

## Samuel Shelly

**Samuel Shelly**, the only Shelly ancestor in the Magnusson-Lawsing that has been identified, so far, married, 24 Oct 1773, at Schenectady, N.Y., Rebecca Ledy, daughter of John Ledy and Catherine Oliver (see Chart 1). Samuel died 31 Dec 1809. Rebecca, baptised 17 July 1757, died 5 Oct 1842 at Glenville, N.Y. She was buried in the churchyard of St: George's Episcopal Church, Ferry St., Schenectady, N.Y.

Rebecca's baptism was recorded in the Infant Baptisms of St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Albany, N.Y., as follows:

Rebekah Daug <sup>r</sup> of John & Catherine Ledy his Wife	Bap <sup>t</sup> July the 17/1757	Mothers Maiden Name
Catherine Oliver/	Richard Oliver	)
	Hannah Oliver	) Suret.
	Elizabeth Hilton	)

Records of the Reformed Dutch Church of Schenectady reported that, in a ceremony conducted by Rev. Barent Vrooman:

1773 — Octo. 24 Getrouwt Samuel Shelly en Rebecca Ledics Byde van Schonechtady (...married Samuel Shelly and Rebecca Ledics, both of Schenectady).

During the Revolutionary War, Samuel was an ardent patriot; and, years later, Rebecca applied for and received a widow's war pension. In her application, Rebecca declared, 13 Nov 1837, that she was 77 years old (actually, she was at least 80) and set forth the circumstances entitling her to a widow's pension: her marriage to Samuel, his war service, and his death (her declaration is the source of Samuel's death date). A certificate of pension (#W 24942) was issued to Rebecca, 17 May 1841, which provided payments of \$50.89 per annum, retroactive to 4 May 1831.

In her declaration, Rebecca stated that her maiden name was Rebecca Lydius; that her marriage to Samuel took place at the house of John Denny, a relative; and that present at the marriage were Jellis Van Vorst, Alice McNutt, Joseph Kinsella, David Kittle and his wife and John Denny and his wife. Rebecca's maiden surname Lydius and the presence of Joseph Kinsella, who married Margaret Lydius, are consistent with the report that Joseph Kinsella was Rebecca's brother-in-law.

Recalling events of more than 50 years before, Rebecca declared that, at the time of her marriage, she—

resided in Schenectada and continued to reside there during said war of revolution....Samuel Shelly... enlisted about a year after her marriage in a company of artificers or fatigue men commanded by Capt. Jacob Vrooman and served more than six months at Ticonderoga.... was engaged in building gondolas and boats .... in the latter part of the year 1776... Samuel Shelly enlisted in a company...commanded by Capt. John A. Bradt, which company was called a company of Rangers then raised for Continental service in the County of Albany to which the District of Schenectada was then attached. The term of enlistment was for a period not exceeding the duration of said war or so long as the provincial Congress of Legislature of said State should appoint.

...for the years 1775, 1776, 1777, 1778 and 1779 and until Samuel Shelly became sick he was constantly on duty as a soldier...with an intermission of not more than six months which time principally occurred in the winter months...after the expiration of said five years, this declarant and her said husband moved away from Schenectada to Seabrook in Connecticut.

In his *A History of Schenectady During the Revolution*, Willis T. Hanson, Jr., reported Samuel's war service as follows (pp. 214-215):

SHELLY, SAMUEL: He was enrolled under Captain Thomas Brower Banker, 2nd Albany County Militia. In January, 1776, he took part in the expedition to Johnstown, on which occasion he and three others constituted the party entrusted with the flag of truce. On March 1, 1776, he signed an agreement with Philip Schuyler for service at Lake George and Ticonderoga, and on September 23, enlisted for one year in Captain John A. Bradt's company of State Rangers. He held the rank of sergeant. On December 4 he was discharged as unfit for duty, but later returned and served for nearly a year, when he was again taken sick and placed in the hospital at Albany. After three weeks he was removed to Schenectady. In consequence of his continued illness he was not required to join the army, "but he felt such anxiety for the success of the American cause that he procured one Donelly as a substitute and said Donelly served to near the end of the war when he died." [Hanson here quotes from Rebecca's declaration.] In spite of his ailments Shelly again entered the service, for in the summer of 1777 he was on duty six weeks with the Northern Army, and in 1778 at Fort Plain and Lower Fort, Schoharie. In 1779 he was at Fort Paris, and in 1780, under Abraham Van Eps, he marched to Ballston: He later moved to Saybrook, Connecticut. His widow received a pension.

Rebecca's recollection that, at the outset of the Revolutionary War, Samuel built boats at Ticonderoga suggests that Samuel may have been a carpenter by trade. His post-war move to Saybrook seems to have been followed at least three more re-locations. To judge from the baptismal records of his children, Samuel was in New York City in 1785 (Leah's baptism); in Schenectady, 1788 (John's baptism); in Ballston, Saratoga County, N.Y., 1798 (Henry's and Frances's baptisms); and in Charlton, Saratoga County, 1806 (Richard's baptism). Samuel may have scouted the Ballston/Charlton area when he was in the Albany Co. Militia.

After Samuel died in 1809, the family apparently moved back to Schenectady; in that children Margaret, Frances and Lydia were buried in St. George's Churchyard 1811, 1813 and 1825, respectively. Had the family been in Schenectady when Samuel died, it seems likely that a record of his burial would have come to light. No such record was reported; so, I speculate, Samuel probably died in Saratoga County.

In Schenectady, widow Rebecca and her children probably joined a related household; in that I did not find Rebecca reported as the head of her own household in the indexes of N. Y. Censuses of 1820, 1830 and 1840.

The *Schenectady Cabinet: or Freedom's Sentinel* of Tues., 11 Oct 1842, reported:

DIED—In Glenville, on the 5th inst., at an advanced age, Mrs. REBECCA, widow of the late Samuel Shelly, deceased.

The *Schenectady Reflector* of Fri., 7 Oct 1842 announced:

The friends and acquaintances of Mrs. Rebecca Shelly deceased, are invited to attend her funeral from the Episcopal Church in this city this (Friday) afternoon at two o'clock.

Rebecca was “of Glenville” in 1837 when she applied for her widow’s pension; so she spent her last five years, at least, in Glenville. Rebecca’s funeral suggested still-strong Schenectady ties; so, it might be, her Glenville sojourn was relatively short.

In Glenville, Rebecca probably lived in a related household. Considering the accounts of her children (below) and what is otherwise known, I imagine that Rebecca’s last years may have been spent in the household of Abram T. Conde, of Glenville, the husband of Rebecca’s granddaughter, Margaret Jane Kinsella.

### Children of Samuel Shelly and Rebecca Ledy—Shelly<sup>6</sup>

Samuel and Rebecca are thought to have had nine children: Sarah, Catherine, Leah Kennedy, John Ledy, Lydia, Henry K., Richard Cooke, Frances and Margaret. This family roster, compiled from church records, was reported in Donald A. Keefer’s Shelly file, the principal source for this Shelly account.

**1. Sarah**, b 23 Aug 1774, bap 4 Sep 1774 (St. George’s); d 19 July 1848, New York City; m 16 Oct 1794, at Schenectady, Richard COOKE (marriages, 1st Ref. Dutch Church, Schenectady). Richard, b c.1771, d 17 June 1833 and was buried in St. George’s Churchyard, Ferry Street, Schenectady.

In her *Biographical Studies, Schenectady*, Harriet Bowers Paige wrote:

Richard Cooke the tailor and storekeeper lived on the south east corner of Union and Ferry Streets, east of the Coffee House and opposite to it, and there he hung himself. Before he lived in that corner he occupied the house where Nehemiah Shunnway (Shumway) lived in Union Street, between the old Courthouse and old Joe Peeks. A house belonging to Joseph Peek. Richard Cooke was an excellent workman. He used to be called “the dancing tailor.”

Samuel and Rebecca seem to have esteemed Richard—or, possibly, his father; in that they named one of their sons Richard Cooke (see below). Considering this sign of in-law congeniality and Richard’s probable prosperity at the time, I speculate that widow Rebecca probably joined the Richard Cooke household when Samuel died.

Sarah and Richard had 11 children: **Margaret**, b 17 Jan 1776, m Augustus GOMBAULT; **Samuel S.**, b c.1797, m Ann E. Beekman; **Frances Rebecca**, b 7 Apr 1798, m Rev. James B. Hardenbergh (widow Sarah died in the Hardenbergh household); **Richard Morris**, b 8 Jan 1800, m (1st) Harriet S. Beekman, (2nd) Anna D. Beekman; **William Jenks**, b 11 Feb 1803, died young; **William Henry**, b 22 Dec 1805, m Jane A. Goodrich; **Theodore Proctor**, b 17 Mar 1807, died young; **Sarah Ann**, b 22 June 1808, died young; **George Townsend**, b 22 Dec 1811, died young; **Joseph Mesias**, b 14 Mar 1813; and **Sarah**, b 1 May 1815.

+ **2. Catharine**, or Catherine, b 13 Dec 1775, d 5 May 1858, Glenville, N.Y., m 1809 Thomas KINSELLA, 1776-1822.

Of principal interest here, Catherine is more fully reported in my Kinsella account.

**3. Leah Kennedy**, b 26 Apr 1785, bap 26 June 1785 (Trinity Ch. Parish, N.Y.C.), d 5 July 1843, m Isaac HOWES, who d 9 Oct 1854. Both Leah and Isaac were buried in St. George’s Churchyard.

In the burials record of St. George’s it was recorded:

July 9, 1843. Mrs. Leah C. Howes died of Cancer July 5th ae 58.  
The *Schenectady Reflector* of Fri., 21 July 1843 tardily published:

OBITUARY—The following notice of the death of Mrs. Leah C. Howes, who died in this city on the 5th inst., was not received until a day after our last paper had been published:

Mrs. Howes was born in the city of New York, April 26, 1785, but for more than thirty-five years has been a resident in this city... about twenty-five (years) since became a communicant in the Protestant Episcopal Church.... For five years preceding her death she was visited with a very painful and distressing illness....

Leah and Isaac had nine children: **John**, b 17 Oct 1808, m Elberta Storm; **Sarah** (Sally), b 16 Sep 1810, m C. Watson DUNHAM; **William**, b 21 Jan 1812, m (1st) Amanda S. and (2nd) Mrs. Sarah M. Ballou; **Maria**, b 7 Mar 1815, m Ambrose WAGER; **Benjamin**, b 8 Aug 1816; **Elizabeth** (Eliza), b 26 Apr 1818, m Rev. Asahel B. CROCKER; **Isaac** d in infancy Aug 1821; **Catharine**, b 6 Dec 1823, m Abel SMITH; and **Thomas Cyrus**, b 26 Dec 1824.

**4. John Ledy**, b 21 Feb 1787, bap 22 Sep 1788 (St. George's), d 9 Sep 1838, Glenville, N.Y., m 15 Nov 1810, Amsterdam, N.Y., Mabel Chamberlain.

Freedom's *Sentinel* of Tues., 11 Sep 1838, reported:

DIED—In Glenville, on Sabbath morning last, after a long and protracted illness, Mr. JOHN L. SHELLY, in the 51st year of his age....

John's Glenville location prompts the speculation that, in her last years, widowed Rebecca may have joined his household. Considering that John was ill for some time before he died and that Rebecca is thought to have gone to Glenville in the late 1830s, it seems unlikely that she joined John's household.

John and Mabel had at least seven children: **Anson W.**; **William C.**; **Marietta**, b c.1828, m Heman G. HAMLIN; **Jane**, b c.1813, m (1st) Peter COOPER and (2nd) Levi MIDDLEBROOKS; **Sarah**; **Harriet**, m Walter BRADSHAW; and **Angeline C.**, m Peter MORRISON. In his log book, Dr. Young of Glenville noted the birth of a daughter, 27 Oct 1835, to John and Mabel—possibly this birth date is that of one of the daughters identified above.

**5. Lydia**, bap 24 May 1789 (St. George's). d May 1825. Buried in St. George's Churchyard.

**6. Henry K.**, b 8 Mar 1796, bap 1798 (Christ Episcopal Church, Town of Ballston, Ballston Center, N.Y.) d 19 Aug 1828 at Schenectady. He m 21 Oct 1816 at Schenectady Deborah Van Der Heyden.