Widows at War: Gender and Property in Revolutionary Chester County, Pennsylvania

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Widows at War: Gender and Property in Revolutionary Chester County, Pennsylvania

An Honors Thesis
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Department of History in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
Bachelor of Arts

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Introduction

On the evening of September 10, 1777, a blacksmith, about forty-five years of age left his farm, wife and children to meet the British Army and offer them knowledge of his home county, Chester County, Pennsylvania. A few miles away, a forty-seven-year-old doctor was on a similar, yet very different, mission offering his knowledge of the county to General George Washington and the Continental forces. He too left behind a wife, children and a farm. These men, Curtis Lewis and Samuel Kennedy, led reconnoitering missions in search of the “enemy” in the hours before the Battle of Brandywine. As daylight approached, they returned with their reports, but what they saw or discovered is not recorded. Later that day, the British and American troops engaged at Brandywine, the first in a series of battles that led to the British occupation of Philadelphia. In the days following the battle, both men lead missions to gather knowledge of the whereabouts of the other troops, and it would not be incomprehensible to think that they may have unknowingly crossed paths in their service, but their lives were on very different trajectories. One loyalist, and one patriot, they chose to show their allegiances by offering their services when the war came to their home county. In the early hours of that September day, one cannot help but wonder if the larger implications of their actions were at the forefront of their thoughts. Lewis and Kennedy could not have possibly imagined what the next year would bring as their lives became more deeply entangled in the war. Their stories, while intriguing, are not the topic of this narrative, but rather the catalyst for a much larger and more complex set of events that began with their deaths. The wives and children they left behind were flung into an ever-changing political and social world, and it was up to them to make the most of their often desperate situations to ensure their own survival. Their widows, Hannah Lewis and
Sarah Kennedy, may have found themselves on different political sides, but both suffered the consequences of the choices made by their deceased husbands.

While the subjects of this study come from differing political backgrounds, the unifying factor in their seemingly disparate cases is their gender and relationships to property. For females living in the eighteenth century, the patriarchal social and political structures offered limited realms in which they could freely operate. English common law tradition meant that married women, *femae coverts*, had a limited set of options for participation outside the home. They could not make contracts or legally act in their own interests, and their legal identities became one with their husbands' upon marriage.¹ For many women, coverture was only a temporary legal status, one they held until the death of their spouse. A woman retained her *feme covert* status unless she was widowed, then she again became a *feme sole* and faced a new "life" after a spouse's death.² Widows became the heads of their own households and were permitted to act, without social censure, in ways that had been legally off limits to them under coverture.³

In widowhood, a woman's relationship to her family's property changed, although it was still somewhat dependent upon her deceased husband's decisions, especially if he left a will. The stipulations of her inheritance were contingent on the husband, and he could choose to leave his wife rights to his property for the duration of her life with varying guidelines about the future inheritance of their children.⁴ If a husband died "intestate," inheritance law ensured a woman at

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² Under coverture, a married woman's legal identity disappeared, and she became inseparably linked with her husband. Single women, as *femae soles*, fared better under the system and had more freedom to operate within the public sphere. Ibid.
⁴ Wilson, 138. If a woman brought property into a marriage that too became her husband's unless a special agreement had been made in a prenuptial contract that ensured her the rights and usage of the land. Ibid, 31, 34-47. There was also the chance of a separate estate which meant that a married woman controlled property separately from her husband. Marylynn Salmon, *Women and the Law of Property in Early America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 81-119.
least a third of the deceased's property, and these dower rights were normally upheld as local
governments did not wish women to become a drain on their economies.¹ Many husbands left
their wives more than a third of their property, and wills were often written in ways that enabled
women to maintain a great amount of control over their economic status and their children.²
Wills could also be restricting, and sometimes men inserted clauses that reduced a woman's right
to land if she remarried as a form of protection against outsiders who could squander the
inheritance of the original couple's offspring.³ Regardless, the death of a spouse thrust women
out of the confines of coverture and into, in the case of places such as Chester County, the rural
economic world.⁴

The relationship between the Revolutionary conflict and widowhood presents an
opportunity to think about women and their experiences with property in a highly politicized and
volatile world. Lewis and Kennedy are important examples of rural widowhood, property
compensation and quests for dower rights in the aftermath of the American Revolution. Much of
the existing literature on gender, politics and property has dealt with individuals residing in cities
or members of the upper class and fails to acknowledge the full breadth of the eighteenth century
gender experience, and their cases, while not entirely correcting the imbalance, offer a starting
point for future inquiry.⁵

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¹ Salmon, 16; Waciega, 43. This was not always the case, however, as Pennsylvania put the interest of
creditors before those of the widow. Sometimes dower was greatly diminished if large debts had to be paid.
Wilson, 101-102.

² For example, a man could include a stipulation which gave his wife the right to decide a child's
inheritance based on his or her behavior. Wilson, 133-135.

³ Ibid, 140-142.

⁴ Ibid, 144-145.

⁵ Women fall into the category of what has been called the inarticulate. Prime examples of texts which
have attempted to refocus studies of the American Revolution on those normally excluded include: Gary B. Nash,
_The Unknown American Revolution: The Unruly Birth of Democracy and the Struggle to Create America_ (New
York: Penguin Group, 2005). For an earlier example see also, Alfred F. Young, “George Robert Twelves
Hewes (1742-1840): A Boston Shoemaker and the Memory of the American Revolution,” _The William and Quarterly_ 38,
Chester County is an ideal location to address rural studies, especially during the American Revolution, because there is a wealth of literature on its rural labor and agricultural history, and because the county played a key role in the Revolutionary conflict. The county was predominately a rural place in the eighteenth century, and with the exception of the town of Chester, a port on the Delaware River and then the county seat, there were no other large commercial centers in the county. Philadelphia was a day's journey from most locations in Chester, and as a result, it "drew its trade, provided professional services, and served as [its] religious, political, social and cultural center."\(^\text{10}\) Chester's rural character meant that early settlers were able to purchase their own land in large enough quantities to establish farming operations to achieve personal subsistence and enter into the market economy.\(^\text{11}\) The county's settlement patterns moved from east to west, but by 1764 "almost all of the land in the entire county had been taken up."\(^\text{12}\) Thereafter, the landless population began to increase. At the eve of the American Revolution, Chester had fifty-four townships and a population of around 30,000.\(^\text{13}\) The county continued to be a rural place into the 1790's, and as Duane Ball has

\(^{10}\) Rosemary S. Warden, "Chester County," in Beyond Philadelphia: The American Revolution in the Pennsylvania Hinterland, ed. John B. Frantz and William Pencak (University Park Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 2. For further discussion of township and county organization, see, James T. Lemon, The Best Poor Man's Country: Early Southeastern Pennsylvania (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972), 99-149. The eastern most boarder of Chester County was only about fourteen miles away from what constituted Philadelphia in the eighteenth century world. Duane E. Ball, "The Process of Settlement in 18th Century Chester County, Pennsylvania: A Social and Economic History" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1973), 23. As Ball further noted, "well over half" of the County was "within a day's journey (thirty miles) to and from Philadelphia by horseback. The remainder of the County [was] within a similar distance from the region's other eighteenth century towns, Chester, Wilmington, Lancaster and Reading." Ibid, 26.


\(^{12}\) Ibid, 26. The county's first inhabitants settled in present day Delaware County and throughout the early decades of the eighteenth century migrated westward. Most early settlers could afford to purchase their own land. Lucy Simler, "Tenancy in Colonial Pennsylvania: The Case of Chester County," The William and Mary Quarterly 43, no. 4 (October 1986): 549.

\(^{13}\) Warden, 1.
argued, its “rural character [... certainly set] it apart from the urban areas of the region.” With this in mind, the study of widowhood can be ideally placed within its borders, especially since it represents the hinterland of Philadelphia, arguably the most important urban and commercial center of the eighteenth-century Atlantic world.

Chester was one of the three original counties, along with Bucks and Philadelphia, established in 1682 by William Penn. By 1789, the county split creating Delaware County, which retained Chester as its county seat, and thus created the need for a new center of government at West Chester in Chester County. The power of local government in Chester County lay at both the county and township levels. Pennsylvania’s counties continued to control townships, report to the colonial government, and serve as repositories for deeds, wills and other legal documents, but geographically small township jurisdictions provided all eligible men the opportunity to hold local positions at least once in their lives. The township, likewise, “fostered an environment conducive to economic growth and community solidarity.”

Another crucial part of Chester County’s character was its rural economy. Lucy Simler and Paul G. E. Clemens wrote extensively on the subject and found that its economy had three distinct features, the first being the “prominence of market agriculture in the lives of most [of the

12 Ball, 33.
15 Ibid. In trying to understand the structure of Pennsylvania, James T. Lemon has cited the county as the most important sub-level of government while Lucy Simler saw the township itself as an important threshold of local activity. See Lemon, The Best Poor Man’s Country and Lucy Simler, “The Township: The Community of the Rural Pennsylvanian,” The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography 106, no. 1 (January 1982): 41-68. Simler argued that the township became an essential part of local government in the colonial era because William Penn feared that unordered settlement patterns would make local government too difficult without a smaller subdivision within the county. In 1789, when Delaware County split from Chester County the new county retained the original county seat, and was named for its proximity to the Delaware River.
16 Lemon, 54-55, 58-66, 98. Colonial government in Pennsylvania reflected eighteenth century English local government, which was administered through the county court system; however, officials such as “constables, overseers of the poor and supervisors of highways” operated at the township level. Simler, “The Township: The Community of the Rural Pennsylvanian,” 53.
Chester's main export crops included wheat, corn and flaxseed, but regional markets for surplus goods such as, rye, barley, oats, hay, wool, meat and animal hides also developed. As historian James T. Lemon wrote, Pennsylvania was involved in "two economic systems, the subsistence economy and the Atlantic trading empire." Rural Pennsylvania provided goods to Philadelphia, Baltimore and London as well as providing "the West Indies, New England, southern Europe, [and] Ireland [... with] flour, bread and wheat." Women were also able to contribute to their family's income along with the local market economy by making and selling cheese, butter or spinning wool and flax. The second feature was the "significance of rural industry." Individuals relied not only on farming but on artisan tasks to supplement their income. The final and perhaps most significant characteristic of the county's rural economy were the relationships between the landed and landless.

Contrary to the idyllic imagery of yeoman farmers owning and working their own land, Chester County had a high percentage of landless workers, especially in the latter years of the eighteenth-century. In the first decades of settlement, Chester consisted of cheap and abundant

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18 Paul G. E. Clemens and Lucy Simler, "Rural Labor and the Farm Household in Chester County Pennsylvania 1750-1820" in Work and Labor in Early America, ed. Stephen Innes (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 110. Chester County farmers not only supplied their farm goods to Philadelphia for purchase but also played a role in the larger Atlantic economy. Wheat and grain were shipped to the West Indies and other grain goods were used to outfit ships as provisions for sailors. Lemon, 27-29.

19 Clemens and Simler, "Rural Labor and the Farm Household in Chester County Pennsylvania 1750-1820," 110. As Rosemary Warden wrote, "by the mid-1770s [...] Chester County farmers were exporting one-third to one-half of their wheat crop through Philadelphia." Warden, 1. Pennsylvania, according to Lemon, "was not locked into a bilateral and dependent pattern to the degree the 'staple' producing southern colonies were. Autonomous connections with other mainland colonies, the West Indies and southern Europe provided income that helped to compensate for the persistent adverse balance of trade with England." Lemon, 27.

20 Lemon, 27.

21 Ibid, 29.

22 Another positive from the county's proximity to the larger market economy of Philadelphia was the chance to gradually accumulate land, acquire consumer goods and save enough money to "purchase bonds at interest." Clemens and Simler, "Rural Labor and the Farm Household in Chester County Pennsylvania 1750-1820," 110-111. For a fuller discussion of women's labor in the rural market economy, see, Joan M. Jensen, Loosening the Bonds: Mid-Atlantic Farm Women, 1750-1850 (New Haven, Connecticut, 1986).

23 Ibid, 111.

24 Ibid, 112.

land, and as a result, many of the land holders were non-residents. By 1765, about forty-seven percent of the county’s population was estimated to be “landless,” and as such, a rural labor structure developed in which landholders, tenant farmers, cottagers and inmates worked together in response to the seasonal agricultural needs of an economy based mostly on wheat. Land, which “was too valuable to leave idle” was typically rented to a tenant, with the average size of a rented farm being about 125 acres. In a tenancy agreement, the landless tenant rented a tract of land for a set amount of time for which a yearly rent was paid. Landholders reaped the benefits from multiple tracts without having to work the land themselves or hire large numbers of extra farmhands. They were ensured that their property would be improved rather than lay fallow, where it served no economic or agricultural use. Tenants typically had full access to the land for a designated term, and depending on the parameters of the agreement, could plant crops for their own personal subsistence or to sell. For the landless class, tenancy offered a potential avenue for upward mobility, along with the chance to work land without relocating to the frontier, and therefore, remaining close to Philadelphia’s market economy. Tenancy’s prominence began to wane in the latter half of the eighteenth-century, but the exact reason for the decline is unknown.

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29 Ibid, 548, 557. As James T. Lemon wrote, “rural Pennsylvanians were connected by a chain of credit through Philadelphia and Baltimore and through merchants, millers, and shopkeepers in smaller places with London merchants.” Lemon, 27. For a discussion of tenancy in other parts of the colonial world, see, Steven Sarson, “Landlessness and Tenancy in Early National Prince George’s County, Maryland,” The William and Mary Quarterly 57, no. 3 (July 2000): 569-598.
Lucy Simler posits that the decline could be attributed to the loss of the opportunity for upward mobility for the landless through tenancy.\(^{30}\)

The landless worker could also become an “inmate” or “cottager.”\(^{31}\) These individuals often had greater freedom to engage in their own labor when they were not needed during the height of the agricultural season.\(^{32}\) A cottage contract typically involved smaller tracts of land with limited rights to resources on the property, and rent was paid through rural labor.\(^{33}\) Cottagers could be married men, widows, or widowers, or even skilled artisans, but each depended on landholders for “living space.”\(^{34}\) Landholders “offered [these laborers] rooms or a cottage and a garden in return for assurance” that an individual would provide rural labor when needed.\(^{35}\) In the 1780s, it was estimated that “perhaps one-third of the county households had such a labor force at their command.”\(^{36}\)

In Chester County “[t]he family farm was both a home and a business” where men and women were both equally involved in some aspect of rural labor.\(^{37}\) Most women were “working women” of the non-leisured class who depended on their own labor “for survival” and “upward mobility,” and women’s labor was used in all spheres, especially during peak harvest times.\(^{38}\)

\(^{30}\) Simler, “Tenancy in Colonial Pennsylvania,” 551-2. Prior to the decline, tenancy and landlessness were common as tenant farmers, with the opportunity to work “good” farm land, could save money for their own economic advancement. Lemon, 95.

\(^{31}\) Cottagers were a contracted labor force and were recorded as inmates on tax lists, but an inmate could also be an individual living as a dependent in another individual’s home.

\(^{32}\) Simler and Clemens, “The ‘Best Poor Man’s Country,’” 239-240.

\(^{33}\) Cottagers were usually also able to pay a small wage or regular rent for the right to use a “garden plot, firewood, and perhaps the apples from several trees and the right to run a pig.” Likewise, they could rent access to pastures for cows, wagons to haul firewood or plow small plots for crops. Ibid, 240.

\(^{34}\) Ibid, 239.

\(^{35}\) Ibid, 239-240.

\(^{36}\) Ibid, 241.

\(^{37}\) Waciega, 47.

\(^{38}\) Lucy Simler, “‘She Came to Work’ The Female Labor Force in Chester County, 1750-1820,” ed. Susan E. Klepp, Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal 5, no. 2 (Fall 2007): 429. For example, haying could become a shared task as men “handled the sickles” and women followed behind raking and turning the grass. In 1783, 163 women were listed as landholders, the majority of which were farmers; however, women also held occupations as tavern keepers, storekeepers, tailors or even as owners of mills and tanyards. Women were also more likely to own slaves, as they relied more on the labor of others to successfully run their land. Simler and Clemens.
When widowed, a woman entered the void left by her husband, but this was not likely foreign territory, as married couples shared in the tasks of farm work. As such, women were prepared to enter the economic sphere of the rural world.

Rural widowhood left women in charge of families and sometimes significant tracts of land that required labor and support networks for economic survival. A variety of factors influenced how a widow dealt with family property, such as her age or the ages of her children. If willed a large tract of land by her deceased husband, a widow typically needed to hire laborers to assist in the running of the property if she wanted to be a “viable farmer.” This was not an issue of gender inability, as males also greatly relied upon the rural labor force; farming was no small task. If a widow was unable to afford to pay laborers, then she would be “advised to lease her lands to a tenant and live as an inmate.” Doing so assured a widow that her family’s land would be improved and that she would have access to an income from the property.

Survival in rural Pennsylvania, for widows especially and for the community at large, depended on the abundance of a landless labor class. As Lisa Wilson Waciega argued, perhaps it was a familiarity with this structure that allowed many women to step seamlessly into the rural world. As such, Chester County created an environment in which widowhood was not necessarily a limiting experience but could offer the chance for self-improvement.

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“The ‘Best Poor Man’s Country,’” 241. Women who owned land were usually widows or spinsters. The ratio of female to male landholders grew in 1780, most likely a result of the Revolutionary War in which many women were widowed. Ball, 84.

Waciega, 51

As Lisa Wilson Waciega found, widowed women of property “carried on complex business matters with ease often with considerable success, both before their husbands died and afterward.” Waciega, 51


Ibid. See also, Jensen, Loosening the Bonds: Mid-Atlantic Farm Women 1750-1850.

Ibid.


Waciega, 42.

Simler, “‘She Came to Work,’” 451.
The landless widow had fewer options than her landed counterpart, but the world of rural labor was not totally inaccessible to her. She could join its ranks and become a dependent in another individual’s household, living with her own children or a family that required her labor. A woman could also become a cottager or earn money through piecemeal tasks such as taking in sewing. Widows turned to rural labor as either workers or landholders for their economic survival, and it was with these labor and agricultural structures and traditions that the inhabitants of Chester County entered the Revolutionary Era.

Chester County “was a picture of rural tranquility, with no foreshadowing of the turmoil to come.” With the exception of the town of Chester itself, no protest movements occurred until the 1770s. It was not until Boston’s port was closed in June of 1774 that the county organized its first Revolutionary committee, but Chester Countians were somewhat reluctant to support the final decision for Independence. Along with the Declaration, 1776 also brought a new and radical State Constitution. The county government began to “disintegrate,” toward the end of that year, and by the spring of 1777, Pennsylvania’s Supreme Executive Council instituted a new county level lieutenant role to organize and run the militia, thereby truly mobilizing the county militarily and giving the Revolution in Pennsylvania, as Francis Fox wrote, its “legs.”

Factions between local Tories and Whigs grew and when the British forces marched into the county in the fall of 1777, the lives of its residents were forever changed.

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47 In account books, female laborers were recorded as completing tasks such as spinning, making garments, “haying” and washing, sometimes on a short term basis or in stretches of longer employment. The work patterns described in account books applied to single women, married women or widowed women as female rural laborers came from all age groups and marital statuses. Simler, “She Came to Work,” 436, 446.

48 Ibid.

49 Warden, 1, 5.

50 Ibid, 5.

51 Ibid, 13; Francis S. Fox, “Pennsylvania’s Revolutionary Militia Law: The Statute that Transformed the State,” Pennsylvania History 80, no. 2 (Spring 2013), 204.
When the British landed at the head of the Elk River in Maryland in late August of 1777, they soon made their way to Chester County en route to capturing the rebel capital of Philadelphia. On September 11th, the British and American forces met at the Battle of Brandywine, which resulted in a British victory. In the days that followed, both the British and American troops remained in the county, meeting again in a surprise attack at Paoli, Pennsylvania, on the evening of September 20th, resulting in another American loss. Shortly after, General William Howe and the British troops entered Philadelphia, beginning an occupation that lasted until June of 1778. During the occupation, the Continental Congress and Pennsylvania's Supreme Executive Council fled Philadelphia for York and Lancaster, Pennsylvania respectively. Washington made another stand against the British in October at Germantown, which likewise proved to be unsuccessful. With the end of the fighting season approaching, Washington and his troops settled into their winter encampment at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania on December 19, 1777. The next year, the "seat of war" was removed from the state and Chester County, but the aftermath of the Philadelphia Campaign (1777-1778) left visible reminders of the actions of the previous year and a path of devastation to personal property by both sides.

Brandywine was the turning point battle in the lives of Hannah Lewis and Sarah Kennedy. With this conflict, Lewis began her life as a single mother, a status made official in October of 1779. For Kennedy, the campaign brought the war closer to her family's property and began her husband's involvement with the Continental Hospital being constructed on their

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property at Yellow Springs, Pennsylvania. Like most colonists, Lewis and Kennedy could never have imagined the changes about to occur in their lives when the Continental Congress declared independence from Great Britain, but they quickly came to realize that their worlds would never be the same.
MAP OF CHESTER COUNTY
PENNSYLVANIA
AS CONSTITUTED ABOUT 1780

Chester County ca. 1780. East Caln Township and Yellow Springs located in Pikeland Township as indicated above

Source: usgwarchives.net
In May of 1786, Hannah Lewis, a resident of Chester County, Pennsylvania, arrived in Halifax, Nova Scotia, to present her claim before British Commissioners to obtain compensation for land confiscated by the state of Pennsylvania eight years earlier as a result of her deceased husband's Revolutionary political affiliation. Following the conflict, the British government sent representatives to America and Canada to collect claims of losses sustained by those who had remained loyal to the crown. Compensation could be obtained for a variety of reasons including offering services to Great Britain, bearing arms against the Americans and deserting the American forces to support the British cause. Lewis arrived prepared to defend her husband's loyalty to the British Empire and obtain compensation necessary for her survival.

Lewis, her husband Curtis, and their children were Quakers living in East Cain Township when the British arrived in Chester County in September of 1777. She recalled that her husband "immediately joined [the British] where from his knowledge of the Country he rendered them essential services by acting as a Guide at the Battle of Brandywine [...and] through the country to the City of Philadelphia." He remained with the British throughout the city's occupation, and when they evacuated Pennsylvania in June of 1778, he, like many loyalists, fled with them to New York. Lewis joined the Guides and Pioneers, a unit within the British army, and held a...
lieutenant position within the corps until his death on Long Island sometime in October of 1779. Ten weeks before his death, Hannah and their children arrived in New York, having recently experienced the confiscation of the family property. At the end of the war, Lewis found herself on the other side of victory, faced with widowhood in a very different world from that in which she had been born, and for the duration of her life, she was plagued by the repercussions of a single political choice made by her husband the night before the Battle of Brandywine.

Hannah Lewis, formerly Miller, was born on April 7, 1734 in East Caln Township in Chester County, Pennsylvania. She was one of seventeen children born to Robert Miller (1703-1761) and Ruth Haines Miller (1709-1797). Her father owned two tracts of land in East Caln, one of which was located along Caln Road, and at the time of his death in 1761, they were valued at £972. Miller, like many in Chester County, engaged in some aspect of rural labor and appeared on county tax lists as a landholder as early as 1725. The Miller family, as Quakers, were members of the Bradford Monthly Meeting, and Robert and Ruth Miller were active within

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59 John M. Coleman, “Joseph Galloway and the British Occupation of Philadelphia.” Pennsylvania History 30, no. 3 (July 1963): 287; Second Report of the Bureau of Archives for the Province of Ontario, 564. Curtis Lewis’s death date has been cited as early as October of 1779 and as late as 1781. There are many discrepancies in the dates given by family members specifically between Lewis and her son Reuben. Lewis is listed as a Lieutenant and member of the Guides and Pioneers in 1781 in Gaine’s Universal Register: Or, American and British Kalendar [sic] For the Year 1781, but it is unknown how current the muster lists were that were printed. For the purposes of this paper, the earliest death date, October of 1779, will be used. The Corps of Guides and Pioneers was a unit within the British Army that originally operated in the New York area, but as their ranks expanded, they engaged in other parts of the colonies. Colonel Beverly Robinson commanded the corps. Robinson, the son of John Robinson, was originally from Virginia but moved to New York where he married into the wealthy Philipse family, living on a significant tract of land along the Hudson River. Walter T. Dornfseft, Military Loyalists of the American Revolution: Officers and Regiments, 1775-1783 (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2011), 378-379. See also, Maya Jasanoff, Liberty’s Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World (New York: Vintage Books, 2011), xi.

60 Bradford Monthly Meeting Minutes, 7th of 2nd Month 1734, MR-Ph34, Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College (hereafter, FHL). Quaker Meeting Minutes were usually dated with a reference to the day and month, and throughout much of the eighteenth century, the first month was March; however, many began to equate January with the first month sometime before 1760.

61 Orphans’ Court, Docket 6, 1761, Robert Miller of East Caln Township; Will of Ruth Miller, Filed 1797, no. 4582, Chester County Archives, West Chester, PA (hereafter, CCA).


63 Chester County Tax Index: 1715-1740, CCA.
the women's and men's meetings. The details of Hannah Miller's early life are difficult to reconstruct because of the relative obscurity that she, like most women in the eighteenth-century, experienced. She likely worked on her family's land involved in some aspect of rural labor; however, she may have also worked outside of the home, as it was not uncommon for young single women to work for other families earning money for themselves or the creation of a dowry. Unfortunately, her status as a dependent combined with her gender almost ensured her invisibility, and it was not until 1760 that she appeared in minutes of the Bradford Monthly Meeting where her intention to marry Curtis Lewis was recorded.

Curtis Lewis was the son of Phineas and Hannah Pennell Lewis and was born around 1732 in East Caln. His family also held membership in the Bradford Monthly Meeting. When he was about ten, Lewis's mother died, and his father remarried sometime after 1744 and subsequently moved the family to the Concord Monthly Meeting. Lewis stayed behind, continuing his membership at Bradford until 1757, when he transferred to be with his father at

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64 Lucy Simler, ""She Came to Work,"" 441. For a further discussion of the relationships between women and labor, see, Jensen, Loosening the Bonds: Mid-Atlantic Farm Women 1750-1850, and Waciega, 40-64.
65 Bradford Monthly Meeting Minutes, 14th of 11th Month 1760, MR-Ph34, FHL.
66 When Phineas Lewis died in October of 1772, he provided for each of his children but left Curtis Lewis only 20 shillings perhaps suggesting that he acquired his share of land upon his marriage. Will of Phineas Lewis, Filed 1772, no. 2723, CCA. The Miller and Lewis families lived in East Caln, and their farms were separated by only two tracts of land, suggesting that Hannah Miller and Curtis Lewis were acquainted from a young age. Likewise, their involvement in the Quaker meeting provided another arena in which they may have first formed a relationship. "Draught of Cain Road," Taylor Papers, 9:1814, HSP. The lands of the Miller and Lewis families were surrounded by the Roman, Parke and Mendenhall families. This area of the township had a level of interconnectedness. Phineas Lewis's daughter, Hannah, married one of the Pim boys in 1752. Likewise, Robert Miller's son, James, married Hannah Pim, making the two families related through multiple marriages. This was not uncommon as Quaker communities often practiced "intricate network[s] of marriages." Warden, 5. Orphans' Court, Docket 6, 1761, Robert Miller of East Caln Township, CCA.
about the age of twenty-five. Why he initially stayed behind is uncertain, but the gap could be an indication of an apprenticeship in preparation for his future career as a blacksmith. In 1760, Lewis petitioned to return to the Bradford Meeting and shortly after married Hannah Miller in December of 1760.

After their marriage, the couple settled in East Caln on a tract of land given to them by Phineas Lewis. Curtis bought two other tracts in West Bradford, a township which bordered East Caln, and county tax lists from the 1770s outline the property he owned. In 1770, his taxable wealth included 140 acres, buildings, three horses, four cattle, seven sheep and one servant. From 1770 to 1775, his holdings fluctuated between 100 and 140 acres. Portions of

68 Bradford Monthly Meeting Minutes, 27th of 6th Month 1744, and 28th of 7th Month 1757, MR-Ph34, FHL: Will of Phineas Lewis, Filed 1772, no. 2723, CCA.
70 Bradford Monthly Meeting Minutes, 4th of 11th Month 1760, and 17th of 12th Month 1760, MR-Ph34, FHL.
71 Phineas Lewis gave the couple about forty acres, and Curtis Lewis bought surrounding lands from his brothers, John and Lewis Lewis. It was on this property that the couple set up their home and blacksmith business. “Memorial of Hannah Lewis,” May 5, 1786, A.O. 12/40, 41, DLAR.
72 Second Report of the Bureau of Archives for the Province of Ontario, 612. West Bradford borders the southern boundary of East Caln, but the proximity of these two holdings is unknown. When Reuben Lewis petitioned the Board of Property to regain rights to his father’s land, records indicated that the forty acres he wished to obtain had a border on the West Bradford line. Likewise, when Andrew Boyd purchased two of the tracts in 1783 for the amount of £22,000, the deed mentioned that the land was located along the township boundaries. Pennsylvania Archives, Third Series, 1:519; Deed Poll, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to Andrew Boyd, November 5, 1783, Deed Book X, 22:386-387, CCA, and “Certificate of Sale of Curtis Lewis’s Estate to Col. Andrew Boyd,” November 5, 1783, Pennsylvania’s Division of Archives and Manuscripts, Records of Pennsylvania’s Revolutionary Governments, 1775-1790, [Film 24], Reel 42, DLAR. As Dennis P. Ryan wrote, confiscated loyalist lands in New Jersey were purchased mostly by the “affluent and respected leaders of the new military and civil establishment, who were able to pay in cash” and therefore “purchase the most valuable land.” Ryan, “Land Holding, Opportunity, and Mobility in Revolutionary New Jersey,” William and Mary Quarterly 36, no. 4 (October 1979): 580. While this was the trend in New Jersey, a similar pattern may have occurred in Pennsylvania as those who purchased Lewis’s land were in the military—Andrew Boyd, a former county sub-lieutenant and Colonel Richard Humpton. Thomas J. McGuire, “A Documentary History of The Center House, or Martin’s Tavern 1764-1800,” July, 2005, martinstavern.org (accessed May 3, 2012), 16, 23.
73 1770 Provincial Tax List, East Caln Township, Chester County, PA, Book P-13B, 316, CCA. Perhaps this servant was John White, a twenty-one year old who ran away from Lewis on May 12, 1770. A notice in The Pennsylvania Gazette offered a reward for both White and a brown mare he stole when he left. The Pennsylvania Gazette, May 17, 1770, Library Company of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA (hereafter LCP). The property owned by Lewis can be compared to county averages. Averages for 1772 were 9.4 cattle, 3.9 horses, 7.3 swine and 14.9
his land were rented, likely to a tenant, as was the case in 1771 when twenty acres were listed as
such on tax assessments.\textsuperscript{75} In the petition Hannah Lewis presented in Halifax, she reported that
one tract of the family land, consisting of 209 acres and a "dwelling house," was rented, and that
payments were made in grain.\textsuperscript{76} Overall, the Lewis family did not appear to be at the bottom of
the socioeconomic hierarchy, as they employed a servant, rented land and had an apprentice.\textsuperscript{77}
The trajectory of their life suggests a desire for improvement, not only for their property, but also
for their family and future heirs.\textsuperscript{78}

The couple continued as members of the Bradford Meeting following their marriage, and
their union produced five children: Reuben, Prudence, Edith, Keziah and Hannah Jr.\textsuperscript{79} There is
little record of their early married life within meeting minutes except for an incident in 1767
when the Caln Preparative Meeting "brought a complaint against Curtis Lewis for Beatin[g] and

\begin{footnotes}

\footnotetext[75]{Ibid; 1771 Provincial Tax List, East Caln Township, Chester County, PA, Book P-14, 333; 1772
Provincial Tax List, East Caln Township, Chester County, PA, Book P-15, 167; 1773 Provincial Tax List, East Caln
Township, Chester County, PA, Book P-16, 1; 1774 Provincial Tax List, East Caln Township, Chester County, PA.
Book P-17, 174, and 1775 Provincial Tax List, East Caln Township, Chester County, PA, Book P-18, 148, CCA.
Interestingly, the amount of land for which Lewis was taxed fluctuated yearly, perhaps a sign of unrecorded rents,
land sales or inaccurate records by the appraiser.}

\footnotetext[76]{1771 Provincial Tax List, Book P-14, 333; 1772 Provincial Tax List, Book P-15, 167, CCA. See, Simler,
"Tenancy in Colonial Pennsylvania: The Case of Chester County," 542-569. The landed class could choose to rent
to a tenant or a cottager and benefit from their labor for the improvement of their land. See also, Lucy Simler, "The
Landless Worker: An Index of Economic and Social Change in Chester County, Pennsylvania, 1750-1820," The
Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography 114, no. 2 (April 1990), 172-175; Simler and Clemens, ""The
Best Poor Man’s Country,”" 234-261, and Clemens and Simler, "Rural Labor and the Farm Household in Chester
County Pennsylvania 1750-1820,"106-143.}

\footnotetext[77]{Second Report of the Bureau of Archives for the Province of Ontario, 612.}

\footnotetext[78]{Pennsylvania Archives, Sixth Series, 13:378. Lewis's apprentice was Jacob Righter. Righter had £400
"decreed" to him because of an apparent breach of their apprenticeship contract. The details are unclear, but Righter
may have been using the politicized situation to his advantage to obtain funds.}

\footnotetext[79]{All three tracts of Lewis's land were improved. Evidence is seen in 1764 when Robert Porter, a
carpenter, was employed for £136 to work on Lewis's land. Bond of Curtis Lewis to Robert Porter, 1764,
MS.13541, Chester County Historical Society (hereafter CCHS), West Chester, PA.}

\footnotetext[70]{Some records indicate that there were more than five Lewis children, yet more than five names are never
recorded. While no birth or marriage dates exist, it was noted that Reuben Lewis was the eldest child. “Claim of
Heirs of Curtis Lewis,” March 13, 1786, A.O. 13/57, 236, DLAR.}
abusing one William McGuir. Lewis submitted various drafts of an apology that was finally accepted in 1768. Apart from this single transgression, the Lewis family appeared to be well-behaved and valued members of the Quaker community and therefore, do not appear in the minutes. Their lives, prior to the British arrival, is relatively untraceable; however, the advent of war, and specifically the Philadelphia Campaign, forever altered their lives.

The British, on arriving in Chester County, looked to local sympathizers for assistance in navigating the region. Joseph Galloway, a known Tory, sought individuals willing to lead the British to the American forces. On the evening of September 10, 1777, Curtis Lewis engaged in a reconnaissance mission with a fellow Quaker, John Jackson, and the two brought a report to General William Howe the next morning—the day of the Battle of Brandywine. Lewis’s service did not end there, and a few days later, he led General Charles Grey to General Anthony Wayne’s encampment during the Paoli Massacre, after which he continued to lead British troops.

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80 Bradford Monthly Meeting Minutes, 1767, MR-Ph34, FHL. The specifics of the incident between Lewis and McGuir are not recorded, and it is unclear who McGuir was. Cases of violence or assault were rare within the Quaker Meeting and made up only 3.0 percent of all offenses and most of the cases involved little physical harm to anyone. Nor did monthly meetings deal especially harshly with assault; they disowned 41.3 percent of the offenders, which makes assault rank thirty-first in severity of treatment.” Often the victims of assault were servants. Jack D. Marietta, The Reformation of American Quakerism, 1748-1783 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984), 24.

81 Ibid, 13th of 5th Month, 1768.

82 The goal of the Philadelphia campaign was to take the city of Philadelphia. The campaign resulted in the British occupation of the city which lasted until June of 1778. McGuire, Battle of Paoli, 5. See also, Warden 14-17.

83 Loyalist and Quaker opposition were concentrated in the eastern and southeastern townships, but loyalist operated throughout the County, and as Warden noted, the “small minority of Chester County Quakers disowned for military activity were more likely to serve with the Americans” than with the British. Warden, 13.

84 Coleman, 287; Second Report of the Bureau of Archives for the Province of Ontario, 564. John Jackson, of East Marlborough Township, filed his claim for compensation in April of 1787. His case records that on the day before the Battle of Brandywine, Joseph Galloway approached him asking him to engage in a reconnaissance mission against the American forces for 60 guineas. Jackson “said he would not do it for sake of Reward [and] took one Curtis Lewis with him and reconnoitered the enemy and brought back an account to Genl. How. a little before Day the Army marched immediately: received 20 gs. for this service.” “Case of John Jackson,” April 3, 1787, in Second Report of the Bureau of Archives for the Province of Ontario, 564. See also, McGuire, “A Documentary History of The Center House, or Martin’s Tavern 1764-1800.” If Jackson received some form of payment, it is possible that he split it with Lewis or that Lewis also received payment; however, Hannah Lewis’s claim makes no mention of either Jackson or any payment Lewis acquired for services provided to the British.
throughout southeastern Pennsylvania and ultimately to Philadelphia.\(^{85}\) He remained with the British, likely wintering with them, and never returned to Chester County after September of that year.\(^{86}\) Lewis joined the Corps of the Guides and Pioneers, commanded by Colonel Beverly Robinson, and was one of ten individuals to hold a position as a lieutenant with the specific task of acting as a local guide.\(^{87}\) When the British evacuated Philadelphia for New York in June of 1778, he was most likely among their ranks.\(^{88}\) Hannah Lewis and her children remained in the county throughout the ordeal, neither fleeing to Philadelphia nor choosing to evacuate Pennsylvania.\(^{89}\)

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\(^{85}\) The Paoli Massacre was a surprise attack on the American forces, under the command of General Anthony Wayne, by the British forces, led by General Charles Grey, on the evening of September 20, 1777. The Americans were camped at the Paoli Tavern and although few actual casualties occurred on the American side, it became known as the Paoli Massacre. McGuire, *Battle of Paoli*, 73, 94, and McGuire, *Brandywine and the Fall of Philadelphia*, vol. 1. *The Philadelphia Campaign*, 184. McGuire draws a connection between a description of an unknown spy and Curtis Lewis. Writing that, "'Grey's detachment was guided by a local Tory spy who was perfectly familiar with the situation and approaches of the American camp. He has been described as a man who limped badly, who had a wife and seven children eight miles away, and who later with his family departed from Philadelphia with the British army'.” Only part of this story aligns with the information found about Lewis, but it is possible that any inaccuracies are only a result of misinformation reported at the time. *Battle of Paoli*, 242n15.

\(^{86}\) It is uncertain if Lewis remained with them, but it is likely that he could not return home to Chester County without putting himself and his family in more immediate danger than if he stayed away.

\(^{87}\) Roll of the Officers of the Corps of Guides and Pioneers Commanded by Colonel Beverly Robinson, 1779. Canada National Archives, Ward Chipman Papers: Muster Master General's Papers and Regimental Papers, 1776-1785, [Film 272], Reel 9, DLAR. The Guides and Pioneers were a unit within the British army raised in December of 1776. A majority of its members were from Westchester County, New York, and the corps rarely had more than 150 members at any time. The Guides and Pioneers moved from Pennsylvania to New Jersey and sent detachments to South Carolina as well; however, the unit spent a majority of time in or around the New York area. Domfest, 378-379. It seems that some of the men given commissions as lieutenants or captains were not in constant service with the unit. These individuals “acted in... secret service or in other dangerous ways” and were given a commission as a measure of protection. If they were captured, it was hoped that they would not be hanged as spies because they were commissioned officers. “Guides & Pioneers Roll of Officers,” The On-Line Institute for Advanced Loyalist Studies. In the muster rolls of the Guides and Pioneers a special note regarding the payment of ten men, one of which was Lewis, likewise suggests that certain members held only quasi membership in the British army. The note reads: “These 10 gentlemen have Lieutenants Commissions in order to entitle them to one dollar per day for services performed, and are ordered to receive that pay with the corps.”

\(^{88}\) It is unknown how many loyalists fled to British occupied Philadelphia. Some reports state that “2,003 American inhabitants, 1,289 soldiers, 61 waggoners, 391 galleymen, and 603 militiamen [...] took the oath of allegiance to the British while the redcoats occupied Philadelphia, [...] and that ] the total number of Americans who went to the British during the occupation was close to 6,000,” Anne Ousterhout, *A State Divided: Opposition in Pennsylvania to the American Revolution* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press Inc., 1987), 170.

\(^{89}\) Lewis may have traveled with her children to Philadelphia to visit Curtis. The Chester County militia and Continental Army may have traveled with her children to Philadelphia to visit Curtis. The Chester County militia and Continental Army tried to keep Philadelphia and the County separated by requiring passes for travel, but this proved unsuccessful as many moved freely between the two locales. Their attempts did little to stop farmers from taking their goods to the city, especially since British currency held more value than its much depreciated colonial
The Quaker community demanded pacifism from its members, and for those who chose to disobey, disownment almost always followed. In the decades prior to the Revolution, Quaker Meetings began to punish more harshly those members who transgressed from their strict societal rules, and the war led to an even narrower definition of proper behavior. Quaker meetings required their members to refuse to “vote, hold office, pay taxes, serve in the militia, pay militia fines or otherwise acknowledge the new government to avoid disownment.” Curtis Lewis’s conscious decision to become involved militarily led to his disownment, a fate that could not have surprised him. Prior to the British arrival in Chester County, he refrained from involvement in military duty and paid £27.10.0 in fines. The reason for his refusal to muster is uncertain; it may have been a reflection of his effort to follow Quaker guidelines. Disownment counterpart. Warden, 17; Bodle, Valley Forge Winter, 94-101. Curtis Lewis, while likely remaining in Philadelphia for the duration of its occupation, may have led raiding parties from the capital to the countryside. It has been suggested that he was involved in leading a party to kidnap Colonel John Hannum, a resident of Chester County. Hannum was reportedly kidnapped by a “tory neighbor” in October of 1777. J. Smith Futhey and Gilbert Cope, History of Chester County Pennsylvania, with Genealogical and Biographical Sketches, (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1881), 586. The Tory neighbor was suggested by Thomas J. McGuire to be either Curtis Lewis or another man, Jacob James, although he writes that James was the more likely candidate. McGuire, “A Documentary History of The Center House, or Martin’s Tavern 1764-1800,” 16.

Rosemary S. Warden records that “Philadelphia-area Quaker meetings eventually disowned almost 1,000 Quakers in the Philadelphia area.” Warden, 7 (especially note 14).

See, Marietta, The Reformation of American Quakerism, 1748-1783. Treason and loyalist sympathizers were dealt with harshly in Pennsylvania, and Quakers often found themselves suspect. One example was that of John Roberts, a Quaker living outside of Philadelphia, who was accused of treason and hanged in November of 1778. See, David W. Maxey, Treason on Trial in Revolutionary Pennsylvania: The Case of John Roberts, Miller (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 2011); see also, Ousterhout, 188-189.

Warden, 12.

Bradford Monthly Meeting Minutes, 18th of 9th Month 1778, MR-Ph34, FHL.

Curtis Lewis’s brother, Obed Lewis, was assessed £25.0.0, and many of his Quaker neighbors in East Caln likewise paid fines. “State of the Accounts of Robert Smith, Esquire, Lieutenant of Chester County from March 1777 to March 1780,” Settled May 13, 1783, Early American Imprints Series, I, no. 18110, 10. The reasons behind his refusal to muster may not have been an indication of his loyalism. The Militia Act of 1777 required men between the ages of eighteen and fifty-three to serve in the war effort or pay a fine. See, Colonial Records of Pennsylvania, 5:765. Individuals refused to participate and paid fines for a variety of reasons. For many Quakers, such involvement went against the principles of the society, and the issue of participation came to a head in the fall of 1775 when a call for universal military service “forced” adult male Quakers to choose to remain pacifistic or become active members in the Revolutionary movement. Warden, 8-9. Under Pennsylvania military law the county lieutenant divided men into battalions and then divided those into eight classes. When the classes were called, an individual could muster or pay to provide a substitute. Francis Fox, “Democracy in the Rough,” (unpublished paper, cited with permission), 14; Fox, “Pennsylvania’s Revolutionary Militia Law: The Statute that Transformed the State,” 207.
proceedings against him began in March of 1778 when the Bradford Monthly Meeting recorded that: “Curtis Lewis hath left his family and gone to the British army for protection and hath entered into some service amongst them.”

His case was continued throughout much of 1778, and the minutes from September 18\(^{th}\) indicated that a committee was sent to meet with him, but was unable to do so because he was “gone with the British army” and likely on Long Island.

The meeting further reported that:

> from the best information they [could] obtain he doth not appear much further guilty than what he is charged with upon minute, but as such a conduct is inconsistent with our practices this meeting desires the friends appointed to prepare a testimony against him and produce next meeting.”

The testimony was approved and Lewis, in his absence, was disowned.

By May of 1778, Lewis, among others, was accused of treason and his family began to feel the consequences of his actions. Two months earlier, the Pennsylvania General Assembly passed a law which permitted the state to confiscate the property of individuals who had joined the British, and as a result, appraisers were sent to make an inventory of both the real and personal property of the Lewis estate. Among the items inventoried were “great quantities of household furniture to [the] amount of £240.15,” various livestock, blacksmith tools as well as

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95 Bradford Monthly Meeting Minutes, 3\(^{rd}\) Month 1778, MR-Ph34, FHL.
96 Ibid, 18\(^{th}\) of 9\(^{th}\) Month 1778.
97 Ibid.
98 Ibid.
100 Ousterhout, 172-173. This act also allowed the Supreme Executive Council to require those who were believed to have helped the enemy to appear for trials. If they failed to do so, “they would suffer attainder for treason. In other words, they would simply be declared guilty without a trial.” The punishment for treason was the death penalty. Hannah Lewis may have had an inventory taken of her personal property as early as November of 1777. Pennsylvania’s Council of Safety ordered committees to collect supplies from individuals who had failed to take an oath of allegiance or were known to have supported the enemy. Quakers were likely targets as they refused to take any oaths. Warden, 18. Earlier in August of 1777, the Supreme Executive Council ordered Chester Countians to take an inventory of all of the “wheat, flour, grain, [and] other stores” in the a county that were “within Twenty Miles distance westward of the River Delaware.” Pennsylvania Archives, First Series, 5:476.
corn valued at £35.\textsuperscript{101} A further inventory of crops was taken in September of 1778 which included wheat and rye reaped by Hannah Lewis, which was estimated to be worth £32.17.6.\textsuperscript{102} Lewis had continued to work the family's land herself, and the agents left her the crops yet to be harvested as they were "[n]ecessary for her Families Support [sic]."\textsuperscript{103} A final inventory was taken in November of 1778, which included two cows, a mare, a bed and bedding, a large copper kettle, a clock, a large oak table, blacksmith tools and a small collection of household goods.\textsuperscript{104} These items were overlooked during the first inventory, but Lewis was able to repurchase her bed and bedding before it was sold at vendue for the sum of £170.\textsuperscript{105} The timing of her eviction is unknown, but in the interim between appraisal and public sale, one part of the Lewis estate was rented.\textsuperscript{106} She may have remained on the property until it was officially offered to the public in August of 1779, or she may have gone to the household of one of her family members.

\textsuperscript{101} Second Report of the Bureau of Archives for the Province of Ontario, 612. In Chester County, Thomas Levis and John Hannum were appointed as the "commissioners to seize the personal effects of traitors."

\textsuperscript{102} Pennsylvania Archives, Second Series, 3:703, 737. Levis and Hannum represent the interconnectedness of local government in Chester County. Both men held various local county positions including the position of county sub-lieutenant throughout the 1770s and 1780s. See, Futhey and Cope, 204. County sub-lieutenants represented the radical infrastructure of the American cause, and the Pennsylvania legislature was made aware of "shady dealings" by many of the sub-lieutenants that eventually inspired policy change in 1779. Francis Fox, "The Accounts of the County Lieutenants," (unpublished paper, cited with permission), 1, and Fox, "Democracy in the Rough."

Interestingly, a third County sub-lieutenant, Andrew Boyd, purchased the Lewis estate in 1783; it seems quite possible that Boyd was privy to knowledge regarding the land because of his active role in local county government.

\textsuperscript{103} Ibid, 12:222.

\textsuperscript{104} Ibid, 12:522.

\textsuperscript{105} Ibid, 12:222; "Evidence on the Claim of Hannah Lewis," May 5, 1786, A.O. 12/40, 41, DLAR. This sum was likely largely inflated due to Pennsylvania's depreciated currency.

\textsuperscript{106} Pennsylvania Archives, Sixth Series, 12:226. The records do not give any indication of who rented the property, but it is possible that it was rented to Lewis and her family. For some women, rented property allowed them to continue to live in their homes. One example is Jane Bartram. Even when her family's personal property was confiscated by Pennsylvania, Bartram was assured a space 'n which she could live without threat of confiscation because she and her husband had rented a property in Philadelphia. Wayne Bodle, "Jane Bartram's 'Application': Her Struggle for Survival, Stability, and Self-Determination in Revolutionary Pennsylvania," The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography 115, no. 2 (April 1991): 197.
Sometime in August, she left Pennsylvania to join her husband on Long Island. It is uncertain if she did so because he had asked her to come or if she simply needed his economic support, but what is clear is that from September of 1777 until her departure for New York, she lived in Chester County as a de facto single mother assuming all the duties that went along with being head of her own household and running the family farm.

Hannah Lewis’s quest for compensation began in April of 1779 before her exodus to New York. Only four months before the family property was offered for public sale, she entered an unsuccessful petition to Pennsylvania’s Supreme Executive Council for “an allowance to be made for herself & Children.” Her petition was dismissed because she had “prevaricated to the Court,” but the claim she made for her children, she was told, would be considered at a future date. It appeared that Pennsylvania was willing to provide support to Reuben Lewis, her only son, if he took an oath to the state, but he did not acquiesce to this demand. Her decision to turn to Pennsylvania for support did not come without precedent as Pennsylvania’s government had been known to “set aside parts of forfeited estates to support wives and children of absentees and traitors.” She must have hoped that Pennsylvania would honor her need for subsistence and recognize the inheritance her children, especially Reuben, would have received from the family land. After all, the only thing she was guilty of was being married to a loyalist, and she

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108 "Memorial of Hannah Lewis and Inventory of Real and Personal Property of Curtis Lewis," March 15, 1784, A.O. 13/57, 231-232, DLAR. She may also have turned to her family for support, twelve of her siblings and her mother lived in the county.
109 Pennsylvania Archives, Sixth Series, 13:378
109 Ibid. The full details of her petition’s dismissal are unknown.
110 "Evidence in the Claim of Hannah Lewis," May 5, 1786, A.O. 12/40, 82, DLAR. It is unclear what Reuben Lewis had been asked to state about his political activities or when he was asked to do so. In June of 1777, the Pennsylvania government required individuals above the age of eighteen to swear their allegiance to the state and denounce King George III.
had presumably done nothing to impede the American cause. Perhaps she believed her actions were separate from those of her husband, and that she, therefore, should not be punished for his political choices. Pennsylvania however did not dismiss her case because of her politics citing instead deceit on her part.112

The political climate in Pennsylvania at this time was hostile to suspected loyalists. In June of 1780, the Supreme Executive Council ordered the wives and children of loyalists to leave the state.113 It seems likely that Lewis had already left by this point, but this decision shows the distrust felt toward suspected Tories, and specifically linked a woman’s political allegiance to that of her husband.114 Earlier in 1779, it was “recommended that the wives and children of refugees be forced to leave” Pennsylvania because it was feared that any correspondence across enemy lines, especially with New York, was a security risk.115 No official action was taken until March of 1780, when the Supreme Executive Council agreed to grant passes to the wives of refugees if they planned to leave the state before April 15th of that year. Not all wives left at this time, but further legislation in June required them to leave or be treated as enemies of the state.116 The question of women’s political loyalties was at the heart of this Act. By pushing the women out of the state, the law assumed that all women held the same political views as their husbands, ultimately denying them independent political thought.117 This most likely stemmed

112 One cannot help but wonder if the vagueness of these records represents a covert attempt to avoid supplying her compensation in the hope that she would be forced to leave Pennsylvania and take her questionable political allegiances elsewhere, especially when considered with the coming legislation aimed at removing women and children from the state in the 1779 and 1780.
115 Ousterhout, 209.
117 Contrary to the assumptions of this law, not all women claimed the same political identity as their husbands. An ideal example is Jane Bartram who claimed her loyalties were with the American cause even though her husband, Alexander Bartram, was a loyalist. See, Bodle, “Jane Bartram’s ‘Application’: Her Struggle for
from political tensions but also from the fact that women, without their husbands, risked becoming a drain on the already strained state economy.

The Supreme Executive Council may have gotten its wish when Lewis left with her children for New York in August of 1779. Without land, crops, furniture or her husband, she had little choice for her own economic survival than to leave the state. His position in the Guides and Pioneers provided a source of income, no matter how meager it may have been, that was desperately needed by the family. The ten weeks they spent together probably included some discussion of what they were to do without a home to return to in Chester County as well as the more pressing matter of how they would support themselves now that they were reunited in New York. Their time together was cut short when Curtis became ill and died in late October of 1779. Now, Hannah was a widow in a strange city with no means to support herself and with seemingly no connections. Being a Quaker, she may have turned to the Friends Meeting in

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Survival, Stability, and Self-Determination in Revolutionary Pennsylvania," 185-220. The case of *Martin v. Massachusetts* (1805) also dealt with the question of women's political autonomy. James Martin, the son of Anna and William Martin, claimed that the state of Massachusetts had unrightfully confiscated land belonging to his mother after she left the state with her husband, a loyalist. In the end, the court ruled in favor of Martin, but the case had larger implications regarding a woman's potential to have independent political thought. See, Linda K. Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect & Ideology in Revolutionary America*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 119-136, and Kerber, “The Paradox of Women’s Citizenship in the Early Republic: The Case of *Martin vs. Massachusetts*, 1805,” 349-378.

118 It is uncertain in which year Hannah Lewis left Pennsylvania, but her story was consistent that ten weeks after her arrival her husband died and that his death occurred in October. Some sources point to a departure for the Lewis family in 1780 and the Quaker Meeting Minutes at Bradford uphold this timeline. A complaint was brought against Edith Lewis in the 8th month of 1780, but the minutes read that she was “apprehending herself under a necessity of leaving the parts.” Bradford Monthly Meeting Minutes, 18th of 8th Month 1780, MR-PH34, FHL. The next month the minutes read that “the friends in the case of Edith Lewis informs that she hath left the parts in order to go to her father at or near New York.” Bradford Monthly Meeting Minutes, 15th of 9th Month 1780, MR-PH34, FHL. The Audit Office records however, suggest that Lewis died in 1779 and Hannah Lewis provided this date in her memorial. If Curtis died in 1780, then Hannah remained in Chester County a year longer.

119 Curtis Lewis’s status as a paid guide for the unit entitled him to one dollar a day for the services he provided. “Roll of the Officers of the Corps of Guides and Pioneers Commanded by Colonel Beverly Robinson, October 24, 1779,” Canada National Archives, Ward Chipman Papers: Muster Master General's Papers and Regimental Papers, 1776-1785, [Film 272], Reel 9, DLAR.

120 “Claim of Heirs of Curtis Lewis,” March 13, 1786, A.O. 13/57, 236, DLAR.
Flushing, New York for assistance, although record of her involvement there does not appear until September of 1782.\textsuperscript{121} Lewis’s first claim as a widow came on November 27, 1780 when she petitioned General Sir Henry Clinton for “continuance of her late husband’s pay, and rations,” and described her husband as a “messenger and guide” commissioned in Howe’s army.\textsuperscript{122} Obtaining economic support was necessary for her survival, especially because, as she stated, she was “left in distress” to care for her children and had been “obliged to leave that province [Pennsylvania] in August last [and] lost her husband soon after.”\textsuperscript{123} Her claim was recommended by Colonel Beverly Robinson and S. (most likely Samuel) Shoemaker.\textsuperscript{124} Shoemaker and Robinson served as inspectors of refugee families in the occupied city of New York, so their testimony to her claim was not unexpected.\textsuperscript{125} Clinton’s decision regarding her petition was not explicitly stated, and after making this claim, she disappeared from the historical record for several years. However, her petition appears to have been successful because when she reappeared in the minutes of the Women’s Meeting at Flushing in 1782, they cited such support reporting that:

\begin{footnotes}
\item Report on American Manuscripts in the Royal Institution of Great Britain, (Dublin, 1906), 2:211-212. Clinton had recently taken over command of the British forces from General Howe. A whole year had passed since Curtis Lewis’s death, and her actions during this year are a mystery.
\item Ibid. Within the document it was recorded that Lewis had six children; however, Quaker records only list five. These variations could suggest that one of Lewis’s daughters had given birth to a child. One of her daughters, Edith Lewis, was later disowned for bearing a bastard child.
\item Ibid. Colonel Beverly Robinson commanded the Guides and Pioneers in which Curtis Lewis served, and Shoemaker was the former mayor of Philadelphia, a Quaker and a loyalist who fled to New York. Van Buskirk, Generous Enemies, 162-163. For more on Shoemaker’s wife, Rebecca, see, Van Buskirk, They Didn’t Join the Band: Disaffected Women in Revolutionary Philadelphia.”
\item Jasanoff, 117.
\end{footnotes}
Hannah Lewis, a Member of our Society suffered herself to be placed in a man’s house and occupy a part of it against his will and receives rations which being a singular case this meeting thinks it best to refer it to the care of the mens [sic] meeting. 126

The rations she received were most likely from the British, and it appeared they had also provided her with a place to stay, quartering her in another man’s home to relieve her apparent destitution. 127

At the same time that her case was recorded in the Quaker minutes, Lewis wrote to her “near relation” Reuben Haines, a Philadelphia brewer, for assistance in returning home to Pennsylvania with a pass. 128 Her letter to Haines is the only surviving document written by

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126 Flushing, New York Women’s Meeting Minutes, 4th of 9th Month 1782, MR-NY51, FHL. The man with whom she was placed may have been Samuel Franklin of Springfield on Long Island as Lewis requested that her letters be directed to his home; however, his home, and status as a fellow Quaker, may have offered a friendly dropping point for her correspondence because her relationship with the man with whom she was quartered seemed to be less than ideal. In the 11th Month of 1782, the Flushing Meeting moved Lewis and her family to a place that they believed was more acceptable; it is not known with whom she lived, but it could be that she lived with Franklin. Flushing, New York Women’s Meeting Minutes, 6th of 11th Month 1782, MR-NY51, FHL. Samuel Franklin was a Quaker merchant from New York City who later became a founder of the Bank of New York as well as a founder and Vice President of the New York Society for promoting the Manumission of slaves. He married Esther Mitchell, a fellow Quaker from Philadelphia. Philadelphia Meeting Minutes, 28th of 5th Month, 1762, MR-Ph384, FHL. Elizabeth Drinker noted a visit in September of 1769 of Franklin, his wife, and others from New York to Philadelphia. The Diary of Elizabeth Drinker, ed. Elaine Forman Crane (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1991), 1:153.

127 In her case, the story of an unpleasant quartering experience seems to be reversed. Typically, soldiers were placed in the homes of civilians, but Lewis was a civilian being placed in another civilian’s home as part of the British Army’s duty to provide for her as compensation for her husband’s services. There are instances of soldiers quartered in the homes of unhappy women and children, and Elizabeth Drinker notes an unpleasant case in her diary, see, The Diary of Elizabeth Drinker, 1:266-310.

128 Flushing, New York Women’s Meeting Minutes, 4th of 9th Month 1782, MR-NY51, FHL; Hannah Lewis to Reuben Haines, 2nd of 9th Month 1782, Long Island, New York, Pennsylvania Division of Archives and Manuscripts, Records of Pennsylvania’s Revolutionary Governments, 1775-1790 [Film 24], Reel 30, 838; “Testimony of Reuben Haines Before Edward Shippen,” March 14, 1786. A.O. 13/57, 236-237, DLAR. Reuben Haines (1727-1793) was Hannah Lewis’s second cousin through her mother, Ruth Haines Miller. Haines was active in civic affairs, and real estate in both Philadelphia and Pennsylvania at large. He was disowned from the Quaker meeting in 1783 and died “rather suddenly” in August of 1793 of Yellow Fever. The Diary of Elizabeth Drinker, 1:495, 3:2158. Haines, a brewer from Germantown, Pennsylvania, also had connections to Timothy Matlack, the Pennsylvania statesman, through the remarriage of his mother, Martha Burr. Burr married Timothy Matlack, the elder, in the 1st month of 1730 and gave birth to a son, Timothy Matlack, Reuben Haines’s step-brother. Genealogy of Haines Family, Wyck Association Collection, Series I, Box 3: Folder 43, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, PA; Dr. A.M. Stackhouse, Colonel Timothy Matlack: Patriot and Soldier, (Privately Printed, 1910), 1-3. See also, John L. Cotter, Daniel G. Roberts, and Michael Parrington, “Wyck: Germantown’s Oldest Surviving House,” in The Buried Past: An Archaeological History of Philadelphia (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), 325-331. Reuben Haines’s grandson, also named Reuben Haines, married one Jane Bowne of Flushing New York who was a cousin connected to Samuel Franklin, the man with whom Hannah Lewis had
Lewis herself, and although only a brief account, provides insight into her plight. She wrote to him of her experiences in New York in September of 1782:

I was left in very distressed circumstances, in a strange country far from acquaintance or relation our situation is remote from a meeting or any body of friends and being here a stranger and without a certificate has made my case more difficult, I am very desirous of returning to my Friends, not only on my account, but particularly on the account of my children [...] that I now intreat [sic] thee to use thy endeavours [sic] to obtain permission for our return, which I am not without hopes may be granted upon a proper application, and as the season is advancing the sooner thou applys [sic] and sends word it is granted the better.¹²⁹

Here she invoked the role of a “Republican Mother,” choosing to relate her situation to the future well-being of her children.¹³⁰ Perhaps she thought that drawing attention to their situation would expedite Haines’s assistance and Pennsylvania’s compliance in obtaining a pass. After all, New York was a Tory stronghold, and such an influence on her children would likely be detrimental if they were ever to become virtuous and active members of the American experiment. She crafted her rhetoric for her Pennsylvanian audience with care.

Haines succeeded in helping her to obtain a pass and recommended her petition to the President of the Supreme Executive Council, William Moore, telling him that she desired to


¹²⁹ Hannah Lewis to Reuben Haines, 2⁰ of 9⁰ Month 1782, Long Island, New York, Pennsylvania Division of Archives and Manuscripts, Records of Pennsylvania’s Revolutionary Governments, 1775-1790 [Film 24], Reel 30, 838, DLAR. Her petition was recommended by Reuben Haines before the Supreme Executive Council on September 25⁰, suggesting that the ninth month was September rather than November.

¹³⁰ The role of the Republican Mother was to teach and train her children to be virtuous citizens, and this ideology offered a new political role for women in the years following the Revolutionary conflict. For a fuller discussion of Republican Motherhood see, Kerber, Women of the Republic: Intellect & Ideology in Revolutionary America. Also, Joan R. Gunderson, To Be Useful to the World: Women in Revolutionary America 1740-1790 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 206-217. It should also be noted that not all women chose to rely on the argument of Republican Motherhood to substantiate their claims. Jane Bartram, for example, while having a child, did not make such an argument for herself. Bodle, “Jane Bartram’s ‘Application’: Her Struggle for Survival, Stability, and Self-Determination in Revolutionary Pennsylvania.”
return to the state with "her three minor children." Along with Haines's assistance, the Quaker Meeting in Flushing provided her with supplies including cloth, apparel and travel expenses which amounted to £29.2.92. The Flushing Meeting also made her case known to the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting through letters written between Edmund Prior, the clerk at Flushing, and James Pemberton, a Quaker merchant living in Philadelphia. According to Prior's letters, the Flushing Meeting expected its Philadelphian counterpart to reimburse it for the funds and goods it offered Lewis. Prior made several inquiries to Pemberton and the Philadelphia Meeting regarding her case and methods of repayment, but their minutes are strangely silent on the matter, and the records at Flushing never record that it was repaid. Lewis finally returned to Chester County and the Bradford Monthly Meeting in December of

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131 "Recommendation of Reuben Haines for the Petition of Hannah Lewis," September 25, 1782. Pennsylvania Division of Archives and Manuscripts, Records of Pennsylvania's Revolutionary Governments, 1775-1790 [Film 24], Reel 30, DLAR. William Moore was a Pennsylvania statesman who served as President of the Supreme Executive Council from November of 1781 until November of 1782. He was succeeded in service by John Dickinson. Robert Lawson-Peebles, "William Moore," American National Biography Online, February 2000, www.anb.org (accessed April 13, 2013). It is unknown how long it took the Supreme Executive Council to delineate on her request for a pass, but she did not return to Pennsylvania until December of 1782. All of the children traveled with Lewis to New York, but it appeared that Reuben and Edith Lewis remained because in 1783 Reuben Lewis and John King, Edith's husband, began compiling documents regarding the property confiscated by Pennsylvania.

132 List of Sundries provided Hannah Lewis, 12th Month, 1782, Pemberton Papers, 37:148, HSP. Also listed on the document was a fee of £0.2.0 for the "storeage [sic] of her furniture at Brooklyn Ferrage." After her property was confiscated, she was allowed to repurchase her bed and bedding. Perhaps this was part of the furniture that she took with her to New York and later needed to bring back. Whatever the case, the line is curious as it suggests that she did have some amount of personal property with her in New York. Her route of travel can also be somewhat reconstructed as £4.13.7 was allotted for "conveying her family and furniture cros [sic] Staten Island from thence to the Jerseys." Ibid.

133 Edmund Prior was also in contact with Samuel Franklin from New York, the man with whom Lewis was connected and both were members of the Flushing Meeting. Their connection most likely played an important role in Lewis's time in New York. Letter to Edmund Prior and Samuel Franklin, 28th of 12th Month, 1782, Philadelphia, Pemberton Papers, 37:139, HSP. James Pemberton was a Quaker and merchant living in Philadelphia who had been a member of the Pennsylvania Assembly but resigned. In 1777 he, along with his brothers Israel and John, were exiled to Virginia with a group of Philadelphia Quakers that included Henry Drinker. "Biographical Directory," in The Diary of Elizabeth Drinker, 3:2196. See also, Robert F. Oaks, "Philadelphians in Exile: The Problem of Loyalty During the American Revolution," The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography 96, no. 3 (July 1972): 298-325.

134 William Cowper and Edmund Prior to James Pemberton, 20th of 1st Month, 1783, Rahway, New Jersey. Pemberton Papers 38:26, HSP.

135 Flushing Monthly Meeting Minutes, FHL; Edmund Prior to James Pemberton, 27th of 4th Month, 1783, New York, Pemberton Papers, 38:139, HSP.
1782, and for the next three years, is relatively undetectable, but even though the records fall silent, it seems likely that she never stopped thinking about ways to obtain compensation.\textsuperscript{136}

At war’s end, the British government sent representatives to North America to hear the claims of those who had remained loyal to the Crown and grant compensation as they saw fit.\textsuperscript{137} Lewis traveled to Halifax, Nova Scotia, where she filed a third claim for compensation which proved to be successful in May of 1786. Two years earlier in March of 1784, Abraham Pastorius, who acted as an attorney for the Lewis family, submitted the first documents regarding their claim for consideration to the British Commissioners, part of which had been prepared by Reuben Lewis in 1783.\textsuperscript{138} In New York, Reuben compiled an inventory of the estate, real and personal, taken by the state of Pennsylvania, and with the help of his brother-in-law, John King, contacted the family’s former neighbors to make an estimate of the value of his late father’s estate, which totaled £4,112.15.0.\textsuperscript{139}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{136} Bradford Monthly Meeting Minutes, 13\textsuperscript{th} of 12\textsuperscript{th} Month, 1782, MR-Ph34, FHL. The Bradford Meeting Minutes recorded that when Hannah Lewis and her children, Reuben, Prudence, Keziah and Hannah Lewis returned to the meeting that they brought with them “a few lines by way [of] recommendation from some friends where she resided.” Ibid. When Hannah Lewis made her claim for compensation in Halifax, it was noted that all of the Lewis children were residing in Pennsylvania. “Evidence on the Claim of Hannah Lewis,” May 5, 1786, A.O. 12/40, 41. DLAR.
\item \textsuperscript{138} “Memorial of Hannah Lewis,” March 15, 1784, A.O. 13/57, 230-235, DLAR. Abraham Pastorius served with Curtis Lewis in the Guides and Pioneers and was a Quaker and native of Germantown, Pennsylvania who later resided in Montreal. His property was also confiscated after he was attainted of treason. His great grandfather, Francis Daniel Pastorius, was the founder of Germantown. See, Roll of the Officers of the Corps of Guides and Pioneers Commanded by Colonel Beverly Robinson, 1779, Canada National Archives, Ward Chipman Papers: Muster Master General’s Papers and Regimental Papers, 1776-1785, [Film 272], Reel 9, DLAR. March 25, 1784 was the initial deadline for submitting cases to the commissioners in Halifax, Nova Scotia and Canada. It appeared that the claim by the Lewis family was submitted toward the end of the admittance cycle; however, the acceptance date was later extend into the 1790s. Second Report of the Bureau of Archives for the Province of Ontario, 14.
\item \textsuperscript{139} It seems that Reuben Lewis, although returning to Pennsylvania briefly in 1782, went to New York to work with King on their claim for compensation. Their early estimate was made in New York and approved by the Tory Mayor, David Matthews, and the amount they reported was in Pennsylvania’s much depreciated currency. “An Estimation of the Real and Personal Estate of Curtis Lewis,” October 15, 1783, A.O. 13/57, 238-239, DLAR.
\end{itemize}
The inventory entered by Pastorius in 1784 included three tracts of land as well as personal items which amounted to £2,467.13.0 sterling.\(^{140}\) The first tract was estimated to be worth £1,278 and was made up of 142 acres, two dwelling houses, and three barns, one built of stone, as well as other “out houses.”\(^{141}\) This probably was the property on which the Lewis family had made their permanent residence, as it was also on this tract that a blacksmith shop was erected.\(^{142}\) The second tract had an estimated value of £663 and consisted of 221 acres, two dwelling houses, a barn and orchard.\(^{143}\) This property was located in West Bradford Township, and Lewis had purchased it “three or four years before the Troubles.”\(^{144}\) The final lot contained only 58 acres, a single dwelling house and barn along with an orchard and had a monetary value of £174.\(^{145}\) This land was also located in West Bradford; however, when Lewis purchased the property, “the deeds were not made out and the person who sold it [had] recovered it.”\(^{146}\) The remaining losses included livestock, blacksmith tools, household furniture and crops including wheat, rye, Indian corn and forage.\(^{147}\) Along with the inventory, Lewis’s memorial outlined her
husband’s service to the British and his conduct “as a good subject to His Majesty’s Government.” Her children went a step further in their petition adding that their father “for the safety of his life was obliged to seek Protection from the Armies of Great Britain” on their invasion of Pennsylvania, perhaps suggesting that Lewis was in some trouble, or at least suspected of loyalism, prior to their arrival in the fall of 1777. His loyalty, combined with the fact that his death had left the family “destitute of subsistence [sic],” they argued, was enough to suggest that “his widow and children” should be “entitled to be numbered among the objects worthy of Compensation.”

Before Lewis left for Nova Scotia, she again received assistance from Haines, who appeared before Edward Shippen, then President Justice of the Court of Common Pleas for the County of Philadelphia, in March of 1786 to report on her case. He told Shippen that “a Letter of Attorney authorizing her to solicit compensation to the Family from the British Government for their losses” had been delivered and agreed upon by Reuben Lewis and his brothers-in-law, John King and Benjamin Meredith. His report appeared to give Lewis’s travel from Pennsylvania to Halifax some legal legitimacy, but why approval was needed is uncertain. It is unclear when she left the state or if she traveled alone, but in a document produced by her children in March of 1786, they noted that Lewis was “about to embark for Nova Scotia to solicit a Compensation [sic].” The document may have served as an unofficial guardianship record.
in which the eldest son, Reuben, approved of his mother’s actions for his minor siblings, Keziah and Hannah Jr.

By May of 1786, Lewis arrived in Nova Scotia, and her claim was officially heard on the 5th by Commissioner Jeremy Pemberton. The claim she presented echoed the rhetoric of her earlier petitions as she spoke of her husband’s loyalty to the crown and the destitution of her family after he was accused of treason. Pemberton recorded that Lewis tried to use Pennsylvania’s Supreme Executive Council as a means of receiving compensation but that the state had not made “any Restitution.” The commissioner determined that Curtis was indeed a loyalist and that Hannah should be granted £70 for “her right of dower in the real estate of her late husband” and £50 in compensation toward “the claimants thirds in her late Husband’s Personal estate.” Like most claimants, she received a significantly lower amount than what was lost, and in the end, was granted only £120. The final observations recorded by Pemberton stated that she had come to Halifax “for the Purpose of having her Claim examined and [meant] to return to Pennsylvania.” Unlike many others who made claims, she and her children returned to Chester County rather than permanently leave America.

Lewis’s claim in Halifax produced the most meaningful records from which to think about the relationships between women and property. Mary Beth Norton’s article “Eighteenth-

154 It is unknown if there was a connection between Commissioner Jeremy Pemberton and the Pemberton family of Philadelphia.
155 “Memorial of Hannah Lewis,” May 5, 1786, A.O. 12/40, 39, DLAR.
156 Ibid, 41.
157 “Determination in the Case of Hannah Lewis,” May 5, 1786, A.O. 12/66, DLAR.
158 “Compensation to Claimants,” 1786, A.O. 12/109, DLAR. £120, although less than her property’s full worth, was still a significant amount, especially since it was given in British pounds sterling which was not weakened by depreciation, as was the case for Pennsylvania’s currency. This amount, in Philadelphia, could pay for rent, food, and clothing for a small family for a number of years. Dr. Billy G. Smith, e-mail message to author, November 15, 2012. See also, Billy G. Smith, The “Lower Sort:” Philadelphia’s Laboring People, 1750-1800 (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1990), and Smith, “The Material Lives of Laboring Philadelphians, 1750 to 1800,” William and Mary Quarterly 38, no.2 (April, 1981):163-202.
159 “Determination in the Case of Hannah Lewis,” May 5, 1786, A.O. 12/66, DLAR.
160 For a larger discussion of loyalists who fled the American mainland, see, Jasanoff, Liberty’s Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World.
Century American Women in Peace and War: The Case of the Loyalists” analyzed loyalist claims and argued that women often were not aware of the value of their own land and used rhetoric to describe themselves as weak, victimized or “unfortunate” individuals. Lewis’s self-perception, as recorded in Halifax, followed these trends. Commissioners recorded what she told them, that “her children were young and she was in distress, otherwise she should have gone to England.” If Norton’s argument is correct, then with this statement, Lewis placed herself solidly among loyalists in America, although it is possible that she was telling the commissioners what she thought they wanted to hear. Her individual political feelings were never stated and like so many loyalist claims entered by women, she “gave no indication that [she] had taken positive steps on behalf of the British cause” but rather hoped to benefit from the actions of her husband. Descriptions of her distress came not only from Lewis, but from witnesses verifying her case. One John Macguire, reported that he thought she “would have come from New York had it not been for her poverty and large Family.” These claims support eighteenth-century gender expectations where women were believed to be weak, helpless or in need of assistance. While this is the image she exuded in her petitions, her actual behaviors suggest quite the opposite. Her mobility throughout the Atlantic World and the trail of petitions and claims she left behind are a testament to her persistence and strength as she navigated differing political worlds to ensure her survival.

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161 Mary Beth Norton, “Eighteenth-Century American Women in Peace and War: The Case of the Loyalists,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 33, no. 3 (July 1976): 406. Expected female weakness also allowed women to move more freely throughout the Revolutionary world because they were “considered weak and childlike” and therefore “no threat.” Such thinking allowed some women to convey goods and information across enemy lines, because the items they carried with them were often given a less thorough check than the goods carried by their male counterparts. Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies*, 51, 121.

162 “Evidence in the Claim of Hannah Lewis,” May 5, 1786, A.O. 12/40, 83, DLAR. Ironically, her very appearance in Halifax could have somewhat undermined her claim as a weak, helpless and poor widow.

163 Mary Beth Norton, Liberty’s Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750-1820 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), 176. In this instance, having one’s political associations linked to one’s husband was beneficial.

164 “Evidence in the Claim of Hannah Lewis,” May 5, 1786, A.O. 12/40, 84, DLAR.
Norton further argued that many loyalist women had limited knowledge or relied on men when making estimations of property value. However, she also found that rural women typically had more success in describing family land holdings and personal property than their male counterparts. Even if they could not give an exact value to their family’s land, they gave commissioners important details about livestock, tools, acres planted, crops both planted and stored as well as dwelling houses and other structures. Lewis described improvements made to her family’s three tracts but found it harder to assign a numerical value per acre. She told commissioners with uncertainty that she could not “form any judgment herself of value, but thinks some of it has been valued at £15 per acre- thinks it worth that.” Here she fits into Norton’s argument that some women had limited knowledge or relied on men when making estimations of property value because, although she could describe items, she had difficulty assigning them specific worth. But even with her uncertainty, she created a valid claim, with the assistance of her son and sons-in-law for which she received limited but needed compensation.

The success of her claim in Halifax was due in part to her support networks. Her only son, Reuben, and her sons-in-law, John King and Benjamin Meredith began compiling information regarding her property case while in New York in 1784. It was, however, in their interest to assist her, as she would be petitioning for compensation that could eventually become part of their inheritance. Reuben Haines also assisted her in returning to Pennsylvania with a pass and served as a witness to her case before the Pennsylvania government verifying the claims.

166 “Evidence in the Claim of Hannah Lewis,” May 5, 1786, A.O. 12/40, 83, DLAR.
167 While men often had more success in this arena, especially when it came to specific mortgage or debt information, men struggled when they needed to describe items typically seen as part of the domestic sphere. As Norton wrote, “just as female claimants were unable to delineate their husbands’ business dealings accurately,” men “failed to submit specific lists of lost household items like furniture, dishes, or kitchen utensils.” Norton, “Eighteenth-Century American Women in Peace and War: The Case of the Loyalists,” 396.
168 “Evidence in the Claim of Hannah Lewis,” May 5, 1786, A.O. 12/40, 83, DLAR.
she made about the necessity of her travels to Nova Scotia. In Halifax, Abraham Pastorius offered his services and likely knew the Haines family as he was also from Germantown, and his service in the Guides and Pioneers would have meant that he and Curtis Lewis were acquainted. Although her reliance on support networks may suggest that she was a “helpless” woman, it certainly proves that she was smart enough to use her connections to her benefit. She in no way arrived in Halifax unarmed or unprepared.

Even if Lewis could not confidently value her own land, she was aware of what property rights widows had if a spouse died intestate. She told commissioners in Halifax that “the laws of Pennsylvania [sic] owes two shares to the eldest son, [while] the rest of the children take an equal share each [and a] widow has her thirds.”

The information she provided reflected the legal precedents operating throughout the early American world, by which attempts were normally made to preserve real property so dower could be granted, since most states did not want women to become a drain on its resources. Pennsylvania’s inheritance laws however, “did little to guarantee a widow an adequate income” and an estate’s debts were satisfied before a widow’s right to a third of her husband’s property was considered. Individual state confiscation acts sometimes treated women and children differently to help them maintain a level of individual subsistence, but this was not the case for Lewis, as Pennsylvania’s government dismissed her attempt to receive support from the land.

A year after Lewis made her claim in Halifax, her son, Reuben, sought compensation from Pennsylvania. In 1787, he presented an application for the rights to forty acres of land in Pennsylvania. In 1787, he presented an application for the rights to forty acres of land in

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170 Wilson, 101-102.
East Cain which was considered at a special meeting of the Board of Property. The Board decided that he should be granted the rights if the property was vacant. However, "some doubts [had] arisen" as to whether the land was free or if it had been "sold as the Estate of Curtis Lewis by the State." The case was postponed until the status of the land could be determined, but it seems unlikely that he received rights to the property. It does not appear that this was the first attempt he made to regain rights to his father's land. In his mother's claim in Halifax, she mentioned that her son refused to take an oath of allegiance and was, therefore, denied his father's property. The circumstances of his earlier petition along with its exact date are not recorded, and why he felt that a claim in 1787 might be successful is uncertain. The political climate during the time in which he entered his petition was changing. Delegates from the thirteen states met in Philadelphia to revise the Articles of Confederation in May of 1787, but instead drafted a completely new United States Constitution. In Pennsylvania, the 1780s brought an increasingly contested political environment, as arguments over the 1776 State Constitution pitted constitutionalist and anti-constitutionalist factions against each other. The debates ultimately led to the creation of a new State Constitution in 1790, as the elected members of the State government became increasingly more conservative. At the same time, prices continued to increase, while the value of currency decreased as part of a larger economic "deterioration" within the state. After his failed claim, Lewis did not immediately leave East Cain, as his

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171 *Pennsylvania Archives*, Third Series, 1:519. The Board of Property was created in 1782 to hear cases and disputes that came from the Land Office. The President or Vice-President of the Supreme Executive Council was usually on the board. See, Record Group 17, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg, PA (hereafter PHMC).
172 Ibid. The only tract that was sold by 1787 was the property that Andrew Boyd purchased in 1783.
174 "Evidence in the Claim of Hannah Lewis," May 5, 1786, A.O. 12/40, 82, DLAR
176 Earlier in October of 1779, factions in Pennsylvania came to a head at what came to be known as the Fort Wilson Riot. The instability was caused by debates over Pennsylvania's deteriorating wartime economy along
name appears on a list of men eligible to muster with the militia for the township in 1787.\textsuperscript{177} Two months later, he submitted a petition for a license to operate the Red Lyon Tavern in Uwchlan Township, which was granted.\textsuperscript{178}

With the exception of her trip to Halifax in May of 1786, record of Hannah Lewis’s life falls silent for almost ten years after her return from New York in 1782. The details of her children’s lives during this period are more abundant. Even before she left Pennsylvania to join her husband on Long Island, one of her daughters, Edith Lewis, came into conflict with the Quaker Meeting, but her absence from the county and the ensuing war appeared to halt the complaints brought against her. Between 1783 and 1793, each of the Lewis children was disowned by the Quaker Meeting.\textsuperscript{179} Their offenses included marriage out of unity, fornication, bearing of bastard children, failure to properly produce certificates and attending marriages outside of the faith. How, or whether, the Revolution shaped such misbehavior is unknown, but the quickness with which they were removed suggests a tightening of Quaker principles and perhaps even shows that their actions were more closely scrutinized, possibly because of the transgression of their late father. Lewis hinted at changes in her children’s behavior in her letter with growing discontent with the 1776 State Constitution. Many in the militia had personal grievances believing that, while they were in service, merchants were amassing economic wealth and power all while the worth of currency continually dropped, which ultimately hurt the poorer members of society and benefited the rich. The riot itself occurred on October 4, 1779, and shots were fired at a passing group of militia in front of the home of James Wilson, leaving six dead and many injured. The incident was the last radical revolutionary movement in Pennsylvania. See, John K. Alexander, “The Fort Wilson Incident of 1779: A Case Study of the Revolutionary Crowd,” \textit{The William and Mary Quarterly} 31, no. 4 (October 1974): 589-612.\textsuperscript{177} \textit{Pennsylvania Archives}, Sixth Series, 3: 308. The list was made up of men between the ages of eighteen and fifty three. The Captain who made the listing was Captain Jacob Rigter [Righter]. It is likely that Righter was the former apprentice of Curtis Lewis.\textsuperscript{178} The petition that Reuben Lewis entered for the Red Lyon was granted in August of 1787. “Tavern Petition of Reuben Lewis,” May 1787, 32:70-71, CCA.\textsuperscript{178} Disownment procedures began with an initial complaint, which was followed by a series of meetings and visitations to the individual whom the complaint was brought against. The individual was normally questioned and encouraged to acknowledge their mistakes and seek forgiveness from the society. If they did so, then disownment proceedings would not be brought against them. Even if they were disowned, the decision was never final. Quakers welcomed back members after disownment if they showed proper deference to the society and its rules.
to Reuben Haines in 1782, when she wrote that she worried that they "may be in danger from [her] present situation to be estranged from Friends." Her fears were not unwarranted.

Edith Lewis was the first to be unfavorably entered into the Quaker records. In 1780, the Bradford Meeting brought a complaint against her for "being present at a marriage accomplished contrary to our [Quaker] discipline." But when the Bradford Meeting decided to go to her with the complaint, they were unable to reach her because she had "left the parts [Chester County] in order to go to her father at or Near New York." The Meeting chose to "rest the matter," but upon her return in 1783, a new complaint stated that "since she left [she] hath born an illegitimate child" and had married a man, John King, who was not in "unity with friends." Disownment preparations were made, and she was removed from the society shortly after. Prudence Lewis was the next to be removed from the Meeting because she had married Benjamin Meredith, "a man not in unity with friends" with the "assistance" of a Baptist preacher. Disownment charges were brought against her in May of 1786, and she too was removed from the society. Reuben Lewis was the next to fall. A complaint was brought against him in 1787 for "neglecting to deliver in his certificate" and for marrying a young

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180 Hannah Lewis to Reuben Haines, 2nd of 9th Month 1782, Long Island, New York, Pennsylvania Division of Archives and Manuscripts, Records of Pennsylvania's Revolutionary Governments, 1775-1790 [Film 24], Reel 30, 838, DLAR. If she simply meant she was worried they would fall out of favor with the Quaker Meeting in Chester County because of their absence or if she knew of other behaviors that would have warranted a disownment is unclear. It should also be noted that in the letter this sentence was scratched out with a single line.
181 Bradford Monthly Meeting Minutes, 16th of 4th Month, 1780, MR-Ph34, FHL.
182 Bradford Women's Meeting Minutes, 15th of 9th Month, 1780; Bradford Monthly Meeting Minutes, 15th of 9th Month, 1780, MR-Ph34, FHL.
183 Bradford Monthly Meeting Minutes, 15th of 9th Month, 1780, 14th of 3rd Month 1783, and 18th of 4th Month 1783, MR-Ph34, FHL.
184 Ibid, 15th of 9th Month, 1780, 14th of 3rd Month 1783, and 18th of 4th Month 1783, MR-Ph34, FHL.
185 Bradford Women's Meeting Minutes, 14th of 4th Month 1786, MR-Ph34, FHL. Benjamin Meredith was a merchant from Philadelphia.
186 Bradford Monthly Meeting Minutes, 12th of 5th Month 1786, MR-Ph34, FHL.
Quaker woman with the assistance of a Justice. By April of 1787, testimonies were being prepared against both Reuben and Sarah Lewis, with formal disownments occurring the following month.

Three years later, Keziah Lewis faced a similar fate and was accused of fornication. By 1791, a testimony was prepared against her for disownment, and the proceedings stated: “through Inattention to the dictates of divine grace which would preserve from evil hath fallen into libertinism and committed fornication, which is manifested by unlawful issue.” As with all disownments, if she offered “sincere repentance” she could regain her membership in the society, but she did not, and her disownment was finalized in 1791. The last Lewis child to face disownment was Hannah Jr. Like most of her siblings, she had moved from different Quaker Meetings in Chester County throughout the late eighteenth-century. The Uwchlan Meeting first heard of a possible transgression from the Goshen Meeting, where she had been accused of fornication. When confronted at Uwchlan about the charge, she told them that she was married. The grounds for her disownment included neglecting to give a certificate to the new meeting and fornication as she had “borne a child.” She had, according to the minutes, tried to “clear herself” of this “sin” by claiming she had been married, by a “hireling

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187 Uwchlan Monthly Meeting Minutes, 8th of 2nd Month 1787, MR-Ph626, FHL. The disownment proceedings do not state who his spouse was, but at the same time his case was being considered, a case was brought against a Sarah Whelen Lewis for similar circumstances, this was likely his wife.
188 Ibid, 5th of 4th Month, and 10th of 5th Month 1787.
189 Ibid, 4th of 11th Month 1790.
190 Ibid, 6th of 1st Month 1791, and 10th of 3rd Month 1791.
191 Ibid, 10th of 3rd Month 1791.
192 Uwchlan Women’s Meeting Minutes, 7th of 6th Month 1792, MR-Ph626, FHL.
193 Ibid, 9th of 8th Month 1792. Hannah Lewis Junior was the only daughter who showed any resistance to the charges brought against her, but again, without any documents in her own voice, the true story is much harder to ascertain.
194 Ibid, 7th of 2nd Month 1793.
preacher."\(^{195}\) Finally, in February of 1793, the full testimony was published and her disownment became official. \(^{196}\)

Disownment of Lewis Children 1783-1793

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date of Disownment</th>
<th>Reason for Disownment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edith (Lewis) King</td>
<td>1783</td>
<td>Attending marriage outside the meeting, bearing of a bastard child and marriage out of unity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prudence (Lewis) Meredith</td>
<td>1786</td>
<td>Marriage out of unity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reuben Lewis</td>
<td>1787</td>
<td>Failure to produce a certificate and marriage out of unity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keziah Lewis</td>
<td>1791</td>
<td>Fornication and bearing of a bastard child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah Lewis Jr.</td>
<td>1793</td>
<td>Fornication and failure to produce a certificate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Bradford and Uwchlan Monthly Meeting Minutes, FHL.

In a span of ten years, each of the Lewis children clashed with the Quaker Meeting and was disowned for behaviors that went against the society’s values. Their mother was the only individual from the immediate family to maintain her membership. With the exception of Hannah Jr., none of the children offered much protest to the charges brought against them. This set of events is interesting, not merely for its depiction of human behavior, but also as a possible indicator of tumultuous childhoods. All of the children were minors when they were forced to flee Chester County for New York, and this, combined with their father’s death and the confiscation of the family property, likely had a lasting effect on their lives. It is easy to imagine that such dramatic changes in the family’s socioeconomic status could have engendered such responses, and it is also possible that the Quaker meeting felt they needed to pay particular attention to the Lewis children, as they had spent so many years away from the county, and because their father had fallen out of favor by involving himself in the war.

\(^{195}\) Uwchlan Women’s Meeting Minutes, 7\(^{th}\) of 2\(^{nd}\) Month 1793, MR-Ph626, FHL.

\(^{196}\) Ibid.
Without a chain of personal correspondence from either Lewis or her children, what she thought about their behavior, along with the specifics of their encounters, cannot be known. Each child represented a personal protest to the strict rules of the Quaker community and whether they were cognizant of this or not is uncertain. It is difficult to speculate whether they would have had the same fate had the war never occurred, or if Curtis Lewis had remained neutral, yet the Lewis family survived a trying and desperate ordeal, which almost certainly and profoundly shaped the lives of these young adults. Their actions may also have been part of a larger trend of premarital sexual relationships, pregnancies in particular, developing in the late eighteenth-century. These trends were seen especially in New England, but also represent larger familial power structure changes. It is possible that the actions of the Lewis children fit into this larger shift rather than representing isolated cases of individual rebellion brought about by the Revolution.  

After their disownment, the Lewis children become much less visible. Edith and John King appear to have remained in Chester County, while Prudence and Benjamin Meredith left the county for Philadelphia. Reuben Lewis, after his removal from the Uwchlan Meeting,

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198 As is expected, it is difficult to trace the females within the Lewis family without knowing if, when or who they married. Little information about John King or his wife Edith has surfaced, but it appears that they resided in Chester County for some time. Prudence and Benjamin Meredith held land in West Whiteland Township but later moved to Philadelphia where Meredith was as a plasterer living in Northern Liberties. Benjamin Meredith to George Entrikin, 1798, Deed Book Q-2, 40:99-102, CCA. The Philadelphia Directories for the 1790s and into the 1820s list various individuals by the name of Benjamin Meredith with careers ranging from plasterer to brewer to grocer. Robert Desilver, The Philadelphia Directory for 1824 (Philadelphia, 1824).
remained in the township where he rented and operated the Red Lyon Tavern.\textsuperscript{199} The others along with their mother likely lived as dependents, in or around the county, but the 1790s census offers little help in locating them.

In January of 1793, thirteen years after Curtis Lewis's death, Hannah Lewis reappeared, this time entering a petition for her dower rights to Pennsylvania's House of Representatives.\textsuperscript{200} In Pennsylvania, if a woman's husband died intestate, she, after debts against his estate were paid, received her dower in the form of rights to the real and personal property owned by her husband at his death.\textsuperscript{201} The share she received was "one-third the value of the whole if there was a living child or children, and one half if there were no children."\textsuperscript{202} Dower was intended to support a woman in her widowhood and prevent her from relying on the public resources of the state.\textsuperscript{203} A report on the petition entered by Lewis read:

Hannah Lewis, widow and relict of Curtis Lewis, deceased [...] set forth that her late husband's estate, to the value of four thousand pounds, was confiscated, sold, and the amount thereof paid into the Treasury of this commonwealth, whereby she has been reduced from affluence to a state of poverty, that having neglected to apply in due time for her right of dower; therefore prays that the Legislature may take her situation into consideration and grant her such relief in the premises, as they may deem proper.\textsuperscript{204}

\textsuperscript{199} Tavern Petition of Reuben Lewis, May 1787, 32:70-71, CCA. It is unclear if Lewis or any of her children relied on him for support.

\textsuperscript{200} Saturday, January 26, 1793, Journal of the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1792-1793, Early American Imprints, Series I, no. 25974, 133.

\textsuperscript{201} His real estate excluded her paraphernalia. Salmon, Women and the Law of Property in Early America, 141, 166. Lewis had previous experience with intestate law. Her father, Robert Miller, died in 1761 without a will and her family's property was dealt with by the County's Orphans' Court. Release of Right, Solomon Miller to Warrick Miller, Chester County Deed Book, O: 14:447-449; Orphans' Court, Docket 6, 1761, Robert Miller of East Caln Township, CCA.

\textsuperscript{202} Salmon, Women and the Law of Property in Early America, 141.

\textsuperscript{203} Many believed that dower rights would always be granted, but in Pennsylvania, the state often put creditors' rights over those of widows. Salmon, Women and the Law of Property in Early America 16, 145; Waciega, 43.

\textsuperscript{204} Saturday, January 26, 1793, Journal of the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1792-1793, Early American Imprints, Series I, no. 25974, 133.
The petition was ordered to lie on the table, and three days later a committee was appointed to investigate the case.\textsuperscript{205} In March, they brought their findings before the House, reporting that after the debts were paid £128.10.9 remained as a balance in the treasury.\textsuperscript{206} "Induced from motives of justice and humanity," the committee decided that the interest of the balance, £7.14.2, should be paid to Lewis annually for the duration of her life, but again, the claim was tabled.\textsuperscript{207}

The minutes fell silent until late December, when her case was "taken from the files," and subsequently passed a second reading.\textsuperscript{208} Debate over the terms of her petition continued into the new year with the House finally voting to send her case to the Senate almost exactly a year after its first consideration.\textsuperscript{209} The Pennsylvania Senate acted more quickly reading her bill, "An Act for the relief of Hannah Lewis," on January 28, 1794 and voting, but the "the bill was lost" after much debate.\textsuperscript{210}

Lewis’s quest for her dower rights raises many questions. Why would Pennsylvania’s government consider giving the widow of an attainted traitor, whom they had originally denied compensation, her dower? Was there someone in the House or Senate who knew of her case and wanted to help?\textsuperscript{211} Did any other cases of contested dower rights from confiscated estates

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{206} Ibid. Salmon, \textit{Women and the Law of Property in Early America}, 166.
\textsuperscript{207} Wednesday, March 13, 1793, \textit{Journal of the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1792-1793}, Early American Imprints, Series I, no. 25974, 262. As Salmon wrote, “courts realized that widow’s thirds could vary in value considerably depending on the age and health of the woman. To a widow of twenty, a life estate signified much more than it did to a widow of sixty. Jurists needed to develop a useful system for proportioning estates between widows and other heirs or creditors.” \textit{Women and the Law of Property in Early America}, 173.
\textsuperscript{208} Tuesday, December 24, 1793, \textit{Journal of the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1792-1793}, Early American Imprints, Series I, no. 25974, 52.
\textsuperscript{211} It cannot be known for certain, but Lewis may have received help from someone in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. It was listed in the papers that a Mr. Whelen "called up" her case. Her son, Reuben Lewis, had married a Sarah Whelen from Chester County, but it is unknown if there were any direct links between the families. \textit{Federal Gazette}, March 30, 1793, LCP; Uwchlan Monthly Meeting Minutes, 10\textsuperscript{th} of 5\textsuperscript{th} Month 1787.
\end{footnotes}
emerge so many years after the Revolution? If not, why was her case considered? The answer could lie in politics. If she had applied for dower after her return in 1782, she most likely would have been denied compensation, as her association with her loyalist husband would have made her suspect. But by 1790, Pennsylvania adopted a more conservative State Constitution, and it is possible that this, combined with the passage of time, allowed for petitions entered by women once seen as loyalists and threats to the state to be considered. 212

The debate over her petition reflected a tangled case of dower rights in which she would be given monetary support rather than property, since her late husband’s estate had been sold. As a result of confiscation, Pennsylvania now had to fill the role of the executor and administrator, and it was up to the state to decide what allowances could be made for her. Traditionally, if an estate sold to cover debts “left a surplus in the hands of the executor or administrator, the widow received not the entire amount, but only the interest of a third of it.” 213

However, Lewis’s land was not sold to cover debt, but by the state to make a profit as

MR-Ph626, FHL. Members of the Whelen family who were in the Pennsylvania State Legislature in the 1790s appear to have sided with the Federalists. Tinkcom, 58, 253-254, 322n25. For more on the genealogical history of the Whelen family, see, John W. Jordan, ed., Colonial and Revolutionary Families of Pennsylvania: Genealogical and Personal Memoirs (New York: Lewis Publishing Company, 1911), 2:663-669. In 1793, Timothy Matlack reentered Pennsylvania politics becoming the clerk of the Senate about the same time that Lewis’s case was brought before the House. It is possible that he had some connections within the House and Senate that would have been helpful to her case. Stackhouse, 15.

212 “A Proclamation By the Supreme Executive Council of the Common-Wealth of Pennsylvania,” May 21, 1778, Early American Imprints, Series I. From her petitions, it seemed that Lewis had reintegrated into life in Pennsylvania and that her husband’s loyalty was no longer a major inhibiting factor. This raises questions about the lives of loyalists who returned to their homes after the war. Some studies have suggested that the majority of loyalists left America, but according to John Shay, “only a fraction of the half-million Loyalists was ever able or perhaps willing to emigrate,” and loyalists “appear to have been reintegrated, speedily and painlessly, into American society,” although all of this varied by state. A People Numerous And Armed: Reflections on The Military Struggle for American Independence (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 184. See also, Jasanoff, Liberty’s Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World. For a fuller discussion of Pennsylvania politics in the 1790s, see, Tinkcom, The Republicans and Federalists in Pennsylvania 1790-1801: A Study in National Stimulus and Local Response.

213 Salmon, Women and the Law of Property in Early America, 166. Salmon wrote that this practice was “particularly harsh” in terms of dower laws, because “even after losing her full dower share in the realty of her husband, she could not claim the full surplus, no matter how small. She had to share it with other heirs.” It is unclear if Lewis would have been required to give part of the money she received to her children as their inheritance or if the State considered making a separate allowance for them.
punishment for her husband’s treason. With her only option for support being payment from the remaining balance, it seemed that the House tried to replicate procedures for widows who were given “a cash equivalent” for their life interest in a third of their deceased husband’s property. But “even if real estate was converted into cash […] the widow did not receive her share of the surplus outright—she simply collected the interest on her share for life.” This stipulation most closely reflected the House’s plan for offering Lewis support through the receipt of the annual interest on the larger sum that remained in the possession of the State’s Treasury.

Lewis’s petition for dower may have been in response to an increasingly troubled economic situation. In 1789, she returned to the Bradford Monthly Meeting after some time at Uwchlan, presumably spent with her son. Two years later, the meeting minutes reported that she again “removed” herself from the jurisdiction of the Bradford Meeting and was now living “within the verge of the Goshen Monthly Meeting.” Bradford believed she needed a certificate and prepared to grant her one if “no obstructions” appeared. An obstruction did appear—“a complaint on account of debt” from Thomas Stalker. The committee investigating Lewis’s situation reported that there was “little prospect” of her being able to pay, but Stalker refused to withdraw the complaint. Further debate ensued, and the committee thought it would be best “to let the matter drop.” It took some time, but the committee successfully convinced Stalker to withdraw his complaint and the matter was “closed on the minute” in

214 Wilson, 27.
215 Ibid.
216 Bradford Monthly Meeting Minutes, 17th of 7th Month 1789, MR-Ph34, FHL.
217 Ibid, 12th of 8th Month 1791.
218 Ibid.
219 Ibid, 18th of 5th Month 1792. When debts were entered against Curtis Lewis’s estate during the confiscation process, Thomas Stalker claimed £60 for a woman, Sarah Jackson, who was born “deaf and dumb,” and £9 on behalf of Margaret Chalfant. Pennsylvania Archives, Sixth Series, 13:378,379. At the same time Stalker brought a complaint against Lewis, he also entered one against her former neighbor, Rachel Roman, also a widow, but it is unclear if their debts were connected.
220 Ibid, 16th of 8th Month 1793.
221 Ibid, 18th of 10th Month 1793.
1794. Lewis's failed petition with Pennsylvania's State Government, as well as the complaint of debt brought against her in the early 1790's, paints a picture of widowhood full of poverty and frustration. Unable to obtain her dower and in debt, her prospects looked bleak, but she did not give up.

Three years later in 1797, the minutes of the Pennsylvania Senate recorded another petition from Lewis, "praying that her case may be re-considered, and such allowances made her, as justice and the nature of her case requires." After much debate, the Senate agreed to send her bill to the House for consideration, where it was tabled in late January of 1798. The case was revisited briefly the following December, but no further action was taken and the petition fades from the records for eleven years. In March of 1809, she returned, and at the age of seventy-four entered a final petition for her dower to Pennsylvania's House of Representatives. The minutes for March 13th read:

Mr. Darlington presented a petition from Hannah Lewis of Haverford township, in the county of Delaware, praying for reasons therein stated, that she may be allowed such part of her late husband's estate, confiscated by the commonwealth, as she might have claimed as her dower right.

No decision on her petition was made, but at the end of 1809 and into 1810, the House voted to send her case to a committee for consideration in the next legislative session. With that final

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222 Bradford Monthly Meeting Minutes, 14th of 2nd Month 1794, FHL.
223 Saturday, December 16, 1797, Journal of the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1797-1798, Early American Imprints, Series I, no. 34329, 29. The case was revisited again on December 19, 1797 and on January 12, 1798. Ibid, 35, 64.
224 Ibid, Friday, January 19, 1798, 81; Saturday, January 20 1798, 122-123.
225 Ibid, Tuesday, December 18, 1798, 50.
226 Monday, March 13, 1809, Journal of the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1808-1809, Early American Imprints, Series II, no. 18334, 652. Haverford Township was once a part of Chester County until the county split in 1789. Mr. Darlington was likely Isaac Darlington, a representative from Chester County and a Federalist. Darlington was a member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives from 1807-1809 and served in the United States Congress from 1817-1819. Andrew R. Dodge and Betty K. Koed, eds., A Biographical Directory of the United States Congress 1774-2005 (Washington D.C., 2005), 920.
vote, both Lewis and her petition disappear, and she, it seemed, never succeeded in obtaining her
dower. 227

Thirty-two years had passed since Curtis Lewis made the decision to join the British in
the fall of 1777, and Hannah, now advanced in age, had spent a lifetime dealing with the
repercussions of his actions. She made claims for compensation not only for herself but for her
children, especially, it seemed, for Reuben Lewis. Her first claim in Pennsylvania failed, but it
indicated that she chose to ignore any political differences she may have had with the American
side in favor of ensuring familial subsistence. When she fled to New York, she entered
widowhood removed from her kin group in a strange city, and ultimately quartered in a
stranger’s home. When she managed to return to Pennsylvania, she began preparations to
present a claim for compensation in Halifax—the only successful claim of her widowed life. In
the 1790s, she faced debt and repeatedly found her petitions for her dower unsuccessful, but her
persistence reveals her determination and desperation, as dower was the last chance she had to
gain economic security, however small it may have been. Her quest for survival through
petitions consumed much of her life, and she was never able to fully escape the political shadow
of her deceased husband. But Hannah Lewis never stopped fighting, and entered the public
sphere as a competent woman capable of seeking her own support, proving one thing, that she
was a survivor.

227 Tuesday, December 19, 1809, Journal of the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of
Pennsylvania, 1809-1810, Early American Imprints, Series II, no. 21024, 115. Lewis’s persistence to gain her
dower rights may or may not be representative of all loyalist women, but there are other examples of women who, in
the years after the Revolution, petitioned continuously for their dower. One example, Kezia Coffin, a cousin to
Benjamin Franklin, made her political allegiance to the British clear. While her husband did not die in the war, she
was unable to gain compensation from the British commissioners in Halifax, and after his death, entered petitions
until the last week of her life trying to obtain monetary support. See, Sarah C. Chambers and Lisa Norling,
“Choosing to Be a Subject: Loyalist Women in the Revolutionary Atlantic World,” Journal of Women’s History 20
no.1, (Spring 2008): 42-47.
In August of 1783, Sarah Kennedy wrote a letter to her brother recounting her experiences during the years of the American Revolution. She noted the “memorable day” that the British left Philadelphia after an occupation of the city that began in September of the previous year. But, that day, June 17, 1778, was memorable for quite another reason. About thirty miles from Philadelphia at the Continental Hospital located at Yellow Springs in Chester County, Pennsylvania, her husband, Doctor Samuel Kennedy, lay dying of typhoid. His illness was brought on by his duties as a surgeon at the hospital, and for eight days his condition continually grew worse. When he died, he left his wife and their children in a precarious situation in which the rights to his property were entangled with a tenancy agreement, the Continental Army, and the numerous soldiers who convalesced there.

Samuel Kennedy was a strong supporter of the patriot cause and entered into service with the American forces in 1776. He served as a surgeon in Pennsylvania’s Fourth Battalion under the command of General Anthony Wayne as part of a campaign that took him to New York and Canada. He returned to Pennsylvania and was present at the battles of Brandywine, Paoli and Germantown in 1777 and served as a guide throughout Chester County, offering geographic knowledge to Washington and his troops. In the days following Brandywine, the Americans, along with Washington, stopped at Yellow Springs to avoid detection by the British following

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228 James Lovell to Timothy Pickering, January 8, 1781, in Letters of Delegates to Congress, 12:571-572.
229 Sarah Kennedy to Thomas Ruston, August 22, 1783, Coxe Family Papers, Series 6a: Thomas Ruston - Correspondence and General Papers, Jan. – Aug. 1789, Box 184, Folder 2, HSP.
230 Ibid; Will of Doctor Samuel Kennedy, Filed 1778, no. 3130, CCA.
231 Sarah Kennedy to Thomas Ruston, August 22, 1783, Coxe Family Papers, Series 6a: Thomas Ruston - Correspondence and General Papers, Jan. – Aug. 1789, Box 184, Folder 2, HSP.
232 Ibid.
233 Ibid; Futhey and Cope, 619. In the days before the battle, Washington and his troops marched to Chester County. The majority of the army was positioned at Chad’s Ford on the northern side of the Brandywine River. General Anthony Wayne’s brigade was also deployed there. Warden, 14.
the aborted "Battle of Clouds" on September 16, 1777. Three months later, as the Americans camped at Valley Forge for the winter, large numbers of injured and sick soldiers of the Continental line were transferred to the property. It was not until January 3, 1778, that Washington called for the official construction of a hospital there. Construction began in March, but Kennedy did not live to see its completion. His death marked the beginning of Sarah Kennedy's own personal quest for property compensation and repayment that lasted twenty-five years and into the first decades of the New Republic.

The role the Yellow Springs hospital played during the American Revolution has been largely overlooked by historians. Medical and Revolutionary histories provide only brief overviews, if any, of the hospital's existence, and most do not give Sarah Kennedy, or the property, the attention they deserve. Her widowhood offers an opportunity to explore the importance of Yellow Springs, and more broadly to understand how her husband's patriotism affected his family after his death. This narrative will focus mostly on Sarah Kennedy's widowhood and her quest for compensation and monetary support for herself and her children. It is the first attempt to place both the property and Kennedy into the larger historic narrative.

234 Taaffe, 83. The "Battle of Clouds" was an aborted effort on September 15-16, 1777 to engage in a military battle in the aftermath of Brandywine. While two small skirmishes did take place, a full scale battle failed to materialize in part because of a strong storm that caused a downpour of rain. Washington and his troops marched through the pouring rain stopping at Yellow Springs on September 16, 1777 in an attempt to avoid the British. McGuire, Battle of Paoli, 28-37. Washington also used the tavern at Yellow Springs as his headquarters on September 17, 1777. Rob Lukens and Sandra S. Momyer, Images of America: Yellow Springs (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2007), 9.


237 Blanco, "American Army Hospitals in Pennsylvania During the Revolutionary War," 347-368. Blanco's article only covers the broad issues of construction and usage. Like many accounts that deal with medical or Revolutionary history, he only briefly records how the property came to be in use by the Continental Army and fails to illuminate any of the stories of individuals such as Sarah Kennedy, her children, or their tenant, Samuel Culbertson. Even a publication put forth by Yellow Springs about its own history, provides little coverage of the property's colonial history, choosing instead to focus on its later use as a school for orphans and role in the film industry. See Lukens and Momyer, Images of America: Yellow Springs.
Sarah Ruston was born to Job Ruston (1714-1785) and Mary Baker Ruston (1718-1757) in Oxford Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania in 1737.\(^{238}\) Little is known about her early life, but some of her experiences can be ascertained from a study of the Ruston family. Her father was born in Berwick, England in the early eighteenth-century and before the age of thirty settled in Pennsylvania, where he purchased a portion of Fagg’s Manor in Oxford Township in 1739, which consisted of about 425 acres.\(^{239}\) Soon after, he purchased an additional 436 acres on Penn’s Manor in the same township, and as such, Sarah Ruston was born into a family with the means to purchase generous land holdings.\(^{240}\) She was one of twelve children born to her father’s first marriage, and her brother, Thomas, was a doctor educated at the College of New Jersey as well as at Edinburgh in Scotland where he received his medical degree in 1765.\(^{241}\) He remained in Europe until 1785 following their father’s death, and the letters written to him by his sister provide some of the richest accounts of her experiences during the war.\(^{242}\) The Ruston

\(^{238}\) Futhey and Cope, 717-718. Job Ruston and Mary Baker were married from 1735 to June of 1757 when Mary died. Job remarried shortly after, and lived until January of 1785. Miles White Jr., *Henry Baker and Some of His Descendants*, (Baltimore, 1901), 23.

\(^{239}\) Futhey and Cope, 717.

\(^{240}\) Ibid. The average size of a farm in the county was about 125 acres. To put her situation in context, see, Lemon, 150-217.

\(^{241}\) Ruston graduated from the College of New Jersey in 1762. The union of Job and Mary Ruston produced twelve children, but it seems that only three survived into adulthood. Sarah Ruston’s step sister, Elizabeth, married John Evans Finley of Chester County. Finley later brought a case against his brother-in-law, Thomas Ruston, which involved most of the Ruston siblings. Ibid, 717. See also, Whitfield J. Bell, Jr., “Philadelphia Medical Students in Europe, 1750-1800,” *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 67, no. 1 (January 1943):1-29.

\(^{242}\) Ibid, 718. See also, Dr. Thomas Ruston Papers, Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, PA.

Thomas Ruston (1742-1811) married Mary Fisher, who brought an ample fortune to the marriage, in London. Upon Ruston’s return to Philadelphia, he engaged in land speculation and ultimately lost most of their fortune before his death. Although he spent the war years in England, he had apparently remained supportive of the American cause. Benjamin Franklin wrote to Charles Carroll regarding Ruston in 1788, “May I presume so much upon our ancient Friendship as to recommend him [Ruston] to those civilities you have a pleasure in showing to strangers of Merit. Such you will find him. He was in England many years while I lived there, and always a firm Friend to the American cause.” Benjamin Franklin to Charles Carroll, October 9, 1778, Philadelphia, in *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, http://franklinpapers.org (accessed May 3, 2013).
family was deeply tied to the Presbyterian Church, and perhaps it was this activism which allowed Ruston to become acquainted with her future husband, a fellow Presbyterian.\textsuperscript{243}

Samuel Kennedy was born to David and Annabelle Montgomery Kennedy on July 1, 1730, at sea while en route to America.\textsuperscript{244} The Kennedy family originated in Ayrshire, Scotland and settled in Londonderry Township, Chester County upon arriving in Pennsylvania.\textsuperscript{245} Much less is known about their family's history and hardly anything has surfaced regarding Kennedy's early years. At some time in 1760, Kennedy, at the age of thirty, married Sarah Ruston, then twenty-three. The couple resided in East Whiteland Township, and their union produced six children: Thomas, John, Mary, Samuel, John Ruston and Sarah.\textsuperscript{246}

Little is known about their early married life, but it appears that Kennedy purchased the land on which the family settled in 1758, two years prior to his marriage.\textsuperscript{247} He bought a second tract in 1763, and three years later purchased another from his father-in-law, Job Ruston, for £20.\textsuperscript{248} By May of 1768, Kennedy had accumulated enough land so that he was able to offer portions of it for rent.\textsuperscript{249} In 1772, he appeared on county tax lists where he was assessed for 200

\textsuperscript{243} Futhery and Cope, 717. The Ruston and Kennedy families lived in adjacent townships; Oxford and Londonderry are located in the southwestern corner of Chester County. See map, p.13.

\textsuperscript{244} Ibid. 717-718.

\textsuperscript{245} Ibid. The Kennedy family also briefly resided in Ireland.

\textsuperscript{246} Only four children survived into adulthood, John (1764-1772) and Samuel (1769-1773) died young. Both children, like their father, are buried in the Charlestown Presbyterian Cemetery in Chester County. Thomas Ruston Kennedy was born in 1763 and John Kennedy was born in 1775. The birth years for the daughters are unknown. Notes on Samuel Kennedy, compiled by Sandra Momyer, Yellow Springs Record Group 1, Box 5, Folder 11, Moore Archives at Historic Yellow Springs, Chester Springs, PA (hereafter, YS).

\textsuperscript{247} Thomas Hubbert to Samuel Kennedy, 1758, Deed Book M-2, 36:294-298, CCA.

\textsuperscript{248} James Hunter to Samuel Kennedy, 1768, Deed Book, O-2, 38:84-88, CCA. Upon Job Ruston’s death in 1785, it was unclear if Samuel Kennedy ever finished his payment for this tract, as Sarah Kennedy found some paper work which suggested that it was not “wholly paid.” Sarah Kennedy to Thomas Wallace, May 2, 1786, Coxe Family Papers, Series 6a: Thomas Ruston – Correspondence and General Papers, Jan. – Aug. 1789, Box 184, Folder 1, HSP.

\textsuperscript{249} The property was a “tanyard” located near the White Horse Tavern in East Whiteland Township. The Pennsylvania Gazette, May 5, 1768, LCP. Later in May of 1772, Kennedy became entangled in a case of disputed territory between Pennsylvania and Cecil County, Maryland. It seemed that Kennedy had managed to remove another man’s tenants and replace them with his own and unrightfully obtain possession of the land. Mark Alexander, of Baltimore, Maryland, accused Kennedy and others from Pennsylvania of taking the land and “extending” the surveyed boundaries in their favor. Pennsylvania Packet, May 25, 1772, LCP.
acres, buildings, livestock and a tavern. Two years later, he had acquired two slaves, both a man and a woman.

On December 26, 1771, Kennedy wrote to Thomas Ruston, his brother-in-law, from his home in East Whiteland about the property at Yellow Springs. Ruston appeared to have advised him to purchase the land, as Kennedy wrote: “I have at length fulfilled your request in purchasing the Yellow Springs which you know is the principle bath in North America.” He continued, writing that the previous owner, John Baily, had made improvements worth £2,000 to the property before his purchase. Yellow Springs, located in Pikeland Township, consisted of 160 acres, a health resort and several structures including houses, barns, a tavern, a hotel as well as a mill and a blacksmith shop. It was a popular health spa in the eighteenth-century and physicians had been sending their patients there to benefit from the waters for decades.

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250 This was true of the records for 1758-1764. Chester County Tax Lists: 1758, Book C-23, 93; 1760, Book C-24, 29; 1762, Book C-25a, 48; Provincial Tax Lists: 1763, Book P-6b, 79; 1764, Book P-7a, 66; 1772, Book P-15, 32; 1773, Book P-16, 52, CCA. On tax lists, the term freemen referred to a single unmarried man over the age of twenty one who was not an apprentice or servant. Simler and Clemens, “The ‘Best Poor Man’s Country,’” 238.

251 He was also taxed for 150 acres, buildings and livestock. Provincial Tax List, 1774, Book P-17, 328.

252 Yellow Springs was also home to a tavern which, as Rosemary S. Warden wrote, served as an “important social center.” The tavern at Yellow Springs was boasted to have once fed 500 people in one day. Warden, 2. See also, Sarah Kennedy’s advertisement for Yellow Springs in the Pennsylvania Packet, June 30, 1781. LCP.

253 Samuel Kennedy to Thomas Ruston, December 26, 1771, Whiteland Township, Chester County, PA, Coxe Family Papers, Box 183, Folder 10, HSP. The property at Yellow Springs was offered for sale at public vendue to cover the previous owner’s debts in March of 1770. Pennsylvania Gazette, March 1, 1770, LCP.

254 Ibid. December of 1771, is the earliest known purchase date for the Yellow Springs property, which is normally cited as being purchased three years later in 1774. This could be a result of difficulty in making the title, an issue that Kennedy himself wrote of in his letter to Ruston.

255 Description of the Property at Yellow Springs, Yellow Springs Record Group 1, Box 5, Folder 9, YS.

256 Blanco, “American Army Hospitals in Pennsylvania During the Revolutionary War,” 364. The mineral and healing properties of Yellow Springs were known and used by Native Americans prior to European contact, and the springs were named for the iron and sulfur content of the waters. As Lukens and Momyer wrote, archeological and historical evidence has suggested that the Lenape Indians knew of Yellow Springs and called it “yellow waters.” They “utilized the magical springs for their medicine.” The first settlers in Pennsylvania learned of the healing properties of the springs and visited the location to benefit from its “medicinal qualities.” The colonists in America “brought with them a history of mineral waters used in Europe [...and] by 1722, Yellow Springs was mentioned in a
seems Kennedy never intended to live at Yellow Springs, as he immediately offered it for rent in 1772. By March of 1774, a tenancy agreement was drawn up between Kennedy and Samuel Culbertson, who began his ten-year lease on April 1st of that year.

With the advent of the Revolution, Kennedy made his patriotic intentions known. In January of 1776 he wrote to the Continental Congress volunteering his services as a physician telling them that he prayed they would “appoint him Surgeon to one of the Battalions [...] about to be raised.” He got his wish, and on January 19th was appointed as a surgeon in Pennsylvania’s Fourth Battalion under the command of Anthony Wayne. By May of 1776, he was on Long Island, New York, serving with the American forces, and Sarah Kennedy’s life as a

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257 As early as 1772, Kennedy offered the property for rent. He also listed, in this advertisement, that he desired to “purchase, a Negroe Man, acquainted with farming.” Pennsylvania Gazette, February 27, 1772, LCP.

258 Tenancy Agreement, Samuel Kennedy and Samuel Culbertson, March 14, 1774, Papers of the Continental Congress, Memorials Addressed to Congress, 5:14, 15. Tenancy agreements, unless specified in the lease, typically held the tenant responsible for paying the taxes on the property. Curiously, Culbertson is mostly absent in tax records, although scattered assessments were made especially during the war years. See, Simler and Clemens, “The Best Poor Man’s Country,” 238. See also, Simler, “Tenancy in Colonial Pennsylvania: The Case of Chester County,” 542-569; Simler, “The Landless Worker: An Index of Economic and Social Change in Chester County, Pennsylvania, 1750-1820,” 172-175; Clemens and Simler, “Rural Labor and the Farm Household in Chester County Pennsylvania 1750-1820,” 106-143.

259 Samuel Kennedy, January 3, 1776, Philadelphia, Yellow Springs Record Group 1, Box 5, Folder 9, YS.

260 Futhey and Cope, 619. The Fourth Pennsylvania Battalion, which later became the Fifth Pennsylvania Regiment, commanded by General Anthony Wayne was “largely raised in Chester County.” The Battalion “joined the Canadian campaign in the summer of 1776, fought at Trois Rivières in Canada, and then remained at Ticonderoga in New York until joining Washington in New Jersey in the summer of 1777. Wayne’s Continentals did not return to Chester County until the British invasion in the fall of 1777.” Warden, 11. In his service to Pennsylvania’s Fourth Battalion, Kennedy was recommended to be paid the sum of 14.1 dollars in May of 1776. Wednesday, May 22, 1776, Journal of the Continental Congress 1776, Early American Imprints, Series 1, 2:184.
single woman had officially begun. He wrote home often, but it seems the couple's correspondence was slowed, as her letters rarely reached him in a timely manner. In early June, he begged her to write about their family, calling his separation from them “intolerable” and adding that sometimes he felt “almost ready to resign.” In his absence, Kennedy was left to handle the family’s economic matters and manage their farm, but even from New York, her husband tried to supervise the running of his home, urging her to hire someone to “superintend [the] Harvest.” By August, Doctor Kennedy was in Ticonderoga, where he repeatedly wrote home expressing his desire to return by the fall. The letters Sarah wrote in response are missing; however, she must have expressed her fears and fatigue from managing the property and children in her husband’s absence. When Samuel responded in early September of 1776, he acknowledged her labors “under such a load of fatigue [and] anxiety,” and prayed for “divine aid” for her. He often closed his letters encouraging her to “comfort” herself and their children “with the hope” of his return. Beyond this correspondence, Kennedy’s life during her husband’s service is unrecoverable, but life with four young children and a household to oversee must have been taxing. In 1783, Kennedy recalled her husband’s involvement during 1776 and

261 Kennedy had apparently left Chester County with Persifor Frazer and arrived on Long Island on May 19, 1776. Persifor Frazer to Mary Frazer, Long Island, New York, May 23, 1776, in General Persifor Frazer: A Memoir, 84.
262 In many of Kennedy’s letters, he often writes that he has not heard from his wife and finds that many of the letters she sent him had gone missing.
263 Samuel Kennedy to Sarah Kennedy, Long Island, New York, June 7, 1776, in “Notes and Queries,” The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography 8, no. 1 (March 1884): 112.
264 Samuel Kennedy to Sarah Kennedy, New York, June 29, 1776, Ibid, 113. At some time in June of 1776, Kennedy obtained permission “to be absent for 8 to 10 days,” and it seems likely that he returned to his home in Chester County during this time. Persifor Frazer to Mary Frazer, Long Island, June 17, 1776 in General Persifor Frazer: A Memoir, 89. In a later letter written by Mary Frazer, she remembered that Samuel Kennedy had ridden “100 miles in the heat of Somer [sic] to see his wife.” Mary Worrall Frazer to Persifor Frazer, October 2, 1776 in General Persifor Frazer: A Memoir, 121.
265 Samuel Kennedy to Sarah Kennedy, Ticonderoga, August 5, 1776, in “Notes and Queries,” 114. It was about this time that Kennedy became very ill as noted in a letter from Persifor Frazer to his wife. Persifor Frazer to Mary Frazer, Ticonderoga, August 6, 1776 in General Persifor Frazer: A Memoir, 104.
266 Samuel Kennedy to Sarah Kennedy, Ticonderoga, September 2, 1776, Ibid, 115.
267 Ibid, 116. Doctor Kennedy’s return to Chester County appears to have occurred in December of 1776 when both he and Frazer were granted permission to return home. Persifor Frazer to Mary Frazer, Ticonderoga, November 18, 1776 in General Persifor Frazer: A Memoir, 132.
1777, writing that he served with General Horatio Gates as "surgeon to the army to Canada and endured all the hardship of the winter in that country" and that he "came home [to] great applause."^268

In March of 1777, Doctor Kennedy had apparently endured enough separation from his family, property and personal affairs and wrote to Pennsylvania's Supreme Executive Council requesting to be transferred to the position of prothonotary for the county.^[269] His petition claimed that after a year of service in the army he "sustained considerable pecuniary loss" which had "so impaired his constitution that he [was] rendered uncapable [sic] of prosecuting his practice in the country as usual."^[270] Rather than appointing him as prothonotary, he was assigned to the role of Senior Surgeon in the Military Hospitals in May.^[271]

Chester County had largely remained removed from direct military conflict until the fall of 1777 when the British entered the county on their way to Philadelphia^[272]. Sarah remembered the events:

> In the year 1777 General Howe and Lord Cornwallace [sic] advanced and fought our army at Chads Ford [...]. General Howe then marched to the white Horses and encamped there. Dear Mr. Kennedy was with our light horse in an advance reconnoitering party at the request of his Excellency General Washington, as he

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^268 Sarah Kennedy to Thomas Ruston, August 22, 1783, Coxe Family Papers, Series 6a: Thomas Ruston - Correspondence and General Papers, Jan. – Aug. 1789, Box 184, Folder 2, HSP.
^269 Petition of Dr. Samuel Kennedy, March 10, 1777, Records of Pennsylvania's Revolutionary Government 1775-1790, Film 24, Roll 33, DLAR. “The prothonotary in eighteenth-century Pennsylvania not only administered the sections of statutes that applied to his office, but he disseminated and interpreted the laws of the land. He also provided the provincial or state executive branch of government with detailed and timely information about persons and events in his county, and he acted as a troubleshooter and personal emissary on a variety of matters for the chief executive and members of his staff.” Francis Fox, “The Prothonotary: Linchpin of Provincial and State Government in Eighteenth-Century Pennsylvania,” Pennsylvania History 59, no. 1 (January 1992): 41. The minutes of the General Assembly regarding the petition read: “The Petition of Samuel Kennedy, praying to be appointed Register and Recorder for the County Chester, was read and ordered to lie on the table.” Tuesday, March 11, 1777, Journal of the General Assembly, Early American Imprints, Series I, no. 15538, 51.
^270 Petition of Doctor Samuel Kennedy, March 10, 1777, Records of Pennsylvania’s Revolutionary Government 1775-1790, Film 24, Roll 33, DLAR.
^271 Futhey and Cope, 619; Sarah Kennedy to Thomas Ruston, August 22, 1783, Coxe Family Papers, Series 6a: Thomas Ruston – Correspondence and General Papers, Jan. – Aug. 1789, Box 184, Folder 2, HSP.
^272 Taaffe, 50-107.
knew the ground[;] they had a skirmish with them and[he] had like
to been taken by them.\textsuperscript{273}

During the Philadelphia Campaign, Kennedy served the American forces beginning a second
period when Sarah was left alone to manage the farm and children in her husband’s absence.\textsuperscript{274}

On September 15\textsuperscript{th}, British troops arrived on the Kennedy’s property in East Whiteland
when Sarah and the children were home alone.\textsuperscript{275} In a letter to her brother, she described the
events in which the British troops camped on their property, noting that before morning their
home was “in ruins [...] the fences consumed the Grain all dislodged [and that] all the indignities
were offered to [their] house.”\textsuperscript{276} She continued:

we all fled and left our stock our grain our furniture which fell into
their hands the windows of our house they broke to pieces our
furniture they carried out and burned [...] the people of the
hospital here were then removed to Reading my husband then went
with them I and my little ones went to my fathers as these parts
were all ravaged by the British no cattle or provisions left there I
stayed three weeks and bore the ill treatment of a drunken
stepmother after that I returned to our waste house.\textsuperscript{277}

It must have been a horrific experience, for Kennedy and her children to have their home and
property destroyed by the enemy in such a brutal fashion. Fortunately, she was able to remove
her family to her father’s land in Oxford Township, where the damages to personal property had
not been as great as those suffered by individuals living closer to the epicenter of Brandywine. It

\textsuperscript{273} Sarah Kennedy to Thomas Ruston, August 22, 1783, Coxe Family Papers, Series 6a: Thomas Ruston –
Correspondence and General Papers, Jan. – Aug. 1789, Box 184, Folder 2, HSP.
\textsuperscript{274} It is likely that Kennedy was able to return home throughout his time in Chester County, especially
when the American forces were camped at the Yellow Springs property not far from his home in East Whiteland.
\textsuperscript{275} Sarah Kennedy to Thomas Ruston, August 22, 1783, Coxe Family Papers, Series 6a: Thomas Ruston –
Correspondence and General Papers, Jan. – Aug. 1789, Box 184, Folder 2, HSP; British Depredations of the
Revolutionary War [Film], Dr. Samuel Kennedy filed by Sarah Kennedy, [frame 220], CCA.
\textsuperscript{276} Sarah Kennedy to Thomas Ruston, August 22, 1783, Coxe Family Papers, Series 6a: Thomas Ruston –
Correspondence and General Papers, Jan. – Aug. 1789, Box 184, Folder 2, HSP.
\textsuperscript{277} Ibid. Her mention of a hospital and the movement of the injured and sick suggests that at least as early
as Brandywine, their property was used for medical purposes. She could also be referring to soldiers scattered about
East Whiteland Township. Her story of property damages by the British troops is very similar to the experiences of
the Frazer family of Thornbury Township. A few days after the Battle of Brandywine, British troops arrived on
their land plundering their home and taking their goods. Like in Kennedy’s case, the British asked where the rebels
were and insulted a slave woman. See, General Persifor Frazer: A Memoir, 156-160.
was also fortunate that her husband was not home when the British arrived, because the soldiers knew of his involvement with the American side. Had he been home, he would have most likely been captured or killed. In fact, the British soldiers told Rina, the Kennedy’s slave who remained behind, that “they had heard of her rebel master in Canada [and] if they could catch him they would give him his desert [sic].” These damages caused by the British were the first instances of property depredation that Kennedy endured. Among the items taken or destroyed were: livestock, wheat, rye, barley, hay, apples, potatoes, pictures, china, furniture, beds, curtains, kitchen items, window glass, clothing, harnesses, 2,000 rails and items necessary for riding. Her property was one of many to incur damages as a result of the war, and soldiers, both British and American, took supplies from local civilians and destroyed property if political affiliations were known.

November of 1777 brought a new appointment for Kennedy as he was made Senior Surgeon and Physician for the General Hospitals in the Middle Department. Later in

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278 Sarah Kennedy to Thomas Ruston, August 22, 1783, Coxe Family Papers, Series 6a: Thomas Ruston - Correspondence and General Papers, Jan. – Aug. 1789, Box 184, Folder 2, HSP. Rina apparently played a key role in saving the house and remained on the property after Kennedy and her children fled. Kennedy remembered the event writing to her brother, “had it not been for our Negro wench Rina […] the house would have been consumed.” Rina remained in service to the Kennedy family for the duration of her life and an unexpected find in the Independent Gazetteer for October 15, 1782 (LCP) locates her son, Primus, who was described as a “rogue” who had had “six masters […] and had] a mother living with widow Kennedy, at the Yellow Springs.” He ran away from his master in Bucks County and, as the runaway advertisement stated, would “attempt to get to [his mother].” The advertisement was entered by a Robert M. Malcom.

279 British Depredations of the Revolutionary War [Film], Dr. Samuel Kennedy filed by Sarah Kennedy, [frame 220], CCA. Sarah Kennedy’s father, Job Ruston, also suffered damages to his personal property when the British marched through the county, and three of his slaves ran away, perhaps to join the British troops. Ibid, [frame 10].

280 Throughout the fall of 1777, the British troops, estimated to be about 17,000 in number, made their way through the county plundering and robbing the inhabitants of their personal property. Warden, 16. Along with damages caused by the British troops, local tory gangs also threatened the inhabitants of Chester County and beyond. One example is that of James Fitzpatrick, “Fitz,” who had deserted the American forces and led General Howe through Chester County. He was known for targeting militia recruiters as well as tax collectors and continued his reign of terror until 1778 when he was captured and hanged. See, Warden, “Chester County,” 19, and Warden, "The Infamous Fitch": The Tory Bandit, James Fitzpatrick of Chester County,” Pennsylvania History 63, no. 3 (1995): 376-387.

December, he was sent by Washington to open a hospital at Lititz, in Lancaster County. As fall turned to winter, there was a growing need for hospitals that could house larger numbers of sick and injured soldiers, and this led Washington to order the official construction of hospital buildings at Yellow Springs on January 3, 1778. Located about ten miles west of Valley Forge, the property had already been serving as a depository for many of the sick from at least December and probably on a smaller scale since Brandywine. After offering his property for use, Kennedy was one of the first physicians assigned to duty there. It seemed that the Continental Congress had been trying to come to an agreement with Kennedy for a “title to the ground to be retained for public use,” since July of 1777, but no official transfer had occurred. By August, construction was completed, and Sarah Kennedy described the changes to their property, writing that “a Large Hospital three stories high was built […] with 300 hundred sick and wounded [and] with second surgeons and mates” serving under her husband. As historian

282 Futhey and Cope, 619; Blanco, *Physician of the American Revolution: Jonathan Potts*, 168, and John Woolf Jordan, *The Military Hospitals at Bethlehem and Lititz, Pennsylvania During the Revolutionary War* (Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, 1896), 20. The American forces had limited places in which they could send sick and injured soldiers. Along with the establishment of the hospital at Yellow Springs, additional hospitals were set up at Red Lion (Lionville), French Creek and Uwchlan. The Uwchlan Quaker Meeting Minutes recorded the event: “The Key of the meeting house was demanded by some of the physicians of the Continental army in order to convert the same to a hospital for their soldiers. The Friend who had care of the house refusing to deliver it, forcible entry was made into the house and stable.” Uwchlan Quaker Meeting Minutes qtd. in Blanco, *Physician of the American Revolution: Jonathan Potts*, 168.

283 Blanco, “American Army Hospitals in Pennsylvania During the Revolution,” 364; Blanco, *Physician of the American Revolution: Jonathan Potts*, 161-167. At the same time that construction for new army buildings began at Yellow Springs, Congress considered reforms of the medical department. The department was under harsh criticism from Benjamin Rush, who wrote that William Shippen, then the Purveyor General and Deputy Director General, was inefficient, corrupt and had an “indifference to suffering.” Rush, and others, worked to reduce Shippen’s credibility and were ultimately successful in forcing Shippen to be replaced by Jonathan Potts. Blanco, *Physician of the American Revolution: Jonathan Potts*, 170-173.


286 “Board of Treasury Considers Mr. Culbertson’s Claim,” July 16,1777, Continental Congress Papers, Applications of Individuals H-L, 13:333, Yellow Springs Record Group 1, Box 5, Folder 10, YS. Why they were interested in obtaining the land this early before Brandywine is uncertain.

287 Sarah Kennedy to Thomas Ruston, August 22, 1783, Coxe Family Papers, Series 6a: Thomas Ruston – Correspondence and General Papers, Jan. – Aug. 1789, Box 184, Folder 2, HSP. The structure also included “broad porches” as well as a “kitchen and bathing facilities.” Blanco, *Physician of the American Revolution: Jonathan
Richard Bianco wrote, in contrast with other hospitals, “Yellow Springs had a record as a fairly healthy place. By August [1778] some 1,300 patients had been treated there, of which 445 were discharged, 124 died and 725 remained.”

By 1780, Yellow Springs was mostly used as a place of refuge for those who suffered from “lingering illnesses” or for those who had been severely wounded and were rehabilitating. Even after the “seat of war” left Pennsylvania, Yellow Springs remained a functioning hospital until a committee of Congress decided that it “should be abandoned” in September of 1781.

By offering Yellow Springs to the Continental forces, Kennedy complicated the tenancy agreement he made in 1774. Samuel Culbertson paid a yearly rent of £70 for the property which included a dwelling house, meadows, saw mill, orchard, waterways, barns, stables, gardens, woods and dams. As per their agreement, Kennedy maintained the right to make any additions to the property in terms of buildings as long as he paid Culbertson for the damages. If

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Potts, 184; Blanco, “American Army Hospitals in Pennsylvania During the Revolutionary War,” 365. Earlier in June, it was observed that the number of patients numbered about 125 to 130. Journal of Rev. Dr. James Sproat, June 13, 1778, qtd. in Gibson, 329. For a more thorough report on the numbers of sick and injured at Yellow Springs as well as the other general hospitals, see, “A Report of the General Hospitals. 26th April 1778” in Philander D. Chase, et al., eds., The Papers of George Washington (Charlottesville Virginia: University of Virginia Press, 2004), 14:651-654.


Gibson, 181.

The hospital at Yellow Springs, like most military hospitals during the Revolution, suffered from a lack of supplies and as a result, the inability to properly treat the sick and wounded soldiers in its care. In May of 1780, Dr. Bodo Otto, then surgeon at Yellow Springs, wrote to Congress that there was “no money in the hands of the Commissary to purchase fresh provisions [...] The assistant physicians complain daily that they have not received any money for their services these past seven months; neither are they furnished with clothing, so it is uncertain how long they will be able to continue in their several capacities. The nurses and orderlies refuse serving any longer, as they have received no pay. This being the deplorable situation of the hospital at Yellow Springs, your Memorialists entreats your Honors to take the matter into consideration and order some speedy relief, or the sick and wounded must unavoidably suffer.” Dr. Bodo Otto to The Committee of Congress for Conducting the Medical Department, May 19, 1780, Yellow Springs, Pennsylvania qtd. in Gibson, 181.


Ibid. Culbertson was also granted the right to sow both winter and summer grain in alternate years on certain portions of the land, and Kennedy agreed to build a shed for horses as well as bring 2,000 rails to the property likely for Culbertson’s use. Kennedy came through on this part of the agreement, and in Sarah Kennedy’s claim for compensation for property damages by the British the loss of 2,000 rails was recorded and estimated to be worth £5.00. British Depredations of the Revolutionary War [Film], Dr. Samuel Kennedy filed by Sarah Kennedy, [frame 220], CCA.
any part of the agreement was broken, then the sum of £130 would be paid to the abused party.\footnote{Tenancy Agreement, Samuel Kennedy and Samuel Culbertson, March 14, 1774, Continental Congress Papers, 5:14-15. The stipulations of their agreement were fairly typical. For a fuller discussion, see, Simler, “Tenancy in Colonial Pennsylvania: The Case of Chester County,” 548.}

Their contract stipulated a ten-year lease, and when the first of the sick arrived on the property, seven years still remained in the term.\footnote{Ibid. The length of time set for Culbertson’s tenancy agreement was longer than average. Most agreements in Pennsylvania were made on a short term basis, typically five to seven years, “in order to facilitate recovery of the land by its owner.” Simler, “Tenancy in Colonial Pennsylvania: The Case of Chester County,” 558.} In offering the land to the Continental Army, Kennedy walked a precarious line between breaking the tenancy agreement and asserting his property rights. While he had the right to make additions with compensation, there was no way their agreement could have foreseen the impending war’s need for a military hospital on the site. Nonetheless, Kennedy’s generosity to the American forces involved yet another party – Culbertson, the tenant.

By June 15, 1778, Kennedy must have known he was dying as he composed his last will and testament then being “much indisposed in body” just two days before his death.\footnote{Will of Dr. Samuel Kennedy, Filed 1778, no. 3130, CCA.} Reverend Dr. James Sproat, Chaplain for the Middle Department of the Revolutionary Army, visited Yellow Springs and stayed with the Kennedys on the 12\textsuperscript{th} of June, noting in his diary that the “poor gentleman, [was] very sick;” later that day, he found “the poor doctor […] no better.”\footnote{Journal of Rev. Dr. James Sproat, June 12, 1778, qtd. in Gibson, 328. Sproat returned to Yellow Springs, and his journal entry from August 5, 1778 states, “I lodged at Mrs. Kennedy’s and endeavored to administer some consolation to her, in her mournful circumstances.” Ibid, 330.} Kennedy died of typhoid fever on June 17\textsuperscript{th}, leaving Sarah Kennedy a widow with four children and uncertain ties to the family property.\footnote{Futhey and Cope, 619. It has been cited in other secondary sources that exhaustion also contributed to Kennedy’s death. See, Warden, “Chester County,” 2n3.}

His will left the bulk of his real and personal estate to his wife, as he intended that she have “all that part or advantages arising from [his] real estate, which has usually been given in the Province of Pensylvania [sic] by a Law in that state made and provided for intestates, in Lew
He also left her the entirety of their “household furniture, [his] Phaeton and pair [sic] of sorrel Horses, together with her saddle and bridle.” Like many men of the era, he took into account the possibility of his wife’s remarriage giving her the “power to give any part of her household furniture to such of her children as she may think proper.” This provision provided her with the freedom to choose how the property should be divided in her own will but also spoke to the concern many men had for their children’s inheritance after their deaths, hoping to stop family property from being transferred to another man’s progeny.

Kennedy likewise left each of his four children “one part” of his estate, with his eldest son, Thomas Ruston Kennedy, receiving “two parts.”

The inventory of Kennedy’s real and personal property revealed that he held multiple tracts of land from which he collected rent, but that the property at Yellow Springs brought in the most income at £70 per year. The total worth of his personal property and annual earnings was £5,640.10.4, no small amount. Even though he was in possession of a substantial amount
of landed wealth, the incomes from his properties were diminished due to the existence of the hospital, in the case of Yellow Springs, and because of damages caused by the British to the other tracts. In fact, the damage done to their home in East Whiteland had forced the Kennedy family to abandon this property and move permanently to Yellow Springs the year before. Kennedy’s death exacerbated an already strained tenancy agreement setting the stage for a conflict between his widow, his tenant and the hospital.

A little over a month after her husband’s death, Kennedy was already thinking of remarriage. She traveled to the town of Chester in August of 1778 with her friend Mary Worrall Frazer, also of Chester County, whose husband, Persifor, served with Doctor Kennedy in 1776 in New York. In a letter to her husband, Mary Frazer recounted their trip and told him of her traveling companion:

I went in Company [sic] with Mrs. Kennedy to Chester who was So kind as to Stay two nights with mee [sic] I find the Thirteen Thousand pound that the Doc/r Left her is not a bribe Suffeciant [sic] to keep her from thinking of an other Husband and I thin e would except of one as Low or Lower in rank than a general for I find it must be an offieser [sic].

At this time, Kennedy was forty-one years of age and all of her children were minors. Remarriage may have given her more stability, although how serious she was about this prospect is difficult to tell. Remarriage rates for widowed women depended upon a variety of factors including their age, the age of their children and their personal wealth. While Kennedy may

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305 It is unknown if any of the other tenants suffered damages to their property by the British, or if damages influenced their ability to pay rent.
306 Sarah Kennedy to Thomas Ruston, August 22, 1783, Coxe Family Papers, Series 6a: Thomas Ruston – Correspondence and General Papers, Jan. – Aug. 1789, Box 184, Folder 2, HSP. She further noted that they moved permanently to Yellow Springs because “it was fatiguing for [Samuel Kennedy] to ride home every Night.”
307 Mary Worrall Frazer to Persifor Frazer, August 30, 1778, in General Persifor Frazer: A Memoir.193.
have been attractive in the marriage market because of the wealth left to her by her husband, she never did remarry, and no mention of such a plan appears in any of her personal letters.

It was not until February of 1779, that Kennedy submitted the first in what would become a series of petitions to obtain support for herself and her children from the Continental Congress for the use of Yellow Springs. Her claim detailed the intricacies of Samuel Culbertson’s tenancy agreement citing specifically the section in which her late husband had “[reserved] ‘the privilege of building houses and water works of any kind on the premises during the term.’” She made it clear that her family’s survival depended on the income accrued from the estate and that the very hospital that her husband had so “cheerfully” agreed to erect on the property was now a colossal hindrance. No rent was paid to her for the use of the land by the Continental Army and as a result, she was deprived of her living. She further noted that her husband’s propertied estate:

tho’ considerable [...was] so ravaged by the enemy that the profits are scarcely adequate to the repairs, and the estate at the yellow springs by the unavoidable destruction attending a large concourse of soldiers is so wasted that the tenant is unable to pay any rent and in fact has paid none since the erection of the Hospital.

Further, she used gendered rhetoric describing herself as a “helpless widow,” with “orphaned children,” who was “really reduced to great difficulty in maintaining” her family because of the damage done to the property and therefore needed assistance so that they would not be “left alone to endure” the consequences of war. Her petition for support was not assured success

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309 Tenancy Agreement, Samuel Kennedy and Samuel Culbertson, March 14, 1774, Continental Congress Papers, 5:14-15; Memorial of Sarah Kennedy, February 1779, Yellow Springs Record Group 1, Box 5, Folder 10, YS.
310 Memorial of Sarah Kennedy, February 1779, Yellow Springs Record Group 1, Box 5, Folder 10, YS.
311 Ibid. Why Culbertson stopped paying rent is unclear, but it seems he saw the damages to the property as a justification to cease payment; in doing so, he broke the tenancy agreement.
312 Ibid. The rhetoric she used was very similar to the trends identified by Mary Beth Norton in her article “Eighteenth-Century American Women in Peace and War: The Case of the Loyalists,” William and Mary Quarterly 33, no. 3 (July 1976). Although her study focused on loyalist women, the ways in which Kennedy described herself...
especially because her husband was dead and the occupancy of Yellow Springs was not likely to be changed by a single widow’s demands. Her husband, it seemed, had formed a quasi-tenancy agreement with the Continental Army, allowing them the rights to use his land while both he and Culbertson continued to live and work there. His death left all parties involved with questionable relationships to the property, but none perhaps were as greatly affected as Sarah Kennedy. She must have believed that her petition would be successful because of her husband’s service. Their patriotism, in her eyes, could not be questioned.

Beyond her claims for individual support she likewise showed her discontent with the tenant, Culbertson, who had not paid any rent since at least March of 1778, and he, as she noted, continued to run the public tavern which was “a nuisance to the hospital.” What exactly she meant by this is uncertain, but her tone suggested a growing dislike for both Culbertson and the tenancy agreement. She even asked the Continental Congress to evict him for her, hoping they could “prevail with the tenant to leave the [Yellow Springs] wholly to this use of the public,” but even with this request, she quickly reminded Congress that if the property was used for the public good “she would humbly hope that a due compensation would be made to her.” After all, both the army and her tenant benefited from the land without paying rent, something she claimed she desperately needed for her own economic survival, especially if she was to repair the home the British destroyed on their way through the county after Brandywine. The goals of her petition were to obtain compensation from both the tenant and Congress, remove Culbertson and return the property to its original condition before it was let.

fit the patterns discovered by Norton, suggesting a shared sense of gendered consciousness for women of the eighteenth-century as they referenced weakness and vulnerability to substantiate their arguments for compensation and assistance from governments on both sides of the Atlantic.

313 Memorial of Sarah Kennedy, February 1779, Yellow Springs Record Group 1, Box 5, Folder 10. YS.
314 Ibid.
315 Ibid.
The Treasury Office released a statement on February 13, 1779 regarding her claim. No official decision had been made, but much discussion over how to obtain the title to the property at Yellow Springs apparently had occurred. With Kennedy’s death, it was “now impracticable, without the aid of the Legislature of the State of Pennsylvania, to obtain a title to the ground on which the Hospitals are built” because the executors had “no power to sell.” It was determined that the Pennsylvania Legislature would need to pass a law authorizing an appraisal of the land necessary for use by the hospital before the plan to obtain the property’s title could move forward. Once this was done, then the land would be given to the President of Congress “and his successors in office forever for the use of the said States.” The Committee had every intention of paying Kennedy for the land and even made provisions that allowed for proper compensation to the tenant. The last resolve of their decision dealt with Kennedy’s petition for monetary assistance. It was decided that her claim “for waste and damages” from the soldiers at the hospital should “be left till other claims of a similar nature throughout the United States [were] taken into consideration.” For now at least, she had to continue without any support from the State or the Continental Congress but was left with some hope, especially since the Treasury Office noted that “allowances [had] in some instances been made in the Quarter Master Generals Department for damages done by the troops of these United States to the possessions of the Inhabitants.” However, they also wrote that “such allowances […] ought

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316 Treasury Office February 13, 1779, Continental Congress Papers, Applications of Individuals H-L 13:328. Without an act from the State Assembly, the property’s ownership and title could not be changed because of the rights of the minor heirs. Transcription of Treasury Office, February 13, 1779, 52n1, Yellow Springs Record Group 1, Box 5, Folder 10, YS.
320 Ibid.
not to be made until some general rule [was] established for doing equal justice” in each case.\textsuperscript{321}

Her first claim stalled, and she received no definitive answer on when or if she could ever gain compensation for the use of the land. It seemed that the only way to obtain immediate profit was to sell the property to Congress, but she was not able, nor did she seem willing to do so.\textsuperscript{322}

Only a week after entering her first petition, Kennedy wrote again to John Jay, of New York, then President of the Continental Congress, further expressing her frustrations. In this letter, her emotions were not as tempered as they had been in her first claim as she pleaded for support:

\begin{quote}
I presented a memorial last week representing the state of the Yellow Springs, and the hospital which is built on our estate, as there is dayley [sic] waste committed and no rent or profit arising, my self and four children by my deceased Husbands will are to be maintained out off [sic] the profits of his estate as that is the principal part of it [I] beg leave to inform the honorable Congress I cannot support them I apprehend it never was the intention of this honorable assembly that Orphans and widdows [sic] of those so warmly attached to the intrest [sic] of America as he was, should bear so large a share of the burden [...] I humbly beg leave to say the Yellow Springs were taken first of necessity, and are now of choice for the benefit of the [...] waters — Pardon my importunities as a distressed widow when I beg some valuation for damages past or that some rent may arise for [the] future.\textsuperscript{323}
\end{quote}

Here, she more clearly revealed her distressed circumstances and even accused the Continental forces of exploiting her late husband’s generosity. It may be unfair to suggest that the sentiments expressed in the letter were only used to manipulate her reader and give her case more weight,

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{321} Treasury Office February 13, 1779, Continental Congress Papers, Applications of Individuals H-L 13:329.
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{322} Samuel left Sarah the rights to the use of the land for the duration of her life which meant she could not sell the land or dispose of it for her own use but was only allowed to receive support from it until her children reached their majority.
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{323} Sarah Kennedy to John Jay, February 17, 1779, Continental Congress Papers, Miscellaneous Letters to Congress 1775-1789, 13:497, Yellow Springs Record Group I, Box 5, Folder 10, YS.
\end{flushright}
but it must also be considered that the strong rhetoric used was aimed at hastening a decision on her earlier claim.\textsuperscript{324}

At the same time Kennedy petitioned Congress for support, she also took her economic survival into her own hands, listing numerous properties to be rented from her late husband’s estate in the \textit{Pennsylvania Packet}.\textsuperscript{325} Among the properties listed was a public house as well as 250 acres located near the White Horse Tavern which had a “good stone dwelling-house, barn, stables, two large orchards, and twenty acres of watered meadow.”\textsuperscript{326} Adjoining this land was “a farm of two hundred acres […] with a good brick house, barn, stables, orchards” and meadow and this property was linked to a tan-yard located in the Great Valley.\textsuperscript{327} The fourth property included “[t]wo houses with gardens and orchards” near the Lancaster Road with “stove rooms […] fit for tradesmen.”\textsuperscript{328} The final tract was a part of Yellow Springs which consisted of “a good house and lot […] where a store used to be kept.”\textsuperscript{329} Kennedy was in no way a landless widow, and had various avenues from which she could obtain monetary support from tenants if these lands were successfully let.\textsuperscript{330}

\textsuperscript{324} In a subsequent document, Kennedy acknowledged that she received a response regarding her claim and was considering what was proposed and would only accept it if she deemed the terms to be fair and “equitable.” Sarah Kennedy to Continental Congress, undated, Yellow Springs Record Group 1, Box 5, Folder 10, YS.

\textsuperscript{325} The \textit{Pennsylvania Packet} was a daily newspaper printed in Philadelphia.

\textsuperscript{326} \textit{Pennsylvania Packet}, February 9, 1779, LCP. Here, Sarah Kennedy described the property as a “large stone Dwelling-house, two stories high, four rooms on a floor, well finished, a court before the door planted with ever-greens, stone barn, stables, and other out-houses; one hundred acres of good land all manured with lime, orchard and meadow well watered” which had been occupied in the last year as a public house and was located twenty-six miles from Philadelphia along the State Road to Lancaster and was the home that Samuel Kennedy had once lived. This piece of property was likely the property that the British damaged in 1777.

\textsuperscript{327} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{328} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{329} Ibid. How she could offer part of Yellow Springs to be let while the hospital was still operating is uncertain; it could be that this part of the land was not located near the hospital buildings.

\textsuperscript{330} Ibid. At the end of her advertisement, she noted that she was “[designed] on leaving the country.” Why she wished to leave is unknown, but whatever her initial intentions may have been, she remained in Pennsylvania for the entirety of her widowhood. She may have planned to visit her brother, Thomas Ruston, who resided in London, but this plan never materialized. Her father and other close family all lived in Chester County, so leaving America would have been a particularly interesting choice; especially since, it seems clear, she intended to continue to try to receive compensation for her losses in Pennsylvania.
Sarah Kennedy was not the only individual affected by the presence of the hospital, and in fact, Samuel Culbertson entered his own petition in July of 1777 for damages “done to his farm at the Yellow Springs by erecting a hospital” there.\(^{331}\) The minutes of the Treasury Office record that prior to this petition he was granted £600 for damages, “in Lieu of the remainder of the term for the whole farm,” but this amount was determined to be “extravagant” and ultimately could not “be complied with.”\(^{332}\) Instead, it was decided that the “dwelling house and rest of the farm [should] be returned to Culbertson as soon as possible [and] that he shall be allowed a reasonable compensation for the rent of the house and his actual damages.”\(^{333}\) The Board did not completely surrender the property believing it was “sufficient […] to retain a few acres of the farm for a garden and the necessary buildings.”\(^{334}\) Animosity between Kennedy and Culbertson likely grew as they both tried to obtain compensation, and perhaps this is why she, in her 1779 petition and in later public advertisements, was bitterly critical of his character and abilities as a tenant.\(^{335}\)

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\(^{331}\) The date of Culbertson’s petition was July of 1777, which was almost a full two months before the Battle of Brandywine. A fuller discussion of this document is considered in the following paragraph. Extract from the Minutes of the Treasury Office, July 16, 1777, Continental Congress Papers, Applications of Individuals 3:333,335, Yellow Springs Record Group 1, Box 5, Folder 10, YS.

\(^{332}\) When or by whom this sum had been granted to him is not made clear in the minutes. Extract from the Minutes of the Treasury office by J. Nicholson, Continental Congress Papers, Applications of Individuals H-L 3:335, Yellow Springs Record Group 1, Box 5, Folder 10, YS. The Board of Treasury looked into the case, recording that “it appears that the farm belongs to doctor Kennedy who has leased it to Culbertson for ten years.” The manner in which this is written suggests that Culbertson had not given the Continental Congress an accurate report on the history of the property and instead had portrayed the rented property as his own landed wealth. It is difficult to know if Culbertson had in fact acted as if he were the owner of the property, but regardless, the Board was able to find out the true details of the tenancy agreement. In Culbertson’s case, it was noted that “a dispute arose between the tenant and the Director General of the Hospitals respecting the compensation which was due to the tenant for the loss he sustained by the erection of the Hospital.” This was the incident which appeared to have inspired Culberton to make this very early claim for compensation. Whatever the case, there was likely a great amount of animosity between Kennedy, the land owner and physician, the Continental Army, the unofficial tenants of Yellow Springs, and Culberton, who had rented the property for his own livelihood.

\(^{333}\) Ibid.

\(^{334}\) Ibid.

\(^{335}\) Along with her anger at Culbertson, Kennedy had reason to distrust those who ran the hospital. One example being that of Alexander McKallaher who had “made a practice of exchanging the hospital stores, such as sugar, molasses, &c. for butter, poultry, eggs, &c. for his own and the doctors’ table.” Tuesday, April 27, 1779. Journals of the Continental Congress. Early American Imprints, Series 1, 523. It was also noted that he kept a
Culbertson's petition dated July of 1777 raises many questions because this document was filed two months prior to the British Army's march through Chester County on the way to Philadelphia. His claim cites that damages were done to his property by the presence of a hospital, suggesting that some type of medical facility existed at Yellow Springs earlier than previously thought. The traditional chronology places the first soldiers on the property after the Battle of Brandywine and then on a more permanent basis after December of 1777 with Washington ordering official construction of hospital buildings the following month. If this date is correct, then this changes the narrative and suggests that Kennedy practiced medicine there earlier than has been believed. He was, after all, no longer deployed with General Wayne after March of that year and could have offered the property for use earlier. There is the possibility that the document is misdated, but this seems unlikely especially since Sarah Kennedy's petition in February of 1779 refers to his earlier claim as does a later petition entered by Margaret Culbertson, Samuel's wife. In the Pennsylvania Evening Gazette, a notice points to construction work occurring on the property in April of 1777, perhaps an indication of an earlier hospital building. The advertisement read: "Wanted a number of Carpenters to go to work at the Yellow-Springs, for which good wages will be given." It is not certain if this indicated the construction of a hospital, or general repairs to the property, but the consistency in reports suggest that Kennedy, or someone, was practicing medicine there and that this service was a precursor to the larger role Yellow Springs played after Brandywine.

"blooded horse in the guard house, and a mare and colt; and has a hostler at his quarters, and another at the hospital, that he entertains all people who come to the hospitals with wine and toddy, alleging that he is allowed to by Congress or Doctor Shippen." Ibid, 523,524.

Friday, February 20, 1801, Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States, 1791-1801, Early American Imprints, Series 1, 810.

Those interested were instructed to "inquire at the Kuhli Khan in Fifth-street, betwixt Market and Arch Streets, or at Capt. Sadler's, in Arch Street, above Seventh-street." Pennsylvania Evening Gazette. April 19, 1777, LCP.
As Sarah Kennedy awaited further word on her petition, she turned to the Orphans’ Court to name guardians for her children, Mary, Sarah, and John, who were all under the age of fourteen. During the same session, her son, Thomas Ruston Kennedy, then sixteen, entered his own petition requesting that his mother and Benjamin Bartholomew be appointed as his guardians for the future delineation of his inheritance. Following these petitions, Sarah Kennedy becomes less visible. It is unknown if, when, or by whom, any of the properties she offered for rent earlier that year were successfully let. All that was left for her to do was to wait patiently while her petition was read and considered by a Continental government that had many more pressing matters to concern itself with than a single widow’s claim for property compensation.

After four months of waiting, on June 29, 1779, Congress arrived at a decision regarding Kennedy’s petition and granted her “five thousand dollars on account of rent for the farm and buildings used for a hospital at the Yellow Springs.” This was the news that she had been waiting for. Now, she could put the sum toward the repairs of her damaged property, and had seemingly avoided a complete transfer of the property’s title to the Continental government and instead received rent for its occupancy. By October, the Pennsylvania General Assembly noted the appearance of her memorial, which had been sent to it via Congress; it was read and

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338 A husband, in his will, often appointed “a cautious man” to be the guardian of minor children, but as Lisa Wilson found, “most men who left wills never took advantage of this option, because it could hinder the widow’s ability to respond to new economic circumstances while doing little to safeguard the children’s property.” In Pennsylvania, a widow could not serve as a guardian if she was the executor of her late husband’s estate. Wilson, 137. Sarah Kennedy seemingly avoided this rule, when she was appointed with Benjamin Bartholomew to be a joint guardian for her son Thomas Ruston Kennedy in 1779. Petition for Guardians for Doctor Kenedis [Kennedy’s] Children, April 29, 1779, Orphans’ Court Minor Records, CCA.

339 Petition of Thomas Ruston Kenedy [Kennedy] for a Guardian, April 29, 1779, Orphans’ Court Minor Records, CCA. Later in 1791, Thomas Kennedy’s sister, Sarah Kennedy, also petitioned the Orphans’ Court for one Benjamin Jacobs to be appointed as her guardian. Petition of Sarah Kennedy for Guardian, December 20, 1791, Orphans’ Court Minor Records, CCA. In 1782, Bartholomew was a justice in the Chester County Orphans’ court; he also served as a Captain in the American Army. See, General Persifor Frazer: A Memoir, 194-195, 307.

It seems the sum had to pass in Pennsylvania’s General Assembly before it was granted to her, but references to her claim do not appear in the minutes of the following session. However, she must have received the sum, because it appeared on the Continental Congress’s expenditure list for 1779.

After she received compensation, Kennedy persisted in trying to obtain more control over the property at Yellow Springs. She sought assistance from any individual who found themselves on the property. One example came in January of 1781, when James Lovell, a delegate in the Continental Congress, wrote to Timothy Pickering, Quarter Master General for the American Army, concerning her plight, stating that he had become an “intercessor for, not a poor, but a very importunate Widow.”

[thought] it grievous that the Manure arising from the Gleanings of her Meadows should not be spent on the Farm. There has been a Sort of a Sale of it to one Evans for a pitiful Sum which She would readily pay if required. She has intimidated the man from taking it away by telling him She has good Reason to hope for your Protection. I really do think that where Farms have been hurt by any Branches of our Operations, all Endeavor should be made to lighten the Harm.

Kennedy must have urged Lovell to make her complaints known, and she was apparently quite persistent in her efforts. The language he used to describe her spoke not of a poor helpless

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341 Saturday, October 2, 1779, Minutes of the Pennsylvania General Assembly, Early American Imprints, Series I, 147. Why the Continental Congress needed permission to grant Kennedy a sum from the state government is unclear. After it was tabled, it was noted that it should be considered in the next meeting of the General Assembly.

342 “Expenditures for the Year 1779,” Journals of the Continental Congress, 1435. It was noted in a document attached to the claim that the Continental Congress decided against purchasing the property at Yellow Springs and chose rather to supply Kennedy with the $5,000. Continental Congress to the Board of Treasury, December 21, 1779, Continental Congress Papers, 13:505.

343 James Lovell to Timothy Pickering, January 8, 1781, in Letters of Delegates to Congress, 12:571-572. Both Pickering and Lovell were from Massachusetts.

344 Ibid. The “pitiful sum” was scribbled in the margins of the letter and was the amount of $30. Sarah Kennedy used her political connections well and relied on others with greater connections than she to navigate her world. Writing to her brother in 1783, she noted that she was “very intimate” with both George and Martha Washington and had “dined with them often at headquarters at Valley Forge 8 miles from [Yellow Springs].” Sarah Kennedy to Thomas Ruston, August 22, 1783, Coxe Family Papers, Series 6a: Thomas Ruston — Correspondence and General Papers, Jan. – Aug. 1789, Box 184, Folder 2, HSP.
widow, as she had described herself in petitions, but of a strong relentless woman. Lovell’s interest in her case, suggests that she had access to a broader support network, and although the specifics of this case are unknown, it illuminates her prowess in using those around her in her attempts to gain greater control over Yellow Springs. After all, her economic survival depended on the wealth arising from the land, and anything the American Army did without her knowledge or support was a threat to her livelihood. It must have been a constant clash of interests with Kennedy believing she had the right to make decisions about the property, and the Army trying to manage the hospital all while the tenant tried to assert his rights to the land.

Three months before Congress officially decided to close the hospital in 1781, Kennedy again sought to lease the Yellow Springs property to a tenant, offering it in the Pennsylvania Packet. Renting the land would be an arduous task, and at the end of her advertisement, she noted that the “Tavern [had] been badly kept this number of years past [and that] none need apply as Tenants but persons of sobriety and property.” With this, she suggested that Culbertson had not properly cared for the land and that she recognized it would take a certain amount of funds to restore it to its original status. By printing such a notice, she made a personal attack on Culbertson, and whether she meant to or not, insulted his skills and worth as a tenant.

345 The full advertisement read: “The noted Tavern and Farm of the Yellow-Springs, Which contains 150 acres of rich land, good meadows and orchard, a large new stone Barn, with Stables under; in the Dwelling House are 13 rooms, 9 of them have fire places, 2 of them have a swinging partition and can be made into one, which makes a handsome ball room; in the bathing season 500 people have been entertained in a day; there are two handsome Bath Houses with Baths in them, and a Room with a fire place, besides the old Bath. The water is inriched [sic] with marine salts, and all those valuable ingredients whereby it is constituted a light and pure chalybeate [pure chalybeate], which instantly pervades the most remote recesses of the human frame, warms and invigorates the relaxed constitution, restores the weakened fibers to their tone and elasticity, removes every obstruction in which the minuter [sic] vessels of the body are liable and becomes thereby adapted to most cold, chronical disorders, lowness of sprints, weak digestions and nervous complaints.” Advertisement by Sarah Kennedy, Pennsylvania Packet, June 30, 1781, LCP.

346 Ibid. Kennedy had good reason to be angry with the “badly kept” status of the land that was being let. A tenancy agreement was supposed to provide security to the landowner that the property would be improved and left in the same, if not better, condition than before its lease. Simler, “Tenancy in Colonial Pennsylvania: The Case of Chester County,” 558.
Not long after the advertisement was published, an angry Culbertson wrote a response for publication from his home at Yellow Springs:

To the public, on reading one of Mr. Claypoole’s late News Papers, I was surprized [sic] to see an advertisement signed by Mrs. Sarah Kennedy, wherein she proposes letting the Farm, Tavern, [etcetera] at the Yellow Springs in Chester County, and that the same might be entered upon the 12th day of August next. I therefore think it my duty to inform the Publick [sic], and more especially, those who may incline to rent the Premises aforesaid, that I the subscriber am in possession thereof, by virtue of a Lease from under the hand and seal of Doctor Samuel Kennedy, deceased, which will not expire until April 1784, and am determined to hold the same until that period; but as the said Sarah Kennedy has, since her husband’s decease, in a base and clandestine manner got possession of the aforesaid lease, she vainly imagines that she can get possession of the premise at her pleasure, although I can prove by a number of reputable gentlemen that it does not expire until the time above mentioned.  

Culbertson all but accused Kennedy of stealing the land he rented and even suggested she changed the tenancy agreement to fit her needs. He painted her as the villain, and perhaps worse yet, as an incompetent woman who lacked the capacity to respect and understand a property agreement.

Following the incident, Kennedy did not continue to offer Yellow Springs for lease nor did she respond to Culbertson’s published statement. Both parties were, however, somewhat justified in their thinking. Culbertson expected his rights to the rented property to remain unchanged as per the tenancy agreement, and Doctor Kennedy, by allowing the hospital to be built, had not technically broken their contract, but did give Culbertson a reason to be angry.

From Sarah Kennedy’s perspective, her late husband’s property was the means for her economic

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347 Pennsylvania Packet, August 9, 1781, LCP.
348 Ironically, Sarah Kennedy later accused Tench Coxe of unrightfully renting a property that her brother, Thomas Ruston, was involved with. Letter of Sarah Kennedy, June 25, 1779, West Chester, Pennsylvania. Coxe Family Papers, Box 189, Folder 2, HSP.
support, and Culbertson broke the tenancy agreement by ceasing to pay rent, although he remained on the land.³⁵⁰ It was evident, from the tone of her petition dated February of 1779, that she was unhappy with his presence.³⁵¹ Within a few months of their public quarrel, Culbertson died, two years before completing his tenancy term.³⁵² The debts against his estate included a payment slightly under £70, the stipulated yearly rent of Yellow Springs, to be paid to Sarah and Thomas Kennedy, suggesting that he began to pay rent again or at least that they were determined to get the past year’s annual dues.³⁵³ With his death, Kennedy could finally offer the land for rent, but no public notices immediately appeared requesting tenants.³⁵⁴

³⁵⁰ During this time, Culbertson also served as a captain in Colonel Montgomery’s First Regiment Flying Camp Battalion, and was taken prisoner in November of 1776, until he was exchanged at Elizabethtown, New Jersey, in November of 1780. What remains a mystery is how he maintained the property in his absence, perhaps a son, his wife or another male family member managed the land. None of the reports made by Kennedy mention his military service or family. Perhaps this was consciously done so she could convince the Continental Congress of her need for compensation, without it being overshadowed by the patriotism of her tenant. It is also of interest that Culbertson was able to file a claim with the Continental Congress in 1777 as well as make petitions to run the public house located on the property in 1778 while he was absent. See, Tavern Petitions of Culbertson for tavern at Yellow Springs in Tavern Petitions, 1700-1923, CCA. See specifically, Tavern Petition of Samuel Culbertson, 1778, Tavern Petitions 1700-1923, 27:100, CCA. His absence does however offer some explanation as to why he may have stopped paying rent, but if this was the reason, then he broke the tenancy agreement and gave Kennedy the right to offer the property for rent in both 1779 and 1781. Futhey and Cope, 508; Inventory of the Estate of Samuel Culbertson, Filed 1782, no. 3349, CCA.

³⁵¹ Memorial of Sarah Kennedy, February 1779, Yellow Springs Record Group 1, Box 5, Folder 10, YS. His death date is uncertain but it occurred at some time between August of 1781 and January of 1782. Renunciation of Margaret Culbertson, January 7, 1782, no. 3349, CCA. In a summary of a letter to Persifor Frazer, Sarah Kennedy asked “him to scrutinize the a/c of Sam/l Culbert [Culbertson] who owe[d] her money the payment of which she accuse[d] him of seeking to avoid.” Sarah Kennedy to Persifor Frazer, February 26, 1786 in. General Persifor Frazer: A Memoir, 330. This would have occurred after Culbertson’s death and unless she was referring to a son, then this date seems to be printed incorrectly.

³⁵² Inventory of the Estate of Samuel Culbertson, Filed 1782, no. 3349, CCA. There was also a note about money owed from Culbertson’s estate amounting to £3.9.9 for “fees in an action brought by Mr. Kennedy.” It is not clear if the Mr. Kennedy in question was the deceased doctor, his son, or one of Samuel Kennedy’s surviving brothers.

³⁵³ It is unclear where Culbertson’s widow and children went after his death. Margaret Culbertson attempted to gain compensation for the Continental Army’s use of land at Yellow Springs from the United States House of Representatives in 1801. The minutes from February 20, 1801 read, “a petition of Margaret Culbertson, widow of Samuel Culbertson, deceased, late of the Yellow Springs, in the County of Chester, in the State of Pennsylvania, was presented to the House and read, praying that she may receive the amount of the damages ascertained to be due to her deceased husband from the United States, in consideration of the use and occupancy of a farm in the tenure of the deceased, on which a Continental hospital was erected, sometime in the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy-seven.” Friday, February 20, 1801, Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States, 1791-1801, Early American Imprints, Series I, 810. Exactly one year later, her petition was again considered. Saturday, February 20, 1802, Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States, 1801-1804, Early American Imprints, Series I, 105. The petition was debated and tabled throughout 1802, and a final decision
When the Continental Hospital was abandoned at Yellow Springs, Kennedy regained control of the property, although the public buildings were a daily reminder of the American presence and the ordeal of the past four years. With their removal and the death of Culbertson, life at Yellow Springs returned to some of its pre-war normalcy, yet her quests for compensation did not stop. The property in East Whiteland, once the family’s main residence, remained in ruins from the encounter with the British troops five years earlier. In November of 1782, she presented accounts of property damages caused by the British Army to the local county government for losses totaling £273.7.6. Among the most expensive items destroyed or taken were riding accoutrements, 200 dozen bushels of wheat, and medical items including a mortar and pestle, brass scales and “large amounts” of medicine. Now, she sought compensation for the damages caused by the British Army, although it is uncertain if she or any of the claimants were ever paid. This petition was the last that Kennedy made for some time, and from her point of view, life in the 1780s began to look rather bleak.

In 1783, at the age of forty six, Kennedy wrote to her brother, Thomas Ruston, reflecting on the past years and thinking about her future. This was the first in a series of letters in which she described her lonely and “rural bewidowed estate” where she had “little amusement but [her] books or letters of [her] absent friends.” She described herself as “going downhill” with almost “half of her hair gray” and “failing eyesight,” and told her brother that she remained in

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was reached on March 8th when the House of Representatives decided that her petition for compensation, along with others, “ought not to be granted.” Monday, March 8, 1802, Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States, 1801-1802, Early American Imprints, Series I, 125. Her claim is a reminder of how many people were influenced by Samuel Kennedy’s decision to lend a portion of his land to the Continental Army.

355 British Depredations of the Revolutionary War [Film], Dr. Samuel Kennedy filed by Sarah Kennedy, [frame 220], CCA.

356 Ibid.

the home "bemoaning" herself for the loss of Samuel Kennedy, who was her "dear consort [... and the] best of husbands." She surely painted a picture of a depressed and lonely existence. Kennedy remained at Yellow Springs until 1784, when she moved back to her previous residence in East Whiteland, living off of the rents arising from her late husband's estate. She told Ruston that she planned to repair the damages caused by the British because the property would "be the legacy of some of [her] youngest children" and she was "willing to leave it in the best condition" she could. Her children were sent off to school, where she was "endeavoring to prepare them for serving their generation." Here she embodied the role of the Republican Mother, as she worked to preserve property for her children's future inheritance and acknowledged the important role that education and civic virtue would play in their lives. Her letters are mostly filled with concern for the future education of her eldest son, Thomas, who she hoped would become a physician like his father.

Despite her claims for compensation and her self-described desperate situation, the estate Kennedy left his wife helped her to support herself and her children. By 1785, she appeared on county tax lists as a land holder and was assessed for 230 acres. Her property included two

358 Sarah Kennedy to Thomas Ruston, August 22, 1783, Coxe Family Papers, Series 6a: Thomas Ruston - Correspondence and General Papers, Jan. – Aug. 1789, Box 184, Folder 2, HSP.
359 She also wrote that she was "in no business." Ibid; Sarah Kennedy to Thomas Ruston, August 1, 1784, Coxe Family Papers, Series 6a: Thomas Ruston – Correspondence and General Papers, Jan. – Aug. 1789, Box 184, Folder 2, HSP.
360 Sarah Kennedy to Thomas Ruston, August 1, 1784, Coxe Family Papers, Series 6a: Thomas Ruston – Correspondence and General Papers, Jan. – Aug. 1789, Box 184, Folder 2, HSP.
361 Sarah Kennedy to Thomas Ruston, August 22, 1783, Coxe Family Papers, Series 6a: Thomas Ruston – Correspondence and General Papers, Jan. – Aug. 1789, Box 184, Folder 2, HSP.
363 Seven of these 230 acres were planted with grain suggesting she continued to be involved in the rural economy. Chester County Tax List, 1785, Book C-36a, CCA. State tax lists recorded her holdings differently taxing her for 250 acres of land, two horses, four cattle, a servant, one mulatto slave and £14 of silver plate. Why there are such discrepancies in the same year may be attributed to tax assessor errors. Pennsylvania State Tax Records, 1785, Books S-14b, 566, CCA. Ibid, Book S-14d. A note at the bottom of the tax list for East Whiteland listed that "Mrs. Sarah Kennedy [owned] 120 acres of land in Pikeland, but I [the tax collector] think more." Ibid, Book S-14a, CCA. However, when she was assessed in Pikeland Township, it was only for two acres. Ibid, Book S-14b, 450. In April of 1786, Kennedy received a tax discount because she had been overrated the previous year. Tax Discount Book 1785-1787, April 13, 1786, 27, CCA. Curiously, on a state tax list, an assessor scribbled the
slaves, a bound servant, three horses, two cattle, and seven sheep. But even with the relative prosperity and independence she had achieved, the difficulties she and her family faced in the aftermath of the Revolution were far from over.

Thomas Kennedy, now in his majority, made his own petition to Congress in July of 1787, in which he requested his inheritance from his late father’s estate. Like the claim his mother entered eight years earlier, he cited his father’s patriotism, the damages at Yellow Springs, and the tensions that arose between the now deceased Culbertson and the Kennedy family. His claim dealt mostly with his expected education, which he said would be paid for from the rents of his father’s estate. His mother’s claim had based its validity on the argument that she could not support her children without compensation to facilitate repairs necessary to make her husband’s properties prosperous again. Now, her son took the claim a step further, citing the use of the property as a hindrance to his ability to obtain education. His case remained under debate for some time, but when it resurfaced in February of 1788, the Board of Treasury recommended that “the Sum of Six hundred and thirty five Dollars, Eighteen Ninetieths of a Dollar” should be awarded to Thomas for the use of Yellow Springs during the war.

The occupations of those who paid taxes and “Mrs. Sarah Kennedy” was described as a “spinster.” The term spinster is somewhat ambiguous; typically, it referred to a woman who was unmarried and whose age suggested that she was unlikely to be. Yet, a less popular definition of a spinster has been suggested to be someone who was engaged in the task of spinning. The meaning of the term attached to Kennedy is unclear. Pennsylvania State Tax Records, 1785, Book S-14a, CCA.

Chester County Tax Records, 1785, Books C-36a and C-36b, CCA. The ages of her two slaves were fifty-five and thirteen.

Memorial of Thomas Ruston Kennedy, July 27, 1787, Continental Congress Papers, Memorials Addressed to Congress, K-L, 5: 53, Yellow Springs Record Group 1, Box 5, Folder 10, YS. Kennedy was twenty-four years old at the time of this petition.

Ibid. Samuel Kennedy wrote in his will that the “profits arising from the lands and the interest of the money now in hand, also all out standing moneys be put upon interest and such profits and interests be appropriated to the educating of [his] children.” Will of Doctor Samuel Kennedy, Filed 1778, no. 3130, CCA.

Ibid. Memorial of Sarah Kennedy, February 1779, Yellow Springs Record Group 1, Box 5, Folder 10; Memorial of Thomas Ruston Kennedy, July 27, 1787, Continental Congress Papers, Memorials Addressed to Congress, K-L, 5: 53, Yellow Springs Record Group 1, Box 5, Folder 10, YS.

Thursday, February 14, 1788, Journals of the Continental Congress, 34:46-47.
report also noted that once the above sum was paid, that Kennedy would be "willing to enter into engagements to purchase at an equitable appraised Value, the Buildings erected on the Lands of his deceased Father." Congress had apparently retained the rights to the buildings once used by the hospital, and Kennedy now considered purchasing them to restore full ownership of Yellow Springs to his family. It appears that he purchased the buildings, or at least entered into serious negotiations about a valid price and even outlined a plan for appraisal, but the final decision remains unknown. His negotiations shed more light on his mother's widowhood, and relationship to the property. Seven years after the hospital was disbanded, the influence of the war continued to be felt and the buildings constructed for public use were still not technically under their control.

In 1793, Sarah Kennedy again sought a tenant, writing to her brother that her son was moving to his own estate, and she encouraged him to mention it to any gentlemen he thought "it might suit." This was the first step she took in separating herself from the estate, and two years later she released rights to part of her dower to her youngest son, John Kennedy, then twenty years old. She did so with the promise that he would pay her £22.10.0 each year for

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370 Memorial of Sarah Kennedy, February 1779, Yellow Springs Record Group 1, Box 5, Folder 10; Memorial of Thomas Ruston Kennedy, July 27, 1787, Continental Congress Papers, Memorials Addressed to Congress, K-L, 5:53, Yellow Springs Record Group 1, Box 5, Folder 10, YS. The Board of Treasury was willing to compensate Thomas Kennedy if, and only if, he agreed to "enter into engagements for the purchase of the public Buildings Erected" at Yellow Springs. Thursday, February 14, 1788, Journals of the Continental Congress, 34:47; February 13, 1788, Registers of Reports for Boards Etc., Continental Congress Papers, Record Group 360, 181. The Board of Treasury later wrote to the President of Congress, Cyrus Griffin, urging him to consider the case. February 13, 1788, Continental Congress Papers, Letters of the Board of Treasury, 1:451; Thursday, February 14, 1788, Journals of the Continental Congress, 34:47.

371 Memorial of Thomas Ruston Kennedy, July 27, 1787, Continental Congress Papers, Memorials Addressed to Congress, K-L, 5:53, Yellow Springs Record Group 1, Box 5, Folder 10, YS. It is very likely that he repurchased the buildings, and a case that extended to the 1870s referenced the Kennedy family as the full owners of the property. Petition of the Chester Springs Soldiers Orphan School and Literary Institute to Satisfy Mortgager. James Bones and wife and Thomas Ruston Kennedy, filed March 30, 1876, Court of Common Pleas 1823-1900. Satisfaction of Mortgage Case #500, CCA.

372 Sarah Kennedy to Thomas Ruston, Valley, July, 25, 1793, Coxe Family Papers, Box 186, Folder 1. It seems Thomas Kennedy had been living on the Yellow Springs property.

373 Release of Dower. Deed Book M-2, 36:298-299, CCA.
the duration of her life. With this release, John received sixty-four acres of land. In the following year, she released another portion of her dower to her eldest son in return for payment of an annual sum of £25. Following this agreement, she moved from her home in East Whiteland to West Chester, the new county seat. The move signified a shift in her life, as she reduced her land holdings and at the age of fifty-nine appeared to prepare for a life removed from the burdens of overseeing her late husband’s estate, as her children were now of age.

If Kennedy hoped for a quiet life in West Chester, then the proceedings of her later years must have been a disappointment. She and her brother, who had returned to Pennsylvania in 1785, entangled themselves in a property dispute which led Kennedy to lose what remained of her dower. The exact details of the case are murky, but Kennedy, through association with her brother, found herself in trouble regarding property sales and was, along with Ruston, threatened with jail. Around the same time in 1799, a Mr. Kinnard, likely her son-in-law, brought a case

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374 Release of Dower, Deed Book M-2, 36:298-299, CCA.
375 Ibid.
376 Release, Deed Book N-2, 37:124-126, CCA. She formed a further agreement which protected her from any missed annual payments, giving her the power to take back the land, about 43 acres total, for her own personal use to satisfy her need for funds. She was, in effect, renting the land to her sons in exchange for an annuity. Agreement, Deed Book R-2, 41:224-226, CCA.
377 Ibid.
378 Also at this time, her son, Thomas, moved from Chester County to Allegheny County where he was employed as a physician. By 1802, he left Allegheny County and moved to Meadville, Pennsylvania, where he continued to practice as a physician. Futhey and Cape, 620.
379 Family tensions grew during the event, and each of the Kennedy children seemed to be involved in some aspect of the case. John Kennedy, Thomas Ruston’s nephew and Sarah Kennedy’s son, wrote an angry letter from jail, where he had been held for six weeks because of his uncle’s property dealings, begging to be released. John Kennedy to Thomas Ruston, Thursday Morning [undated], Cox Family Papers, Undated Correspondence and General Papers, Box 190, Folder 4, HSP. See also, Jacob E. Cooke, Tench Coxe and the Early Republic, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978), 324-328.
380 Sarah Kennedy to Thomas Ruston, [undated letter], Cox Family Papers, Undated Correspondence and General Papers, Box 190, Folder 4, HSP; Sheriff’s Deed, Deed Book R-2, 41:426-428; Ibid, 423-425, CCA. In her letter, Kennedy noted that “Mr. Kinnard has been kind enough to bail both you and me we are both indebted to him.” It seems that the problems Ruston faced stemmed from his father’s death. In 1790, his brother-in-law, John Finley, brought a case against him for property rights and claimed that Ruston was in so much debt that he had not properly dealt with Job Ruston’s will. There is a mention of Ruston’s character in court report which read: “When Thomas Ruston came first from England, he once and again makes his home with this sister [Elizabeth Ruston Finley] for days together and is treated with all that civility and courtesy his sister or the family were capable of. Yet never once does he acknowledge y/e favor –No but the moment he has it in his power unmanlike [sic] indeed, he puts on all y/e majesty of self importance to his sister in the absence of her husband, discharges her at her peril […]
against her for damages done to his land worth £1,063.19.3, and as a result, the £25 annuity paid to her was "seized and taken" to settle the suit.\textsuperscript{381} Thomas Kennedy was also required to pay £145.5.0 to help settle the debt against his mother, and a tract of land she owned in East Whiteland was taken to satisfy the case against her.\textsuperscript{382} Her remaining land holdings were reduced and the yearly annuities were no longer paid to her by her sons. Finally, in 1800 the case was settled when Thomas Kennedy granted another tract of land from his mother's dower to Kinnard to satisfy the remaining debts.\textsuperscript{383} Greatly diminished of property, she returned to West Chester where she continued to deal with the problems of her bankrupt brother's property and personal affairs.

In February of 1804, Kennedy and her son, Thomas, entered a final petition for compensation linked with Samuel Kennedy's service to the American forces. Their claim was entered into the Pennsylvania House of Representatives where they petitioned for Donation Lands "for the benefit of the heirs of the deceased [Kennedy]."\textsuperscript{384} A few years earlier, in April of 1796, Thomas applied for donation lands for himself and his younger siblings, but it seemed that this application stalled and resulted in this subsequent petition to the Pennsylvania House.\textsuperscript{385}

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{381} Kinnard was married to one of Kennedy's daughters, Mary. Perhaps some of this sum was meant to repay Kinnard for offering bail for both Kennedy and Ruston. A further entry appeared in August of 1799, and also dealt with Kinnard and Kennedy's life estate. Sheriff's Deed, \textit{Deed Book R-2}, 41:426-428; Ibid, 423-425; Sarah Kennedy, Sheriff's Deed, June 18, 1799, 1:100; Sarah Kennedy, Sheriff's Deed, August 23, 1799, 1:101, CCA.

\textsuperscript{382} Sarah Kennedy, Sheriff's Deed, June 18, 1799, 1:100, CCA.

\textsuperscript{383} Deed, Thomas Ruston Kennedy to John Kinnard, 1800, \textit{Deed Book S-2}, 42:236-238, CCA. This case may have had something to do with the inheritance that Mary Kennedy Kinnard should have received at her majority. Will of Doctor Samuel Kennedy, Filed 1778, no. 3130, CCA.

\textsuperscript{384} Friday, February 10, 1804, \textit{Journal of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives}, Early American Imprints, Series II, no. 7012, 379. Donation Lands were given to those individuals who remained in service to the state of Pennsylvania throughout the Revolutionary War. The land offered was in the Northwestern region of the state and included tracts in the counties of Butler, Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango and Warren. See, Record Group 17, PHMC.

\textsuperscript{385} "Application of Thomas Ruston Kennedy," April 14, 1796, Records of the Land Office, Donation Land Series, RG17-168, Donation Claimant B, 361, PHMC.
\end{footnotes}
By late February, the House reported that the original petition had not been granted because of uncertainties regarding Doctor Kennedy's service. He held the role of surgeon in Pennsylvania's Fourth Battalion, but it did not appear that he, as their report stated, "continue[d] as the actual surgeon to that battalion until his death," yet they did determine "that he was nevertheless employed in the public service" when he died.\(^{386}\) The House believed that this was enough for them to suggest that the family should be granted donation lands, but when the case came to a vote on March 2, 1804, it failed to pass.\(^{387}\) With this last and unsuccessful attempt to gain compensation, petitions from the family stop, and Kennedy and her relation to her late husband fade from the historical record.\(^{388}\)

Sarah Kennedy died around 1815, out-living her husband by thirty-seven years.\(^{389}\) Her widowhood was anything but tranquil, filled with quests for property compensation, a disgruntled tenant and a precarious link to a Continental Army hospital. From the moment Samuel Kennedy offered Yellow Springs to the Continental troops, his wife's life became forever entangled with its future. In the early years of her widowhood, she was forced to adapt to her new circumstances in the highly volatile political world of Revolutionary Pennsylvania.


\(^{387}\) Friday, March 2, 1804, *Journal of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives*, Early American Imprints, Series II, no. 7012, 511. The vote was forty-three against and thirty-eight in favor.

\(^{388}\) The repercussions of Samuel Kennedy's patriotism were felt into the nineteenth-century when, in July of 1830, John Kennedy the last surviving son of Sarah and Samuel Kennedy wrote to Samuel McKean, Secretary of the State of Pennsylvania, regarding his deceased father's military service. He wrote that his mother applied for a pension "on acct. of the Revolutionary services of Dr. Kennedy [...] and that a bill was reported by the Assembly to allow her a pension, during life, on acct. of her husband's former services" but that the bill was lost. John Kennedy to Samuel McKean Esqr. Secretary of the State of Pennsylvania, July 29, 1830, Jonesboro Tennessee, Miscellaneous Surname Files: Kennedy, CCHS. Kennedy was likely referring to the claim made by his brother and mother in 1804 regarding Donation Lands, which failed to pass in the Pennsylvania House. He requested that the proceedings regarding her petition be forwarded to him along with any other documents dealing with his father and Yellow Springs, in the hope that he could claim compensation for his late father's services. Over fifty years had passed since the Continental Army first arrived at Yellow Springs, and the last of the Kennedy family was still trying to prove that Samuel Kennedy had dutifully served as a physician and that they therefore deserved a pension. What became of John Kennedy's petition is unknown, but this final account speaks to the long term effects of Samuel Kennedy's service on his family.

\(^{389}\) Sarah Kennedy's death date is uncertain. She outlived her eldest son, Thomas Ruston Kennedy, who died in Meadville, Pennsylvania in 1813.
This narrative has barely touched on the hospital’s primary function choosing rather to explore the individuals operating on the fringes of its existence. By doing so, it has aimed to uncover a microcosm of the Revolution and the broader implications the conflict had on individuals, especially widows, and their relationships to property. Doctor Kennedy’s involvement with the hospital created a tangled property case which followed his widow well beyond the Revolutionary War and into the early years of the New Republic. Sarah Kennedy proved to be a persistent, resilient, and maybe even stubborn, widow who moved beyond the obstacles of her situation to successfully navigate her changing social and political world, obtaining necessary compensation and asserting her rights to the family’s estate, all while defying gendered expectations and showing that she was anything but a weak and helpless woman.
Conclusion

Born within a few years of each other in the 1730s and married by 1760, the lives of Hannah Lewis and Sarah Kennedy coincided with the Revolution in similar fashion. By the late 1770s, both women were widows and from that point forward actively petitioned for property rights and compensation. Prior to their widowhoods, they had experiences as single mothers running their households while their husbands were absent, and therefore stepped into this new phase in their lives with the skills and abilities necessary to manage their family's affairs.

Lewis and Kennedy may have come from different political backgrounds, but their gendered experiences as widows of war had similarities that crossed political lines. This is especially seen in the rhetoric they employed when making claims for compensation. In some respect, both women tried to embody expected roles as "helpless" or "weak" women by using terms such as "left in distress" throughout their claims. Whether they truly thought themselves to be helpless will never be known, but both likely knew that using this language gave added weight to their arguments, although it cannot and should not be assumed that their claims of distress were not founded in truth. Calling such similarities proof of gender consciousness may be going too far, but there appears to have been an established pattern, much like the trends identified by Mary Beth Norton, that these women used in their claims. Their language speaks to broader gender expectations held by society, but also indicates that women, while being legitimately disadvantaged by their gender, may have used certain rhetoric to

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300 Hannah Lewis to Reuben Haines, 2nd of 9th Month 1782, Long Island, New York, Pennsylvania Division of Archives and Manuscripts, Records of Pennsylvania's Revolutionary Governments, 1775-1790 [Film 24], Reel 30, 838, DLAR; Sarah Kennedy to John Jay, February 17, 1779, Continental Congress Papers, Miscellaneous Letters to Congress 1775-1789, 13:497, Yellow Springs Record Group 1, Box 5, Folder 10, YS.

301 Norton, "Eighteenth-Century American Women in Peace and War: The Case of the Loyalists," 386-409. Through the entire process of entering petitions, neither woman ever mentioned their contributions to the cause rather relying on their husbands' legacies to substantiate their claims. This was particularly true for loyalist women who, as Norton found, rarely cited that they had helped the British cause. Norton, Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750-1820, 176.
manipulate the recipients of their petitions. Regardless of the language they used, there was a clear disconnect between their descriptions and their actions.\footnote{This was essentially the argument put forth by Lisa Wilson Waciega in her article, “A ‘Man of Business,’: The Widow of Means in Southeastern Pennsylvania, 1750-1850,” where she specifically refers to Norton’s argument, suggesting that while the rhetoric may represent the ideal, the actions of most widows proved to be quite the opposite. Waciega, 41.} Forced to navigate a complicated political world, both during and after the Revolution, they were illustrations of the strength and persistence of widows and were, as Lisa Wilson Waciega argued, well prepared to step into the void left by their husbands.\footnote{Ibid, 40-64.}

Support networks, likewise, played an important role in their success. Lewis had support not only from her nuclear family but also from extended kinship ties, as well as the larger Quaker community. Kennedy relied on her family, neighbors and friends, and had the advantage of knowing individuals such as George Washington, which gave her added political clout when seeking compensation. A final, but vital, part of each woman’s petition was her acknowledgment of her role as a “Republican Mother” and her duty to prepare her children for the future as virtuous citizens. Both recognized that if their petitions linked their claims with concern for their children that the government might pay more attention to their needs.\footnote{The actual gains women made during the Revolution itself were questionable, but the ideology of Republican Motherhood offered them a sphere of influence in the home and likewise helped to usher in arguments in support of expanded female education. See, Kerber, Women of the Republic: Intellect & Ideology in Revolutionary America and Gunderson, To Be Useful to the World: Women in Revolutionary America 1740-1790.}

Widowhood, as historian Vivian Bruce Conger wrote, was an “‘interlude’ during which a woman carried out her husband’s wishes for maintaining a well-ordered family.”\footnote{Conger, 5.} As she further argued, few widows actually “took advantage of their situation because they internalized the lessons taught to them in the advice books about their proper economic and social roles.”\footnote{Ibid.} While this may have been true for some, Lewis and Kennedy moved beyond gender limitations
and into the public world through their petitions. Lewis spent thirty-two years of her life petitioning for support, compensation or dower, showing her tenacity and drive for survival, while twenty-five years of Kennedy's life were devoted to the same cause. Without the war, the lives of these women would be mostly unrecoverable, as nothing about their life trajectories likely would have made them visible. Women married, and some ultimately became widowed, but with the Revolution, these normal life patterns took on new meaning. For them, widowhood was linked to war and everything and every action was more highly politicized. Their stories present a portrait of the Revolution that moves beyond military action and into the family and community level.

Lewis and Kennedy's stories are unique, and so far do not align with any prominent studies of widowhood, property and political allegiances in the Revolutionary world. Of the two, Lewis clearly had added factors working against her, and her husband's status as a loyalist made her a target for political distrust. Yet, she was able to exist between two political worlds making claims with each side and ultimately resettling in Pennsylvania. She did not claim a different political identity from her husband, as Jane Bartram did, nor did she remain in Pennsylvania to defend her family's land as in Grace Galloway's case. But like these women, her story is a story of survival in a changing political world where gender was still an obstacle and where political allegiances mattered. Kennedy, in contrast, had the advantage of being a wealthy widow aligned with the victors and with unquestionable ties to the American cause. She too had to struggle to obtain compensation for the services offered by her husband, as well as handle a

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The Revolutionary War brought the complexities of property and gender relations to the surface in ways that may not have been possible before. Women who found themselves newly widowed had to transition into their "life after death" in a world drastically different and more unstable than the world in which they had been born into. Widows not only had to struggle to keep their "families intact" and overcome the "prevailing ideology of proper female behavior" but had to navigate the social and political world of the Revolution while remaining cognizant of their individual needs and the larger ebb and flow of the military conflict.

Lewis and Kennedy were caught in two worlds; they now had a broader space in which to operate in the public arena, but were limited by the political actions of their deceased husbands and more broadly their gender. They never could fully escape their husbands' political shadows and these women and their families paid for the choices their husbands made for the rest of their lives. There is still much work to be done before widowhood and property can be completely

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398 There are other women who suffered similar fates and a fuller more comprehensive study of these women and their property would help to establish broader trends of the rural war widow's experiences. Examples from Chester County include: Christiana Righter and Elizabeth Rogers, whose husbands died as British prisoners, and Jane Wallace who, after her husband's death, had to petition yearly for payment of a pension from which she drew her living. Pennsylvania Archives, Fifth Series, 4:515-516. One has only to look through Sabine's sketches of Loyalists to find snippets of the lives of women, and men, who, by remaining loyal to the crown, suffered property confiscation as a result. See, Lorenzo Sabine, Biographical Sketches of Loyalists of the American Revolution (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1998), and Gregory Palmer, Biographical Sketches of Loyalists of the American Revolution (Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1983).

399 Wilson, Life After Death.

400 Ibid, 2.
understood, but Hannah Lewis and Sarah Kennedy provide a glimpse into the complex relationships of widowhood and property brought on by the Revolutionary conflict—areas that when considered together, illuminate a sub-story of the American Revolution that needs to be told.
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