

Thomas Lynch, Jr.
Signer of the Declaration of Independence
August 5, 1749 – late 1779



Source: The Georgetown County Historical Society Museum

One of the youngest signers of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Lynch, Jr., was the son of a prosperous South Carolina rice planter. Educated in England, he studied law at the famous Inns of Court in London before returning home to marry Elizabeth Shubrick. Lynch settled into life at Peach Tree Plantation and engaged in public service, including serving as a founding member of St. Michael's Parish. He held the historic Pew 63.

As the Revolutionary War approached, Lynch volunteered as a militia captain. While recruiting, he contracted a severe case of malaria. Meanwhile, his father, a delegate to the Continental Congress in Philadelphia, suffered a debilitating illness. Lynch traveled north to care for him and assume his father's duties. On August 2, 1776, Lynch proudly signed the Declaration of Independence just before his 27th birthday.

During their subsequent journey home, the elder Lynch suffered a fatal stroke. Thomas Lynch, Jr. returned home but never re-entered politics due to recurring bouts of malaria. In late 1779, seeking a more agreeable climate to relieve his health, Lynch and his wife boarded a ship for southern France via the West Indies. Only a few days into the voyage, their vessel vanished at sea, likely lost to a violent Atlantic storm. The young patriot and his wife were lost forever.

