

CAPTAIN JESSE HOLBROOK
MISERABLE WRETCH OR MALIGNED MARINER?

By Anita A. Lustenberger, CG

Six men named Capt. Jesse Holbrook, all cousins descended from John⁴ and Sarah (Chrittenden) Holbrook through their sons Abiezer⁵ or Thomas⁵ Holbrook, were active in Maine on the waters of the Penobscot and Kennebec rivers from the 1770s to the 1870s. They can be separated by occupation from the Jesse Holbrooks who were farmers or in other kinds of work but, as these six were sea captains, occupation is of no aid in distinguishing them. One Capt. Jesse⁷ Holbrook (1770–1825) is differentiated because an uninhibited family genealogy referred to him as “a miserable wretch.”¹

A Pennell genealogy written in 1916 by Clara Pennell Phinney contains assorted unflattering or honest assessments of Pennell relatives (“a drunkard,” “a suicide,” “a half breed of mixed blood”). Her annotations are rarely found in other genealogies of a century ago, in which families were more typically “ancient and honorable” with unpleasant or embarrassing facts omitted. Another compiler of the Pennell and Holbrook families, Charles Nelson Sinnett, characterized family members as “a very worthy citizen . . . of sturdy and helpful character,” “a truly helpful woman,” “an excellent farmer and citizen.” Sinnett was probably in contact with some of the relatives with whom Phinney was corresponding, but his only comment on the Jesse Holbrook treated here was “a sea Captain from Great Sebascodegan, Me.”²

Phinney, who lived from 1863 to 1943, was a second cousin twice removed of Lucy (Pennell) Holbrook, wife of Capt. Jesse Holbrook, but Phinney could not have known Lucy or Jesse personally, both of whom had died by 1830. One acknowledgement in Phinney’s bibliography was to “Records by Robert Pennell on Brunswick line.” Of four possible Robert Pennells,³ the most likely to have been Phinney’s informant was Robert Pennell Jr., 1811–1877, a first cousin once-removed of Lucy (Pennell) Holbrook.⁴ In 1865 this Robert purchased “the old Pennell homestead in Brunswick” and lived there until his death. He would have been fourteen when Capt. Jesse Holbrook died, and he could have heard his parents’ comments about the life of Capt. Holbrook and the Pennells. Lucy’s father, John Pennell, who died when informant Robert was eleven, was described as “a very tall, round shouldered man, red haired, good natured, religious, and generally liked.”⁵ Clara Phinney and Robert Pennell detailed the children and grandchildren of John Pennell’s seven daughters, although they knew little about the children of Capt. Jesse and Lucy (Pennell) Holbrook, except to note: “John Pennell left his property to his grandson John Pennell Holbrook who quickly squandered it.”⁶

JOHN PENNELL HOLBROOK

John Pennell’s only son, John Pennell Jr., died in infancy, and John Pennell Holbrook, son of Capt. Jesse and Lucy (Pennell) Holbrook, became the namesake of his grandfather.⁷ On 2 April 1814, John Pennell and wife, Hannah, sold seventy acres with buildings to John Pennell Holbrook for \$700,⁸ possibly occasioned by John Pennell Holbrook’s marriage two weeks later to his cousin Polly Holbrook.⁹ One wonders how a nineteen-year-old had amassed \$700 and if money was truly

¹ Clara Pennell Phinney, “The Pennell Family in Brunswick, Maine” (typescript, 1916), 4:15 [FamilySearch digital film (DGS) #7561829]. The descent of Capt. Jesse Holbrook⁷ is Abiezer⁶–5, John⁴–3–2, Thomas¹.

² Charles N. Sinnett, “The Holbrook Families of Maine” (typescript, 1926), p. 4, copy at Maine State Library Augusta, Maine. Great Sebascodegan is the largest island of the Town of Harpswell.

³ Phinney, “Pennell Family” [note 1], 4:73, 105, 120, 131.

⁴ Phinney, “Pennell Family” [note 1], 4:132, 131, 46, 3:13, 15, 33.

⁵ Phinney, “Pennell Family” [note 1], 4:15

⁶ Phinney, “Pennell Family” [note 1], 4:15.

⁷ Phinney, “Pennell Family” [note 1], 4:34.

⁸ Cumberland Co. Deeds, 78:101, John Pennell to John Holbrook, 2 April 1814.

⁹ Joseph Crook Anderson II, *Vital Records of Brunswick, Maine, 1740–1860*, and the Forsaith Book of Brunswick Family Records . . . (Rockport, Maine, 2004), 168.

exchanged. More importantly, John Pennell Holbrook was too young to buy or sell land legally.¹⁰ Hannah Pennell may have known this, or had other reservations, because she did not acknowledge the deed and relinquish her dower rights until two weeks after John Pennell Holbrook turned twenty-one in 1816.

On 25 January 1816, the same day that Hannah Pennell acknowledged the 1814 deed, her grandson John P. Holbrook, yeoman, “sold” the seventy acres and buildings back to his grandfather for \$700, with the stipulation that

... if John Holbrook his heirs or assigns shall maintain said John Pennell and his wife during their natural life with victuals, drink, lodging and clothing & find and provide all things necessary for them & maintain them in a comfortable manner and pay to Hannah Speer my daughter, after my decease, fifteen dollars, to Rachel Ross fifteen dollars, to Mary Mitchell, Lucy Holbrook, Mehitable Ross, Jennett Lovit and Margaret Cary fifteen dollars each, then this deed to be void, otherwise to be and remain in full force.¹¹

This deed was signed two weeks after John’s twenty-first birthday, and there was no recorded dower release by John’s wife, Polly. Polly left no records and shenmay have died at any time, although the note that John and Polly had “one daughter who lived with her mother at Federal St, Brunswick”¹² strongly implies that Polly was alive two years after her marriage.

Two years later, on 28 December 1818, John P. Holbrook sold the land, now “eighty” [sic] acres, to John Jordan Jr. for \$500. This implies that John P. Holbrook had taken care of his grandparents in accordance with the conditions of the earlier deed. John P. Holbrook would then owe the \$15 to each of the sisters.¹³

Again, wife Polly did not relinquish dower, and John P. Holbrook may have retained the property with the sale never happening. Then, confusingly, five months later, on 10 May 1819, John P. Holbrook again sold the land (now seventy acres) for only \$400 to a merchant, David Stone of Brunswick, to whom he may have been indebted.¹⁴ And yet again, wife Polly was not noted on the deed as having signed off. For some reason, the sale to Stone apparently never was finalized, as two years later, on 6 September 1821, five of the daughters of John Pennell quitclaimed the seventy acres that had been sold in 1818 to John Jordan Jr.:

*Jesse Holbrook and Lucy Holbrook his wife in her right, Samuel Ross and Mehitable Ross his wife, Wm Mitchell and Mary Mitchell his wife, in right of their said wives all of Brunswick and George Leavitt yeoman and Jane Leavitt his wife in her right of Harpswell, Henry Carey of Harlem in the County of Kennebeck and Margaret his wife, in consideration of ninety dollars paid by John Jordan Jun r of Brunswick.*¹⁵

Of the five daughters, only Lucy Holbrook and Mary Mitchell signed. No separate deed was found with signatures for the other three daughters (Mehitable Ross, Margaret Carey, and Jane Leavitt), nor is a deed found for daughter Hannah Spear, who was living but not named. Rachel Ross had died, leaving heirs, but the 1816 deed had not mentioned rights for heirs of the daughters. The sale price of \$90 is equal to six times fifteen, which would give each of the six living daughters \$15 as originally requested by John Pennell in 1816. This carelessly incomplete deed must have been intended to provide neighbor John Jordan Jr. with a good title, and to provide each of the daughters the \$15 apiece that must not have been given to them by John P. Holbrook. The family seems to have agreed to this deed to clean up the mess.

Thus, documented by five deeds over a seven-year period, John Pennell Holbrook had indeed quickly squandered the land from his grandfather.

¹⁰ He was b. 11 Jan. 1795 per Anderson, Brunswick VRs [note 9], 51.

¹¹ Cumberland Co. Deeds, 73:462.

¹² Phinney, “Pennell Family” [note 1], 4:34.

¹³ Cumberland Co. Deeds 84:206.

¹⁴ Cumberland Co. Deeds, 84:325.

¹⁵ Cumberland Co. Deeds, 90:95–96.

JESSE HOLBROOK, a sea captain, was born in Harpswell, Maine, about 1770–73, son of Abiezer and Elizabeth (Snow) Holbrook.¹⁶ He died in Brunswick, “very suddenly,” 4 December 1825, aged 55.¹⁷ He married in Harpswell, 8 December 1791, LUCY PENNELL.¹⁸ Lucy was born in Brunswick, 4 January 1770, daughter of John and Hannah (Graham) Pennell of Brunswick,¹⁹ and died about April 1826, aged 55 years.²⁰

Jesse Holbrook and his young family were named in an 1810 List of Vaccinations in Topsham, and in the Topsham 1810 census.²¹ On 13 June 1814, Jesse Holbrook, born Harpswell, Cumberland [Co] “Mass.,” aged 37 [sic], mariner, 5' 10½" tall, with hazel eyes, dark hair, and dark complexion, was enlisted by Capt. Douglass as a corporal in the U.S. Army for the duration of the War of 1812. On 16 February 1815, he was recorded in Capt. John Merrill's detachment of the 34th Regiment, U.S. Infantry, and on 31 March 1815 he was discharged at Portland, Maine, his term of service having expired.²²

His enlistment would have been in reaction to loss of livelihood after the British Atlantic blockade shifted to New England. The War of 1812 had its greatest effect in Maine beginning in April 1814, when the British, not having enough ships to blockade the entire American seacoast at once, shifted their blockade from the Carolinas to New England. Neither merchant ship nor privateer could get past the Royal Navy, and captured American seamen were impressed into service on the British ships. The coasting trade became so perilous that American merchants had to resort to overland transportation. The shift of the blockade in 1814 explains why records of activations of Maine militias in the War of 1812 and enlistments in the U.S. Army only begin in 1814.²³

By 1820 the family was in Brunswick, with Jesse “Holebrook” working in commerce and the household of married son Jesse Holebrook Jr. adjacent.²⁴ Jesse Holbrook was of Brunswick when he died there “suddenly.”

Children of Jesse 7 and Lucy (Pennell) Holbrook:

i ABIEZER HOLBROOK, b. Brunswick, 28 Aug. 1792;²⁵ according to Phinney he m. SUSAN LEAVITT,²⁶ although no record of the marriage nor of his death have been found. On 9 March 1814, a month before his father, Abiezer reacted to the British blockade by enlisting for the duration of the war in the U.S. Army at Topsham in the company of Capt. Holden. He was aged 21, b. Brunswick, a mariner, 5' 9½" inches tall, with gray eyes, brown hair, and a dark complexion. He served in the 45th U.S. Infantry in the companies of Capt. Smith Elkins and Capt. Joseph Flanders. Abiezer was tried 11 April 1815 by a Regimental Court Martial at Sacketts Harbor on Lake Ontario for unsoldier-like conduct and was reduced to the ranks.

On 5 June 1815, his term expired, and he was discharged at Sacketts Harbor.²⁷

He was probably the Abiezer Holbrook, b. Brunswick, with hazel eyes, brown hair, ruddy complexion, 5' 10½" tall, age 24, who enlisted in Jan. 1817 in Savannah, Ga., to serve in the 4th

¹⁶ He was 37 years old in the 1810 List of Vaccinations in Mary Pelham Hill, ed., *Vital Records of Topsham, Maine, to the Year 1892*, 2 vols. (Concord, N.H., 1929–30). 1:97. He was aged 55 at his death in 1825. His parentage is given in Sinnett, “Holbrook Families” [note 2], pp. 3, 4.

¹⁷ [Brunswick] *Maine Baptist Herald*, Tuesday, 6 Dec. 1825, p. 3 [genealogy bank.com].

¹⁸ Judith Holbrook Kelley and Clayton Rand Adams, *Marriage Returns of Cumberland County, Maine, Prior to 1892* [Rockport, Maine, 1998], 85.

¹⁹ Anderson, *Brunswick VRs* [note 9], 32, 121.

²⁰ [Portland] *Christian Mirror*, 21 April 1826, p. 3: “In Brunswick, Mrs. Lucy Holbrook, 55.”

²¹ Topsham VRs [note 16], 1:97; Jesse Holebrooks [sic] household, 1810 U.S. Census, Topsham, Lincoln Co., Maine, p. 9.

²² U.S. Army, *Register of Enlistments, 1798–1815*, Enlistments prior to the Peace Establishment, 1798 May 17–1815, vol. H, p. 8 [ancestry.com, image 319].

²³ Donald R. Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* (Urbana, Ill., 1989).

²⁴ Jesse Holebrook household, 1820 U.S. Census, Brunswick, Cumberland Co., Maine, p. 394.

²⁵ Anderson, *Brunswick VRs* [note 9], 51. While he was listed as age 16 in the 1810 List of Vaccinations in Topsham VRs [note 16], 1:97, the ages in the vaccination records do not entirely agree with the dates of birth from vital records and other sources.

²⁶ Phinney, “Pennell Family” [note 1], 4:33.

²⁷ U.S. Army *Register of Enlistments 1798–1914* [note 22], vol. 11-H, p. 21, # 247 [image 21].

Battalion of Artillery.²⁸ There was no other Abiezer Holbrook born during the 1790s in the Brunswick/Harpswell/Topsham area. The physical descriptions, aside from the change in complexion, agree well enough, and there is no record of him in Maine after 1814.

Sinnett says Abiezer had “one child that died without issue” but “the name of his wife is not given.”²⁹ Phinney says Abiezer m. Susan Leavitt and they were the parents of “Lucy Holbrook, born before wedlock, took the name of Leavitt. Book-keeper for Jesse Jordan, New Meadows, Brunswick, Maine, and spinster.”³⁰ One Lucy Leavitt was b. Brunswick, 19 March 1815, no parents listed on the record.³¹ In 1860 Lucy Leavitt, aged 45, was in Brunswick sharing a dwelling with the family of Lemuel Ward. She had \$500 in personal estate but no real estate.³² Susan Leavitt might be the woman of that name who married ca. 1829 at the age of 33 William Toothaker, b. 15 July 1791.³³ This Susan Leavett was b. in 1796 and d. 1 Nov. 1833, and she and William were the parents of two children b. 1830–32.³⁴

Reputed child of Abiezer Holbrook and Susan Leavitt: 1. Lucy Leavitt, b. Brunswick, 19 March 1815, d. after 1860.

ii JOHN PENNELL HOLBROOK, b. 11 Jan. 1795;³⁵ m. (cert.) Brunswick, 13 April 1814, MARY/POLLY HOLBROOK, ³⁶ b. Harpswell, 10 Jan. 1792, daughter of Jonathan and Rebecca (Veazie) Holbrook.³⁷ She was his 1st cousin once removed. No record has been found for John after his confusing series of deeds for the land his grandfather tried to give him in April 1814. He did not serve in the militia in 1814 for the War of 1812, although he was old enough. The last reference naming him is on a list of letters in the Brunswick post office as of 1 July 1824.³⁸ John and Polly are said to have had a daughter who d. without issue and who lived with her widowed mother at Federal St., Brunswick.”³⁹

iii JESSE HOLBROOK Jr., b. Brunswick, 7 March 1797,⁴⁰ d. 31 May 1882;⁴¹ m. (cert.) Brunswick, 16 March 1819, as Mr. Jesse Holbrook “Jur.,” JOHANNAH THOMAS of Hartford, Maine ⁴² b. Middleboro, Mass., about 1799, d. Dexter, Maine, between the 1860 and 1870 censuses.⁴³

²⁸ U.S. Army Register of Enlistments 1798–1914 [note 22], Enlistments 1815 May 17–1821 June 30, vol. D–H, p. 94, #48 [image 313].

²⁹ Sinnett, “Holbrook Families” [note 2], p. 4.

³⁰ Phinney, “Pennell Family” [note 1], 4:33.

³¹ Anderson, Brunswick VRs [note 9], 456.

³² Lucy Leavitt household, 1860 U.S. Census, Brunswick, Cumberland Co., Maine, p. 877. She might be the Lucy Holbrook (indexed as “Westbrook”), 35, living in Brunswick in 1850 with Beulah “Lavett,” 63 (Beulah Lavett household, 1850 U.S. Census, Brunswick, Cumberland Co., Maine, p. 204). She could be the Lucy Leavitt, d. 30 Nov. 1885, aged 92y, bur. in New Meadows Cemetery, Brunswick (g.s. photo, findagrave.com #46245233).

³³ Anderson, Brunswick VRs [note 9], 511.

³⁴ Anderson, Brunswick VRs [note 9], 511.

³⁵ Anderson, Brunswick VRs [note 9], 511.

³⁶ Anderson, Brunswick VRs [note 9], 168.

³⁷ “Genealogical Records of Harpswell, Me.,” The Genealogical Quarterly 4[1903]:23; her parents m. Harpswell, 21 May 1772 (“Harpswell, Maine, Vital Records, Recorded by Rev. Elisha Eaton, 1754–1764, and by His Son Samuel Eaton, V.D.M., 1765–1843,” typescript [n.d.], Maine Historical Society, Portland, call #Mv H236.1, p. 25).

³⁸ “List of Letters,” Weekly Eastern Argus, Monday, 12 July 1824, p. 1 [genealogybank.com].

³⁹ Sinnett, “Holbrook Families” [note 2], pp. 4, 22; Phinney, “Pennell Family” [note 1], 4:34.

⁴⁰ Anderson, Brunswick VRs [note 9], 51. He was listed as age 13 in the 1810 List of Vaccinations (Topsham VRs [note 16], 1:97).

⁴¹ Jesse Holbrook, War of 1812 Pension Application, Soldier App. #19013, Cert. #22658, Bounty Land Warrant #84745-160-55 [images, fold3.com].

⁴² Anderson, Brunswick VRs [note 9], 176.

⁴³ Johannah Thomas town of birth (Middleboro, Maine [sic]) from 1877 death record of son John P. Holbrook (Massachusetts Vital Records, 1841–1910, 292:215 [image, americanancestors.org]; Jesse Holbrook household, 1860 U.S. Census, Dexter, Penobscot Co., Maine, p. 8 (Joanna, aged 60, b. Mass.); John P. Holbrook household, 1870 U.S. Census, Parkman, Penobscot Co., Maine, p. 162 (Jessee, aged 73, living with his son, Joanna not listed).

Sinnett said Jesse Jr. “went west and all trace was lost,” while Phinney wrote, “he went North, no trace.”⁴⁴ Jesse, however, left many records. He served 20–22 June and 10–29 Sept. 1814 in Capt. Nathaniel Walker’s company, Maj. D. Holden’s Battalion of Artillery, raised at Topsham. The company was stationed in Bath. Jesse served as a hostler, in charge of the horses which pulled the artillery cannons.⁴⁵

After their 1818 marriage, the couple began their family in Brunswick but soon moved north to Piscataquis and Penobscot counties where Jesse worked as a millman, and a day laborer.⁴⁶ He never owned real estate, and in 1860 his personal wealth was a meager \$75. He was of Blanchard, Maine., listed on 1 Sept. 1842 as having filed a petition, with a schedule of debts and inventory of property, praying to be declared bankrupt under the Uniform System of Bankruptcy Act.⁴⁷

On 7 April 1855, Jesse applied for, under the Act of 3 March 1855, and received 160 acres of bounty land for his 21 days of service in the War of 1812. On 1 June 1871, he applied for a pension under the Act of 14 Feb. 1871, but was rejected as having served fewer than 60 days. He later applied for a pension under the Act of March 1878, which was granted, and he received a pension until his death on 31 May 1882.⁴⁸

Children of Jesse⁸ and Johannah (Thomas) Holbrook:⁴⁹

1. Charala Thomas⁹ Holbrook, b. Brunswick, 13 Dec. 1819.
2. Lucy Pennell Holbrook, b. Gardiner, 28 Feb.
3. Zebadee Thomas Holbrook, b. Hartford, 21 July 1822.
4. Jesse Holbrook, b. Monson, 29 Feb. 1824.
5. John Pennell Holbrook, b. Monson, 26 Jan. 1826.
6. Joan Holbrook, b. Foxcroft, 26 Jan. 1828.
7. Mercy Holbrook, b. ca. 1830.
8. Elmira A. Holbrook, b. Blanchard, [calc.] 9 May 1831.⁵⁰
9. Mary Holbrook, b. ca. 1834.
10. Caroline Holbrook, b. ca. 1836.
11. Clarissa S. Holbrook, b. ca. 1840.
12. George W. Holbrook, b. ca. 1842.

⁴⁴ Sinnett, “Holbrook Families” [note 2], p. 4, and Phinney, “Pennell Family” [note 1], 4:34.

⁴⁵ Records of the Massachusetts Volunteer Militia Called Out by the Governor of Massachusetts to Suppress a Threatened Invasion During the War of 1812–14 (Boston, Mass., 1913), 148.

⁴⁶ Jesse “Holebrook” Jr. household, 1820 U.S. Census, Brunswick, Cumberland Co., Maine, p. 394; not found in 1830 U.S. Census; Jesse Holbrook household, 1840 U.S. Census, Blanchard, Piscataquis Co., Maine, p. 17; Jesse Holbrook household, 1850 U.S. Census, Guilford, Piscataquis Co., Maine, p. 248; Jesse Holbrook household, 1860 U.S. Census, Dexter, Penobscot Co., Maine, p. 8; John P. Holbrook household, 1870 U.S. Census, Parkman, Penobscot Co., Maine, p. 162; Augustus Bond household, 1880 U.S. Census, Dexter, Penobscot Co., Maine, E.D. 13, p. 526.

⁴⁷ “Notices in Bankruptcy,” Portland Weekly Advertiser, Tues., 13 Sept. 1842, p. 1 [genealogy bank.com].

⁴⁸ Jesse Holbrook, War of 1812 Pension Application [note 41].

⁴⁹ Births and birthplaces of first 6 children recorded Foxcroft (VR, 1: 37 [DGS #7595362, image 156]; last 6 children from Jesse Holbrook household, 1850 U.S. Census, Guilford, Piscataquis Co., Maine, p. 248, and 1860 U.S. Census, Dexter, Penobscot Co., Maine, p. 8.

⁵⁰ As Elmira Hill, she d. East Rochester, N.H., 1 May 1886 aged 54y 11m 22d (New Hampshire Death Records 1654–1947 [DGS #4243608, image 1941]).

iv MARY ELIZABETH/POLLY HOLBROOK, b. Brunswick or Harpswell,⁵¹ 1801–2,⁵² d. after 1880 when she was living in Chelsea, Maine;⁵³ m. (1) Brunswick, 3 Oct. 1820, ISAAC YORK,⁵⁴ b. ca. 1789, d. Brunswick, ca. Aug. 1824, “formerly of Andover, Mass., aged about 35”;⁵⁵ m. (2) (int.) Lisbon, Maine, 30 Aug. 1826, JOHN YORK (as John York of Lisbon and Mrs. Mary York of Brunswick),⁵⁶ who d. between 1842 (last child) and 1850 (when Mary was enumerated as head of household).⁵⁷ Mary was living in Brunswick in 1860, but moved to Pittston by 1870 and Chelsea by 1880, where she lived with her son Colby adjacent to her son Abiezer.⁵⁸

Children of Isaac and Mary Elizabeth (Holbrook) York:

1. Abiezer York, b. 25 Dec. 1821.⁵⁹
2. Clarissa Ann York, b. say Nov. 1822.⁶⁰

Children of John and Mary Elizabeth (Holbrook) (York) York:⁶¹

3. Mercy Marden York, b. ca. 1828.
4. George H. York, b. ca. 1829.
5. Abigail York, b. ca. 1832.
6. Asa York, b. ca. 1833.
7. Charles Dana York, b. ca. 1836.
8. Colby W. York, b. ca. 1841.
9. Jesse Holbrook York, b. Brunswick, [calc.] 12 April 1843.⁶²

v SIMON HOLBROOK, b. ca. 1804,⁶³ d. Brunswick, ca. Jan. 1847, “aged about 48” [sic];⁶⁴ m. (int.) Brunswick, 15 June 1825, NANCY VARNEY both of Brunswick.⁶⁵ In 1830 the couple lived in Brunswick,⁶⁶ but were not located in the 1840 census.

⁵¹ She was born in Brunswick according to the 1904 death certificate of daughter Clarissa Ann Welch (Maine Vital Records 1670–1921, image, familysearch.org). She was born in Harpswell in the 1905 death certificate of son Jesse H. York (Massachusetts Deaths, 1841–1915, image, familysearch.org).

⁵² Aged 49y in Mary York household, 1850 U.S. Census, Brunswick, Cumberland Co., Maine, p. 244; aged 67y in Mary York household, 1860 U.S. Census, Brunswick, Cumberland Co., Maine, p. 18; she was 10y old in the 1810 List of Vaccinations in Topsham VRs [note 16], 1:97. She was listed as child of Lucy Pennell Holbrook, with no further information, in Phinney, “Pennell Family” [note 1], 4:34.

⁵³ Colby W. York household, 1880 U.S. Census, Chelsea, Kennebec Co., Maine, E.D. 88, p. 142. Mary York, “mother,” was aged 79.

⁵⁴ Anderson, Brunswick VRs [note 9], 162, 179.

⁵⁵ Death notice, Portland Advertiser, 25 Aug. 1824, p. 3 [genealogybank.com].

⁵⁶ Anderson, Brunswick VRs [note 9], p. 299; Lisbon VRs, 1:239 [DGS #7834680, image 135].

⁵⁷ Mary York household, 1850 U.S. Census, Brunswick, Cumberland Co., Maine, p. 244.

⁵⁸ Mary York household, 1860 U.S. Census, Brunswick, Cumberland Co., Maine, p. 18; Colby York household, 1870 U.S. Census, Pittston, Kennebec Co., Maine, p. 433; Colby York household, 1880 U.S. Census, Chelsea, Kennebec Co., Maine, E.D. 88, p. 142.

⁵⁹ Abiezer York family record, Anderson, Brunswick VRs [note 9], 437.

⁶⁰ She was aged 78, with a birth date of Nov. 1821, in Elmer Welch household, 1900 U.S. Census, Brunswick, Cumberland Co., Maine, E.D. 36. The year “1821” is not compatible with the birth date of her brother Abiezer.

⁶¹ Mary York household, 1850 U.S. Census, Brunswick, Cumberland Co., Maine, p. 244; Mary York household, 1860 U.S. Census, Brunswick, Cumberland Co., Maine, p. 18.

⁶² He was aged 62y 10d at his death in Gardner, Mass., 22 April 1905 (Massachusetts Deaths, 1841–1915, image, familysearch.org).

⁶³ He was aged 6 in the 1810 List of Vaccinations, Topsham VRs [note 16], 1:97.

⁶⁴ Death notice, [Augusta] Maine Farmer, 7 Jan. 1847, p. 3 [genealogybank.com].

⁶⁵ Anderson, Brunswick VRs [note 9], 188.

⁶⁶ Simon Holbrook household, 1830 U.S. Census, Brunswick, Cumberland Co., Maine, p. 11.

Children of Simon and Nancy (Varney) Holbrook, b. Brunswick: ⁶⁷

1. Patience Holbrook, b. 21 May 1830.

2. Abiezer Holbrook, b. 12 March 1832. 3. Sarah Elizabeth Varney Holbrook, b. 7 April 1841.

vi MERCY HOLBROOK, b. ca. 1809. ⁶⁸ No further information.

vii GEORGE HOLBROOK, not included on the 1810 List of Vaccinations, ⁶⁹ but he was possibly the male under 10 in the 1820 census. ⁷⁰ According to Sinnett, he “went west and all trace was lost”; according to Phinney, he “went North, no trace.” ⁷¹ A George Holbrook, however, m. Brunswick, 18 Oct. 1840, MARTHA MAXWELL of Brunswick, ⁷² and the couple was found on the 1850 census as George Holbrook, age 36, laborer, Martha Holbrook, age 34, Abby Holbrook, age 8, and two Maxwells. ⁷³ Neither George, Martha, nor Abby were found in 1860 or later.

CONCLUSION

Clara Phinney and Robert Pennell erred in giving the name of Mrs. John Pennell as Harriet rather than Hannah and omitted Simon Holbrook from the list of Jesse and Lucy (Pennell) Holbrook’s children, even though Simon was in the 1810 list of vaccinations. The information they gave for the seven Pennell sisters and their spouses, Lucy Leavitt’s existence and spinsterhood, Jesse Holbrook Jr.’s move north rather than west, and John Pennell’s squandering of his grandfather’s land has all been corroborated. The kind words describing John Pennell may well be true. No record has been found to confirm the description of Capt. Jesse Holbrook as a miserable wretch. The statement is difficult to prove. Everyone has opinions about their neighbors, but few write them down. Land records have proven that Phinney and Pennell were correct about John Pennell Holbrook’s inability to manage his inheritance.

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⁶⁷ Anderson, Brunswick VRs [note 9], 334, 366.

⁶⁸ She was aged 1 in the 1810 List of Vaccinations in Topsham VRs [note 16], 1:97. She was listed as a child of Lucy Pennell with no information (Phinney, “Pennell Family” [note 1], 4:33, 34).

⁶⁹ Topsham VRs [note 16], 1:97.

⁷⁰ Jesse Holebrook household, 1820 U.S. Census, Brunswick, Cumberland Co., Maine, p. 394.

⁷¹ Sinnett, “Holbrook Families” [note 2], p. 4; Phinney, “Pennell Family” [note 1], 4:34.

⁷² Cumberland Co. Marriage Returns [note 18], 218.

⁷³ George Holbrook household, 1850 U.S. Census, Brunswick, Cumberland Co., Maine, p. 239.