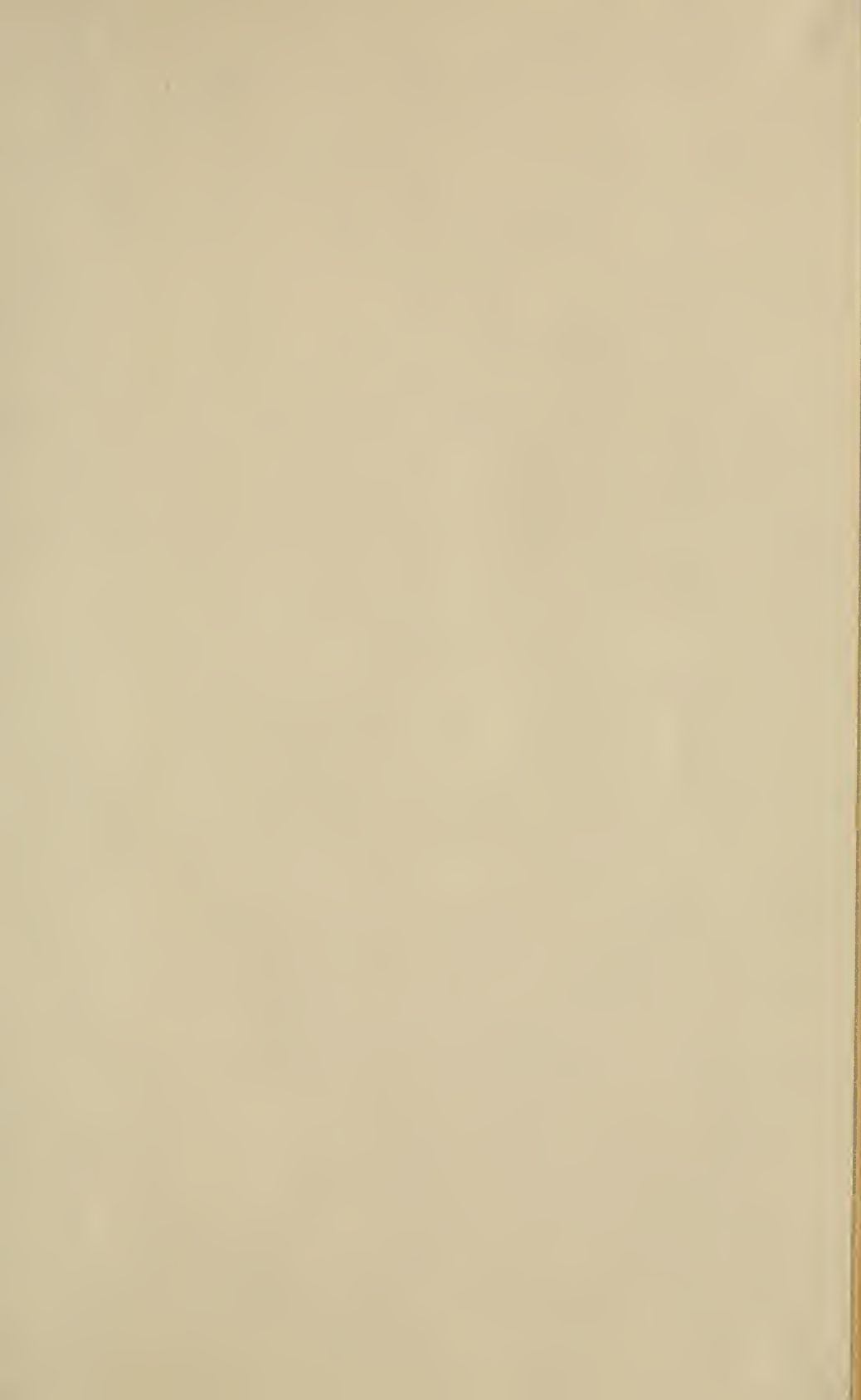


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Colonel William Raymond Lee of the Revolution

By Thomas Amory Lee, A.M., LL. B.

Deprinted from the Essex Institute Historical Collections
Vol. 53, with Additions.

SALEM, MASS.
THE ESSEX INSTITUTE
1917



COL. WILLIAM RAYMOND LEE

1745 - 1824

From the miniature by Hancock, 1805,
in possession of the Essex Institute.

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THE ANCESTRY OF COL. WILLIAM RAYMOND LEE.

Col. William Raymond Lee, of the Continental Army, was descended from Henry and Mary Lee, who settled in Manchester, Mass., in 1650. The ancestry of Henry Lee is unknown, but it is said that he came from Cheshire, England, and that he brought with him the coat of arms of the ancient family of Lee, of Lea or Dern Hall, Cheshire, of which Maj.-Gen. Charles Lee, of the American Revolution, Sir Harry Lee, Knight of the Garter, and the various Earls of Litchfield (Quarrendon and Ditchley Lees) were members. His line of descent from that family is not known, though it has been suggested that he might be the Henry Lee who was the third son of George Lee, of Highgate, Middlesex, who died in June, 1637, and was younger brother to Sir Henry Lee, the first Baronet, of Ditchley, Oxon, both being sons of Sir Robert Lee, Knight, of Hulcote, Bucks. It has also been suggested that Henry Lee may have been the Dr. Henry Lee who was a brother of Col. Richard Lee, of York County, Va., the ancestor of the Lees of Virginia.

Henry Lee died in Manchester, Mass., in 1675, after having served as town selectman, and after having been elected by the County Court as constable. He was survived by his wife, Mary, sons John, 1661-1744, a Justice of the Peace and prominent citizen, Samuel, of whom later, and Thomas, who took part in the Canadian Expedition of 1690, Capt. William Raymond's Company, and never returned, and daughters Hanna and Sarah. Deacon Samuel Lee, 1667-1754, was a well known merchant of his time, owned slaves in 1690, owned the largest vessels of his town, among them the "Swallow" in 1692, was town clerk, 1725-38, selectman about fifteen years, one of the two first deacons of the first church of Manchester, 1716-1754, was a Justice of the Peace, and was called Samuel Lee, Esq., in the records. He married Rebecca

Masters, daughter of Nathaniel and Ruth (Pickworth) Masters, and granddaughter of the "Worshipful Mr. John Masters" of Cambridge, 1639. Deacon Samuel Lee had nine children, including Lieut. Nathaniel Lee, an officer of the militia, and Justice Samuel Lee, who was the grandfather of Col. William Raymond Lee.

Justice Samuel Lee, 1693-1753, was a celebrated architect and builder, and one of the most prominent merchants of the Province of Massachusetts. He removed to Marblehead, Mass., about 1740, and in 1745 he is spoken of as "Justice Samuel Lee, Esq.", a "very wealthy merchant and owner of many warehouses". He held various town offices, such as town treasurer, town clerk and selectman, was a Justice of the Peace for many years, and in 1732 was appointed commissioner to make a report to the General Court in regard to the well known Dog Town or Gloucester dispute. He owned six houses in Manchester and Marblehead, many slaves and many ships, silver, at least two portraits, and a really good library for the time. He made a number of journeys abroad, and on one of them brought back a parchment pedigree of the Lees of Lea Hall. He was one of the richest merchants of his day in the Province, and seems to have exerted a decided influence on the community around him. He married, first, 1712, Mary Tarring, daughter of General John and Abigail (Abbott) Tarring; second, Hannah (Negus) Swett, widow of Dr. Joseph Swett, Jr., of Marblehead. He left a legacy of £100 for a free school in Manchester, directed that no mourning was to be paid for or escutcheons put on his coffin, and divided his estate, valued at £11,333, among his children.

Justice Lee had thirteen children, including Capt. Samuel Lee, 1714-1779, Justice of the Peace and prominent merchant, whose issue is now extinct in the male line; Col. John Lee, of whom later; Col. Jeremiah Lee, of whom later; David Lee, who was a student at Harvard from 1744 to 1747, in the class of 1748, and died before his graduation. He ran off without leave of the faculty to go to the siege of Louisburg, in 1745, and was fined and degraded by the faculty; and Abigail, who married Col. John Gallison, Esq., 1731-1786, a very prominent

merchant and citizen of Marblehead, being a selectman, 1762, Justice of the Peace, 1766, Representative to the General Court, 1769, 1774 and 1775, and Colonel of the 5th Essex Regiment in 1772. The late Henry Hammond Gallison, artist, of Boston, was a descendant. (See The Gallison Family of Marblehead, by Thomas Amory Lee.)

Col. Jeremiah Lee, 1721-1775, "the illustrious patriot of the Revolution," uncle of Col. William Raymond Lee, was one of the greatest merchants of New England before the Revolution. His mansion, finished in 1768, is said to have been the most magnificent built in the colonies, and is now owned by the Marblehead Historical Society. Col. Lee was one of the most prominent patriots of the Revolution and lost in it both his life and his fortune. He was chairman of the Essex County Congress of 1774, chairman of the Marblehead delegates to the Provincial Congresses of 1774 and 1775, chairman of the committee to wait upon Gov. Gage, and was a very active member of the famous Committee of Public Safety and Supplies, with Samuel Adams and John Hancock. Col. Lee was elected to the Old Continental Congress of 1774 as the delegate from Marblehead, but declined the honor on account of pressing personal affairs. He died from the effects of exposure received on the night of April 18, 1775, when the British troops surrounded the Black Horse Tavern on their way to Lexington, and Col. Lee, Col. Azor Orne and Elbridge Gerry (later Vice President of the United States) hid in their night clothes in a corn field behind the tavern. Col. Lee was also colonel of the Marblehead Regiment and was a Justice of the Peace, as were his two brothers, Col. John and Capt. Samuel Lee, his father Justice Samuel, his grandfather Deacon Samuel, and his great uncle John Lee. Portraits of Col. and Mrs. Jeremiah Lee, by Copley, are owned by their great-great-grandson, Thomas Amory Lee. Full length copies of the Copley portraits, by Chester Harding, are owned by Col. Lee's great-great-granddaughter, Elizabeth Amory Lee, wife of Brig.-Gen. Oswald H. Ernst, U. S. A. Mrs. Frederick Kinsman of Wilmington, Delaware, owns a miniature, said to be by Copley, of her great-great-grandfather, Col. Lee. Col. Lee married Martha, daughter of

Dr. Joseph and Martha (Stacey) Swett. Dr. Swett was a wealthy importing and exporting merchant of Marblehead. Among their children were Joseph and Mary Lee. Capt. Joseph Lee, 1748-1785, graduated A. B. from Harvard in 1769, and later A. M. He was a classmate of his brother-in-law, Hon. Nathaniel Tracy, was an importing and exporting merchant, and served in the Revolution as Capt. of the 6th Co. of Glover's Regiment. He married Hannah, daughter of the patriot, Col. Isaac Hinckley of Barnstable, A. M., Harvard, 1740, grand-daughter of Hon. Col. Sylvanus Bourne, Esq., great-grand-daughter of Lt.-Col. John Gorham, who married Mary, sister of Col. John Otis. Colonel Hinckley was first cousin of President Thomas Clap of Yale, Harvard, 1722, and Mrs. Hinckley's brother, Hon. Col. William Bourne, married a daughter of Lt.-Gov. Hazard of Newport. Capt. Joseph Lee had four children, including Abigail H., who married Sylvanus Gray, Esq., nephew of Hon. William Gray, Lt.-Gov. of Massachusetts, and left issue, and Jeremiah, a merchant of Boston, who died without issue in 1852. Mary Lee, daughter of Col. Jeremiah Lee, perhaps "the greatest beauty of her day", married Hon. Nathaniel Tracy, A. M., A. A. S., 1751-1796, son of Capt. Patrick and Hannah (Gookin) Tracy, and descendant of Gov. Thomas Dudley, Gov. Simon Bradstreet, Maj.-Gen. Daniel Gookin, the famous Rev. John Cotton, Anne Hutchinson, and Maj. Thomas Savage. (See The Tracy Family of Newburyport, and Nathaniel Tracy, Harvard, 1769, in the Harvard Graduates' Magazine for 1916, both by Thomas Amory Lee.) He graduated A. B. from Harvard in 1769, A. M. later, took a supplementary course at Yale, received an honorary A. M. at Princeton in 1773, travelled abroad, and went into partnership with his brother, Col. John Tracy, and brother-in-law, Hon. Jonathan Jackson. He was perhaps the greatest merchant of the Revolution and certainly the greatest merchant of the Province of Massachusetts. He fitted out the first privateer of the Revolution, and had 110 merchant vessels, valued at \$2,733,300, and 24 cruising ships which captured during the Revolution 120 vessels, which sold for \$3,950,000.00. Besides this, he loaned the Government \$167,000.00,

which was never repaid. He was a Representative, 1780, 1781, 1782, State Senator, 1783, delegate to the Constitutional Convention, and a charter member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. His portrait was painted three times by Copley or Stuart, Trumbull and Miss Hills, and his miniature painted twice, as was his wife's. Among their children was Hannah, who married Lieut. William Raymond Lee, Jr., son of Col. William Raymond Lee, and they were the parents of Gen. William Raymond Lee, A. M., A. A. S., of whom later.

Col. John Lee, 1716-1789, father of Col. William Raymond Lee, was a very prominent merchant, owned many ships, five or six houses, a number of slaves, much silver, etc. He frequently held the town offices of clerk, selectman and moderator, "for many years was a representative to the Legislature, and one of the Municipal Magistrates of the county," and a Justice of the Peace for many years. He was chairman of the local committee of Inspection, 1774, of the committee to raise money to support the Minute Men, 1775, of the local committee of correspondence, 1775, of the delegates to the Essex County Convention, 1774 and 1776, was appointed in 1775 by the Provincial Congress to swear the soldiers in the county of Essex, was elected Colonel of the 6th Essex Regiment, January 27, 1775, marched to Salem, at the head of his battalion, to defend the munitions of war from Col. Leslie, and also to the relief of Beverly when the British sloop of war "Falcon" fired upon that town. He was a zealous patriot and took an active part in the perilous efforts which were made by citizens of Massachusetts to obtain a redress of wrongs they had endured as colonists of Great Britain. Col. Lee married, 1737, Joanna Raymond, 1715-1811, daughter of Captain Ebenezer and Joanna (Herrick) Raymond, granddaughter of Captain William Raymond, the Indian fighter, and of Captain Herrick, of Beverly. Col. Lee was the father of twelve children, including Captain John Lee, 1738-1812, who was a daring sailor of the Revolution, and was finally smuggled out of prison in England by Major General Lord Burgoyne, who had been befriended by Captain Lee's brother, Col. William Raymond Lee, when the latter

was in command of the captured Burgoyne and his army; Joanna, who married, 1756, Captain Benjamin Kimball, Harvard, 1753, an officer of the Revolution; Mary, who married, first, Major Joshua Orne, Jr., Esq., 1747-1785, Harvard, 1764, Justice of the Peace, deputy to the General Court, member of the Provincial Congress, 1775, chairman of the Committee of Correspondence, 1775 and 1776, a very prominent merchant and leading patriot of the Revolution, and married, second, Major Orne's half brother, Hon. Major General Azor Orne, Esq., of Marblehead, 1731-96, Justice of the Peace, Special Judge of Common Pleas, Deputy to the General Court, Councillor, and delegate to the Essex County Congress and the Massachusetts Provincial Congress, elected delegate to the old Continental Congress of 1774, member of the famous Committee of Safety and Supplies, Colonel of the Marblehead Regiment before the Revolution, and elected Second Major-General of the Massachusetts Militia by the General Court of 1775; he was one of the most prominent patriots of the Revolution (See the Orne Family of Marblehead, by Thomas Amory Lee); Annis, who married Major John Pulling, Jr., of the Revolution, who hung the lanterns in Christ Church belfry for Col. Paul Revere's famous ride. Their granddaughter, Annis, married Rev. Wm. Henry Furness, D. D., LL. D., father of Horace Howard Furness, Ph. D., L. H. D., LL. D., Litt. D., the great Shakespearian scholar; Col. William Raymond Lee, the subject of this sketch; Betsey, who married the Rev. Daniel Johnston, Harvard, 1767, one of the fighting chaplains of the Continental Army; Nabby, who married Captain Stephen Sewall, merchant of Marblehead and Boston, and close relative of Chief Justice Samuel Sewall, LL. D., and of the Hon. Jonathan Mitchell Sewall; he served as a captain in Col. Lee's Regiment, 1777-78, and later as aide-de-camp to Gen. Glover; Martha, who may have been engaged to Major-General William Alexander, Lord Sterling, of the Continental Army, and who married, first, 1776, Capt. Jeremiah Hibbert, of Marblehead, a noted sailor of the Revolution, and married, second, Major General John Fiske of Salem, a famous sailor of the Revolution, rich merchant, Major-General of Militia,

and member of the Committee of Safety (The late Frederick Ward Putnam, A. M., Sc. D., the distinguished scientist, was a descendant); Fanny, who married, first, Captain John Glover, Jr., of the Revolution, eldest son of Brig.-Genl. John Glover, of the Continental Army, and who married, second, Elkanah Watson, Esq. of Freetown; Lucy, who married Col. Marston Watson, Esq., grandson of the "Honorable Col. Judge Benj. Marston, Esq.", an officer of the Revolution, a great merchant of Boston, and one of the first members of the Massachusetts Historical Society, father of the Rev. John Lee Watson, S. T. D., D. D.

For further information as to the family, see "The Lee Family of Marblehead," by Thomas Amory Lee, in vols. 52 and 53 of the Essex Institute Historical Collections.

COL. WILLIAM RAYMOND LEE.

COL. WILLIAM RAYMOND LEE, son of Col. John and Joanna (Raymond) Lee, was born in Manchester, July 30, 1745, and died in Salem, Oct. 26, 1824. He married, at Marblehead, April 3, 1770, Mary, daughter of Dr. Joseph* and Hannah (Swett) Lemon, or Lemmon, baptized Nov. 17, 1745; died July 6, 1825, aged 80 years. Mary Lemon was the favorite niece of Madam Martha Lee, and Col. Wm. R. Lee the favorite nephew of Col. Jeremiah Lee. Dr. Lemon graduated from Harvard in 1735, and was a prominent physician. After completing his academic education, William R. Lee entered the counting room of his uncle, Col. Jeremiah Lee. After he had completed his commercial education, he was employed by his uncle to take active charge of his extensive business, and continued its manager until the Revolution. While so engaged he passed much of his time at Nantucket, New Bedford, etc., in purchasing oil for the European market.† At the request of Col. Jeremiah Lee, young Lee and his wife spent their first year of married life as guests of Col. Jeremiah and Mistress Martha Lee. Desiring to live in less splendor, they then moved a few yards up the hill opposite the training field to the commodious mansion of Samuel Lee, Esq., his grandfather.

Foreseeing the Revolution, General Glover, Colonel Lee, Lieut. Col. Johonnot, Adjutant Gibbs and other gentlemen of the town formed a military association to ac-

*There is a Copley portrait of Dr. Lemon in a huge wig, now in New Orleans, and owned by Shannon Davis, Esq. It was formerly owned by Col. Lee's daughter, Mrs. Willard of Boston.

†Curwen's Journal, p. 579.



COL. WILLIAM RAYMOND LEE

1745 - 1824

From the portrait by Stone, owned by Thomas Amory Lee.

quire a knowledge of tactics and discipline in order to be qualified to take an active part in the field should hostilities commence. As early as 1770, Col. Timothy Pickering was engaged to give a course in military theory, a fencing master taught them the use of the small and broad sword, and a man who had served as a sergeant in the British army taught them the manual exercise and company and battalion movements. Colonel Lee formed a company of artillery early in 1775, of which he was the commander.

“In Committee of Safety [which had been authorized to appoint field officers], Cambridge, April 29, 1775, . . . Capt. Foster is appointed to command one of the companies of artillery and ordered to enlist said company. Capt. William Lee, of Marblehead, has been sent for to take the command of another. . . . Joseph Warren, Chairman.”

Two days after the affray at Lexington, Marblehead had organized a regiment of ten companies, under the command of Colonel, later General, John Glover. This regiment is variously known as Glover's, the Marine, the Amphibious, the 21st U. C. Regiment, the 14th Continental, and the Marblehead regiment. It was one of the most famous of the Revolution. Its history has been written. “Few regiments in the entire Continental Army were in more important engagements or rendered greater service. It has the added distinction of being one of the first to be organized.* Col. W. R. Lee was senior captain, his first cousin Joseph Lee, a captain, his second cousin Seward Lee, a lieutenant, his brothers-in-law, John Glover, Jr. and Marston Watson, captains, and his relative by marriage, Joshua Orne, 1st lieutenant. On June 23, 1775: “Ordered, That the officers in Col. Glover's regiment be commissioned, except Capt. Lee and his subalterns.”† Colonel Lee had not yet decided whether to remain at the head of his artillery company or to go with Glover. He went with Glover, however, and the regiment was in Cambridge on June 22, 1775, and joined the Provincial army under General Ward. The regi-

*Glover's Marblehead Regt., F. A. Gardner, p. 1.

†Journal of Mass. Provincial Congress, p. 377.

mental uniform "consisted of a blue round jacket and trousers, trimmed with leather buttons." Col. W. R. Lee was early promoted to be major of this regiment.

On Jan. 1, 1776, Glover's regiment was reenlisted as the 14th Continental, and Lee was at that time major and played his part in the various battles in which the regiment was engaged. The regiment manned the vessels and rafts on the night of Aug. 28, 1776, and ferried Washington's army across the river after the disastrous battle of Long Island, and thus saved the army. On Sept. 4, 1776, Colonel Glover took command of General Clinton's brigade, and Colonel Lee was commissioned brigade major, an office of much responsibility, as the General Orders show. "The Brigadier Generals are to select capable, active and spirited persons to act as Brigade Majors, who will be allowed pay for their services.* The regiment was in the battle of Oct. 18, 1776, and an eye witness, writing on Oct. 23d, says that Major Lee "behaved gallantly."† The regiment is best remembered for its noble service on Dec. 25, 1776, when it ferried Washington and his army across the Delaware river through swiftly floating ice on their way to the victory of Trenton.

At this time Colonel Lee had many meetings with Major-Gen. Charles Lee, the son of Gen. John Lee of Dern Hall, Cheshire, and the last scion in the male line of the eldest branch of the ancient and distinguished family of Lea of Dern Hall, to which it is supposed that Colonel Lee's immigrant ancestor Henry Lee belonged. "Gen. Lee was not only slovenly in his dress and rude in manner, but remarkable for his sordid parsimony. Col. Lee often remarked on these inhospitable and repulsive peculiarities of an officer of his superior education, large service in European armies, and constant intercourse with the first gentlemen in every country in which he had resided. Col. Lee stated that as acting brigade major of the brigade which Col. Glover temporarily commanded, he was obliged daily as senior officer in General Lee's division, and at all hours to visit the headquarters of Gen.

*Col. W. R. Lee's Note Book of the Revolution, owned by Mass. Hist. Society.

†Roads' Marblehead, p. 170, and Freeman's Journal, Nov. 12, 1776.

Lee. On one occasion, happening to call just as the General was sitting down to dinner, he observed, 'Major Lee, why the devil do you never dine, breakfast, or sup with me; you are frequently at my quarters, either in the morning, at the dinner hour, or in the evening.' The major replied, 'General, you have never invited me to take a seat at your table.' 'That is just like all you damned Yankees; never stand on ceremony, but in future, whenever you come into my quarters at the time I am taking my meals, sit down and call on the servant for a plate.' 'Very well, sir,' said the major, 'I am very much obliged to you and will avail myself of your politeness now,' and placing a chair at the table, requested that a plate might be brought to him. The General was astonished, looked unutterable things, and never again hinted that Major Lee's company would be agreeable. This the major well understood, and therefore was glad of an opportunity to try the character of an officer who had at times the appearance of being hospitable and generous, but still never wished the sincerity of his proffered kindness tested.

"But General Lee's inconceivable selfishness was more completely developed while at White Plains, where he lodged in a small house near a road which General Washington was obliged to pass when on reconnoitering excursions, and one day returning with his staff, they called and took dinner. They had no sooner gone than General Lee observed to his aid, 'You must look me out another place, for I shall have Washington and all his puppies continually calling on me, and they will eat me up.' The next day General Lee, seeing Washington out upon like duty, and supposing that he should have another visit, ordered his servant to write with chalk upon the door, 'No victuals dressed here to-day.' When the company approached and saw this notice, they laughed heartily, and pushed off with much good humor for their own table, without a thought of resenting the habitual oddity of the man."*

On Jan. 1, 1777, Major Lee was promoted to be colonel

*Dearborn's Life of Col. W. R. Lee (MS.), pp. 108-110.

of "Lee's Additional Regiment", and at once returned to Massachusetts to recruit his regiment. Many of the officers and men were from Marblehead, among them being Joseph Swasey, major, Joseph Stacey, quartermaster, Joshua Orne, captain, and Col. Lee's brother-in-law, Stephen Sewall, captain. On Oct. 2, 1777, Colonel Lee was ordered to Philadelphia to join the army, but the news of Lord Burgoyne's surrender to General Gates on Oct. 13, at Saratoga, having been received, he was ordered to return to Cambridge to guard the British army. "The prisoners arrived at Cambridge on the 7th of November, and were received by Colonel Lee, as commanding officer of the cantonment. It was indeed a remarkable coincidence. On the very ground where, two years before, the Marblehead regiment had first appeared in arms in the Continental service, General Glover now delivered an army to the care of Colonel Lee. And what a change had taken place during the interval in the positions of these heroic citizens of Marblehead! When, in 1775, the regiment left the town, one was its colonel and the other the captain of one of its companies. Now, the colonel had become a general, and the captain, having been promoted from one grade after another to that of colonel, had been offered the position of adjutant-general of the American army. Further comment is unnecessary. The responsible positions to which they had been promoted is sufficient evidence of their heroism and of the distinguished services which they had rendered to their country."*

Shortly thereafter, Colonel Henley took command at Cambridge, but having pricked with his sword an insolent British soldier, he was placed under arrest, and Colonel Lee again took command. Colonel Lee had his own troubles, as the following letters to Major-General Heath show:—

Friday Evening, 7 o'clock.

Sir.

This moment a Subaltern from the Hill Informs me that the British Soldiery behave in a most scandalous

*Roads' Marblehead, pp. 184 and 185.

manner by pulling down Barns and other Buildings and Abusing Guards—Sentries and Swearing they will have fire wood at all Hazards. In consequence of which I have ordered the Guards all doubled and the Regiment ready at a moment's warning, and unless there is wood provided immediately, it will be attended with bad Consequences. Should be glad of your particular Orders by the bearer and am with respect,

“Your most Obd. Hum. Ser.

Will R. Lee, Comman^r

“To the Hon. Maj. Gen. Heath.”

General Heath's reply has not been preserved.

“Cambridge, Nov. 1st, 1777.

“Sir.

“Mr. Abel Pierce (Foreman of the Smiths) has apply'd for help out of the Regiments of Militia; I have examined Brooks's and find two soldiers who are willing to go into the Works (provided they can be allowed the customary wages that the other Workmen have at the same business). Shall wait your directions thereon.

“The officers are exceeding uneasy with respect to their Quarters, as the Cold Weather approaches fast, and but very little wood renders their situation very disagreeable. Should be glad to have the answers to the Questions tomorrow, as they are sanguine to know. This morning I Rode Round the lines and found the Field Officers and some others Walking by their Barracks to keep themselves from Perishing with Cold, not one stick of Wood to put into the Fire, and if some other method cannot be found to supply them, they must either Perish or burn all the Publick Buildings. And am with Respect,

Sir your most obdt Ser't,

Will R. Lee.

“To the Honorable Maj. Genl. Heath.”

Colonel Lee was ordered to take command at Cambridge by the following letter from Gen. Heath:—

“Head Quarters, Boston, Nov. 7, 1777.

“Sir,—

“You will immediately repair to Cambridge and take the command of all the troops doing duty there, whether

continental or militia, in continental service; you will order such guards to be mounted this night as you may think necessary for the safety of the place and keeping the prisoners in proper order. In short, you will exercise your best discretion in establishing order and regularity at the post. The Deputy Adjutant General will acquaint you with the orders already issued, others shall be communicated to you as occasion may require. The soldiery are to be kept strictly within the limits assigned to them, and the officers to their quarters until they have given their paroles.”*

General Burgoyne having charged Colonel Henley “with barbarous and wanton conduct and intentional murder,” a court martial was ordered, of which Gen. Glover was president and Col. Lee a member. The trial lasted more than twenty days, and after a thorough investigation the court decided that the charges against Col. Henley were “considered not supported.”† General Burgoyne was a constant attendant at and interested participant in the trial, and at times acted in a very disrespectful manner. He made a speech during the trial in the course of which he dwelt at length upon the unfortunate position of the officers and soldiers of his army, and the sanguine expectations which had been indulged “of their being received with all that magnanimity and kindness which was due them as prisoners of war. We were led into these delusive hopes by the very honorable treatment shown us by General Gates; by that we received from you, Mr. President [Gen. Glover] when you conducted us upon the march, and by that we afterwards found from the worthy member of the Court near you [Col. Lee], who had the immediate command in this district upon our arrival, and to whom, most happily for us, the command is now again devolved.”‡

One of the British prisoners, Lieutenant Anbury, wrote an account of his “Travels in America,” in which he reviews the court martial and pays the following tribute to Colonel Lee:

*Mass. Hist. Colls., 7th series, vol. 4, p. 176.

†American State Trials, 1914: Trial of Col. Henley.

‡Roads' Marblehead, p. 187.

"In consequence of this acquittal, Colonel Henley reassumed his command the next day, but merely for form's sake, as the next week Col. Lee took the command, which he had when we first arrived. Affairs are much better regulated, everything is now in perfect tranquillity, and a good understanding has taken place between our troops and the Americans. Colonel Lee has remedied one great evil, which was compelling our soldiers to purchase all their provisions at two stores in the barracks, and not permitting them to send to Cambridge, where they were much cheaper. Passes have been granted for a sergeant and a certain number of men to go out and purchase provisions, by which means the stores cannot impose on the troops; and they now sell their commodities at the market price."*

The office of Adjutant General of Washington's army having become vacant, Colonel Lee was offered the distinguished position by Washington, but declined it, preferring to remain in the field at the head of a regiment. Washington wrote to Richard Henry Lee in the Continental Congress that Col. Lee "is an active, spirited man, a good disciplinarian." He also said that Col. Lee had "deservedly acquired the reputation of a good officer," and that he "holds a high place in my esteem."

Many of the letters between Washington and Heath in 1777 mention Colonel Lee. One of the services which he rendered at this time is described in the correspondence between Washington and Heath. General Heath writes from Boston, June 7, 1777: "The cartouche boxes which have commonly been made for the army are made of the most miserable materials, and in case of storms commonly serve only to waste the ammunition which is carried in them. Colonel Lee, who undoubtedly may be called a martinet in military matters, is desirous that the boxes for the three regiments [Henley's, Jackson's and Lee's], which are to be posted here, may be made of better leather. He has brought me a sample. The first expence will be considerably more than that of the present model, but in a long run they will be much the cheapest,

*Roads' Marblehead, p. 187.

as they will with proper care last the war, whilst the other will scarcely last one campaign."

Gen. Washington replied on June 23, 1777: "I have long found the ill effects of the wretched cartouch boxes generally in use, and I am very glad to find that Colonel Lee has found out a kind that will preserve the ammunition. You will direct him to have them made, and I should be glad of one by way of pattern." To which General Heath made the following answer on July 7, 1777: "I have directed that the carteridge boxes be made as soon as possible for Col^o Lee's and Jackson's regt.; one of the first that is finished shall be sent to your Excellency."*

As Marblehead was so continually exposed to the attack of the enemy, rendering the situation of his family most unsecure, and as his business as a merchant had been greatly affected and required his personal superintendence to prevent the entire destruction of his property, which consisted very largely of ships and merchandise, Colonel Lee considered it his duty to resign his commission and very reluctantly wrote a letter† to General Heath requesting leave to resign, which was granted by Congress on June 24, 1778, altho he did not receive his discharge until some time later, as he took part in the expedition under the Marquis de la Fayette against Rhode Island. On April 8, 1778, Washington wrote to Heath from Valley Forge: "Finding that Colonel Lee cannot be prevailed upon to remain in the service, I have represented his case and that of Major Swazee [of Lee's Reg't] to Congress and expect in my next to inform you of their acceptance of their commissions."

Heath wrote to Washington, Aug. 12, 1778, from Boston: "I some time since received a resolve of Congress accepting the resignations of Col^o Lee and Major Swasey's commissions—the latter I do myself the honor to enclose. Col^o Lee is gone on the expedition to Rhode Island, and I believe commands the boats." Colonel Lee was not able to get away until nearly the first of October, and thus served three and a half years in the Revolution.

*Mass. Hist. Coll., vol. 44, p. 62, and vol. 4 of 7th series, pp. 104 and 124-6.

†Papers of Continental Congress, No. 78, XIV, folio 189.

Upon resuming his business, Colonel Lee soon became one of the most active and prominent participants in counteracting the efforts of the enemy to destroy the coast fishing and foreign navigation and trade, and sent out a number of armed "Letters of Marque" until the end of the war, among others the well known "Thorn."

After the war was over a number of loyalists returned to Marblehead, among them the Robie family, one of wealth and exceptional culture at that day, but especially detested, as Mr. Robie was a very active loyalist, and Mrs. Robie, while on the way to the ship which took them to Halifax at the beginning of the war, had given way to temper and uttered the following wish: "I hope that I shall live to return to find this wicked rebellion arrested and see the streets of Marblehead so deep with rebel blood that a long boat might be rowed through them."* On learning of their return the people swore vengeance upon them and prepared to tar and feather them, but Colonel Lee, with a few friends, boarded the vessel after dark and smuggled the family ashore and into the home of one of their party, where they were guarded until the excitement died.

On the return of peace the usual business of the town was re-established, and the basis of the whole trade being the fisheries, Colonel Lee entered largely into it and fitted out twelve vessels. He was also extensively engaged in foreign commerce and became the head of a well known mercantile house, Will. R. Lee & Co., taking into partnership with him his sons, William Lee, Lieut. William Raymond Lee, jr., and Capt. Joseph Lemon Lee. The firm employed the noted Commodore Samuel Tucker, of the Revolution, as one of their commanders, and the magnitude of their operations may be seen from the fact that their account at one time with Tucker alone was over £50,000.

"As Colonel Lee was highly respected for his public spirit, energy, intelligence and philanthropy, he was for many years one of the chief municipal officers of the town, and ever foremost in projecting and carrying into

*Dearborn's Life of Col. Wm. R. Lee (MS.), pp. 178-180.

effect all such measures as were deemed best calculated to relieve the indigent, extend the means of education to all classes of children, and promote the industry, happiness and prosperity of the whole people."* Colonel Lee, Joshua Orne, Esq., Rev. William Whitwell, the Rev. Isaac Story (uncle of the distinguished Joseph Story of the U. S. Supreme Court), and Samuel Sewall, LL. D., A. A. S., distinguished as Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts, were trustees of the public schools. Colonel Lee also was one of the "benefactors" of the Marblehead Academy in 1788.

When war with France was imminent, in 1798, "the citizens of Marblehead sprang to arms for the defense of their country. The veterans of the Revolution, though exempt from military duty, formed themselves into a company and were armed and equipped at their own expense. Their commander was the intrepid Col. William R. Lee, under whose direction they were disciplined once a fortnight in order to be in readiness to act at a moment's notice."†

Among Colonel Lee's guests in 1791, at his beautiful mansion on the training field hill, was the Rev. William Bentley of Salem, who gives in his Diary an admirable description of Colonel Lee and his position in society. The day, Sept. 16, had been appointed for the review in Marblehead, and Dr. Bentley went with a young French friend. Col. John Tracy of Newburyport and Gen. John Fiske of Salem, kinsmen of Col. Lee, reviewed the troops. "Col. Lee, whose elegant House is on the parade, gave us a Collation at 4 o'clock in a very polite & generous manner. . . . At Sundown I was introduced into the family of Col. Lee at Tea. He has eight children and a very obliging wife. This gentleman has a very excellent person and was highly esteemed in the Continental Army and particularly by our illustrious Commander in Chief. His want of promotion in the militia depends on himself . . . I went into the cupola upon the elevated seat of Col. Lee to enjoy the extensive view he has from that

*Dearborn's Life of Col. Wm. R. Lee (MS.), p. 181.

†Roads' Marblehead, p. 153.

‡Roads' Marblehead, p. 264.

convenient place, but the air was not sufficiently clear for the purpose. I could see enough to believe the representation just. They have a seven foot Telescope in fine order, and they declare that they can see the people pass to church in the streets of Salem on Sunday, such a command have they of the Town. I observed that the Beacon on Baker's Island looks directly up their Harbour."* Dr. Bentley later says that "Col. Lee presided with great success" at the Fourth of July celebration, 1802.

Colonel Lee was a selectman of Marblehead from 1791 to 1797, and Representative to the General Court in 1780, 1785, and 1792.

As did many of his name, Colonel Lee believed that a full stomach was a preventive of evil, and accordingly, "annually on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day, he made it a principle to purchase large quantities of fresh beef, pork, mutton and poultry, which, with flour, butter, sugar, tea, spices, and fuel, were distributed by his benevolent and excellent wife to the poor inhabitants of the town. The most needy and deserving being all known, they were informed at what hour to come and receive their several presents, that they might be enabled to join in the general festivities of those New England holy days. But at all times of the year his doors were ever open to the sick and the needy, and such were his liberal attentions to all who required assistance that he was honored and respected by his fellow townsmen for his humane, charitable and ever kind attentions to the wants and troubles of his townspeople. Nor was his lady less appreciated and beloved for a like admirable disposition and the same exalted Christian virtues. Many a mother and father and many a child experienced their munificent beneficence when sickness, poverty, and the rigors of winter brought want, affliction and sorrow into their homes."†

Colonel Lee invested a large amount of money in the purchase of Georgia lands through the New England Georgia Land Co., which had bought a large portion of the present State of Mississippi from several grantees of

*Dr. Bentley's Diary, vol. I, p. 303.

†Dearborn's Life of Col. Wm. R. Lee (MS.), pp. 181-182.

the State, and had at one time about 25,000 acres of this land, which was regarded as a good investment. Unfortunately for the investors, the State of Georgia, at the next session of its Legislature, declared the sale fraudulent, and therefore null and void, and ceded the whole tract to the United States in 1802. At almost the same time several of the consignees to whom his cargoes were consigned abroad failed, and Colonel Lee lost his cargoes, and about the same time the cruisers of France captured several of his vessels during that period when the rights of neutrals were not respected. He thus lost many thousands of dollars in a few months, and accordingly retired from business, and on the 31st of July, 1802, received the appointment of Collector of the Port of the District of Salem and Beverly, which office he held until his death over twenty years later.

Colonel Lee appears frequently hereafter in Dr. Bentley's Diary, as mediating in 1803 with Judge Sewall in order to reduce the sentence of thirty days' imprisonment passed on Mr. Carlton, the printer, for insinuating that Col. Timothy Pickering might have received hush money from Liston, the English minister, etc. In 1805 his house was on fire, and in 1807 a store on his wharf in Marblehead burned, causing several thousand dollars damage to sails, rigging, etc. On July 10, 1807, Colonel Lee was moderator of a meeting which passed several resolves on the subject of the British aggressions. In 1808, April 1, Colonel Lee was chairman of a Republican caucus, and Dr. Bentley notes that "the utmost republican displeasure falls upon Col. Pickering. The history of his military character is exposed in his cowardice at Lexington," etc. Colonel Lee fell under Dr. Bentley's wrath for venturing to disagree with him in 1808 on the subject of the proper incumbent for the surveyorship of the port. But a short time later Colonel Lee, Esquire Dearborn* and Dr. Little dined with Dr. Bentley to meet Mr. Ogilvie, the orator, who sustained his reputation by his conversation.

In 1806, Marblehead was much exercised over the alleged refusal of Capt. Ben. Ireson of Marblehead to rescue a ves-

*Gen. H. A. S. Dearborn, son-in-law of Colonel Lee.

sel in distress. It has been said that Ireson was not to blame, as the gale rendered rescue impossible, that he told the crew to lie by, went below to sleep, that the crew disobeyed him, left the wreck, and then put the blame on their skipper. However, they were rescued by a vessel which reached the home port before Ireson did. His refusal caused a great outburst of indignation, and he was tarred and feathered upon his arrival, placed in a dory, and carried by a mob of 500 on the road to Beverly, where he was to be left. The Salem authorities feared a general riot should they enter the town, and asked Col. Lee to meet the procession. Col. Lee at once acquiesced and met the procession at ten o'clock near the Salem line. He asked the leaders to halt the march and then addressed them, asking them to return to Marblehead, as the people of Salem were very desirous that the quietude of that town should not be disturbed at that late hour of the night, and remarking that he was confident they were such true sons of Marblehead that they would not persist in proceeding further. The mob gave three cheers and at once returned home. Whittier has caused the incident to be remembered by his poem.

Colonel Lee died October 26, 1824, and the following obituary appeared in the Salem newspapers:—

“In this town, on Tuesday morning last, William R. Lee, Esquire, age 80, Collector for this District. Col. Lee was a native of Manchester, but removed in early life to Marblehead, where he was a distinguished merchant. In the commencement of the Revolutionary War he was appointed a major in Col. Glover's regiment, and afterwards Lieut. Colonel. He was esteemed as a brave and skillful officer, and enjoyed in a high degree the confidence of Washington and the other worthies of the Revolution. In 1801 he was appointed by President Jefferson to the office of Collector for the District of Salem and Beverly, which he filled with great dignity and fidelity till his death, enjoying the universal respect of his fellow citizens, who honored him as a gallant soldier in the cause of Liberty, the patriotic citizen and accomplished gentleman. His remains are to be entombed at Marblehead this evening.”

Madame Lee did not long survive her husband, and died at Salem on July 6, 1825, aged 80 years. “She was an

estimable lady. As a wife and mother she was unrivalled. Generous, kind, and beneficent, no one came to her door for aid that had not cause to thank and bless her as they went away."*

Colonel Lee's beautiful Marblehead home has been noticed in print many times. It was here that his father died in 1789, and his grandfather, Justice Samuel Lee, lived and died in 1753, and in this house Col. Jeremiah Lee was married. The older part of the house was built about 1745, probably by Samuel Lee, Esq., but the modern house was built about twenty years later, probably by Capt. Samuel Lee. The material was brought from England, apparently in one of "King" Hooper's ships. At the same time the two giant lindens standing on either side of the door were brought from England. They later became famous, as the subject of a poem written by Longfellow during one of his visits to the house. The wall paper in one of the front rooms is almost unique in America, being a representation of the historic "Pilgrimage to the Mosque of Omar." The most distinguished guest of the mansion was Washington, who, when he came to Marblehead in 1789, visited Colonel Lee and promised to send him a likeness of Mount Vernon on his return to Virginia. The gift is still preserved in the family and owned by Raymond Lee Newcomb, the naturalist of the ill-fated "Jeannette" expedition to the North Pole, a great-grandson of Colonel Lee. It is painted on a rectangular background of glass in gold leaf and sepia, and is interesting artistically as well as historically.

Before leaving for the front at the time of the Revolution, Colonel Lee freed his slaves, as he deemed it unjust to fight for liberty and at the same time own human beings.

An excellent portrait of Colonel Lee in Revolutionary costume, wearing the eagle of the Society of the Cincinnati, is now owned by Thomas Amory Lee, a great-great-grandson, and a very good miniature by Hancock is in the museum of the Essex Institute. His commissions as Ma-

*Dearborn's Life of Col. Wm. R. Lee (MS.), p. 187.





THE COL. WILLIAM RAYMOND LEE MANSION, MARBLEHEAD
Now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Waldo P. Ballard.

for and Colonel, signed by John Hancock, and his orderly books of the Revolution and a roll of his regiment were deposited by his grandson, Gen. William Raymond Lee, with the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Gen. Henry A. S. Dearborn wrote a "Life of Col. William Raymond Lee," in two volumes, which he completed in 1843. It has never been published. It contains matters of considerable historical interest, including sidelights on the characters of Gen. Rufus Putnam and Gen. Charles Lee. General Dearborn's wife, Hannah Swett Lee, wrote a small manuscript of some forty pages entitled the "Lee Genealogy," mostly concerned with the Lees of Lea Hall, from whom it is supposed that the Marblehead Lees take their descent, and to which Gen. George Sears Greene of New York made additions.

Colonel Lee's name was given to one of the streets in Marblehead which led down to one of his wharfs. The first steam fire engine in Marblehead, purchased in 1880, also was named the "Col. William R. Lee." Old Fort Lee of Salem was named after Col. Lee. He was an original member of the Society of the Cincinnati, an officer of the Freemasons, and an officer of St. Michael's Episcopal Church.

Children, all born in Marblehead:—

WILLIAM, b. Nov. 29, 1770; d. Feb. 2, 1851.

MARY, b. July 25, 1772; d. in Boston about 1850; m. (int.).

March 8, 1800, Capt. Thomas Cary Willard, who d. in 1801.

He was a master mariner and merchant. Child: (1) Ann

Elizabeth Lee, b. Feb. 5, 1801; d. in Boston, Dec. 11, 1885.

She lived with her mother in Roxbury, close to her cousin

Gen. W. R. Lee. She inherited the beautiful Lee silver

from her grandfather, Colonel Lee, and gave it to Elizabeth

Amory Lee, dau. of Gen. William Raymond Lee.

WILLIAM RAYMOND, b. Aug. 19, 1774; d. Sept. 7, 1861.

JOHN, b. July 6, 1778; lost at sea, Dec., 1799, unm. He was a

handsome man, and a fine miniature of him, apparently by

Miss Goodrich, is owned by Miss Sarah Dearborn of Bos-

ton, granddaughter of Gen. H. A. S. Dearborn.

ANNIS (twin), b. Sept. 26, 1780; d. Sept. 24, 1793, unm.

JOSEPH (twin), b. Sept. 26, 1780; d. Oct. 8, 1780.

ELIZABETH LEMON, b. Oct. 17, 1781.

HANNAH SWETT, b. Oct. 6, 1783; d. Oct. 10, 1868, in Boston; m. May 5, 1807, Gen. Henry Alexander Scammell Dearborn,* A. M., A. A. S., M. C., President of the Society of the Cincinnati and member of the Mass. Hist. Soc'y, son of Major-General Henry Dearborn, M. C., Sec'y of War, b. March 3, 1783, at Exeter, N. H., d. July 29, 1851, at Portland, Me. Stuart painted seven portraits of the two Generals Dearborn and their wives. Miss Sarah Dearborn and Miss Mary Clapp of Portland own miniatures and portraits. Children: (1) Julia Margaretta, b. Jan. 22, 1808, d. 1867, m. Jan. 23, 1834, Col. Asa W. H. Clapp, M. C., of Portland; (2) Henry George Raleigh, b. June 22, 1809, d. 1884, m. July 6, 1840, Sarah Thurston; (3) William Lee, b. June 12, 1812, d. 1875, m. Mary Abby Bacon. Their son William Henry represents Gen. Dearborn in the Society of the Cincinnati.

JOSEPH LEMON, b. May 10, 1785; d. Dec. 21, 1819.

*See Appleton's Biographical Dictionary; Drake's Memorials of the Society of the Cincinnati, pp. 291-4.



HON. HENRY A. S. DEARBORN

From the miniature by Ames, now owned by Miss Sarah Dearborn.

DESCENDANTS OF COL. WILLIAM RAYMOND
LEE.

William Lee, 1770-1851, eldest son of Col. William Raymond Lee, was a merchant and member of the firm of Will R. Lee & Co. Later he served as an officer in the custom house at Salem, under his father the Collector. He was married three times and had fourteen children. The late Joseph Lemon Lee of Salem was his last surviving son. Mrs. Cyrus Sargent of Cambridge, wife of Cyrus Sargent, A. B., LL. B., attorney of Boston, is a descendant. His daughter Caroline married Benjamin Saunders Wheeler, second cousin of Benjamin Ide Wheeler, Ph.D., LL. D., President of the University of California. Raymond Lee Newcomb of Salem, the former naturalist of the ill-fated "Jeannette" Arctic expedition, is also a descendant. A fine miniature of William Lee was destroyed in the Salem fire of 1914. Raymond Lee Newcomb owns a beautiful silhouette of Mrs. Lee.

Capt. Joseph Lemon Lee, 1785-1818, the youngest child of Col. Lee, was a master mariner and in command of a ship at the age of fifteen. He was drowned off the coast of France, and his brother-in-law, Hon. Henry A. S. Dearborn, had a monument erected over his grave. He married Catherine Fogarty of Salem, and their one child, Mary Lemon, married Jeremiah Etheridge of Boston. Capt. Lee's grand-daughter, Miss Cora Lee Etheridge of Boston, owns his portrait, painted when in Holland about 1805, and also his miniature.

Lieut. William Raymond Lee, Jr., 1774-1861, was a merchant of Salem and Boston, and member of the firm of Will R. Lee & Co. He removed to Boston about 1813, and lived in the old brick mansion later occupied by Hon. Marshall P. Wilder. His road-horse, "Rat", won a famous trotting race from Mr. Hemenway's "Boston Blue" about 1819, making the fastest time then ever having

been recorded. During the War of 1812, he was Aide-de-Camp on the staff of Maj.-Gen. Henry Dearborn, whose son, Brig.-Gen. H. A. S. Dearborn, married Hannah Swett Lee, sister of Lieut. Lee. Lieut. Lee married his cousin Hannah, daughter of Hon. Nathaniel and Mary (Lee) Tracy, a woman of great beauty.

Their son, Gen. William Raymond Lee, was born in Salem, Aug. 15, 1807, and died in Boston, December 26, 1891. He was educated at the American Literary, Scientific and Military Academy and at West Point, in the class of 1829. He was the first superintendent of the Boston & Providence Railroad, was superintendent and president of the Vermont Central and the New York, Ogdensburg and Champlain Railroad, and consulting engineer of the same railroad, was chairman of the Board of Directors, and was unanimously elected president of the Rutland & Burlington Railroad. He was Colonel of the Harvard Regiment, 20th Massachusetts Vols., during the Civil War, was Brev. Brig.-Gen. U. S. V., and Brig.-Gen. of the Massachusetts troops. He was given the honorary degree of M.A. by Harvard in 1851, and was a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. (See Brevet Brigadier-General William Raymond Lee, U. S. V., A. M., A. A. S., by Thomas Amory Lee, A. M., LL. B.) He married, 1842, Helen Maria Amory, daughter of Thomas Amory, Esq., granddaughter of Dr. William Bowen, A.M., of Providence, and a descendant of the Hon. Jonathan Amory, who was treasurer of the Province of South Carolina, Speaker of the Assembly, etc., etc., 1693-97, and a descendant of Roger Williams, the founder of Rhode Island. General Lee had three children, (1) Elizabeth Amory, who married General O. H. Ernst, U. S. A., and whose daughter, Elizabeth Lee Ernst, married Hon. William Morton Grinnell, nephew of Vice President Levi P. Morton, who was assistant Secretary of State for the United States, and an officer of U. S. Vol. in the Spanish-American War; (2) Lieut. Arthur Tracy Lee, U. S. A., 1845-70, a graduate of the United States Military Academy, 1865, and aide-de-camp to the President of the United States; (3) Robert Ives Lee, 1846-1911, educated at St. Paul's School, a prominent horseman of the middle



GEN. WILLIAM RAYMOND LEE
1807 - 1891

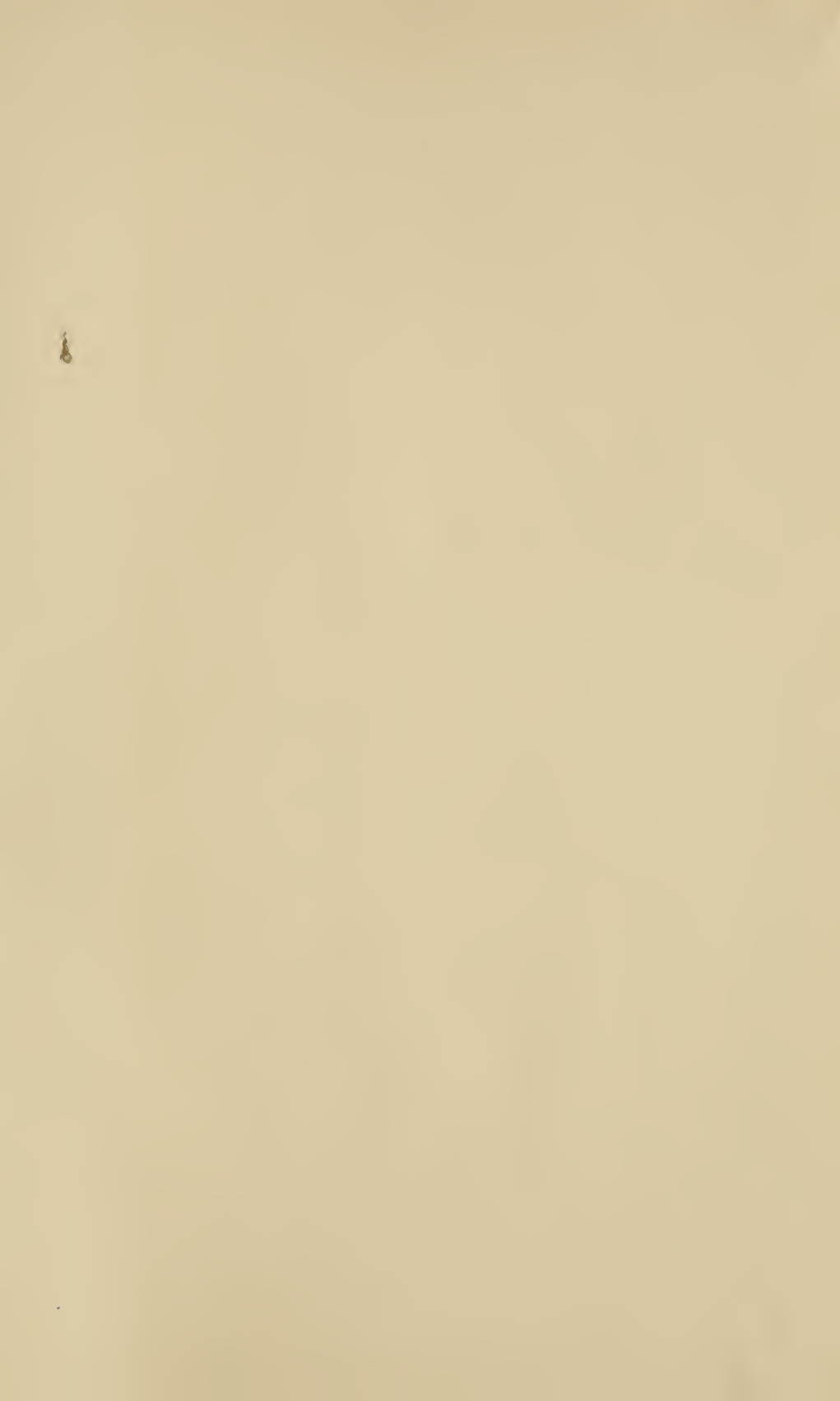
From the portrait by Chester Harding, now owned by
Thomas Amory Lee.

West. He was elected to the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati, travelled at home and abroad, and married, March 31, 1880, Abbie Katherine Kimber, daughter of Henry and Jean (Henry) Kimber, of Kimberton, Pa., and descended from Col. Richard Kimber, an officer of Cromwell's army. (See sketch of R. I. Lee in W. E. Connelley's History of Kansas and "Robert Ives Lee" by Thomas Amory Lee. They had three children: (a) Helen Amory, married, 1912, William Henry Van Horn of Chicago, educated at Michigan University; (b) Thomas Amory, A. B., A. M. and LL. B., travelled at home and abroad, Second Lieutenant in the Missouri National Guard, an attorney of Topeka, Kansas, member of many historical societies, and author of about a dozen historical, biographical and genealogical sketches; (c) Anna Louise, of Philadelphia, Pa.

Among the descendants of Col. Lee's daughter, Hannah Swett Lee, who married Hon. H. A. S. Dearborn, A. M., A. A. S., son of Major-General Henry Dearborn, commander-in-chief of the U. S. Army during the War of 1812, are Miss Sarah Dearborn of Boston, Miss Mary Clapp of Portland, Me., and William Raymond Lee Dearborn of the U. S. Navy.

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