

had heard Lawrence had “retired from your firm, & proceeded to India.” Aside from listings in Philadelphia city directories, the few bills of lading found in Series III serve to document that partnership.

David Lewis married Mary Darch (d. 1819) in 1794. In August of that year, he joined MacPherson’s Blues, a volunteer battalion formed by William MacPherson (1756-1813), and marched with them to western Pennsylvania to assist the federal government in suppressing the Whiskey Rebellion. Lewis and his wife had several children, four of whom survived him. He owned a country house, Springbrook, in what is now the Holmesburg section of northeast Philadelphia; the property was afterward the site of the Edwin Forrest Home for Retired Actors, also named Springbrook. A Federalist in politics, Lewis was a member of the Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, which was founded in 1800 and whose membership was then restricted to ship owners, importers, exporters, and maritime insurance brokers. He was also at one time president of the stockholders of the Insurance Company of North America, founded in 1792. In addition, Lewis was apparently a philanthropist: a notice in the July 22, 1808, issue of *Poulson’s American Daily Advertiser* reported that he had given “seven large specimens of bark clothing from the S. Seas” to Peale’s Museum.

Though he was a prominent merchant and marine insurance underwriter in Philadelphia for half a century, the sole biographical source on David Lewis is a pamphlet-size essay written by his son and privately printed some four decades after Lewis’s death on April 28, 1840. The *Memoir of David Lewis of Springbrook, Esquire, and of Philadelphia, by his son David Lewis* (Philadelphia: Amateur Press of Edward Conner, 1883) was originally prepared for inclusion in Henry Simpson’s *Lives of Eminent Philadelphians, Now Deceased* (1859) but, by the author’s admission, was not completed in time for publication.

## Chronology

- 1745 Isaac Wharton born
- 1766 David Lewis born, July 9
- 1780s David Lewis apprenticed to Isaac and Samuel Wharton
- 1786 Isaac and Samuel Wharton dissolve partnership, January 2
- 1786 David Lewis and Isaac Wharton form Wharton & Lewis
- 1794 David Lewis marries Mary Darch, May 22
- 1794 David Lewis joins MacPherson’s Blues and marches to Pittsburgh
- 1803 Phoenix Insurance Company organized at Wharton & Lewis store, December 11
- 1804 Phoenix Insurance Company incorporated, February 4, with Wharton as president
- 1805 Wharton resigns as Phoenix president November 8; Lewis elected president
- 1806 Lewis re-elected president of Phoenix, and holds position until death
- 1807 Wharton & Lewis firm dissolved by mutual consent, July 1
- 1808 Isaac Wharton dies, March 31, age 63
- 1819 Mary Darch Lewis dies