

James Pennington of New Brunswick and William Pennington of North Carolina, Loyalists during the American Revolution

Were they brothers from Culmstock, Devon, England?

By Rick Crume

Tracing the origins of a Loyalist ancestor can be a daunting challenge. After the American War of Independence ended in 1783, many Loyalists resettled in New Brunswick, and there's often sparse evidence of their former places of residence in the colonies. Many Loyalists were foreign-born and identifying their hometowns overseas can be even more difficult.

At least two Loyalists named Pennington came from England. William Pennington, a customs official in North Carolina, was forced to return to his native land when the Revolutionary War broke out in 1776. James Pennington, a soldier in a Loyalist regiment, first appears in America in 1778. No record has been found to link them directly, but could William and James Pennington have been related, maybe even brothers?

Service in the Queen's Rangers

James Pennington was a soldier in the Queen's Rangers, a Loyalist regiment recruited in the colonies and named for King George III's wife, Queen Charlotte. The regiment's first known muster occurred on Staten Island, New York, in August 1776. About 400 officers and men were recruited, mainly from New York and Connecticut.¹ The regiment was originally composed of ten companies, each with about 40 men. James Pennington appears first in a muster roll dated 20 July 1778² and then regularly as one of about 30 privates in the rolls of Capt. James Kerr's Company through February 1781.³ James Pennington and two other soldiers "deserted" on 11 July 1779, but rolls from December 1779 to late 1780 show that he was one of between two and four of the company's soldiers held "prisoner with rebels" at any one time during the period.

Morris Haycock, a sergeant in Capt. Dunlop's company and a fellow prisoner of war with James Pennington and others at Reading, Pennsylvania,

requested provisions in a letter dated 27 July 1780, and addressed to Lt. Matheson, Quartermaster, Queen's Rangers, New York:

*Sir: I take this opportunity of informing you by Col. Van Heimel that I with Jerry Ownings, John Stephens and James Pennington are here Prisoners of War greatly distressed for want of Necessaries and as here are a number of Hessians who are to be supply'd with Cloathing &c., we beg that such things as you may think suitable may be sent along with theirs for to be Prisoners is distressing and to be without Cloaths or money makes it still worse so we hope you will use your best endeavors to supply us with a little of both.*⁴

After more than four months as a prisoner of war, James Pennington returned to duty on 17 November 1780. He transferred to Capt. John Whitlock's company and was promoted to corporal. Of the 36 members of the company, James Pennington was one of ten natives of England. Thirteen were born in America, ten in Ireland, one in Scotland and two outside the British Empire.⁵

Back on the battleground, casualties mounted. Of the 41 soldiers on Whitlock's muster roll for 24 August to 24 October 1781, four died, one was sick on Long Island and two were being treated at General Hospital in New York.⁶ George Washington defeated the British forces at Yorktown on 19 October 1781. Capt. Whitlock's company was taken prisoner on the same day and was held until at least mid-1782. Some soldiers were detained on Long Island and others in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.⁷

Settlement in New Brunswick

When the Revolutionary War ended with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles in 1783, members of the Queen's Rangers fled from New York to New Brunswick. The British Crown granted them land in Queensbury Parish, named for the Queen's Rangers,

¹ John Graves Simcoe, *A Journal of the Operations of the Queen's Rangers, from the End of the Year to the Conclusion of the Late American War* (New York: Bartlett & Welford, 1844, reprint by The New York Times & Arno Press, 1968), p. 18.

² British military records, "C" series, Family History Library microfilm 1,753,825, vol. 1863, p. 73.

³ Murtie June Clark, *Loyalists in the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publ. Co., 1981), vol. II, pp. 371-374, 376-382.

⁴ Jonas Howe, "A Sergeant of the Queen's Rangers," *New Brunswick Magazine*, Saint John, N.B., vol. III, no. 2 (Aug. 1899), pp. 87-93.

⁵ Clark, *Loyalists in the Southern Campaign*, vol. II, p. 589.

⁶ Clark, *Loyalists in the Southern Campaign*, vol. II, pp. 591-592.

⁷ Clark, *Loyalists in the Southern Campaign*, vol. II, pp. 593-596, 630.

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on the Saint John River in York County about 25 miles upstream from Fredericton. James Pennington settled on his lot and improved it, but a question arose as to whether the land should belong to discharged members of the Pennsylvania Loyalists. James Pennington and another grantee made their case in York County Petition #208, dated 27 December 1786:

To his Exelency Thomas Carlton Esq.r Governor & The Memorial of James Sheehan and James Pennington of the Queens Rangers.

That your Memorialists in January 1784 took up Block No. 93 then laid out for the Queens Rangers and has built houses and improved the Land and still continue to improve but are discouraged by being informed that Memorialists cannot hold the Land on account of its being since laid out for the Penselvania Loyalists Memorialists humbly prays your Exelency will secure the Land they have improved which is No. 1 & 2 of the Penselvania Loyalists Block and Memorialists will pray.

Apparently the dispute was settled in favor of Sheehan and Pennington. The reverse side of the petition says, "M Council 12th Jan.y 1787. James Pennington to be registered for No. 1. James Sheehan for No. 2."

A few years later, James Pennington filed another land claim, York County Petition #696, dated 12 May 1803:

The Memorial of James Pennington humbly showeth

That about Eight years ago a James Trainor lived and Died with memorialist who took care of him in his Sickness burryed him administered and paid his debts and sent his acc^{ts} of Administration to the Surrogate[.] the deseased James Trainor had a lot of Land granted to him No 4 Queens Rangers Block Township of Queensberry[.] Memorialist at that time had half a Grist Mill in Company with Mr Morehouse and the lot being contiguous Memorialist built a House on the Lot but Morehouse and Memorialist parting Memorialist was obliged to leave the House Land and other improvements and Build a Mill 6 Miles from Trainors Lot[.]

New Brunswick cadastral (grant) map #125 shows that James Trainor (spelled -er on the map) was granted a 200-acre lot adjacent to two 500-acre lots granted to Daniel Morehouse in Upper Queensbury. Land grants were long and narrow so that at least a part of most lots bordered the river. The

Trainer lot was 1/8 mile wide on the side facing the river and more than 2½ miles long.

Daniel Morehouse had fought alongside James Pennington in the Queen's Rangers. Both were members of Capt. James Kerr's Company from 1778 to 1779⁸ and Capt. John Whitlock's Company from 1780 to 1782.⁹

James Pennington goes on to say in his petition that Anthony Manuel, taking up residence on the Trainor lot, contended that Pennington "had not proceeded agreeable to Law." Arguing for his right to the property, James noted that he hadn't received a land grant, while Manuel had. (Does that mean that James was never granted Block No. 93?) James further made his case:

Memorialist has a House on the Lot and Cleared some Land on it and his moving 6 miles from it does not make it abandoned... Memorialists best Days was spent in the service of his Country and is now struggling to bring up a Family of young Children and prays the rights of a Subject by granting Memor.st the aforesaid Lot.

It's unknown if he succeeded in his claim to James Trainor's lot. As noted in his petition, James Pennington and his family had already moved six miles downstream on the Saint John River, where James owned and operated a grist mill. They probably located not on the actually island, but in the Bear Island settlement on the banks near the island. The island was flooded when the New Brunswick Power Commission built the Mactaquac Dam in 1967, forming Mactaquac Lake. A stream formerly called Penningtons Brook and now known as Sinnots Brook¹⁰ flows into the Saint John River at this settlement. Maybe James located his mill at a falls on this stream or built a dam on it.¹¹

In about 1798, some 15 years after he settled in New Brunswick, James Pennington married Mary "Polly" Price. Assuming he was born in about 1755, he was about 43 and she was about 26. She was one of 22 children of Edmund and Jane (Webb) Price. A veteran of the French and Indian War, Edmund was a pre-Loyalist settler who arrived at Gagetown, Queens County, New Brunswick in 1767. He was a baker in New York and a farmer and coal miner in New Brunswick. After his death in 1785 or 1786, Edmund's widow Jane married Henry Kitchen, a Loyal-

⁸ Clark, *Loyalists in the Southern Campaign*, vol. II, pp. 370-371.

⁹ Clark, *Loyalists in the Southern Campaign*, vol. II, pp. 589, 592-596, 630.

¹⁰ Alan Rayburn, *Geographical Names of New Brunswick* (Ottawa: Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, 1975), p. 256.

¹¹ Gerald Keith of Saint John West, N.B., letter, dated 14 August 1976, to Rick Crume, Glyndon, Minnesota.

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ist and millwright. They lived at New Canaan, Queens County, New Brunswick. *The Descendants of Edmund and Jane (Webb) Price*, a book written by M. Frederick Amos, Gerald Keith and Myrtle K. Perry, and published in 1976, gives details on about 10,000 Price descendants.

James Pennington died in 1808¹² at about age 53. His death left Mary, only about 36 years old, a widow with five children, all probably under age 10. How could she manage? Most likely, she got help from her married sisters Elizabeth Browne, Margaret Cliff and Deborah Williams, all of whom lived in or near Bear Island. Mary would reach the age of 86, outliving her husband by at least 50 years.



Culmstock, a pretty little village in East Devon, is divided into two parts by the River Culm. An old, single-lane stone bridge links the town's two sides. Parts of the parish church, All Saints, date back to the 12th century. A yew tree, over 200 years old, grows out of one of the tower walls and still looks healthy. The village had 1,446 residents in 1850 and, by 1868, many of its residents worked in the woolen mills.

English Origins

Several sources, including muster rolls of the Queen's Rangers, indicate that James Pennington came from England.¹³ Nothing has been found in American or Canadian records that gives his date or exact place of birth. One account says that he was related to the Pennington family of Liverpool, who made china and pottery in the eighteenth century,¹⁴

but no James in that family fits what we know about the one who ended up in New Brunswick.

James Pennington first shows up in the muster rolls of the Queen's Rangers in 1778. Assuming he was between 18 and 28 years old, he would have been born between 1750 and 1760. The International Genealogical Index (IGI) <www.familysearch.org>, an extensive, but incomplete, index of births, baptisms and marriages in England, lists eight James Penningtons and Pinningtons born in England in the 1750s. Most can be ruled out because they died in infancy or were still living in England after 1778.

What we know about the Loyalist James Pennington fits most closely with the James Pennington in this IGI entry, copied from a parish register transcript: James Pennington, christened 5 January 1755 at Culmstock, Devon, England, a son of William Pennington and Elizabeth Collings.¹⁵ The parents' names also match names the Loyalist James gave to his own children. He and his wife Mary Price had five children, including James, probably named after his father, Jane named after her maternal grandmother and Deborah named after her mother's sister. The other two, William and Elizabeth, could very well have been named after their paternal grandparents.

The burial of William Pennington, who had married Elizabeth Collings in 1743, is recorded in the Culmstock parish registers in 1764. There are no records of marriage or burial for his widow or children. That suggests the family moved away. However, there are records that could pertain to their sons James and Isaac. A James Pennington, age 28, was buried on 24 August 1778. He would have been born in about 1750. That seems too early to have been the James Pennington who was christened on 5 January 1755, but we can't rule out the possibility that they were the same person. Also, there's a record of marriage of Isaac Pennington in 1794. If he was the Isaac, christened in 1747, he would have been at least 47 at what was apparently his first marriage. That's unlikely, but possible.

In addition to a son James, William Pennington and his wife Elizabeth Collings also had a son William, christened 26 March 1744 at Culmstock.¹⁶ Two records tie him with a William Pennington who went to North Carolina as a civil servant and later returned to England:

1. The Treasury of Great Britain appointed William as Comptroller of Customs for the port of Brunswick, Brunswick County, North Carolina, by a

¹² Intestate estate of James Pennington, York County, N.B., probates, vol. 1 (1794-1826), Family History Library microfilm 851,192, pp. 77-78. Administration was granted 19 February 1808 to Mary Pennington, widow.

¹³ Clark, *Loyalists in the Southern Campaign*, vol. II, p. 589.

¹⁴ Sarah (Pennington) Uhler, "James Pennington, Minnesota Pioneer," *Pennington Pedigrees*, vol. 3, no. 1, p. 62.

¹⁵ Culmstock, Devon, England, parish registers, 1608-1837, transcript, FHL microfilm 917,187.

¹⁶ Culmstock parish registers, transcript.

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warrant dated 11 May 1764.¹⁷ That was just a month after the death of the father of the William Pennington christened at Culmstock.

2. William Pennington died at age 84 and was buried 23 March 1829 in the vault of Dowry Chapel, Clifton, Gloucestershire, England.¹⁸ That date fits just right with the William Pennington christened on 26 March 1744; he would have died just short of his 85th birthday.

William Pennington continued at his post in North Carolina until 1776 when all business ceased at the Custom House and, as a Loyalist, he was forced to leave.¹⁹ Maybe his younger brother James followed him to America and was the James Pennington who joined up with the Queen's Rangers in 1778.

No solid evidence yet confirms that James Pennington, christened in 1755 at Culmstock, Devon, was the same James Pennington who fought with the Queen's Rangers. It may be just a coincidence, but the Queen's Rangers is said to have had strong connections to Devon²⁰ and its commander, Gen. John Graves Simcoe, grew up in Wolford Lodge, Devon,²¹ just five miles from Culmstock.

DNA testing could prove James Pennington's relation to the Penningtons of Culmstock. The Pennington Research Association <www.penningtonresearch.org> has tested DNA samples from a number of Penningtons and the results show that people carrying the surname descend from several unrelated Pennington ancestors. In fact, the DNA profile for PRA Group 17, covering descendants of the Loyalist James Pennington, doesn't match the profiles of any other groups tested so far. To prove the connection between the Loyalist James Pennington and the Culmstock Penningtons, we'd have to match the DNA of PRA Group 17 with that of a male Pennington whose line back to the Penningtons of Culmstock has been confirmed.

Finding a Pennington with a proven line back to the Penningtons of Culmstock could be a challenge. James Pennington's brother, William, christened in 1744, had no children. James and William also had a

brother Isaac, christened in 1747. He could be the Isaac Pennington who was married twice at Culmstock and had two sons christened there.²²

Only a few Penningtons appear in the parish registers of Culmstock in the eighteenth century. There's a good chance they were all related, so we could look for any Pennington whose paternal line goes back to Culmstock. All the Penningtons seem to have left Culmstock by the mid-nineteenth century. The partial index to the 1871 census of England on Ancestry.com lists two Culmstock natives named Pennington, both women. The 1881 census of England on FamilySearch <www.familysearch.org> lists 196 Penningtons born in the county of Devon, but only one born in the parish of Culmstock, and she was a woman. Three Penningtons were born in Uffculme, which is very close to Culmstock.

[To be continued.]

When visiting Web sites cited in this article, be sure to leave out hyphens in the URLs.

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¹⁷ North Carolina State Archives, Mars online catalog <www.ncarchives.dcr.state.nc.us>.

¹⁸ Mary V. Campbell, parish register transcripts, St. Andrew, Clifton, Gloucestershire, 1538-1837, p. 47, FHL microfilm 1,749,584 items 1-6. "1829 Burials. Wm Pennington (formerly M.C. of Clifton). Chapel Vault. Address: Dowry Square. Buried: Mar. 23. Age: 84. By whom the ceremony performed: Jn Hensman."

¹⁹ Alexander Fraser, *[United Empire Loyalists]: Second Report of the Bureau of Archives for the Province of Ontario*, p. 1197, case 1152, Ancestry.com <www.ancestry.com/search/rectype/inddb/1016.htm>.

²⁰ Queen's Rangers <www.queensrangers.co.uk>.

²¹ History of Sir John Graves Simcoe <www.noronet.on.ca/~jcardiff/transcripts/bios-photos/essays/24%20historyjgs.html>.

²² International Genealogical Index <www.familysearch.org>.

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tration was granted on his estate in York County, New Brunswick.³²

Genealogical Summary, Three Generations

Generation Two

Generation One

1. **William^A Pennington**, buried 15 April 1764 at Culmstock, Devon, England,²³ may have been a son of William Pennton and Hanna Green, married 18 April 1716 at Culmstock.²⁴ William Pennington and Elizabeth Collings were married 19 September 1743, at Culmstock.²⁵ They were the parents of the following children, all christened at Culmstock:

- + 2 i. **WILLIAM^I PENNINGTON**, christened 26 March 1744.²⁶ He was probably the William Pennington who died at age 84 and was buried 23 March 1829 in the vault of Dowry Chapel, Clifton, Gloucestershire, England.²⁷
- 3 ii. **ISAAC PENNINGTON**, christened 19 September 1747.²⁸ He could be the Isaac Pennington who married Sarah Shaddock, 28 September 1794. Their children, John, age 7, and Elizabeth, age 1, were christened 20 December 1801. Isaac married Joan Thomas, 21 December 1800, and their son James was christened 4 March 1804.²⁹
- 4 iii. **REBECCA PENNINGTON**, christened 5 January 1755.³⁰
- + 5 iv. **JAMES PENNINGTON**, christened 5 January 1755.³¹ He may have been the James Pennington who died before 19 February 1808 when adminis-

2. **William^I Pennington** (William^A) was baptized 26 March 1744 at Culmstock.³³ He was probably the William Pennington who died on 15 March 1829³⁴ at age 84 and was buried 23 March 1829 in the vault of Dowry Chapel, Clifton, Gloucestershire, England.³⁵ William married Penelope Sophia Weston, often known as Sophia, who was born in 1757 and died in 1827. Memorial plaques to William, dated 1829, and Penelope, dated 1827, were mounted on the west wall of Dowry Chapel.³⁶

The Treasury of Great Britain appointed William as comptroller of customs for the port of Brunswick, then North Carolina's leading port, by a warrant dated 11 May 1764.³⁷ That was about a month after his father's death. A biography of William Pennington in *The Dictionary of North Carolina Biography* says that, as comptroller of customs, he was responsible for "collecting customs duties and inspecting ships in search of cargoes on which duties had not been paid."³⁸ He soon faced resistance:

In February 1766, during the course of colonial resistance to Parliament's Stamp Act, a delegation sought Pennington in the governor's house but Tryon, by then the governor, refused to permit them to take him. The next day between four hundred and five hundred men gathered and threatened to remove Pennington by force. Pennington offered to leave, declaring to the governor that "whatever Oaths might be imposed on Him, he should consider them

²³ Culmstock parish registers, transcript.

²⁴ Culmstock parish registers, transcript.

²⁵ Culmstock parish registers, transcript.

²⁶ Culmstock parish registers, transcript.

²⁷ Mary V. Campbell, parish register transcripts, St. Andrew, Clifton, Gloucestershire, 1538-1837, p. 47, FHL microfilm 1,749,584 items 1-6.

²⁸ Culmstock parish registers, transcript.

²⁹ International Genealogical Index <www.familysearch.org>. All these marriages and christenings took place in Culmstock.

³⁰ Culmstock parish registers, transcript.

³¹ Culmstock parish registers, transcript.

³² York Co., N.B. probates, 1794-1826, vol. 1, pp. 77-78, FHL microfilm 851,192.

³³ Culmstock parish registers, transcript.

³⁴ This death notice, "Mar 15th in Dowry Square, Hotwells, at an advanced age, William Pennington, Esq., many years Master of the Ceremonies of that place," appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* and in the weeklies, the *Bristol Mirror*, *Bristol Gazette*, *Bristol Mercury* and *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*.

³⁵ Campbell, parish register transcripts, St. Andrew, Clifton, p. 47.

³⁶ Dowry Chapel was demolished in 1963 and what became of the plaques is unknown.

³⁷ North Carolina State Archives, Mars online catalog <www.ncarchives.dcr.state.nc.us>.

³⁸ William S. Powell (ed.), *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, ca. 1979-1996), vol. 5, p. 68.

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as Acts of Compulsion and not of free Will." In spite of Tryon's intention to protect him, Pennington volunteered to resign his office and accompany the men. They took him into the town and obliged him and other officials to sign an oath not to enforce the Stamp Act. On 3 Mar. 1766, however, Pennington was restored to his office by the governor.³⁹

William was paid £40 a year and in 1771 he moved into a house that belonged to William Tryon, governor of North Carolina.⁴⁰ A profile of Brunswick <www.ah.dcr.state.nc.us/sections/hs/brunswic/brunswic.htm> has a picture of the ruins of St. Philip's Anglican Church where William Pennington may have worshipped.

The colonists revolted against the Stamp Act and business at the Custom House ceased in February 1776. William Pennington was driven out of North Carolina and lost furniture valued at £50, but "never was molested personally." He remained on board the ships *Scorpion* and *Thitus* until August when he arrived at New York. He soon set sail and arrived in Cork, Ireland, in September and from there went on to England. As a former comptroller of customs, he received an annual pension of £60 until at least 1784.⁴¹

Back in England, William, "an elegant writer ... admired for his wit and polished manners,"⁴² took up a completely different job as master of ceremonies for the Clifton Hotwells near Bristol.

In 1723 London newspapers were advertising 'Famous Bristol Hotwell Water, fresh from the well, delivered to any part of the Town for six shillings per dozen bottles.' ... There were several springs in the Hotwells vicinity... During the eighteenth century the spa became a fashionable resort and was visited by many famous people... After 1785, Hotwells imitated the City of Bath by appointing a Master of Ceremonies, a Mr William Pennington who wore a gold medallion on a blue ribbon to emphasize the dignity of his office. Elaborate balls were held in the evenings, and public breakfasts in the mornings, as was fashionable in those days.⁴³

³⁹ Powell, *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, vol. 5, p. 68.

⁴⁰ Claim of William Pennington, case 1152, dated 27 Feb. 1784. Printed in: Fraser, Alexander. [*United Empire Loyalists*]: Second Report of the Bureau of Archives for the Province of Ontario, p. 1197, Ancestry.com <www.ancestry.com/search/rectype/inddb/1016.htm>.

⁴¹ Claim of William Pennington, case 1152.

⁴² Lorenzo Sabine. *Biographical Sketches of Loyalists of the American Revolution* (original published: 2nd ed. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1864), p. 165, Family and Local Histories <www.genealogy.com>.

⁴³ Bristol History Then and Now: The Hotwells Spring, formerly at <myweb.ecomplanet.com/DENH7646/mycustompage0015.htm>.

The *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography* provides more details:

Clifton Hot Wells was a popular spa fifteen miles from the better-known Bath. It was the function of the master of ceremonies to arrange balls, entertainments, and other amusements for the pleasure of the wealthy and the titled elite of the day. One of his acquaintances observed, "We are all in the right to love Mr. Pennington, 'tis for all our credit to love him" Another said, "He has won all our hearts here, and his charming wife will do the same with his friends wherever they are."⁴⁴

RULES *of the* **BRISTOL HOTWELL**

The Master of the Ceremonies, whose inclination coincides with his duty to conduct the entertainments of this place with proper decorum, yet without unnecessary restraint, requests the favour of the company to attend to the following rules:

- 1st. That a certain row of seats be set apart at the upper end of the room, for ladies of precedence, and foreigners of fashion.
- 2nd. That every lady who has a right to precedence, deliver her card to the Master of the Ceremonies on her entering the room.
- 3rd. That no gentleman appear with a sword or with spurs in these rooms, or on a ball night in boots.
- 4th. That after a lady has called her dance, her place in the next is at the bottom; and for the future it is to be understood that no lady of rank can avail herself of it, after the country dances are begun.
- 5th. That on ball nights, when minuets are danced, ladies who intend dancing there, will sit in a front row, for the convenience of being taken out and returning to their places.
- 6th. That on all occasions ladies are admitted to these rooms in hats, not excepting the balls given by the Master of the Ceremonies.
- 7th. That the subscription-balls will begin as soon as possible after seven o'clock, and conclude at eleven, on account of the health of the company.
- 8th. It is earnestly requested, that when a lady has gone down the dance, she will be so polite, as not to retire till it is concluded.

WM. PENNINGTON Esq.
Master of the Ceremonies
1st May 1785

"Master of the Ceremonies" William Pennington posted his "Rules of the Bristol Hotwells," dated 1 May 1785. Among the eight rules intended to preserve proper decorum, number three admonishes gentleman from appearing with a sword or spurs or wearing boots on a ball night. Number five encourages ladies who wish to dance minuets on ball nights to sit in a front row, "for the convenience of being taken out and returning to their places."⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Powell, *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, vol. 5, p. 68.

⁴⁵ The Rules appeared in a guidebook to Bristol, England.

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William Pennington married Penelope Sophia Weston, “an attractive, popular lady who had declined many offers of marriage.”⁴⁶ Her circle of friends included many learned people, and they were prolific letter-writers. Much of their correspondence has been preserved, and the Yale University Library has four collections of their letters:

1. Love letters written by **Samuel Jackson Pratt** (1749-1814) between March and August of 1779 to Penelope. “Pratt abandoned his clerical career to become successively an actor, a bookseller, a dramatist, and finally a prolific poet and novelist... Often lengthy, the letters describe Pratt’s feelings for her and concern over her health and situation; social news of Bath and other locales; and Pratt’s works and reading, including commentary on the writings of Rousseau and Richardson.”⁴⁷

2. Twenty letters that **Anna Seward** (1742-1809) sent to Penelope between 1782 and 1806. The 127 pages are described as “friendly correspondence covering such matters as news of mutual friends, the failing health of the author, and the amorous and marital situations of the recipient.”⁴⁸

3. Letters from **Hester Lynch Thrale Piozzi** (1741-1821) to various people, including Penelope Pennington.⁴⁹

4. A letter dated 1 April 1788 from Penelope Pennington to **Ann Greathed**.⁵⁰

In 1960 the Princeton University Library acquired a collection of Penelope Pennington’s manuscripts consisting of letters, a commonplace book and a poem.⁵¹

1. Thirty-one letters written by Mrs. Pennington, mostly to her younger friend **Maria Brown**.

2. About 200 pages of material, mostly copied by Mrs. Pennington from printed and manuscript sources.

3. The autographed manuscript of Penelope’s poem, “The Copper Farthing.”

The Princeton Library’s Robert Taylor Collection (RTC01, Box P) also includes correspondence

between Penelope Pennington and Hester Piozzi, a close friend of Samuel Johnson. In his commentary on the manuscripts in an article for *The Princeton University Library Chronicle*, James Thorpe focuses on Penelope and Hester’s correspondence.⁵² When they became friends in 1788, Hester was 47 and Penelope was “an alert, lively, literary-minded, impatient spinster of thirty-six,⁵³ tied to the care of an aging mother.” Their letters include book critiques, comments on politics, complaints about bad health and occasional gossip and moralizing. Subjects range from Lord Byron’s latest poems to “that *faithless* Wretch Bonaparte” and “those despicable Americans.”⁵⁴ Penelope’s physical afflictions included catarrah, “Rheumatism of the Head” and “Fatigue & Anxiety of Mind & Body,” while her husband William suffered from “frightful attacks of *Spasms* in his *Stomach*.”

Some of the Pennington-Piozzi correspondence was published in *The Intimate Letters of Hester Piozzi and Penelope Pennington 1788 1821*, Oswald G. Knapp, editor (London: John Lane, 1914).

William and Penelope Pennington had no children. In his will dated 1827, the year Penelope died, William Pennington of 13 Dowry Square in Clifton, Gloucestershire, England, wrote a will leaving his entire estate to his “dear friend,” Sophia Wren, spinster.⁵⁵ If he was, indeed, a brother of James Pennington who had died in New Brunswick in 1808, you’d think that William might have left some of his estate to James’s children.

5. James^I Pennington (William^A) was baptized 5 January 1755 at Culmstock.⁵⁶ He may have been the James Pennington who died before 19 February 1808 when administration was granted on his estate in York County, New Brunswick.⁵⁷ That James married Mary “Polly” Price, born in about 1772, probably at Gagetown, Queens County, New Brunswick, to

⁴⁶ Powell, *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, vol. 5, p. 68.

⁴⁷ Samuel Jackson Pratt, Pratt Papers, 1779, call no. OSB MSS 16, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University Library.

⁴⁸ Osborn Shelves c, Osborn 18th Century Bound Manuscripts <<http://webtext.library.yale.edu/beinflat/osborn.cshelf.htm>>, James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

⁴⁹ Hester Lynch Piozzi Collection, call no. GEN MSS 125, General Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

⁵⁰ Bertie Greathed Papers, James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection, box 1, folder 15, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University <webtext.library.yale.edu/xml2html/beinecke.great.nav.html>.

⁵¹ Penelope Pennington Collection, 1798-1827, call no. C0002, Manuscripts Division, Princeton University Library.

⁵² James Thorpe, “Friend to Mrs. Piozzi: Penelope Pennington in Miniature,” *The Princeton University Library Chronicle*, vol. 21, no. 3 (spring 1960), pp. 105-110.

⁵³ If she was actually born in 1757, she would have been 31 in 1788.

⁵⁴ The correspondence between Penelope Pennington and Hester Piozzi was microfilmed as part of “The William Cowper Papers and Other Eighteenth Century Manuscripts,” Reading, Berkshire, England: Research Publications, 1991. 10 microfilms. (British literary manuscripts from Princeton University). See the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (NUCMC) <www.loc.gov/coll/nucmc/nucmc.html>.

⁵⁵ Prerogative Court of Canterbury, catalogue reference PROB 11/1756, file reference 81, Documents Online, <www.documentsonline.pro.gov.uk>. The will was proved on 23 May 1829.

⁵⁶ Culmstock parish registers, transcript.

⁵⁷ York Co., N.B. probates, 1794-1826, vol. 1, pp. 77-78, FHL microfilm 851,192.

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Edmund Price and Jane Webb.⁵⁸ Her gravestone in the Boundary Creek Cemetery in Westmorland County, New Brunswick, is inscribed, “Mary, widow of the late James Pennington. DIED Dec 7th 1859. In her 87th Yr.”⁵⁹

James¹ Pennington and Mary “Polly” Price were the parents of the following children, all probably born in Queensbury Parish, York County, New Brunswick.

- + 6 i. JAMES L.² PENNINGTON was born 16 October 1799⁶⁰ and died 24 February 1888 at Afton, Washington County, Minnesota.⁶¹
- + 7 ii. ELIZABETH PENNINGTON died before 1851 when her husband, William McKeen, is listed as a 60-year-old widower in the census of Douglas, York County, N.B.⁶²
- + 8 iii. JANE PENNINGTON was born in about 1801 and died after 1871.⁶³
- + 9 iv. REV. WILLIAM E. PENNINGTON was born in about 1803 and died 27 Feb. 1884 at Houlton, Aroostook County, Maine.⁶⁴
- + 10 v. DEBORAH PENNINGTON.

Generation 3

6. James L.² Pennington (James¹, William⁴) was born 16 October 1799 and died 24 February 1888 at Afton, Washington County, Minnesota. He was married 2 August 1827 in York County, New Brunswick,⁶⁵ to Mary Ann Gallop, a daughter of Samuel Gallop and Mary Hubbell of Wicklow Parish, York County (later Carleton County), N.B. She was born 14 July 1809 in New Brunswick, probably at Prince William, York County, and died 4 December 1878 in Stillwater, Washington County, Minnesota.⁶⁶ James and Mary Ann had at least ten children. He and other

family members are buried in the Fairview Cemetery in Stillwater.



Brothers Rev. William E. Pennington (1803-1884) & James L. Pennington (1799-1888). Photo in possession of George and Grace Clymer of Afton, Minnesota, 1997.

James Pennington’s family moved from Queensbury Parish, York County, New Brunswick, to Houlton, Aroostook County, Maine, by 1840,⁶⁷ and to Hodgdon, Aroostook County, Maine, by 1850.⁶⁸ He and his older sons settled in Stillwater, Washington County, Minnesota, in 1854, and his wife and younger children followed in 1856. Apparently James farmed in the summer and logged in the winter. He and his seven sons cut logs and rafted them on the St. Croix and Snake Rivers. As early as 1855 he became the first white settler in Kanabec County, Minnesota, and located on Pennington Lake near Brunswick, about 75 miles northwest of Stillwater. It took James seventeen hours to walk from Brunswick to Stillwater over a rough trail.⁶⁹ The family moved back to Stillwater in the early 1860s.

7. Elizabeth Pennington, known as Betsey, of Queensbury and William McKeen of the parish of Maugerville were married in York County, New Brunswick, 20 July 1820.⁷⁰ James Pennington and Mary Price witnessed the marriage. Elizabeth and William McKeen had at least nine children born between 1821 and 1837.

8. Jane Pennington of the Parish of Queensbury and Edmund Hovey of the Parish of Ludlow, Northumberland County, N.B., were married 17 October 1820. James Hovey and Maria Williams witnessed

⁵⁸ Many of their descendants are named in *The Descendants of Edmund and Jane (Webb) Price*, by M. Frederick Amos, Gerald Keith and Myrtle K. Perry, 1976.

⁵⁹ Viewed 6 May 1993 by Rick Crume.

⁶⁰ Handwritten notation on a photograph of the brothers James L. Pennington (1799-1888) and Rev. William E. Pennington (1803/1804-1884). The original was in the possession of brother and sister George and Grace Clymer of Afton, Minnesota, 1997.

⁶¹ *Stillwater Daily Gazette*, Stillwater, Minn., 25 Feb. 1888.

⁶² Page 67 or 75.

⁶³ 1871 census, Queensbury, York Co., N.B.

⁶⁴ Obituary of Rev. W. E. Pennington, *The Religious Intelligencer*, Saint John, N.B., Mar. 14, 1884, p. 2.

⁶⁵ York Co., NB, marriage registers, bk. 1 (vol. A), p. 295.

⁶⁶ Obituary of Mary Ann Pennington (sic), *The Stillwater Lumberman*, 6 Dec. 1878.

⁶⁷ 1840 U.S. Census, Houlton, Aroostook Co., Maine, p. 69.

⁶⁸ 1850 U.S. Census, Hodgdon, Aroostook Co., Maine, pp. 67-68.

⁶⁹ Sarah (Pennington) Uhler, “James Pennington, Minnesota Pioneer,” *Pennington Pedigrees*, vol. 3, no. 1, p. 62.

⁷⁰ York Co., N.B., marriage registers, bk. 1 (vol. A), p. 149.

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the marriage.⁷¹ Edmund was born in 1795 at Gagetown, Queens County, N.B., and died in 1887 at Houlton, Aroostook County, Maine. He and Jane had at least four children born between 1821 and 1840.

9. Rev. William E. Pennington was born in about 1803 in Queensbury Parish, York County, N.B., and died 27 February 1884 at Houlton, Aroostook County, Maine. He is buried in the Old Waterville Cemetery in the Parish of Wakefield, Carleton County, N.B.⁷² and his gravestone is at least eight feet tall. He was married 17 January 1837 in Queens County, N.B.,⁷³ to Isabella Slip or Slipp of Waterborough, Queens County, a daughter of John Slip or Slipp and Hannah Merritt. Isabella was born 7 September 1821 at Hampstead,⁷⁴ Queens County, N.B., and died 13 December 1898 at Houlton.⁷⁵ William and Isabella had twelve children.



Rev. William E. Pennington (1803-1884). One of many pictures mounted together in a photographic montage, "F. B. Ministers of N. B. & N. S." (Free Baptist Ministers of New Brunswick & Nova Scotia) and reprinted in *Biographical Directory of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Free Baptist Ministers and Preachers* (Hantsport, N.S.: Lancelot Press, 1996), by Frederick C. Burnett

William E. Pennington was converted at age 26 in 1830. The church at Upper Queensbury licensed him as a Free Will Baptist minister in 1831 and he was the first person ordained by the General Confe-

rence at a ceremony held at Queensbury in 1832. He is said to have organized more than twenty churches and performed over 1,000 baptisms, mostly in Carleton, York and Westmorland Counties, New Brunswick, and in Houlton, Maine.⁷⁶

Despite the disapproval of some ministers, William and a number of other preachers engaged in commercial activities and did not wear clerical attire.⁷⁷ William E. Pennington, a 55-year-old clergyman and farmer, is listed with his wife and six children, all Free Will Baptists, in the 1861 census of the parish of Moncton, Westmorland County, N.B.⁷⁸ The census shows that the family ran an active farm with 50 "improved" acres of land and 250 "unimproved" acres, 6 horses, 4 milch cows, 2 working oxen, 3 "other neat cattle," 7 sheep and 6 swine. In the previous year the farm produced 500 lbs. of pork, 400 lbs. of butter, 48 lbs. of cheese and 30 lbs. of wool. The family harvested 40 tons of hay, 40 bushels of wheat, 250 bushels of oats, 200 bushels of buckwheat and 300 bushels of potatoes.⁷⁹

William's family moved from New Brunswick to Houlton, Maine, in about 1844 and back to New Brunswick in about 1858. They returned to Houlton in about 1871 and the next year they moved to Hudson, St. Croix County, Wisconsin. At some point, maybe in the 1870s, they spent four or five years in Minnesota,⁸⁰ before returning again to Maine. William's obituary says, "At the time of his death he was pastor of the F. C. Baptist Church in Bridgewater, Me., and preached his last sermon there about five weeks before his death."

10. Deborah Pennington and William Kinney, both of the Parish of Queensbury, were married 5 July 1827 in York County, N.B. Mary Ann Gallop and James Pennington witnessed the marriage.⁸¹ William and Deborah are said to have had children Isabella, William and another son who was a member of the Maine state legislature. One son could be William P. Kinney, born in March 1833 in N.B.,⁸² a minister from Houlton who was present at the funeral of Deborah's brother William in 1884.⁸³

⁷⁶ Frederick C. Burnett, *Biographical Directory of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Free Baptist Ministers and Preachers* (Hantsport, N.S.: Lancelot Press, 1996), pp. 148-150.

⁷⁷ Burnett, *Biographical Directory*, p. 150.

⁷⁸ Sheet 39.

⁷⁹ 1861 census, parish of Moncton, Westmorland Co., N.B., agriculture schedule, sheet 6.

⁸⁰ Obituary of Rev. W. E. Pennington.

⁸¹ York Co., N.B., marriage registers, bk. 1 (vol. A), p. 298.

⁸² 1870 U.S. Census, Houlton, Aroostook Co., ME, p. 6. 1900 U.S. Census, Houlton, p. 165.

⁸³ Obituary of Rev. W. E. Pennington.

⁷¹ York Co., N.B., marriage registers, bk. 1 (vol. A), p. 154.

⁷² R. Wallace Hale, *Southern Carleton County Cemeteries*, typed manuscript, dtd. 4 Jan. 1982, p. 252.

⁷³ Marianne Otty Estate Papers, shelf 126, box 16, pkt. 106, bk. 9, p. 5, New Brunswick Museum, Saint John, N.B.

⁷⁴ Obituary of Isabella Pennington, *The Aroostook Times*, Houlton, Maine, Fri., 16 Dec. 1898, p. 7.

⁷⁵ Obituary of Isabella Pennington.

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When visiting Web sites cited in this article, be sure to leave out hyphens in the URLs.

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