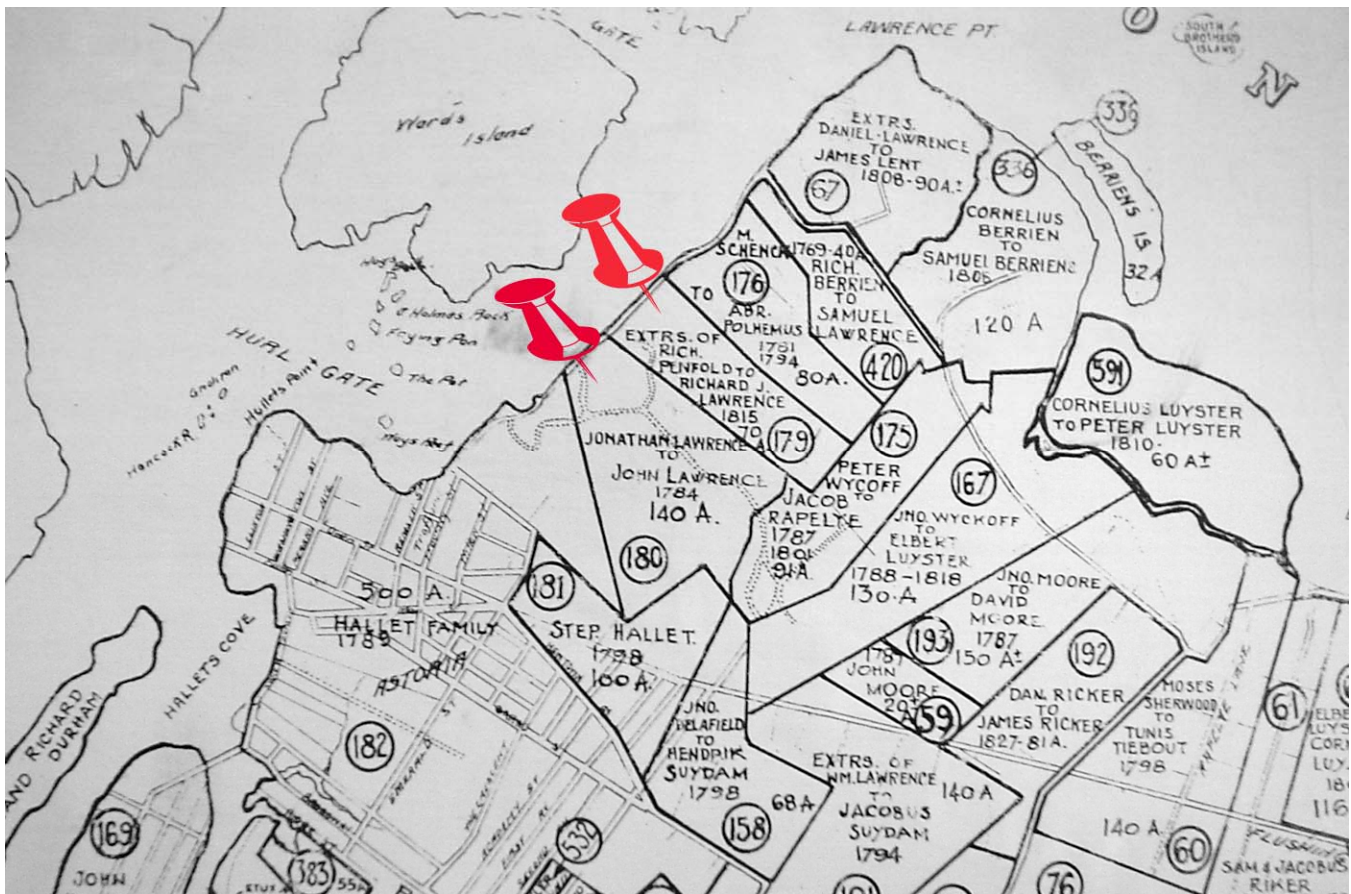
John Lawrence who married Mary Penfold may have been the son of John Lawrence and Lenah Deforest of New York City. The latter John Lawrence was an older brother of the William Lawrence cited above, both being the sons of John Lawrence and Patience Sackett.¹⁴ In his will, originally dated 11 August 1761, amended by codicils dated 21 February 1763 and 3 August 1764, proved in New York County, New York, John Lawrence (son of John and Patience) stipulates:

"... I give and bequeath unto **John Lawrence son of Lenah De forest of this city** the sum of fifteen hundred pounds like money when he shall attain to the age of twenty one years which said legacy last mentioned I desire and direct may be put out at interest as soon as conveniently may be after my decease by my brothers Nathaniel Lawrence, Thomas Lawrence, Jonathan Lawrence, and Daniel Lawrence ... for the use of said John Lawrence and that he be maintained and educated out of the interest thereof until he shall attain the age of twenty one years as aforesaid and that then the principal sum and such part of the interest arising therefrom that shall remain after his maintenance and education shall be paid to him."

A subsequent clause of the will increases the above legacy to £2,000, should John Senior die without any children by his wife Catherine. The younger John Lawrence was born in 1755. His presumed father John Lawrence married Catherine Livingston four years later in 1759. The will of the father John Lawrence does not specify John's relationship with Lenah Deforest, but clearly implies that she was the mother of John Senior's son John Junior, who would have been age 9 at the time the will was originally prepared. No further record of a Lenah Deforest has been located. However, a Leah Deforest married a Johannes DeGraaf 1 August 1775, 20 years later than the birth of John Lawrence.^{15,16,17}

John Lawrence, husband of Mary Penfold, served on the American side during the Revolutionary War, in the Fourth Regiment of the Line New York, commanded by Col. James Holmes.¹⁸ In his 1832 application for a pension, John Lawrence says of his service that he enlisted in August 1775 in the 3rd Company, 4th Regiment New York. "That he was for sometime attached to the said Regiment at Ticonderoga, and was thence detached to different parts of the country to bring up recruits. That he was after promoted to a Captaincy by warrant under the aforesaid Col Holmes and served as such in several skirmishes with the British on Long Island, and continued in the service as Captain until he left the service in 1778."¹⁹

In 1784, John Lawrence purchased from his uncle Jonathan Lawrence a 140 acre farm located at Hellgate in the town of Newtown, Queens Co, New York. This farm was immediately adjacent on the west to the 70 acre farm of his mother-in-law Mary Leverich Penfold, the widow of Richard Penfold. The latter farm was also the residence of John's sister-in-law Elizabeth Penfold and her husband Captain Cornelius Berrien.²⁰



1800 Ownership Map Queens County, New York

In 1785, John Lawrence was appointed an assessor for the Town of Newtown.²¹ The 1786 tax list of Newtown includes John Lawrence.²² A subscribers list dated 1 May 1786 for the Rev. Peter Fish of the Newtown Presbyterian Church included Mary Penfold and John Lawrence.²³

The 1790 U.S. Census of Newtown, Queens County, New York records John Lawrence, listed adjacent to his in-laws William L. Penfold, Mary Penfold, and Cornelius Berrien. The Census tallies record two free white males under the age of 16, 2 free white males over the age of 16, 3 free white females, and 7 slaves. The census tallies account for John, his wife Mary, and his daughter Mary, but the other individuals represented by the tallies have not been identified.²⁴

The 1800 U.S. Census of Newtown, Queens County, New York records John Lawrence, listed near his mother-in-law Mary Penfold and his brother-in-law Cornelius Berrien. The Census tallies record 1 free white male over the age of 45 (John), 1 free white female age 10 to 15 (unidentified), 1 free white female age 16 to 25 (daughter Mary), 1 free white female over the age of 45 (wife Mary), and 9 slaves.²⁵

In 1799, the State of New York enacted legislation providing for the collection of taxes on real estate and personal property. John Lawrence is recorded on the tax assessment list for the years 1799 to 1803 at Newtown. The average assessment for 1799 and 1800 was \$5,100 real estate and \$600 personal estate; for 1801 to 1803, the average assessment was \$3,400 real estate, and no value recorded for personal estate. There is no obvious reason for the change in John's assessment in 1801. Perhaps he had sold off a portion of the farm. The 1800 U.S. Census lists a Jacob Gosline between Mary Penfold widow and John Lawrence, which may or may not be an indicator.²⁶

In 1806 John Lawrence, Esquire was appointed an Assessor for the Town of Newtown.²⁷ On 7 April 1807 John Lawrence was appointed a Supervisor for the Town of Newtown, and served until 3 April 1810.²⁸

The 1810 U.S. Census of Newtown, Queens Co, New York lists John Lawrence adjacent to his brother-in-law Edmund Penfold. The Census tallies record 1 free white male over the age of 45 (John), 1 free white female over the age of 45 (wife Mary), 3 other free persons (unidentified), and two slaves.²⁹

In 1816 John Lawrence was appointed a Highway Commissioner for the Town of Newtown.³⁰

The 1820 U.S. Census of Newtown, Queens Co, New York lists John Lawrence. The Census tallies record 1 free white male over the age of 45 (John), 2 free white females age 10 to 15 (unidentified), 1 free white female over the age of 45 (wife Mary), and 5 slaves.³¹

Mary Penfold Lawrence died on 13 May 1829 at Newtown, Queens Co, New York, in the 80th year of her age according to her gravestone marker. She was buried in the Lawrence Cemetery in the Steinway section of Queens County, New York.³²

The 1830 U.S. Census of Newtown, Queens Co, New York lists John Lawrence. The Census tallies record 1 free white male age 50 to 59 (unidentified), 1 free white male aged 70 to 89 (John), 1 free white female age 15 to 19 and 2 free white females age 20 to 29 (unidentified); also 6 free colored persons.³³

On 21 November 1832 John Lawrence swore an affidavit in support of his application for a revolutionary war pension. On 19 December 1844, Mrs. Mary P. Hartman filed an affidavit stating that she was the sole surviving child of John Lawrence, deceased.³⁴

The 1840 U.S. Census of Newtown, Queens Co, New York lists John Lawrence. The Census tallies record 1 free white male age 80 to 89 (John); also, unidentified, 2 free white males age 20 to 29, 2 free white males age 30 to 39, 2 free white females age 15 to 19; also 1 free white female age 20 to 29 (perhaps granddaughter Cornelia Clara Hartman, age 28) and 1 free white female age 40 to 49 (perhaps daughter Mary widow of Lewis Hartman, age 59).³⁵

John Lawrence died at Newtown 19 December 1844. The *New York Herald* reported: "A correspondent informs us of the death, on the 19 instant at his residence near Astoria, L.I. of Captain John Lawrence, in his 90th year, a soldier of the Revolution. Mr. Lawrence was an actor in several of the most important military events in the war of Freedom. At the termination of that great struggle he retired to his farm, on which he has ever since resided; living to see around him "children of the third and fourth generations". Till lately he preserved his health and faculties, and was a noble and venerable remnant of the men of '76. His death which can hardly be called the result of disease, removed another of those to whose patriotism and valor we owe our present heritage of freedom."³⁶ John Lawrence was buried in the Lawrence Cemetery-Steinway. His grave marker indicates he was an officer of the Revolution, and that he was age 89 years and 4 days at the time he died.³⁷

John Lawrence and Mary Penfold had one child that survived to adulthood. Mary Penfold Lawrence was born at Newtown 20 November 1781; she married Lewis Hartman at Hellgate 15 May 1805. Mary is found in the 1850 and 1860 U.S. Census in Manhattan, New York County living with her daughter and son-in-law Louisa and James Todd. Mary P. Lawrence Hartman died in Manhattan, New York County, on 20 January 1863 and was buried at the Lawrence Cemetery-Steinway.^{38,39,40,41}

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Endnotes

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