

Pension Application for Benjamin Lawrence or Laurence

W.20394 (Widow: Mary Parker) Married in July or August 1782. In another deposition she says they were married April 1780. Benjamin died April 30, 1817.

State of New York

City and County of New York SS.

Mary Parker Lawrence of the City of New York being duly sworn maketh oath and saith that she is now the widow of Benjamin Lawrence formerly of the said City now deceased who was during a part of the Revolutionary War in Captain Hamtramck's Company in the Fifth New York Regiment commanded by Colonel Lewis Dubois in which company he was a sergeant, and afterwards in the Second New York Regiment commanded by Colonel VanCortlandt and this deponent further saith that an exemplification of the Letters Patent granted to the said Benjamin Lawrence for a Lot of land in the Township of Tully in the Military Tract in the State of New York was in the possession of the said Benjamin Lawrence in his life time and at the time of his death and is now in the possession of this deponent.

That he died on or about the thirtieth day of April one thousand eight hundred and seventeen and this deponent further saith that she this Deponent was married to the said Benjamin Lawrence while he was in the American Army and between one and two years before the close of the Revolutionary War at Haverstraw now in Rockland County in the State of New York by the Reverend W. Burns the Pastor of the Presbyterian Church then residing at that place and who was then a very aged man; that no marriage certificate was given by the Reverend Mr. Burns.

That in the month of August now last past this deponent went to Haverstraw to search for the Record of her said marriage and had diligent search made among the records of the said church, but the present minister after examining all the books informed this deponent that the Book of Marriages kept by Mr. Burns could not be found and that the same must have been destroyed.

That this deponent lived with the said Benjamin Lawrence as his wife from the time of their marriage as aforesaid until the time of his death at that time herein before mentioned—

That Elizabeth Teel of Haverstraw aforesaid was this Deponent's Bridesmaid at her said marriage and this deponent hoped to find her to get her evidence of the marriage but on inquiry at Haverstraw in August last this Deponent was informed and she believes that she died and had been buried about a year before at Haverstraw aforesaid.

And this deponent further saith that she doth not know of any living witness to the said marriage ceremony.

That the said Benjamin Lawrence as this deponent is informed and believes was in the Expedition to Quebec and was with General Richard Montgomery when he was killed, and was afterwards at Fort Montgomery taken a prisoner by the British and remained some months as their prisoner in the City of New York.

And further that this deponent has not since the death of her said husband remained [sic, probably meant she remained a widow] – that she had four children by

her said husband, all of them deceased and all of them over sixteen years when her said husband deceased. (Signed with her mark) Mary Parker Laurence

Subscribed & sworn to before me this second day of April 1839. Thos G. Talmage. Alderman of the Ward and ex officer Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of and for the City & County of New York.

Letter in folder dated December 27, 1937, written in response to an inquiry.

Benjamin Lawrence

W.20394

The data given herein are shown in the papers on file in pension claim, W.20394, based upon service of Benjamin Lawrence in the Revolutionary War.

The date and place of birth and names of the parents of Benjamin Lawrence are not shown, nor his residence at the time he entered service in the Revolutionary War given.

Benjamin Lawrence served first on the Expedition to Quebec and was with General Richard Montgomery when he was killed; he enlisted March 22, 1777, served as sergeant in Captain Hamtramck's company, Colonel Lewis Dubois' 5th New York regiment, was a Fort Montgomery, was taken prisoner and held some time in New York City, and served subsequently in Colonel VanCortlandt's 2nd New York regiment, from which he was discharged at the close of the war.

He lived from about the year 1792, in New York City, and died there April 30, 1817. He was by trade a carpenter.

Benjamin Lawrence married, while in service, in Haverstraw, New York, Mary, who was born in April 1760 or 1761, and was living in Haverstraw with her parents, their names not stated. The soldier and said Mary rode on horseback, in company with several couples, to the house of the Presbyterian Minister, after their marriage returned to the home of Mary's parents where her mother had prepared a supper, and there they danced afterwards "as was the custom on such occasions". There are various statements in regards to the date of their marriage; it was probably between 1780 and August 1782. A part of the evidence submitted as proof of their marriage was the inscription on the tomb stone of their eldest son, John Lawrence, in the Dutch Reformed Cemetery at Houston and Fortsyth Street, New York City, (in 1842, shown as follows: "In Memory of John Lawrence, who departed this life, October 30, 1830, aged 47 years, 5 months, and 5 days".

Mary Parker Lawrence, the soldier's widow, was allowed pension on her application executed April 4, 1839, at which time she resided in New York City, New York. It is not shown that Parker was her maiden name. Her name was borne on the pension roll as Mary Parker Laurence.

Benjamin Lawrence and his wife, Mary, had four children, the two eldest were Lawrence and Benjamin; the names of the other children are not shown. It was stated that said children were all over sixteen years of age when their father died, and that they were all deceased in 1839.

In 1839, Deborah VanWart, Sister if Mary Parker Lawrence, lived in New York City, with her husband, William VanWart; she was aged about seventy-five years, her husband, aged about seventy-eight years. Jacob VanWart, their eldest child, was born October 9, 1783. Deborah and her sister, Mary, lived in the same house in Haverstraw, New York, at the time said Jacob was born. Deborah Van Wart stated that Elizabeth Teel of Haverstraw was Mary's attendant when she married to the soldier. In October 1841, said Deborah was deceased.

In February 1841, Mrs. Nancy Lawrence, the widow of the soldier's son, John Lawrence, was a resident of New York City, New York, aged fifty-one years and upwards. She stated that she and said John Lawrence were married in September 1808. This affidavit was made in the presence of Miln Parker, Special Justice, New York City.

It is shown that on account of service in the Revolutionary War, Benjamin Lawrence was allowed 600 acres of bounty land by the State of New York, described as Lot #12, in the Township of Tully (Montgomery County).