

















FOY

POUR DE

VOIR

*Seymour Duke  
of Somerset*



# The Somerset Hills

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Being a Brief Record of Significant  
Facts in the Early History  
of the Hill Country of  
Somerset County  
New Jersey



By

Ludwig Schumacher



New Amsterdam Book Company

156 Fifth Avenue New York

1637  
'01

WARRANT FOR  
ARREST

1742  
355

TO  
F. P. OLCOTT  
OF  
ROUND TOP FARM  
BERNARDSVILLE



## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

“ When 'Omer smote 'is bloomin' lyre  
He'd 'eard men sing by land an' sea ;  
An' what he thought 'e might require,  
'E went an' took—the same as me ! ”

In the preparation of this little book, the usual sources have been consulted. These have been found in the collections of the New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania Historical Societies. To these have been added some oral traditions, now first put in form, and some materials culled from unpublished manuscripts. In brief, to use the words of the immortal creator of Don Quixote, “though seemingly the parent, I am in truth, only the stepfather” of these historic excursions and digressions.

MILLINGTON, N. J.

OCTOBER, 1900.



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# THE SOMERSET HILLS

## I.

### GENERAL SURVEY.

THE traveller needs but a slight acquaintance with London in order to recall the huge building or series of buildings looming over the Thames known as Somerset House. It was built on the site of the erstwhile palace of the Dukes of Somerset in the year 1776—a significant date in American annals. The relationship existing between the town house of the Protestant Protector during the minority of King Edward VI. and the Somerset Hills of New Jersey is not apparent. But a brief inquiry into the origin of names will bring us to fair Somersetshire in Old England, the ancestral home of Henry VIII.'s brother-in-law, and so too, doubtless, of the early settlers of Somerset County.

Perhaps they found in these New Jersey foothills some suggestions of the mountains, moors, and fens that characterize old Somersetshire, the land of Lorna Doone and John Ridd, the West Wales of the romances of Arthur and his Round Table.

In any case, the county name records the memory of their old home for all time. So, too, the townships of Bridgewater and Bedminster, and the town of High Bridge, once within the county limits, but now across the borders of Hunterdon County, are but names transplanted from old Somerset. And who shall say that this new Somerset, no less than the old, may not claim "a fine soft atmosphere all its own"?

The aristocratic tradition of Somerset County neither begins nor ends with the association in name with an English ducal house. The Duke of York, the first Lord Proprietor of the Colony, deeded all the land within the present limits of the State to two arch-aristocrats, John, Lord

Berkeley, and Sir Philip Carteret. The trifling gift was in recognition of their loyalty to the House of Stuart. Berkeley had accompanied the Stuarts into exile, and Carteret, governor of the Island of Jersey, had endeared himself to the royal house by a determined defence of the island against the parliamentary troops. Dividing their estate into two parts, the dividing line passed through the Somerset Hills. The greater part of the county, however, was in East Jersey, whose capital was Perth Amboy, from which centre the county was developed. Only a small portion fell to West Jersey, the estate of Lord Berkeley. But in 1673, Lord Berkeley lost all faith in the possibilities of his American estate, and sold out for the sum of £1,000 all his interests to one John Fenwick, a Quaker, who purchased it in trust for Edward Byllinge, also a Quaker. This sale was destined to momentous consequences in the colonial development of America. It led directly to "one of

the pivotal events of American history"—the coming of the Quakers to the middle Colonies. For a dispute between Fenwick and Byllinge over the purchase was brought to William Penn for adjudication, in the process of which he became interested in American real estate.

East Jersey was soon subdivided by Carteret's heirs, and again subdivided until the Lords-Proprietors numbered twenty-four. Every foot of ground belongs to the present owner as successor to these proprietors, by and through the rules of Common and Statutory Law.

The aristocratic tradition is well maintained; for in the last century, we find that Catherine, Duchess of Gordon, of Gordon Castle, Scotland, a daughter of the Earl of Aberdeen, was a large landowner in both Bedminster and Bridgewater townships. In local parlance, this tract is still referred to as "The Duchess." A mention of the Duchess of Gordon suggests a link of association with a classic repartee. The Duchess

married General Staats Morris, whose brother, the celebrated Gouverneur Morris, induced her to invest in American real estate, acting as her agent in the Somerset County purchase. While Gouverneur Morris was at the French Court, his personal resemblance to the King, Louis XVI., was a subject of general comment. The king himself noted it and once remarked to Morris: "You bear a striking resemblance to our family ; was your mother much at court?" "No," replied Morris, "but my father was." This was a favourite story of the late Lord Tennyson, who accounted it a brilliant illustration of the world's stock of anecdotes of this class. It is possibly mythical in the personal application to Morris, but his resemblance to the House of Bourbon, together with a reputation as a wit, makes it entirely possible.

To continue the county tradition, Lord Neil Campbell, brother of the Duke of Argyle, lived in state on an estate of sixteen hundred acres

near the junction of the north and south branches of the Raritan River. He was devoted to the cause of "The Pretender" and saved his head by escaping to the Colonies. His grandson, John Stevens, married Betty Alexander, sister of the last Earl of Stirling. They are the ancestors of the distinguished Stevens family of Hoboken.

The Earl of Stirling proved his title clear in 1760 and then returned to his estate at Basking Ridge, and spent his time, to use his own words, "in settling a good farm in the wilderness and bringing to it some of the productions and improvements of Europe." That aristocratic tradition and ancestry were not incompatible with the type of patriotism that gave birth to a great republic in 1776, is abundantly shown in the annals of the American Revolutionary struggle.

The early settlers of Somerset were most heterogeneous, both in rank and nationality.



There were English and Scotch gentlemen and yeomen, Dutch burghers and peasants, and Germans from the Palatinate, many of whom were redemptioners. We may trace their origin in the religious societies and congregations that still exist, some of which have records of a historic continuity of more than two centuries. Several Protestant Episcopal parishes have their origin with the mother-church of England, and were doubtless centres of settlements by the English. Luthern congregations were organized by the German immigrants ; Presbyterian by Scotch Calvinists ; and the Dutch Reformed churches scattered through the central and southern part of the country speak for the land of dikes and ditches, the land of William the Silent and John of Barneveld.

The earliest specific reference we find to the Somerset Hill country is in a report to the proprietors of East Jersey. In answer to one of their inquiries of their agents, the report

dated March, 1684, says: "There are also hills up in the country, but how much ground they take up we know not; they are said to be stony and covered with wood, and beyond them is said to be excellent land."

The existence of Somerset County dates from 1688, when it was set off from the neighboring county of Middlesex. But it was some twenty-five years before it was sufficiently organized to have courts of its own for the administration of justice, and a county seat. Six Mile Run, Hillsborough, and Somerville were successively the county capital, the present administration buildings at Somerville dating from 1798.

In Smith's "History of New Jersey," published in 1765, the description of the county records: "The land is rich and being settled by the industrious low Dutch and a few others, much improved wheat is the staple of the county of which they raise large quantities; they send

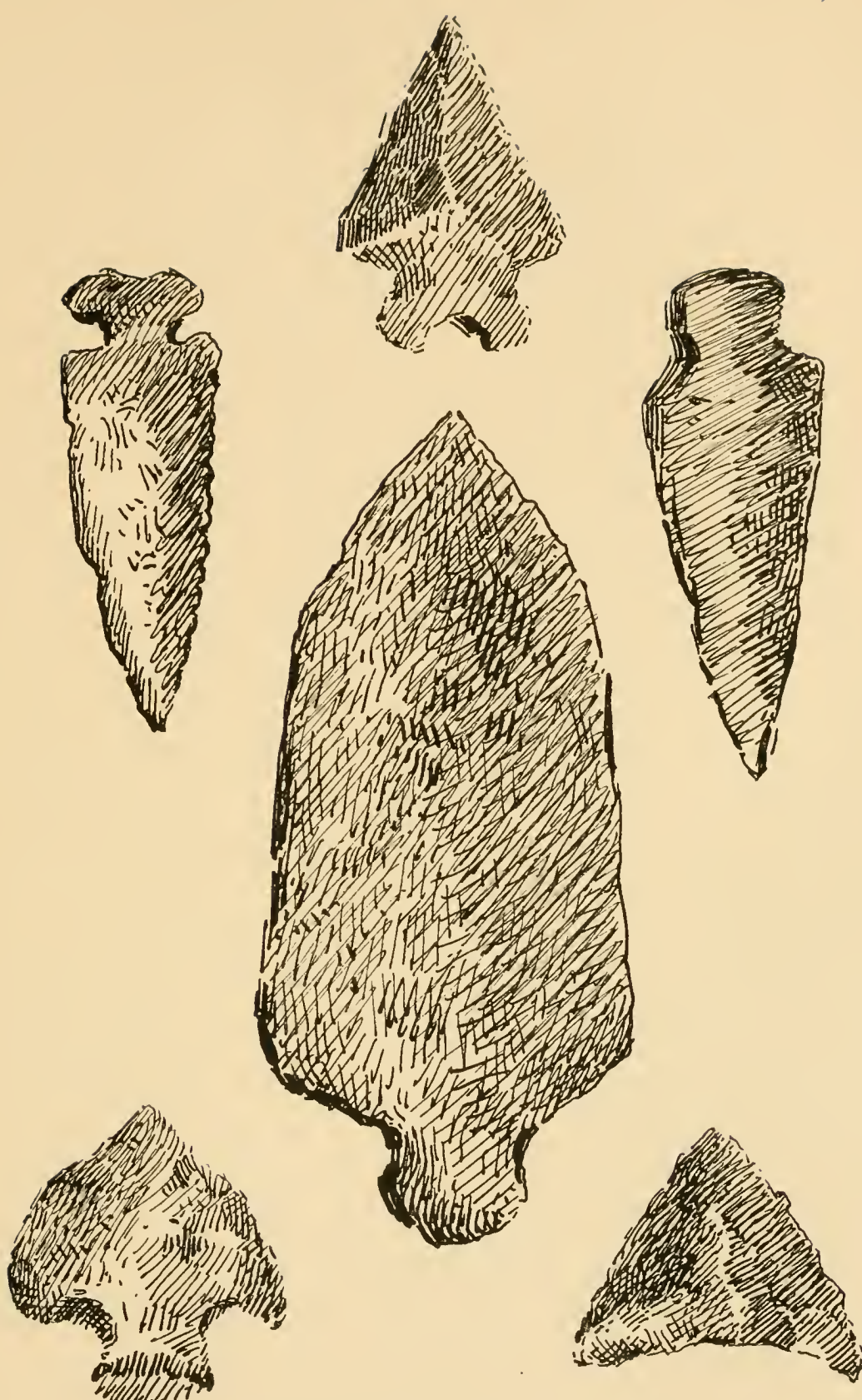
their flower down Rariton River, to New York.”

The first permanent settlement within the present bounds of the county was made in 1681. In 1665 the first English governor, Philip Carteret, issued a publication entitled “Concessions and Agreements of the Lords-Proprietors.” The object of this was to encourage emigration, and as an immediate result several families from Piscataqua, in the then province of Massachusetts, settled Piscataway. Pushing westward from this point along the line of the old Indian trail, the settlement soon spread across the present borders of Somerset, and with the settlement of Bound Brook in 1681 the county history begins as a matter of written record.

## II.

## INDIAN TRADITION AND HISTORY.

AS with other prehistoric peoples, we are largely dependent upon oral tradition for our theories of the genesis and evolution of the American Indian race. By a careful consideration of their weird and fantastic traditions, we may reach a plausible working theory when these are supported by circumstantial evidence. The Indians who roamed through the Somerset Hills are classed as Algonquins, the huge family whose territory extended from the Mississippi to the Atlantic and from the Carolinas to Hudson Bay. "Like a great island in the midst of the Algonquins, lay the country of the tribes speaking the generic tongues of the Iroquois." The true Iroquois, or Five Nations, extended through Central New York, from the Hudson to the Genesee River. The particular



“The Dust of a Vanished Race”



tribe occupying New Jersey, so far as it was occupied, is now termed Delawares, though they called themselves Lenni-Lenape, and the country they occupied between the Hudson and Delaware Rivers they call "Scheyichbi." The Indians were never numerous in this State ; indeed, the whole family of Algonquins is estimated within a quarter of a million, and at no time after the discovery by Europeans numbered more than two thousand in New Jersey. In New England, attracted thither possibly by the bounty of the sea, they were more numerous.

The Algonquin traditions all agree that their remote ancestors came from a region west of the Mississippi. Like the story of the Aryan migrations from the region about the Caspian Sea, there seems to have been successive tides of migration, each crowding its forerunner toward the sea. They believed that previous to their incarnation they were all animals, and lived in caves under the earth. One of them

accidentally discovered a hole leading out to the sunshine, and then they all followed him out and found it so pleasant that they began life anew. They gradually developed into human beings, learned to hunt and fish, and practised a rude agriculture. They still claim kinship to their animal ancestors, it would seem, for we still hear of such chiefs as "Sitting Bull" and "Big Bear."

The Lenni-Lenape in their march eastward came in friendly contact with an earlier migration from the Northwest, called the Mengwe, later known as the Iroquois. Their common progress was disputed by another powerful tribe known as the Alligewi, who disputed their right to advance. Neither tribe being strong enough to vanquish the Alligewi, they joined forces and completely annihilated them. Then the Lenape and Mengwe parted company, the latter settling in the vicinity of the Great Lakes, and the former continuing eastward. The Le-



nape crossed the Alleghanies, a name commemorating their vanquished enemies, the Alligewi, and in course of time reached the Delaware, which they called Lenape-Whittuck,—the River of the Lenape. Then crossing over the river they took possession of the land and called it Scheyichbi.

Such is the Indian tradition. They surely found game and fish in abundance ; deer were plentiful ; bears, wolves, and panthers were quite too numerous to permit even the idle life of the aborigines to drift into monotony. The fertile bottom lands of the rivers were easily cultivated, and here they usually planted their maize and built their wigwams. On a single farm near Basking Ridge, along the upper courses of the Passaic River, several hundred flint and quartz arrowheads, and some fifty tomahawks, have been picked up in recent years. At still another point irregular fragments of flint, and imperfect arrowheads, celts, and

tomahawks, seem to indicate the site of an arrow "factory." An "amulet" too is occasionally met with. These are curious and varied in shape, sometimes resembling a bird, sometimes a rabbit or other animal. They are sometimes rudely decorated—or are the decorations hieroglyphics? Throughout Bedminster township, too, these relics of the American Stone Age have frequently been found.

The Indian trails connecting the Delaware River with the ocean crossed Somerset County in several places. The main one followed the lower course of the Raritan River, between New Brunswick and a point on the Delaware north of Trenton. The natural course of settlement was along these trails, but it is a matter of great pride to the people of the State that the country was peaceably occupied by purchasing the lands from the Indians. No bloody Indian wars interrupted the development of the Colony. Disputes occasionally arose as the pur-

chases multiplied, but the matter was amicably adjusted by the colonial government, and a reservation of three thousand acres in Burlington County was set aside for their use. Here the remnants of the Lenapes settled and became known as the Edge-Pillocks. In 1801 they were invited by the Mohicans of New York to join them. The invitation was in terms both cordial and picturesque: "Pack up your mats," said the Mohicans, "and come and eat out of our dish which is large enough for all, and our necks are stretched in looking toward the fire-side of our grandfather till they are as long as cranes."

The Edge-Pillocks sold their lands and joined the Mohicans. Both tribes soon decided to buy lands in Michigan and settle there, but they did not prosper. In 1832 the whole remnant of these New Jersey Indians numbered only forty. They therefore sent their oldest chief, one Bartholomew Calvin, to petition the New

Jersey legislature for aid, making a claim for certain hunting and fishing rights they still held.

They claimed but two thousand dollars, which amount the legislature readily granted. "It is a proud fact in the history of New Jersey," said Samuel L. Southard, a native of Basking Ridge, on this occasion, "that every foot of her soil has been obtained from the Indians by fair and voluntary purchase and transfer—a fact that no other State in the Union, not even the land that bears the name of Penn, can boast of." These sentiments were indorsed by the Indian agent in his address to the legislature. He was a full-blooded Indian, called by his people Shawriskhekung or Wilted Grass. He was educated in Princeton College by a Missionary Society which had named him Bartholomew Calvin. In closing his address, he said : "Not a drop of our blood have you spilled in battle, not an acre of our land have you taken but by our consent. These facts speak for

themselves and need no comment. They place the character of New Jersey in bold relief and bright example to those States within whose territorial limits our brethren still remain. Nothing but blessings can fall upon her from the lips of Lenni-Lenape."

There is a record, however, of one Indian brave who refused to follow the tribe West. He with his squaw returned to Burlington County and settled near Mount Holly, where they died some twenty years later. They left a daughter, a tall, powerful woman who was known throughout the country as Indian Ann. She lived to a great age, dying in 1894, with the melancholy distinction of the "Last of Lenni-Lenapes in New Jersey."

"Ascending the St. Lawrence," says Francis Parkman, "it was seldom that the sight of a human form gave relief to the loneliness, until at Quebec, the roar of Champlain's cannon from the verge of the cliff announced that the savage

prologue of the American drama was drawing to a close, and that the civilization of Europe was advancing on the scene." In New Jersey, haply, the advance was accomplished with no record of cruelty or wrong.

III.

**SOCIETY IN COLONIAL SOMERSET.**

THE colonial population of Somerset County was far from homogeneous. It was literally composed of all sorts and conditions of men. There were English, Scotch, Dutch, German, Indians, and of negroes there were not a few. There was a corresponding diversity in rank, for class distinctions, both in theory and in fact, were as fully recognized as they were in the mother countries. But colonial society added yet another social condition—that of the negro slave. We find within the narrow limits of Somerset County the noble, the slave, and all the intermediate ranks; all this too in a scattered population probably never much exceeding 6,000 souls.

The international conscience of the civilized world on the subject of slavery was not yet

awakened. The traffic proved to be extremely profitable, and its interests were carefully fostered by the home Government. In theory the institution was as fully accepted in the North as it was in the South, and the fact that they soon became more numerous in the South is due chiefly to conditions of climate and occupation. The moral and economic aspects of the question were not seriously considered until a period shortly prior to the Revolution. Stern New England Puritans did not hesitate to engage in the traffic and amass fortunes thereby. Peter Faneuil, the Boston Huguenot merchant, was, we are told, "on the one hand piling up profits from his immense slave trade, while on the other occupied in private and public charities, and in the erection of a Cradle of Liberty in Boston."

As Professor John Fiske humorously observes, "It takes men a weary while to learn the wickedness of anything that puts gold in their purses." The pious woman who retorted to



the author of "The Negro's and Indian's Advocate" that "he might as well baptize puppies as negroes" was not unique. The question before the United States Supreme Court in the famous Dred Scott case was no new thing. So early as 1667, nearly two centuries before Chief-Justice Taney's decision, the Virginia House of Burgesses enacted: "Whereas, some doubts have arisen whether children that are slaves by birth and by the charity and piety of their owners made partakers of the blessed sacrament of baptisme, should by virtue of their baptisme be made free: It is enacted and declared by this grand assembly and the power thereof, that the conferringe of baptisme doth not alter the condition of the person as to his bondage or freedom; that diverse masters, freed from this doubt, may more carefully endeavor the propagation of Christianity by permitting children, though slaves, or those of greater growth if capable, to be admitted to that sacrament."

The extent to which it obtained in New Jersey is not definitely known, but in proportion to its population, it was far in excess of any other colony north of the Mason and Dixon line. They were most numerous in those parts of the country settled by the Dutch, presumably because the Dutch colonial interests in the tropics and their vocation as traders had familiarized them with the institution. The total population of the State in 1726 numbered 32,442, of which eight per cent. were negro slaves. The same year, out of a total population in Somerset County of 2,271 souls, 17 per cent. were negro slaves, and this ratio was exceeded in two other counties. In the year 1800 the proportion of negroes to whites was still nearly as great, and they then numbered 1,863. In the early years of the century a series of laws were enacted for their gradual emancipation, and by 1830 the total number in Somerset County numbered but 78.

Negroes in Somerset County were valuable property. In an inventory of an estate at Branchburg, settled in 1764, there is mention of six slaves varying in value from £30 to £70 each. Again, a few years later, we find the following bill of sale: "July 10, 1768, John Van Nest, of Bridgewater (now Branchburg) sold to Peter Van Nest, a certain Neger Winch named Mary, and a neger boy named Jack for the sum of £66, York currency."

Nor shall we have to go South, or to the pages of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," for instances of barbaric cruelty. There are records of revolting brutality in the execution of the death penalty. For murder or assault, the slave was burnt alive, and for certain petty misdemeanors, hanging was considered none too severe by the colonial courts. In 1694 a justice of Monmouth County pronounced sentence on a negro murderer in the following terms: "Cæsar, thou art found guilty by thy country of those horrid crimes

that are laid to thy charge : therefore, the court doth judge that thou, the said Cæsar, shall return to the place from whence thou camest, and from thence to the place of execution, when thy right hand shall be cut off and burned before thine eyes. Then thou shalt be hanged up by the neck till thou art dead, dead, dead : then thy body shall be cut down and burned to ashes in a fire, and so the Lord have mercy on thy soul, Cæsar.”

From such sombre pictures, it is a relief to turn to a consideration of the fashionable life of the Colony. Here we have glimpses of colour, gayety, and grace sufficient for the composition of a Watteau picture. Midway between New England and Pennsylvania, the social life of New Jersey was neither so austere as was that of the Puritans nor yet so sombre as that of the Quakers across the Delaware. It was more in touch and sympathy with the gayety of Knickerbocker New York and Cavalier Virginia. So

we may read of gay doings in the old Capitol at Perth Amboy ; of men in crimson and satin garments, gold laced and frilled, with silver buttons engraved with monograms ; in silk stockings and jewelled shoe buckles ; in hats cocked and laced, and powdered wigs ; with gold snuff-boxes and gold-headed walking-sticks.

And the ladies were even more “smart” in gorgeous apparel. They wore gorgeous brocaded silks and satins, large hats with streaming feathers, jewels, gay ear-pendants ; they powdered and puffed their hair, painted and patched their faces. We hear of all these vanities ; they are no new things in these later days. An advertisement in the *New York Gazette* of 1733 reads: “Morrison, Peruke maker from London, dresses gentlemen’s and ladies’ hair in the politest taste. He has a choice parcel of human, horse, and goat hair to dispose of.”

“The apparel oft proclaims the man” and woman. It is but a step from the world’s

stage to the mimic stage. The first theatre company to visit the Colonies appeared in Perth Amboy in 1752, and fashionable New Jersey society received the innovation with open arms. Long years after, old ladies recalled with rapture the beauty and charm of the leading lady as Jane Shore. In marked contrast to all this, in the year 1750, the Assembly of the province of Massachusetts forbade theatrical representations because, that body held, "they tend greatly to increase immorality, impiety, and a contempt of religion."

The colonial administration of America abounds in memories of gentlemen of distinction no less than in tyrannical time-servers and selfish politicians. Of the gentlemen, the Colony of New Jersey was favoured with not a few. Of such was Col. Robert Hunter, who was appointed to the governorship of the provinces of New York and New Jersey early in the eighteenth century in the reign of Queen Anne.

It was during his administration that Northern Somerset County was settled, and the western portion was set off as a separate county, named in compliment to him, Hunter-don. He was a personal friend of Addison, Steele, and Swift, and was thus in close touch with the literary life of the Augustan Age of English letters. Indeed, it is said he owed his appointment to Addison, who was then Under Secretary of State. Himself a graceful and witty writer, it would seem that he shared the mantle of the brilliant dean of St. Patrick's. Writing to Swift from the executive mansion, Perth Amboy, under date of March 13, 1713, he says : " This is the finest air to live upon in the universe ; and, if our trees and birds could speak, and our assemblymen be silent, the finest conversation also."

The consecration of Swift to the bishopric of the Church of England in America was once seriously considered. The plan was abandoned, however, and the mother Church never sent a

bishop across seas to the American Colonies. The American episcopate of the Protestant Episcopal Church, therefore, dates from a period after the Revolution, nearly a century after the plan of sending Jonathan Swift hither was considered. Had he been sent to the new world instead of to Ireland perhaps "Gulliver's Travels" had not been written, and Stella and Vanessa had not languished.

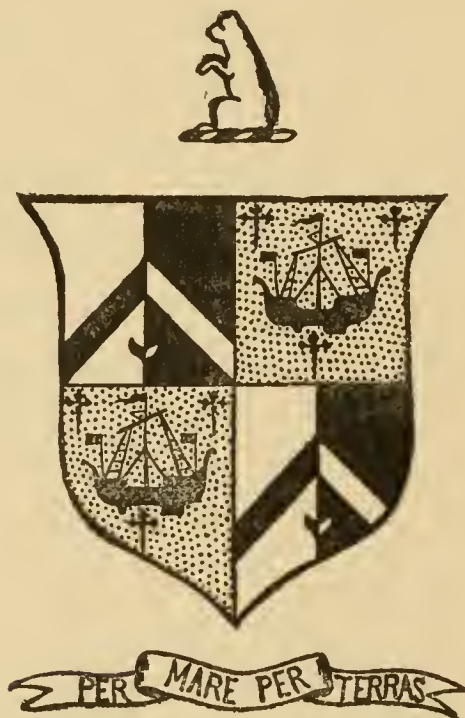
All functions relating to the administration of the Government were attended with great dignity and ceremony. These, of course, were based on English precedent, some of them, indeed, being still in force. Judges on a circuit were "met outside of the town by the sheriff, justices of the peace, and other gentlemen on horseback who conducted them in honour to their lodgings." When Lord Stirling, a distinguished son of Somerset, officially attended the Governor's Council, "he rode in a great coach with gilded panels, emblazoned with coronets and medal-



lions, and altogether affected a style and splendour probably unequalled in the Colonies." A contemporary speaks of the equipage of Governor Lewis Morris (Governor of New Jersey from 1738 to 1746) rolling down Broadway "with silver mountings glittering in the sunshine and the family arms emblazoned upon it in many places." To support all this state, private fortunes were expended, and salaries were out of all proportion to modern ratios. The salary of the royal governor of New Jersey, a modest little colony which at no time before the Revolution numbered more than 150,000, is estimated at quite or nearly £1,000.

Indeed, to reconstruct the social life in the Colonies, even in the modest little province of New Jersey, it would seem necessary to deduct but little from the brilliant pen pictures of Thackeray and Macaulay which depict contemporary England. One important deduction must, however, be borne in mind: Architecturally, the

colonial mansion, be it ever so "stately," could never rival the manor house or castle of Old England. The colonial houses developed in the English American Colonies have a beauty and fitness of their own, but they are not to be compared to the splendour that "falls on castle walls" of enduring stone, or to the domestic beauty and comfort of a Tudor manor house.



IV.

PLUCKAMIN AND BEDMINSTER.

THE name of the village of Pluckamin is of doubtful origin. It is probably derived from an Indian word of uncertain meaning from which we get our word persimmon. The settlement of the village dates about the middle of the eighteenth century. The names of the early settlers, together with the early religious history of the village, indicate a Dutch and German origin of the first land-holders of Pluckamin. St. Paul's Lutheran Church was erected in 1756, and maintained a vigorous existence for the next generation. The congregation was gradually absorbed by the Presbyterians whose church building is near the site of the Lutheran Church which was torn down early in the nineteenth century.

At the outbreak of the revolution, it was a

flourishing village, and situated as it is on the highroad between Trenton and Morristown, was the scene of many marchings and counter-marching, of halts and incidents worthy of recollection. After the battle of Princeton early in January, 1777, Washington wished to attack the British at New Brunswick before going into winter quarters at Morristown. But the jaded condition of his small army led him to abandon the plan, and so, bearing to the northwest of the enemy, he reached Pluckamin on Saturday, the 4th of January, halting there over Sunday. The wounded were quartered in the village; the British prisoners, numbering nearly three hundred, were quartered in the Lutheran Church which was turned into a temporary prison. The army camped on a snow-covered hill to the south of the village. The headquarters of Washington during these two eventful days was the Fenner house, still standing.

Here he wrote his official report of the battle

of Princeton and immediately dispatched it to Congress by Col. Henry. The moral effect of the victories of Trenton and Princeton to the American cause is almost incalculable. As strategic successes they rank with the brilliant achievements of any war. The ageing King of Prussia, Frederick the Great, who watched the progress of the war in America with keen interest, pronounced them master-strokes of military genius. There was no community of interest between the Prussian autocrat and the American Colonists, but, like the figures on a chess board, the game deeply interested him as a study in military science. His admiration of the strategic skill displayed in the movements on Trenton and Princeton led him to send to Washington a sword with the complimentary inscription, "From the oldest general in the world to the greatest."

The Commander-in-chief's modest official report of the engagement at Princeton, penned

on that busy mid-winter Sunday spent in Pluckamin, is well worth perusal and is inserted here unabridged:

PLUCKAMIN, 5 Jan. 1777.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

SIR: I have the honour to inform you that since the date of my last from Trenton I have removed with the army under my command to this place. The difficulty of crossing the Delaware on account of the ice made our passage over it tedious, and gave the enemy an opportunity of drawing in their several cantonments, and assembling their whole force at Princeton. Their large pickets advanced towards Trenton, their great preparations, and some intelligence I had received added to their knowledge that the 1st of January brought on a dissolution of the best part of our army, gave me the strongest reason to conclude that an attack on us was meditating. Our situation was most critical and our force small. To remove immediately was

again destroying every dawn of hope which had began to revive in the breasts of the Jersey militia; and to bring those troops who had first crossed the Delaware, and were lying at Crosswicks under General Cadwalader, and those under General Mifflin at Bordentown (amounting in the whole to about three thousand six hundred) to Trenton was to bring them to an exposed place. One or the other, however, was unavoidable. The latter was preferred and they were ordered to join us at Trenton, which they did by a night march on the 1st instant. On the 2nd, according to my expectation, the enemy began to advance upon us; and after some skirmishing the head of their column reached Trenton about four o'clock, whilst their rear was as far back as Maidenhead. They attempted to pass Sanpink Creek, which runs through Trenton at different places, but finding the fords guarded, they halted and kindled their fires.

We were drawn up on the other side of the creek. In this situation we remained till dark, canonading the enemy and receiving the fire of their field pieces, which did us but little damage. Having by this time discovered the enemy were greatly superior in number, and that their design was to surround us, I ordered all our baggage to be removed silently to Burlington soon after dark; and at twelve o'clock, after renewing our fires and leaving guards at the bridge in Trenton and other passes on the same stream above, marched by a roundabout road to Princeton where I knew they could not have much force left and might have stores. One thing I was certain of, that it would avoid the appearance of a retreat which was of consequence, or to run the hazard of the whole army being cut off, whilst we might, by a fortunate stroke, withdraw General Howe from Trenton and give some reputation to our arms. Happily we succeeded; we found Princeton about sun-



rise with only three regiments and three troops of light-horse in it, two of which were on their march to Trenton. These three regiments, especially the two first, made a gallant resistance, and in killed and wounded and prisoners must have lost five hundred men ; upwards of one hundred of them were left dead on the field ; and with what I have with me and what were taken in the pursuit and carried across the Delaware, there are near three hundred prisoners, fourteen of whom are officers, all British.

This piece of good fortune is counterbalanced by the loss of the brave and worthy General Mercer, Colonels Hazlet and Potter, Captain Neal of the artillery, Captain Fleming who commanded the first Virginia regiment, and four or five other valuable officers, who, with about twenty-five or thirty privates, were slain in the field. Our whole loss cannot be ascertained, as many who were in pursuit of the enemy (who were chased three or four miles) are not

yet come in. The rear of the enemy's army lying at Maidenhead not more than five or six miles from Princeton, was up with us before our pursuit was over, but as I had the precaution to destroy the Bridge over Stony Brook about half-a-mile from the field of action, they were so long retarded there as to give us time to move off in good order for this place. We took two brass field-pieces, but for want of horses could not bring them away. We also took some blankets, shoes, and a few other trifling articles, burned the hay and destroyed such other things as the shortness of time would admit of.

My original plan when I set out from Trenton was to push on to Brunswic; but the harassed state of our troops, many of them having had no rest for two nights and a day, and the danger of losing the advantage we had gained by aiming at too much, induced me by the advice of my officers to relinquish the attempt.

But in my judgment, six or eight hundred fresh troops upon a forced march, would have destroyed all their stores and magazines, taken (as we have since learned) their military chest containing seventy thousand pounds, and put an end to the war. The enemy, from the best intelligence I have been able to get, were so much alarmed at the apprehension of this, that they marched immediately to Brunswic without halting except at the bridges (for I also took up those at Millstone on the different routes to Brunswic) and got there before day. From the best information I have received, General Howe has left no men either at Trenton or Princeton. The truth of this I am endeavoring to ascertain that I may regulate my movements accordingly. The militia are taking spirit and I am told are coming in fast from this State, but I fear those from Philadelphia will hardly submit to the hardships of a winter campaign much longer, especially as they, very unluckily, sent

their blankets with their baggage to Burlington. I must do them the justice, however, to add that they have undergone more fatigue and hardship than I expected militia, especially citizens, would have done at this inclement season. I am just moving to Morristown where I shall endeavor to put them under the best cover I can. Hitherto we have been without any; and many of our poor soldiers quite barefoot and ill clad in other respects.

I have the honour to be, etc.

This was an eventful Sunday in the annals of the quiet Somerset village. Besides the Commander-in-chief, there were among others known to fame, Generals Greene, Knox, and Sullivan; there was, too, the venerated Dr. Benjamin Rush, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, soon to be appointed surgeon-general of the army. Among the fourteen British officers captured and under guard was

one Captain William Leslie, son of the Earl of Leven, who was so severely wounded in the battle that he died soon after reaching Pluckamin. Dr. Rush, who ministered to the dying captain, was a native of Philadelphia. He graduated from Princeton College at the early age of fifteen, and then studied medicine in Edinburgh where he took his degree. During his residence abroad, he knew the family of the Earl of Leven intimately. It was his melancholy privilege to attend the dying captain in his last moments, and see him reverently interred in the Lutheran Cemetery. The journal of Captain Rodney of the Delaware line has the following record of the event:

PLUCKAMIN, N. J., Jan. 5, 1777.

The General continued this day also to refresh the army. He ordered forty of our light infantry to attend the funeral of Colonel Leslie, to bury him with the honours of war. He

was one of the enemy who fell at Princeton. They readily obeyed in paying due respect to bravery, though in an enemy. Captain Henry was now gone home, and I, myself, had command of the five companies of infantry, but as I had not paid any attention to the military funeral ceremonies, I requested Captain Humphries (Humphreys?) to conduct it.

Dr. Rush had the grave marked with a headstone bearing the following touching inscription:

In memory of the  
Hon. Capt. William Leslie of the  
17th British Regiment.  
Son of the earl of Leven  
in Scotland.

He fell January 3d, 1777, aged 26 years,  
at the Battle of Princeton.

His friend, Benj. Rush, M. D., of  
Philadelphia,

hath caused this stone to be erected as  
a mark of his esteem for his  
worth, and respect for  
his noble family.

About the year 1835 the crumbling tombstone was replaced by the then Earl of Leven. He ordered a literal copy of the inscription written by the good Dr. Rush, who, the day after the burial of Leslie, hurried off to Princeton to attend the dying General Mercer.

More than a century later, another Philadelphia physician was to find inspiration in the life and character of Dr. Rush. In Dr. Weir Mitchel's novel of the Revolution, "Hugh Wynne," Dr. Rush divides the honours and the interest with the nominal hero of the romance.

Another incident of the halt at Pluckamin is not so sombre. This was the arrival of Captain John Stryker's troop of Somerset horse, laden with some timely spoils of the enemy. Cornwallis, in his hurried retreat, had left several broken-down baggage wagons in charge of a guard of two hundred men. Captain Stryker with but twenty troopers, suddenly fell upon them at night and so

terrorized the guard that they fled, leaving the baggage to fate. Captain Stryker promptly repaired the wagons, bringing them in triumph to the army during the halt at Pluckamin.

In the disposition of the army during the winter of 1778-79, General Knox was in command of an artillery corps, stationed at Pluckamin while the Commander-in-chief made his headquarters in the Wallace house near Raritan. General Knox's headquarters were in the Vander Veer house near the Bedminster Church where he was joined by Mrs. Knox, who also spent the winter there. The corps, which boasted a fine artillery train captured from Burgoyne, was stationed near the village.

Facing the parade ground was a building known as the Academy—enclosing a room thirty by fifty feet which did service as a lecture hall, for the camp was turned into a training school during the periods of inactivity. The camp known as Artillery Park was





General Knox's Headquarters, Bedminster



the scene of much merry-making and social life during this winter.

“You know what an agreeable circle of ladies this State afforded two years ago,” wrote an officer to a brother of General Knox. “It is since much enlarged, so that we can (in military stile) at a moment’s warning, parade a score or two.”

The most brilliant event of that season took place on February 18th (1779). It was a grand fête and ball to celebrate the first anniversary of the French Alliance. There were military reviews and manœuvres directed by Baron Steuben, the Inspector-General. There was a dinner followed by a display of fireworks and a grand ball. The company included all the army officers stationed at or near Pluckamin, the Commander-in-chief and his staff, and many people of distinction in residence near the camp. A grand pavilion one hundred feet long, roofed by thirteen arches, was decorated

with allegorical paintings executed for the occasion. The sixth of the thirteen arches was a grand illuminated representation of Louis XVI. as "The encourager of letters, the supporter of the rights of humanity, the ally and friend of the American people." A strange fate met this "supporter of the rights of humanity" a few years later on the Place de la Revolution.

This early significant use of the number thirteen was the subject of a brilliant Tory sarcasm at the time. The *Lampoon* states: "Thirteen is a number peculiarly belonging to the rebels. A party of naval prisoners, lately returned from Jersey, say that the rations among the rebels are thirteen dried clams per day; that the titular Lord Stirling takes thirteen glasses of grog every morning, has thirteen enormous rum bunches on his nose, and that (when duly impregnated) he always makes thirteen attempts before he can walk. That Mr.

Washington has thirteen toes on his feet (the extra ones having grown since the Declaration of Independence) and the same number of teeth in each jaw . . . that a well organized rebel household has thirteen children, all of whom expect to be generals and members of the High and Mighty Congress of the Thirteen United States when they attain thirteen."

General Knox writes to his brother of the event with great pride:

"We had at the Park on the eighteenth," he says, "a most genteel entertainment given by self and officers—everybody allows it to be the first of the kind ever exhibited in this State, at least: We had about seventy ladies—all the first *ton* in the State—we danced all night—between three and four hundred gentlemen—an elegant room—the illuminating fireworks, etc., were more than pretty."

A correspondent to the *Pennsylvania Packet* of March 6th gives a detailed account of the

celebration and concludes with the following tribute to the women of the period:

“Is it that the women of New Jersey, by holding the space between two large cities, have continued exempt from the corruptions of either, and preserved a purity of manners superior to both? Or have I paid too great attention to their charms and too little to those imperfections which observers tell me are the natural growth of every soil?”

It was doubtless a brilliant company that danced in the academy that night. The event stood in bold relief against the inactive and troubled social life of the preceding years. General Washington himself, with Mrs. Knox, opened the ball. Mrs. Washington, Lady Stirling, Mrs. Greene and others received the guests. And there was William Duer, Englishman, West-Indian, New Yorker, ex-member of Congress, and army officer, come to dance with his fiancée, Lady Kitty Stirling.

Among the guests was the distinguished Henry Laurens, late president of Congress, who was soon to be a prisoner in England while his son, Col. John Laurens, was doing such valuable service in bringing about the active co-operation of the French. Exasperated with the dalliance of the French ministers, Colonel Laurens resorted to an argument with Count de Vergennes which was irresistible. "The sword which I now wear in the defence of France as well as of my own country," he said, "I may be compelled in a short time to draw against France as a British subject, unless the succor I solicit is immediately accorded."

The sojourn of General and Mrs. Knox in Pluckamin closed in gloom. A tombstone in the graveyard of the Bedminster Church tells part of the story. The inscription reads :

"Under this stone are deposited the Remains of Julia Knox, an infant who died on the second

of July, 1779. She was the second daughter of Henry and Lucy Knox, of Boston in New England."

The Consistory of the Dutch Reformed Church refused to allow the child to be buried in the churchyard, because the Knoxes were not of their faith. But Jacobus Van der Veer, General Knox's host, invited him to bury the infant in the field adjoining the graveyard, where his own daughter was buried, for a still more brutal reason. She had died insane—"possessed of the devil"—and therefore should not have Christian burial. Years afterwards the field was included in the churchyard, but the incidents are sorry illustrations of the religious intolerance of the day.

With the breaking up of General Knox's camp, the important revolutionary incidents of the village come to a close. Eoff's tavern continued to be a convenient half-way house, and a detachment of the Continental troops,



with our French allies under Lafayette, passed through in 1781 on the hurried march to Yorktown. With the return of peace the village returned to the even tenor of its way—which, it would seem, has scarcely been interrupted since.

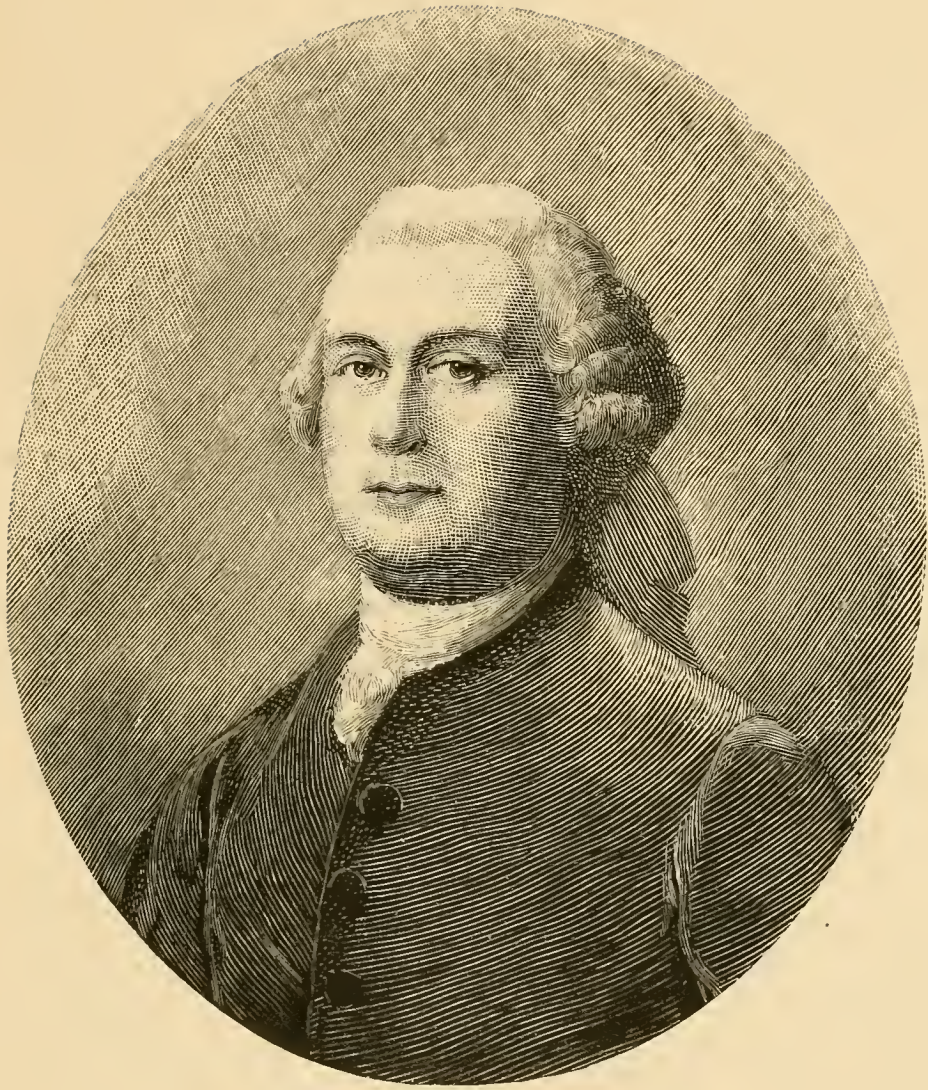
## V.

**BERNARDSVILLE.**

Bernards Township and Bernardsville probably commemorate one of the royal governors of the province, Sir Francis Bernard, who was appointed in 1758. He was a popular governor, and when he was transferred to Massachusetts in 1760 by the home government, the regret was general. His administration of that province was less happy. It was he who introduced the royal troops to the city of Boston, prorogued the Colonial Assembly for refusing to vote supplies for their support, and so contributed to the volume of grievances that led to the Revolution.

Governor Franklin, of New Jersey, writing to his father, Benjamin Franklin, from Burlington in 1769, says:

“The Boston writers’ have attacked Gov-



Sir Francis Bernard



ernor Bernard on his letters and on his being created a baronet. They worry him so much that I suppose he will not choose to stay much longer among them. There is a talk that a new governor is shortly to be appointed. Many of the principal people there wish you to be the man, and say you would meet with no opposition from any party, but would soon be able to conciliate all differences."

The old name of the village was Vealtown, and the old Vealtown Inn, known as Bullion's Tavern, is frequently mentioned in Revolutionary annals. It occupied the site of the present stone tavern in the village. While the scene of no distinguishing event, Bernardsville was frequently the halting or camping place of officers and troops in their crossing and recrossing of New Jersey. After the disastrous battle of Long Island in August, 1776, General Lee was extremely dilatory if not positively disobedient in following the Commander-

in-chief in retreat across New Jersey. On the twelfth of December, his command camped for the night in Bernardsville. Lee, however, temporarily transferred his command to General Sullivan, and, "governed by some freak or whim, or still baser passion," put up for the night at Mrs. White's Tavern at Basking Ridge. The story of his capture by the British the following day is told more in detail in the note on Basking Ridge.

A month later Bernardsville again saw the Continental troops. This time, however, not in disheartening retreat, but flushed with the great strategic and actual victories of Trenton and Princeton. After the battle of Princeton, early in 1777, the first halt made by Washington and his army on the way to Morristown was at Pluckamin. From thence, after a few days' sojourn, he proceeded through Bernardsville and New Vernon, making his winter headquarters at the Arnold Tavern on the Morristown "Green."

Early in 1781 the tavern at Vealtown was the scene of a little army diplomacy. During that winter the Pennsylvania line under command of General Wayne went into winter quarters on Kimball Hill near Morristown. It would seem that the condition of the troops was but little better than during the memorable winter at Valley Forge.

“The men,” wrote General Wayne, “are poorly clothed, badly fed and worse paid, some of them not having received a paper dollar for near twelve months; exposed to winter’s piercing cold, to drifting snows, and chilling blasts, with no protection but old worn-out coats, tattered linen overalls, and but one blanket between three men.” Small wonder they mutinied. They were devoted to their cause and to General Wayne, but he was quite unable to restrain them. So thirteen hundred withdrew from camp intent on marching to Philadelphia to present their claims to

Congress. Their first halt for the night was at Vealtown and here Wayne followed them, meeting the non-commissioned officers of the mutineers in Bullion's tavern. The result of the conference was a compromise. General Wayne despatched a courier to Congress stating their grievances and claims, and Congress promptly sent a committee to confer with them. They met the mutineers at Princeton, relieved their necessities, granted the justice of their claims, and sent them back to camp.

Meanwhile an incident had taken place that proved they were no traitors, though in a state of mutiny. Emissaries from General Clinton met them, offering generous terms to join the King's troops. But Clinton had reckoned without his host. The emissaries were promptly seized as spies and turned over to the custody of General Wayne, to whose command the mutineers themselves soon returned. General Wayne's sobriquet of "Mad



Anthony" was changed to "Dandy Andy" in New Jersey, where he was extremely popular. The sobriquet grew out of his gentlemanly soldierly appearance and fastidiousness in dress.

The camp at Kimball Hill and various events in this and the preceding seasons furnish the materials for Bret Harte's pretty Revolutionary story, "Thankful Blossom." The house of the heroine was on one of the main roads leading from Kimball Hill to Vealtown.

When, in August, 1781, Washington boldly decided to cross the Hudson and unite with Lafayette and the French fleet in Virginia, the allied armies crossed New Jersey by different routes in four divisions.

The two divisions of our French allies lay at Whippany, Morris County, over night on August 28th. The first division camped at Bullion's Tavern, Bernardsville, the following night, and the next day pushed on to Millstone. On the 30th, the second division fol-

lowed from Whippany, and they too camped at Bernardsville for the night, following the first in their southern course, one day later. The journal of the commissary of the French army records: "The road which I took to reach Bullion's Tavern is not disagreeable, but the farms are still middling, they were sown with maize and buckwheat; I also saw a little hemp there."

The appearance of the soldiers of his Christian Majesty Louis XVI., well drilled and in natty uniforms, must have been in striking contrast to the ill-fed and half-clothed troops that passed through the village five years earlier after the defeat at Long Island. Then there had been no considerable victory over the royal forces. Now there was the memory of Trenton, Princeton, and Monmouth in New Jersey; of the capture of Burgoyne in New York. Then the Colonies were fighting single-handed; now they held the active and moral

support of a powerful ally—the hereditary enemy of the British.

With this memorable march across the Jerseys, the Revolutionary memories of Bernardsville close; for the final victory at Yorktown followed two months later.

Perhaps the most interesting historic house architecturally is the old Kirkpatrick homestead on the Mine Brook road. It is built of stone, two stories in height, in a severe and dignified style which the present owner has had the good taste to preserve and copy in all restorations and extensions. On a stone over the doorway are chiselled the initials D. M. K., 1765. The initials stand for David and Mary Kirkpatrick, the sturdy Scotch emigrants who built the house, whose son Andrew was a distinguished Chief-Justice of the State (1803-1824).

Bathing Ridge Dec'r 9: 13<sup>th</sup> 1926

My Dr Gates

The ingenious mechanism of Foot Washington

has worked the goodly fabric. We had been building -

there was so hard a stroke - entire now a certain great

Man is most damnable efficient. He has shown me into

VI.

**BASKING RIDGE.**

Several existing records place the earliest settlement of Basking Ridge "about the year 1700." It is quite possible that squatters may have been settled in the vicinity as early as 1700, for in the transactions of the regular sale and deeding of the land there are sundry references to trouble in dispossessing the squatters. But inasmuch as the date of the purchase of a tract of some three thousand acres, including the site of the present village, is dated June 24th, 1717, the latter may be considered the date of the historic beginning of the village.

The purchase was made from an Indian chief named Nowenoik by one John Harrison, agent of the East Jersey Proprietors, the price paid being about fifty dollars. The tract extended

east to the Passaic River at Millington and south to the Dead River. It was known as Harrison's Neck and was sold a few years later to four men, namely: Daniel Hollingshead, George Rissearick, Col. John Parker, of Amboy, and James Alexander, surveyor-general of the provinces of New York and New Jersey.

These gentlemen had it regularly surveyed in 1727 and laid out in farms of one hundred and fifty to two hundred acres each. These were then drawn for in lots, the lot to the northeast of the village having fallen to James Alexander, the surveyor-general of the province.

The name of the village is variously spelled—Baskinridge, Baskenridge, Basken Ridge, etc.—in published and written documents, during the first century of its existence. In the loose orthography of the period, this is nothing unusual, but in the earliest authentic documents the word appears in its present form. This seems to indicate a purely English origin for

the name, the local tradition being that the Ridge was a place of resort for the wild animals to bask in the sun.

A log meeting house was erected on the site of the present Presbyterian Church some time between the years 1725–1730. This was superseded by a larger frame building in 1749. The earliest burial discoverable from the gravestones is dated 1736. But by 1740 Basking Ridge must have been the centre of a considerable and vigorous community. In that year the village was visited by the great English evangelist, George Whitefield, who himself recorded the visit in the following terms:

“When I came to Basking Ridge I found that Mr. Davenport had been preaching to the congregation. It consisted of about three thousand people. In prayer I perceived my soul drawn out and a stirring of affection among the people. I had not discoursed long, but in every part of the congregation, somebody or other

began to cry out, and almost all were melted to tears.”


This was the period known in the religious annals as The Great Awakening. They were days of fervent, genuine piety, even though marred by Puritan narrowness and intolerance. The spirit of the Puritan petition to parliament still obtained. “The service of God,” that petition records, “is grievously abused by piping with organ singing and trowling of psalms from one side of the choir to another, with the squeaking of chanting choristers disguised in white surplices, some in corner caps and silly copes.” There was no organ and no choir in the village church at this period. The doleful hymns of the day were “lined out” by the pastor or a deacon, then sung by the congregation. The churches were cheerless and plain; in winter unheated, and the customary sermon, morning and afternoon, was one hour in length timed by an hour-glass. It is recorded of one Puritan



preacher that he could rarely confine himself within the hour limit. When the sand had run out he would turn over the hour-glass deliberately and say: "Brethren, let us take another glass."

In 1751, the Rev. Dr. Kennedy was appointed to the pastorate of the Presbyterian Church, and soon after established a classical school of considerable repute throughout the State. He was a Scotchman, a graduate of the University of Edinburgh, a Doctor of Medicine, and an all-around gentleman of culture. He died in 1786, and was buried in the churchyard. The present church structure, the third on the site, was erected in 1838.

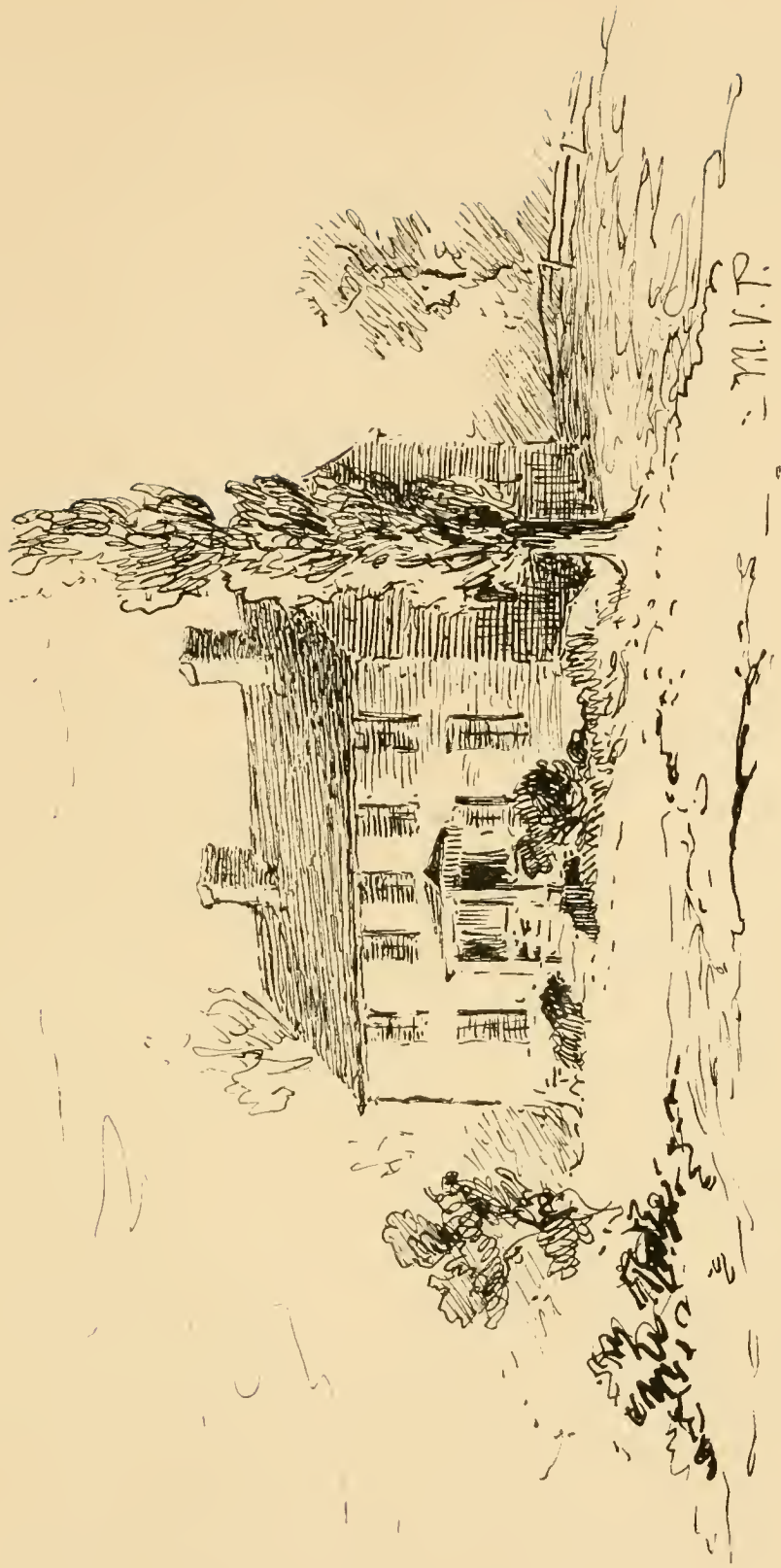
At the outbreak of the Revolution, a cultivated society already existed in Basking Ridge and the surrounding Somerset Hills. Lord Stirling had made his summer home here a permanent residence. The distinguished Southard family were his neighbors. John Morton, of



New York, had recently settled here in an attractive and well-furnished homestead. This society was soon augmented by exiles of prominence from New York and elsewhere, who found comparative security in these hills. Elias Boudinot, of Elizabeth, who as president of Congress signed the final Treaty of Peace with Great Britain, had placed his family in two farmhouses near the village. When Governor Livingston was obliged to abandon his home in Elizabethtown, Liberty Hall, his family was sent to Basking Ridge and were the guests of his brother-in-law, Lord Stirling, at The Buildings.

The capture of General Lee in the early period of the war was the beginning of a series of Revolutionary associations with the village.

For nearly a hundred years the measure of this adventurer's guilt was a subject of dispute, but thorough investigation leaves no doubt on that subject. Lee, who was second in com-



Mrs. White's Tavern



mand, coveted the post of commander-in-chief. After the battle of Long Island and the series of subsequent disasters, he was extremely dilatory in following Washington into Pennsylvania, hoping, it is charged, that with his small force some new disaster would befall him, and thus place his covetous second first in command. On the 12th of December, 1776, Lee arrived in Bernardsville, where the army camped for the night. He, however, moved on to more comfortable quarters in Mrs. White's tavern in Basking Ridge, leaving the army in charge of General Sullivan. The following morning a party of thirty British dragoons, under Colonel Harcourt, suddenly appeared, surrounded the house, captured him, and carried him off to the British lines at New Brunswick, some eighteen miles distant, where, clothed only in dressing gown and slippers, the crestfallen would-be commander-in-chief created no little merriment. At the time, the capture of General Lee was

counted another addition to a long series of disasters. It was, indeed, the darkest period of the war. But we know better now. The capture left General Sullivan in command of Lee's division, which promptly joined Washington in Pennsylvania, and made possible the most brilliant strategic feat of the war—the capture of the Hessians at Trenton and the victory of Princeton. And we know now, too, that at the very moment of Lee's capture, he had but signed the following letter to General Gates:

BASKING RIDGE, Dec'r ye 13th, 1776.

My Dr GATES:

The ingenious manœuvre of Fort Washington has unhinged the goodly fabric we had been building. There never was so damned a stroke *entre nous* a certain great man is most damnably deficient. He has thrown me into a situation where I have my choice of difficulties.

If I stay in this province I risk myself and army, and if I do not stay, the province is lost forever. . . . Our counsels have been weak to the last degree. As to yourself, if you think you can be in time to aid the General, I would have you by all means go. You will at least save your army. . . . Adieu my dear friend. God bless you.

In "Janice Meredith," his romance of the Revolution, Mr. Paul Leicester Ford makes the capture of Lee a conspicuous episode. With substantial fidelity to facts, he gives a realizing picture of the tavern of the day, its keeper and patrons, and above all of the covetous, arrogant General Lee on that wintry December morning in 1776. We see the cursing, crestfallen captive within the British lines at New Brunswick, and from thence forwarded to Cornwallis at Princeton.

There were great festivities in the village on July 27, 1779. The occasion was the marriage

of Lady Kitty Stirling to Col. Wm. Duer, of the Continental army. The ceremony took place on the lawn in front of The Buildings, "under a cedar tree," so the local tradition states. It brought together a large and brilliant company, including many army officers. A barbecued ox and wine without stint furnished refreshment. The bridegroom is described by Judge Jones, the Tory historian of the period, as "William Duer, a West Indian, settled in the province of New York for several years, as great a rebel as ever lived."

Colonel Duer was, in fact, a native of Devonshire, England, though his early life was spent in the West Indies. After the war, he lived in great state in New York City, but in 1792 his reckless speculations precipitated the first great financial panic known to New York.

The Duers were conspicuous during the period of social reconstruction in New York City following the war. In the "Republican Court"



which succeeded the Provincial court circle, they naturally occupied the prominent place to which their birth, breeding, and the public services of their respective families entitled them.

That Lady Kitty Duer had all the graces and accomplishments tradition attributes to her is attested by the existence of her letters which are models of graceful elegance. In the summer of 1778 the Countess of Stirling and Lady Kitty visited Mrs. Robert Watts, Lord Stirling's elder daughter, in New York City. This was by special permission of Sir Henry Clinton, the commandant, during the British occupation. In a letter to her father on her return, Lady Kitty writes:

“I have made several attempts to obey an injunction laid upon me by my dear papa, in a letter to General Maxwell, but have always been interrupted, or entirely prevented, by trivial accidents, which, though important enough to prevent my writing, are scarce worth mention-

ing to you; Colonel Livingston going to camp, at last furnishes me with an opportunity of acquainting you with everything my memory retains of our jaunt to New York.

“In the first place we had the satisfaction of being treated civilly by the British officers. One indignity indeed we received from General Grant, who ordered a sergeant to conduct the flag to town, instead of an officer; but we were so happy at getting permission to go on that we readily excused his want of politeness: Our acquaintances in town were very polite to us: many, indeed, were remarkably attentive; but whether it proceeded from regard to themselves, or us, is hard to determine. The truth is, they are a good deal alarmed at their situation, and wish to make as much interest as possible on our side. The sentiments, I really believe, of a great number, have undergone a thorough change, since they have been with the British army; as they have many oppor-

tunities of seeing flagrant acts of injustice and cruelty which they could not have believed their friends capable of if they had not been eye witnesses of their conduct. This convinces them that if they conquer, we must live in abject slavery.

“Mamma has, I suppose, mentioned to you the distressed situation in which we found poor Mary. The alarms of the fire and of the explosion, added to her recent misfortune, kept her for several days in a very weak state; but we had the satisfaction to leave her perfectly recovered. The child she now has is one of the most charming little creatures I ever saw, and by all accounts is more likely to live than either of the others. Mr. Watts, I am happy to find, is among the number of those who are heartily sick of British tyranny; and as to Mary, her political principles are perfectly *rebellious*. Several gentlemen of your former acquaintance in the British army made par-

ticular inquiries after you. Col. Cosmo Gordon, brother of the Duchess, was very desirous of making acquaintance with us on your account, but we happened, unfortunately, to be abroad whenever he called upon us. The Chief Justice, Lord Drummond, Mr. Barrow and several others begged to be remembered to you. Lord Drummond is very anxious to have his character cleared with respect to his parole: he says you know the circumstances, and wishes you would persuade the General to take the matter into consideration. I believe his lordship would be very happy to become an American subject if the British parliament would condescend to accede to our independence, and he is therefore very solicitous to secure our good graces.

“Upon the whole, I think we may call our jaunt a very agreeable one, though it was checkered by some unlucky circumstances. For my own part, I liked it so well that I

could wish to repeat it in a few months if my sister does not get permission to pay us a visit. I left mamma very well two days ago to pay a visit to the Governor's family, who sent the Colonel with an absolute command to fetch me. They all beg to be remembered to you."

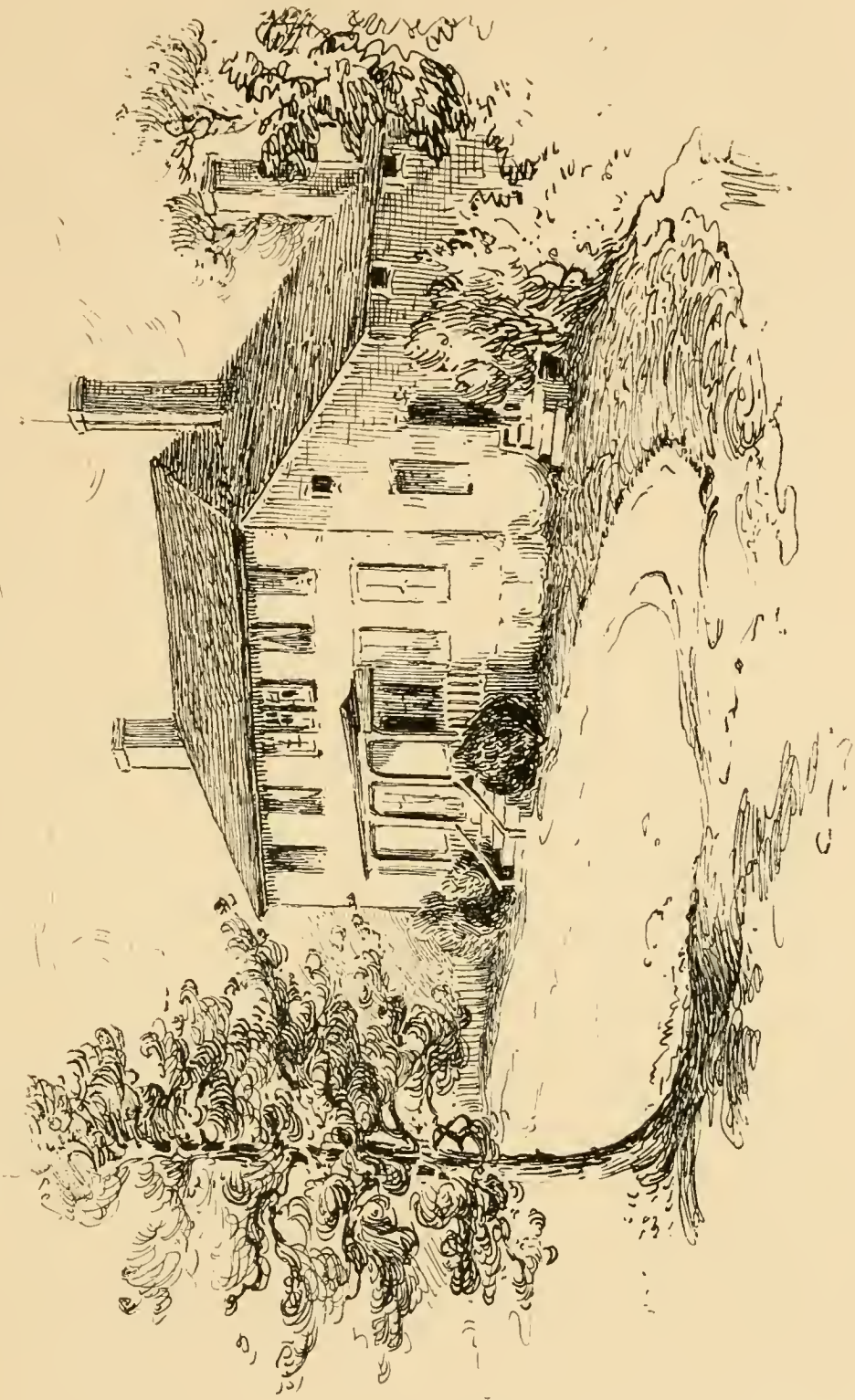
This letter is dated "Parsippany, August, 1778," whither Lady Kitty had gone, it will be observed, to visit her uncle, Governor Livingston.

During the winter of 1779-80, Washington and his army were encamped at Morristown for the second time. In February General Greene's division was moved to Basking Ridge, where it remained until the opening of the next campaign. During this season smallpox again broke out in camp, and a hospital was established for isolating and treating the victims. This was located on the road between the village and the Stirling estate, well back from

the highway. The foundation of the old farmhouse, which was the nucleus of the hospital, still exists, and human bones have been unearthed in the vicinity. General Greene's headquarters were at The Buildings, the home of his companion in arms, Lord Stirling. At the same time Governor Livingston's wife and daughter were also guests of Lady Stirling. We have a hint of the social refinement at The Buildings in a private letter of General Greene to his wife. Referring to the Misses Livingston, he writes:

“They are three young ladies of distinguished merit, sensible, polite and easy. Their manners are soft and engaging; they wish to see you here and I wish it too, but I expect long before that happy moment to be on the march towards Philadelphia.”

In August, 1781, the village was gay with the passing French and Continental troops en route for Yorktown. Washington's pretended



East Front of Stirling Manor House





menace of New York concealed his brilliant strategy, and almost before Sir Henry Clinton was aware of his design, the body of the Continental army and the French allies were well on their way to Virginia, there to co-operate with the French fleet which had just arrived. The army marched in several divisions by different routes. Washington chose the route across New Jersey by way of Pompton, Morristown, Basking Ridge, Pluckamin, etc. With him were two thousand Continentals, General Knox and some artillery, and Count Rochambeau with a division of the French toops, including his favourite regiment of Bourbonnois. The latter were particularly conspicuous for their brilliant uniforms, trim appearance, and military efficiency. The column halted at Basking Ridge and Bernardsville. The French officers were entertained by Mr. John Morton, who lived near the village church. Living with the Mortons were

Mrs. Morton's parents who were natives of Germany. They utterly refused to meet the hereditary foes of their native land, protesting that no good could possibly come to America from a French alliance. The halt was brief, and, doubtless, the progress of the French troops south continued to excite the interest and admiration of the countryside.

The Revolutionary annals of the village may fitly be concluded with a sketch of William Alexander, titular Earl of Stirling, Major-General in the Continental army. His father was James Alexander, engineer in the Jacobite uprising known as "The '15." This failure to restore the "Pretender" to the throne of his father led James Alexander and some of his associates to avoid embarrassments by escaping to America. He came well recommended, however, and in 1716, the year after his arrival in New York, he was appointed Surveyor-General of the Provinces of New York

and New Jersey, a post which he held until his death forty years later. He studied law and was admitted to the provincial bar, where he soon rose to eminence. He appeared in defence of John Peter Zenger in the famous libel case in 1735—thirty-five years earlier than the same principle agitated all England by the publication of the “Letters of Junius.”

He was a member of the Governor’s Council, a member of the Board of Proprietors of East Jersey, and one of the founders of “The American Philosophical Society.” Thus, surveyor-general, lawyer, statesman, scientist, the career of the sometime engineer-officer in the ranks of the Old Pretender is an early illustration of the truism that America is another name for opportunity. In 1721 he married the widow of one Samuel Provost. He died in 1756, leaving to his widow and five children a large landed estate, including a tract of some seven hundred acres at Basking Ridge.

In the division of the estate, this fell to his only son, William Alexander, known in American history as Lord Stirling.

The career of William Alexander, titular Earl of Stirling, is an interesting page from the romances of the British peerage. He was born in New York City in 1726, educated in the best schools of his day, his father instructing him in mathematics and surveying. He entered business life at an early age, first as clerk, then as co-partner in the provision business his mother inherited from her first husband.

In the course of their trade, they took contracts for supplying the King's troops with clothing and provisions in the French and Indian War. He soon attracted the attention of the Commander-in-Chief, Governor Shirley, who invited him to join his personal staff, and eventually appointed him his private secretary. When, in 1756, Governor Shirley was

summoned to England for trial, Alexander accompanied him as a witness, and his testimony contributed materially to the vindication of the character of Governor Shirley.

William Alexander remained in England five years, during which time he presented and prosecuted his claims, first to the title, and then to a portion of the estate of the Earl of Stirling.

When Henry, fifth Earl of Stirling, died in 1739, the next in succession to the title was one Dr. William Alexander, who had settled in Jamaica, Long Island. Dr. Alexander was a nephew of James Alexander of New York, and the uncle urged the nephew to present his claims. This he refused to do, and when he died childless, in 1747, James Alexander fell heir to the title. It was his purpose to present his claim to the title, but public and private affairs prevented his departure for Scotland from year to year, and the claim was not entered and prosecuted

until after his death, when his son William went abroad for that purpose.

The earldom of Stirling was not an ancient dignity, but the origin and history of the house are of extraordinary interest. The founder of the house was William Alexander (1580-1640), the court poet of the reigns of James I. and Charles I. These monarchs created him successively Lord Alexander of Tullibrodie, Viscount of Canada, Earl of Stirling, and Earl of Dovan. Along with these titles came huge gifts of land in Nova Scotia, Canada, a "tract of Maine," and Long Island. To these were added great political and administrative powers, among which was the power of creating one hundred and fifty baronets. As a matter of fact many English baronets to-day hold their titles from patents granted by the first Earl of Stirling. When, however, the fifth Earl of Stirling died, the American estates had vanished, but it was the purpose of William







Alexander to try to recover the title to some portion of them, along with the dignity.

William Alexander proved his claim to the title according to Scotch law, and since the claim was for a Scotch peerage, this would seem to settle the matter. But some of his friends persuaded him to present his claim to the House of Lords, not as a necessary measure, but as a matter of courtesy to that august body. The decision by the House of Lords was not reached until after his return to America, when they decided the claim could not be allowed because he had failed to show that heirs in a direct line were extinct.

He had assumed the title of Earl of Stirling when the Scotch court reached the decision in his favour, and continued to be known as such in public and private life to the day of his death. But with all his apparent vanity, there was no uncertain note in his politics

when it became necessary to take issue in the events that led to the Revolution.

On his return to America, he disposed of his mercantile interests in New York City and began the work of developing the landed estate at Basking Ridge, which he had inherited from his father. He built thereon a summer residence, which after a few years became his permanent residence.

Smith's "History of New Jersey," published in 1765, has the following reference to it:

"Here also at Basken-Ridge, is the seat of William Alexander, Earl of Stirling; his improvements for taste and expense promise more than anything of the kind hitherto effected in the Province."

In 1748, he had married Sarah Livingston, a sister of the Governor Livingston who was to succeed the last royal governor of New Jersey.

Meanwhile he continued to be active in

public life as Surveyor-General of the Province and member of the Provincial Council. In the latter capacity, he was summoned to Burlington by Governor Franklin in November, 1765, to consider the Stamp Act. He was detained in Basking Ridge by illness, but wrote the Governor his sentiments on the subject. Like many another man of the day, he refused to consider the Stamp Act a deliberate measure on the part of the ministry, believing it to be a mere blunder, which would be repealed as soon as recognized.

At no time in the course of the events that led to the Declaration of Independence was his judgment obscured or his course vacillating. He was still a member of the King's Council, and on terms of friendly intimacy with Governor Franklin when the first Revolutionary Congress appointed him to command the First New Jersey Battalion.

His prompt acceptance and vigorous organi-

zation of the same led to his dismissal from the Board until the King's pleasure should be known. When, however, the Provincial Congress deposed Governor Franklin, the last royal Governor of New Jersey, it became the duty of his old friend and associate, Lord Stirling, to arrest and imprison him. He was soon released on parole, and at the close of the war retired to England, where he died in 1813.

The career of Major-General the Earl of Stirling, as he was officially designated, in the course of the Revolutionary struggle, is well known. His bold attack and capture of a British man-of-war laden with provisions in New York Harbour in January, 1776; his gallant and able service in the Battle of Long Island; his services at Brandywine Creek, Germantown, and Monmouth; his timely services in exposing the Conway cabal and thus preserving to the army its Commander-in-

chief; his lamented death in Albany, in January, 1783, while in charge of the Northern Department awaiting definite terms of peace—all these are matters of public history.

There is but little difference of opinion from the American point of view on the subject of his public life. Judge Jones, the Tory historian of New York during the Revolution, presents quite a different viewpoint. He quotes with great satisfaction a reference to Lord Stirling by the Marquis de Chastellux, a member of the personal staff of Count de Rochambeau, who made a tour of the rebel colonies during the war, and, like many a later traveller, "wrote us up." The Marquis writes: "His birth, title, and property have given him more influence in America than his talents could ever have acquired him. The title of 'Lord' which was refused him in England is not here contested. He is accused of loving the table and the bottle as

becomes a 'Lord' but more by far than becomes a General."

His fondness for his title was sometimes the subject of jokes, at his expense, even among his friends. On one occasion, when a soldier was about to be executed for desertion, the criminal called out in terror, "Lord have mercy on me!" Lord Stirling, who chanced to be in that vicinity, replied with warmth: "I won't, you rascal! I won't have mercy on you."

With the death of Lord Stirling the family disappears from the active life of the village of Basking Ridge. His estate, owing to his extravagance and the depreciation of the Continental currency, was so deeply involved that he died practically bankrupt. The Basking Ridge estate passed out of the family, and the splendours of The Buildings were soon tarnished by time and neglect. What is at once the most authentic and realizing picture of the elegance and refinement of the home

of this American nobleman is from the memoirs of Mrs. Quincy, wife of a former president of Harvard College. Her father, Mr. John Morton, lived near the Stirling estate, and during her girlhood she knew the family intimately. She writes:

“The seat of Lord Stirling, called by the country people The Buildings, was two miles distant. Designed to imitate the residence of an English nobleman, it was unfinished when the war began. The stables, coach houses, and other offices, ornamented with cupolas and gilded vanes, were built round a large paved court behind the mansion.

“The front with piazza opened on a fine lawn descending to a considerable stream called the Black River. A large hall extended through the centre of the house. On one side was a drawing-room with painted walls and stuccoed ceiling. Being taken there while a child, my imagination was struck with a style

and splendour so different from all around. The daughters of Lord Stirling, called Lady Mary and Lady Kitty, afterwards Mrs. Watts and Mrs. Duer, the Miss Livingstons, afterwards Mrs. Kane and Mrs. Otto, and other cultivated and elegant women domesticated in the family, made an impression I can never forget, for they were all very pleasing and kind to me. Ten years afterwards I again visited The Buildings, but what a change had taken place! The family had removed, the house was tenanted by a farmer, and the hall and elegant drawing-room, converted into granaries, were filled with corn and wheat, and the paved courtyard with pigs and poultry.

“The stables and coach house were going to ruin, and through the door of the latter, which was falling off the hinges, I saw the state coach of the fashion of Sir Charles Grandison’s day. It was ornamented with gilded coronets and coats-of-arms blazoned on the







your most Humble Serv<sup>t</sup>  
1772.  
Hirling.

panels, and fowls were perching and roosting upon it.”

Lord Stirling was buried in the Livingston vault in the old Dutch Church in Albany. When the church was demolished in 1808, the remains were moved to the Protestant Episcopal burying ground on State Street. In 1868 the graveyard was included in a public park and the bodies removed to the Albany Rural Cemetery. Here, it seems probable, rest the bones of Major-General the Earl of Stirling in an unmarked grave; for in the process of removal their definite location was lost. “Our fathers find their graves in our short memories, and sadly tell us how we may be buried in our survivors.”

Other citizens of national reputation belong to the Basking Ridge of the next two generations. William L. Dayton was born here in 1807. In the course of his life he served successively in the State Senate, on the bench of

the Supreme Court of the State, in the United States Senate, as State attorney, as candidate for Vice-President on the Republican ticket of 1856 along with Gen. John C. Fremont, and in 1861 was appointed Minister to the Court of France by President Lincoln. He died in Paris in 1864 while in charge of this important post.

The Southard family, already referred to, had migrated from Long Island soon after the settlement of Basking Ridge. Here Henry Southard was born in 1747. He was a member of the State legislature for eight years and represented his district in Congress for twenty-one years. His still more distinguished son, Samuel L. Southard, was born here in 1787. He was Associate Justice of the Supreme Court and was elected Governor of the State in 1829. He was appointed Secretary of the Navy in 1823, and for a time was also Acting Secretary of War and Treasury. He served several terms in the United States Senate, of which body he was

president in 1841. While in the Senate he met his father in a joint committee of the two houses—father and son each being chairman of his respective committee. When St. Mark's Church was erected in 1852, the stone altar therein was built by the Southard family as a memorial to the Congressman and Senator of their family.

Basking Ridge, no less than Lamington, has the tradition of an Indian horror, at least by association. The following story, told by an aged kinswoman of the heroine, was written out many years ago, under title of

#### THE LOCUST GROVE.

Not far from the banks of the Passaic River, where the narrowing meadow-lands approach the Passaic Water Gap, is a grove of locust trees. It is not far from the high-road leading to the ancient village of Basking Ridge and was once a part of the estate of

Lord Stirling. The surrounding country is steeped in the tradition of a past century; across the meadows, some two miles to the west, is the stately old mansion which was Lord Stirling's home before and during the Revolutionary struggle—the trysting-place of many men now known to fame, during the two winter encampments of the Continental army at Morristown. On the crest of the ridge that lies to the east of the village stands the colonial house in which the too ambitious General Lee was captured. The church edifice guarding the head of the main street is not as ancient as the village, though venerable enough to command respect.

But to return to the Locust Grove. The present generation can still remember when the solitude of the place was broken only by the low of cattle grazing in the meadows, the note of Bob White, or the rumbling of wagons over the road hard by. Near the

centre of the grove is still to be seen the remnant of a hearth that was once a home, and some fragments of a foundation. A succession of old-fashioned flowers here makes an annual struggle for existence. Daffodils, grape-hyacinths, rockets—each has its season, and each season the noiseless encroachments of ‘tares’ rob them of a little of their former glory. These, together with some traces of a well-sweep, are all that is left of the home of ‘Old Aunt Polly Kernan.’ Here she lived in lonely, childless widowhood, well into the nineteenth century, surviving the tragedy of her life nearly half a century.

She was married in Basking Ridge several years before the outbreak of the Revolution, and then went to Cherry Valley in Central New York where her husband had purchased some land. This was then a frontier region, and its proximity to the house of the Six Nations resulted in the destruction of the

village and the massacre of the inhabitants in the course of the border warfare that added to the horrors of the period. In the summer of 1778, the country was terrorized by the reports of the massacre of Wyoming Valley in Northern Pennsylvania. The Tories and their Indian allies of New York resorted to barbarities scarcely equalled in the earlier border warfare. A few months later Cherry Valley was similarly raided, and among the victims was the pioneer Kernan family. Among the Indians was a party of Mohawks, led by their chief, the notorious Joseph Brant, the ally of his Majesty George III.

The Kernans lived on the outskirts of the village on a secluded farm off the highroad. The even tenor of their uneventful lives was rudely interrupted towards the close of a quiet autumn day in 1778.

Aunt Polly was busily engaged before the great kitchen hearth preparing the evening



meal. The children were playing about the door waiting for the return of their father and the men from the meadows. A wild shriek and the alarming cries of the children brought the mother to the door, only in time to see two of the children scalped by a party of savage Indians; the third, a little brown-eyed girl of four years, taken roughly into custody, and to be herself bound hand and foot and along with the little girl put under guard while the house was plundered. Meanwhile John Kernan returned from the field, and almost before he could comprehend the situation, was scalped before the eyes of his wife and child, and the bloody trophy flaunted in their faces.

As soon as night set in, the Indians turned their backs on the ghastly victims of their vengeance and the home they had desolated and began a hurried and stealthy retreat, carrying the little girl but compelling the mother to follow on foot.

The story of Polly Kernan's life among the Indians was never known in detail. Years after her capture, when she returned saddened and changed, the subject was too painful for discussion in her presence.

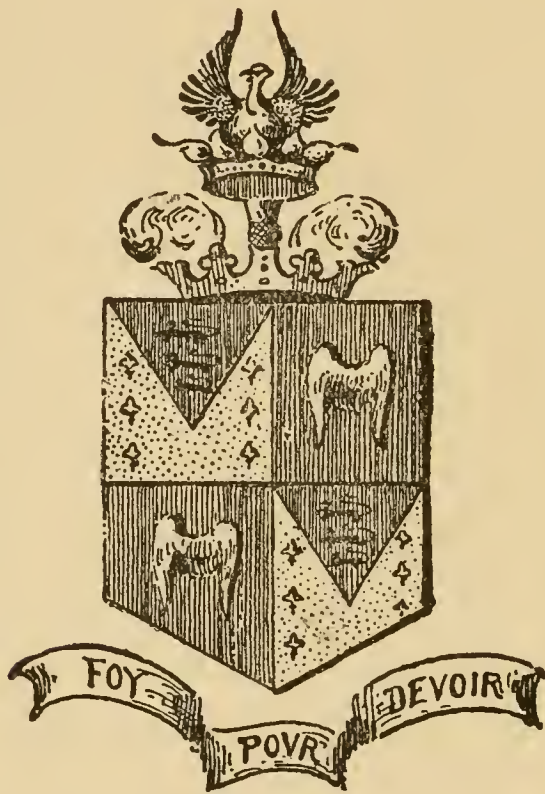
This much became known: She was early separated from her only surviving child and for years was jealously watched by her captors, who took her to Western Pennsylvania—the far West of that day. She finally succeeded in evading the vigilance of her captors sufficiently to confide her story to an English trader, with whose connivance she succeeded in returning to the East. Long and weary marching by night, and hiding during the day, with many an escape that seemed almost miraculous, placed her beyond their power. One day she lay concealed under a brush heap in a clearing, and her benefactor barely succeeded in preventing the Indians from firing the brush heap in pursuing their work. She eventually found an asylum

with a relative near her former home in Basking Ridge and immediately began to make efforts to trace the wanderings of her daughter, the little brown-eyed Mary.

After years of patient following and of one clew after another, she was identified as the wife of a chief in the far West. She had lost her original identity and had no interests further than those of her children, her husband, and the tribe with which she had become identified. The trader who found her learned that she had a vague recollection of a mother, and an early home, but she refused to return to either.

“The old order changeth, yielding place to the new,” and the quiet locust grove with its succession of old-time flowers and its pathetic tradition is to be no exception. Already the shriek of the locomotive crashing through the woods to the south disturbs the repose of the summer days, and bustle of the new life of progress is crowding out this significant inci-

dent of pioneer days. The passing of the Indian would seem to indicate that his mission is accomplished. What that mission was in the development of the human race is a subject beyond the limit of the Somerset Hills.



## VII.

## LAMINGTON.

THE Presbyterian church was organized about 1740, and the first regular pastor was installed in 1742. This was the Rev. James McCrea, who organized the parish and erected a manse on the banks of the Peapack River, where his children were born. Two of his sons were killed in the battle of Saratoga, one was killed in a skirmish, and one was a surgeon in the army. But the chief interest in the family centres about his daughter Jane, whose life furnishes a romance of the Revolution, and the circumstances of whose tragic death were cited with thrilling effect when the great Burke arraigned the ministry before the House of Commons.

Jane McCrea, second daughter of Rev. James McCrea, and Mary Graham his wife, was born

in the Lamington manse in 1753. There was an excellent school in the village, from which there is a record of at least one student who entered the University of Edinburgh. Here Jane McCrea received her education along with her future lover, one David Jones.

Her oldest brother John studied law and settled in Albany for the practice of his profession, and in 1773 purchased a farm on the western bank of the Hudson near Fort Miller Falls. After the death of her father in 1769 Jane made her home with her brother at Albany and on the farm. There were other emigrants from Lamington settled in that region, among them one Mrs. Jones, a widow, and her six sons, one of whom, David, was the old schoolmate of Jane McCrea at Lamington.

Before the marriage was consummated, however, the war of the Revolution broke out, and the home of the McCreas and Joneses became the theatre of the series of events connected

with Burgoyne's invasion of Northern New York. The McCreas were staunch patriots; the Joneses were Tories. So the course of true love between the Tory Jones and his fiancée ran the traditional course. But affections are deeper than political prejudices, and secret communications with Lieutenant Jones of his Majesty's forces in America led to the plan of a clandestine marriage. He was to meet her at the house of a mutual friend, a Mrs. McNeil, at Fort Edward, on July 27th (1777), but the close proximity of the American pickets made that impracticable. So he sent her word that a band of friendly Indians would meet her as near the house as safety would permit and conduct her to the British camp where the marriage was to take place. On the morning of the 27th, while Jane was watching for the appearance of her escort, the American troops were driven forward by a band of Indians under one DeLoup. Six of the band left the

pursuit and entered Mrs. McNeil's house, took Mrs. McNeil and Jane prisoners and hurried them off to a neighbouring hill. Here they were met by another band of Indians, those sent by Jones to escort his bride to his camp. They demanded the release of Jane; her captors refused and in a quarrel that ensued, DeLoup in a fit of rage turned to Jane McCrea, brutally struck her with a tomahawk, "scalped her and tossed her flowing hair aloft with a fiendish yell of triumph." The next day her body was found covered with leaves and brush; it was conveyed to the fort, near which it was buried the following day by her grief-stricken brother. Her lover, Lieutenant Jones, saw the bloody scalp in the British camp and learned the details of the horror from DeLoup, the leader of the band he had sent to escort her.

This is not an isolated instance of Indian brutality, but it attained almost international



importance as an illustration of the infamous policy of the British Government in the Indian alliances. The immediate responsibility of the deed, as a question of military ethics, has never been definitely settled, but the willingness on the part of the British Government to employ savages against the colonists cost them the loyalty of more than one vacillating colonist.

In his formal protest to General Burgoyne, General Gates said: "Miss McCrea, a young lady, lovely to the sight, of virtuous character and amiable disposition, engaged to an officer of your army, was taken out of a house near Fort Edward, carried into the woods, and there scalped and mangled in a most shocking manner. The miserable fate of Miss McCrea was particularly aggravated by her being dressed to receive her promised husband, but met her murderers employed by you."

During the Revolution, when the British

were in possession of New York, the patriotic Rev. Dr. Rodgers, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, found it necessary to leave the city, and for a year he ministered to the congregation at Lamington. In 1778, in consequence of the British occupation of Philadelphia, the Synod of Philadelphia met in the Lamington Church.

This was before the days of the temperance agitation. There is a story of a clergyman who was once sent to supply Lamington Church, who preached with particular force and eloquence. After the morning service, as was the custom, the elders gathered about him and paid his fee in crisp half-pound notes. "Gentlemen," he said, "will you take a walk with me?" Whereupon they all crossed the street to the tavern and took a drink at the parson's expense. He handed the barkeeper one of the half-pound notes, saying: "Take your pay out of that, I just received it for

preaching the sermon." Then they all returned to the church for the afternoon meeting. A full century before this date, the Virginia House of Burgesses had deemed it necessary to enact a warning to the clergymen in the following terms: "Mynisters shall not give themselves to excesse in drinking and ryott." Whether for better or for worse is another question. But standards and judgments have both changed by process of the silent years.

## VIII.

**MENDHAM, PEAPACK, Etc.**

THE village of Mendham is just beyond the limits of the Somerset Hills. But inasmuch as it was within the original limits of the county—Hunterdon and Morris counties being both included in the original limits of Somerset—it may fairly claim a passing note here. In 1713 a large tract of land, including the present site of the village, was purchased from the original lords proprietors by one James Wills. It was at first called Rocksiticus, by which name it was known until shortly before the Revolution, when it received the name by which it is known at present.

The early church relations of the Mendham pioneers were either with the congregation of Basking Ridge, or with that at Morristown, first known as West Hanover. But by 1738

there was a separate Presbyterian congregation in existence here, and in 1745 the first church edifice was erected on the site of the present building. As a result of the British occupation of New York after the disastrous battle of Long Island, in 1776, the Presbyterian Synod of New York met in the Mendham Church. During the winter of 1780-81, when a division of the Continental army was encamped on the hills extending from Morristown to Washington Corner, near Mendham, the church was cleared of its pews and turned into a hospital. Some unnamed and unmarked graves in the churchyard bear mute testimony to the ravages of disease in the army hospital during that severe winter. Still they could hardly wish "couch more magnificent." For like the martyrs of many another struggle for a great principle:

"On Fame's eternal camping-ground  
Their silent tents are spread;

And Glory guards in solemn round  
The bivouac of the Dead."

The Presbyterian congregation in Mendham claims to have given some thirty ministers to the Church in the course of its existence. Among these may be counted the late distinguished bishop of Western New York, the Rt. Rev. Arthur Cleveland Coxe. He was born in Mendham, the son of the then pastor of the Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Dr. Cox, distinguished alike as theologian, preacher, and wit. Of his family of ten children, five became members of the Episcopal Church. "How many children have you, Dr. Cox?" he was once asked. "Ten" was the prompt reply; "Five of them are wise and five of them are Episcopalians."

The village of Peapack records the name and location of an Indian trail that crossed Northern New Jersey east and west. This trail was known as the Peapack Path and

was a well-known landmark. In 1701 a large tract of land was conveyed by the proprietors to George Willocks and John Johnston. The tract was known as the Peapack patent and embraced the site of the present village, which was settled soon after this time. George Willocks, along with John Harrison, who purchased the Basking Ridge tract in 1717, were among the founders of the first Church of England parish in East Jersey, St. Peter's, Perth Amboy (1698). The fact is recorded on a tablet on the walls of the present church edifice erected by the parish in 1825.

The settlement of Liberty Corner may be dated about 1730, the date when the Annin family located here, and the place was long known as Annin's Corner. It was to all intents and purposes a part of Basking Ridge, having no church of its own for a hundred years. The first regular pastor of the Basking Ridge Church, the Rev. John Cross, lived

here in the house still standing, and here he entertained the Rev. George Whitefield during his memorable visit in 1740. There is a tradition in the family that Lafayette spent the night in this house in the spring of 1780. He was en route for Morristown on his return from his memorable mission to the French Court in the interest of the States. He is also said to have recalled the fact to a member of the Cross family when he revisited this country in 1825.

Several houses still standing antedate the Revolution, notably the old stone house (the Annin homestead) and the Cross house already mentioned, both to the north of the village.

The earliest homesteads were established on Long Hill and Millington about 1730. The highroad over Long Hill was the main thoroughfare to Newark by way of New Providence (Turkey) and Springfield.



IX.

**EPILOGUE.**

**N**OTHING has been said in the foregoing pages of the natural beauties of the Somerset hills. These speak for themselves. Historic associations may fade, yes, vanish ; but the beauties of nature are enduring and self-evident.

The earliest civilizations developed in the lowland plains of the great river valleys. This is in accordance with the natural law of development along the lines of the least resistance. The hill country marks the frontier in the evolution of all the earlier civilizations. The occupation of the hills is a second period in the march of progress, the extension of empire, the beginning of conquest. Of the three great monarchies that successively occupied the basin of the Euphrates and Tigris

rivers—Chaldæa, Assyria, and Babylonia—each in turn stretched farther inland embracing more and more of the hill country. The settlement and development of colonies illustrate the same principle. In the settlement of the colony of New Jersey, the lower courses of her two chief rivers, the Raritan and Passaic, were first occupied. For a generation or longer, the hill country was a natural frontier—the abode of elves and fairies, it may be no less than of witches; a land full of mystery and beauty—not without its dangers and therefore alluring.

But more than for anything else, the hills have stood for a region of refuge and repose. We shall not have to search far in Holy Writ for illustrations of this. For the great Hebrew poet, “the little hills rejoice on every side,” and in his despair he exclaims, “I will lift mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help!” Shakespeare retires the disheart-

ened Henry VI. to a hill, there to await the result of the battle of Towton. Here the tempest-tossed king reflects:

“Methinks it were a happy life  
To be no better than a homely swain;  
To sit upon a hill as I do now. . . .  
Ah, what a life were this! how sweet!  
how lovely!  
Gives not the hawthorn brush a sweeter  
shade  
To shepherds looking on their silly sheep,  
Than doth a rich embroidered canopy  
To kings that fear their subjects’  
treachery?”

The hill country is, moreover, the haunt of the babbling brooks, the “little rivers”; and there be those to whom the sound of the babbling, purling waters of a brook is the most delicious note in nature. “There’s no music like a little river’s,” writes Robert Louis Stevenson in “Prince Otto.” “It plays the same tune (and that’s the favourite) over and over again, and yet does not weary of it like men fiddlers.

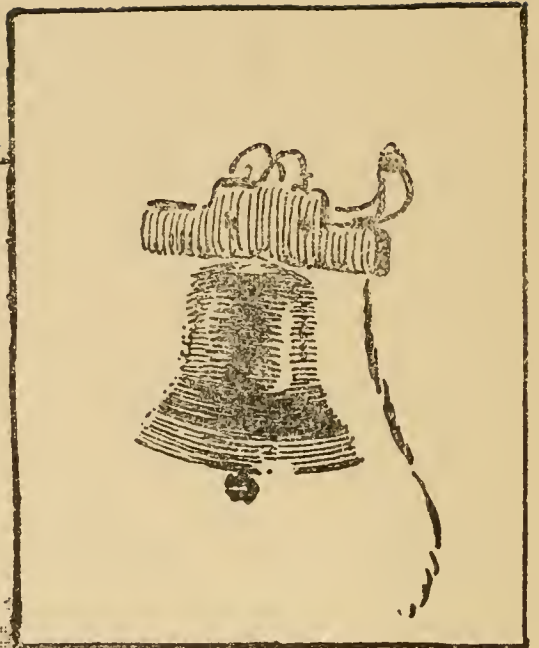
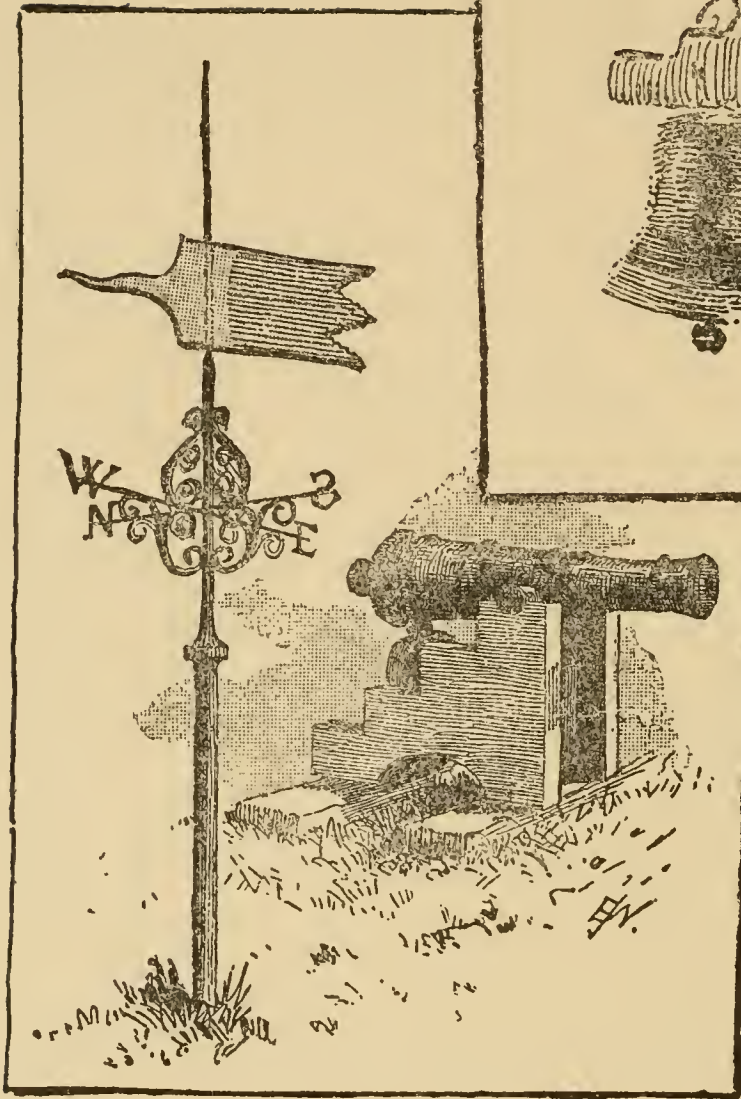
It takes the mind out of doors ; and though we should be grateful for good houses, there is, after all, no house like God's out-of-doors. And lastly, sir, it quiets a man down like saying his prayers."

But the lowlander may not share this partiality for the hill country. Like the Lincolnshire farmer in Alton Locke, he will have "none o' this darned ups and downs o' hills to shake a body's victuals out of his inwards," but he would have "all so vlat as a barn door for vorty mile on end—there's a country to live in!" Ah, well! "*Chacun a son mauvais gout.*"

For the hill dweller will persistently regard the lowlands as a land of exile. He may be out-argued in the matter and have to admit that the coign of vantage is not always in his favour ; but he will insist that the hill country is the only fit dwelling-place. That here, more than elsewhere, lovers of nature,

of "God's out-of-doors," find her responsive to every passing mood. Her sympathies are eternal and infinite; her influences manifold. Some of these are reflected in the following sonnet:

"O Earth! thou hast not any wind that blows  
Which is not music; every weed of thine  
Pressed rightly flows in aromatic wine;  
And every humble hedgerow flower that  
grows,  
And every little brown bird that doth sing,  
Hath something greater than itself, and bears  
A living word to every living thing,  
Albeit it holds the message unawares.  
All shapes and sounds have something which  
is not  
Of them; a Spirit broods amid the grass;  
Vague outlines of the Everlasting Thought  
Lie in the melting shadows as they pass;  
The touch of an Eternal Presence thrills  
The fringes of the sunsets and the hills."



X.

NOTES ON ILLUSTRATIONS.

FRONTISPIECE.

Book Plate of Seymour, Duke of Somerset, from a copy of the original, engraved on steel by B. Clowes.

“THE DUST OF A VANISHED RACE.” Facing Page 20. Specimen arrow heads found in Somerset County. Drawings the exact size of the originals in a private collection.

GENERAL KNOX'S HEADQUARTERS, BEDMINSTER.

Facing Page 54. The house still stands as originally built. Illustration is from a drawing made in 1900.

SIR FRANCIS BERNARD. Facing Page 62. From the original painting by Copley in the hall of Christ Church, Oxford; by per-

mission of the Dean and Canons of Christ Church, and through the kindness of Messrs. Macmillan & Co., of London. *Author's note in The American Revolution, by John Fiske. Illustrated Edition. Published by Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., by whose courtesy the portrait is here presented.*

FACSIMILE OF GENERAL LEE'S WRITING. Page 70.

This letter, written at Basking Ridge just before his capture, was an important link in the chain of evidence that established Lee's treason.

MRS. WHITE'S TAVERN. Facing Page 76. The frame of the original tavern is incorporated in the house occupying the original site. The drawing was made from a woodcut, *circa* 1850, before the house was remodelled.

CARICATURE OF GENERAL LEE. Facing Page 78.



From the engraving in Girdlestone's *Facts tending to prove that General Lee was the Author of Junius*, London, 1813. The drawing was made by Barham Rushbrooke, on Lee's return from Poland in 1766, in the uniform of an aide to King Stanislaus, and shows the inevitable dog. According to Dr. Girdlestone, "though designed as a caricature, it was allowed by all who knew General Lee to be the only successful delineation, either of his countenance or person." The absurd notion that Lee might have been the author of *The Letters of Junius* had its origin in a particularly audacious lie which he told to Thomas Rodney, of Delaware, in 1773. *Author's note in The American Revolution, by John Fiske. Illustrated Edition. Published by Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., by whose courtesy this portrait is here presented.*

EAST FRONT OF STIRLING MANOR HOUSE. Facing Page 86. After a drawing made about 1850, at which time this front still remained as it was built by Lord Stirling. The cedar tree shown in the foreground is the one under which, according to one tradition, Lady Kitty Alexander was married to Colonel Duer in July, 1779. According to another tradition, she stepped out on the lawn in her bridal gown, after the ceremony, and under this tree received the congratulations of a company of soldiers who assembled to honour their Major-General's daughter.

WILLIAM ALEXANDER, FIRST LORD STIRLING. Facing Page 92. From a copy of the exceedingly rare engraving by William Marshall. "In 1637 Lord Stirling published his collected works (with the exception of his 'Aurora') under the title of 'Rec-

reations with the Muses.' Marshall engraved his portrait, which, it is stated, the noble Lord placed only in the copies presented to his friends. It is a fact that it is found in only a very few copies and has always been considered rare."

MAJOR-GENERAL THE EARL OF STIRLING. Facing Page 101. From the portrait engraved for *The Life of William Alexander, Earl of Stirling*. New Jersey Historical Society, 1847.

RELICS OF THE BUILDINGS. Page 128. Weather Vane and Bell owned by The Washington Association of New Jersey and preserved in Washington's Headquarters at Morristown.

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