

Lawrence was born on 12 August 1915 in Kings Norton, Birmingham to Joseph Mark Joseph and Lydia Lyons. Lydia was the niece of Sir Joseph Lyons of Lyons Tea Houses.

Joseph and Lydia lived in London, but during the First World War, Lydia was evacuated to Birmingham with Lawrence's older sister Leah who was born in 1913.

Lawrence's paternal family can be traced back to the 1780's where his family were living in Aldgate in London. His great grandfather Phineas worked as a general dealer and married Priscilla Levy in 1844. They had two children, Joseph and Mark. Phineas died in 1849 when he was only twenty-eight leaving his widow with two children aged one and two. In the 1851 census Priscilla is listed as a clothes dealer and has her sons and mother Levy, who was born in Holland, living with her at Church Street in Bethnal Green. In 1861, Priscilla was living with her sister's family with her boys who are now aged fifteen and thirteen and they are working as bootmakers. Lawrence's grandfather Mark married Rebecca Joseph in 1869 and they six children, the youngest was Joseph Joseph, Lawrence's father. Mark worked as a tailor and clothier all his life and was wealthy enough to be able to employ a domestic servant.

Lawrence's father Joseph was born in 1888 in Battersea and at the age of twenty-three, in 1912, he married Lydia Lyons. They had two children, Leah who was known as Doris born in 1913 and Lawrence born in 1915. On 23 August 1916 Joseph enlisted into the Army Service Corps as a driver. He served in Salonica, Egypt, Palestine and France. He was admitted to hospital on 27 February 1919 and was medically discharged on 16 May 1919. Lydia was a keen amateur dramatist and both Doris and Lawrence took part in theatrical performances.

Lydia died in 1924 at the young age of thirty-five when Lawrence was only eight. The following year his father Joseph remarried to Bertha Goldsmith.

After leaving school Lawrence worked with his father at a builder's merchants in Acton. The 1939 Register lists Lawrence and his sister living with their father and stepmother at 59 Creffield Road in Acton. Lawrence is listed as a builder's merchant and as an ARP Manager of materials. Lawrence enlisted into the RAFVR in 1940.

In 1939, Ellen Dowling was living in Paddington with her older sister Mary and she was working as a shop assistant. Ellen was born in County Laois in Ireland in 1912 and was baptised as a Catholic. It is not known how Ellen and Lawrence met and they were married in July 1943 in Paddington. It is thought that Ellen remarried after the death of Lawrence but details are unknown.

Lawrence was killed on 10<sup>th</sup> May 1944 and is buried in Avord Communal Cemetery in France.