

The Historic County

Newsletter of The Passaic County Historical Society

March - 2008 Volume 9 - Issue 1

LAMBERT CASTLE, 3 VALLEY ROAD, PATERSON, NJ 07503

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Women's History Month

Every March, the country celebrates the accomplishments of women throughout American history. We join in the celebration as we recognize and appreciate the diverse and unique contributions of the following women who have had an association with Passaic County.

Augusto, Maria Crapelli - 1901-1982 - resided in Paterson. Maria was a journalist, founder of *La Voce Italiana - The Italian Voice* newspaper, community leader, and first woman mayoral candidate in Paterson.

Botto, Maria - 1870-1915 - resided in Haledon. Maria, an Italian immigrant silk worker, opened her home as a meeting place for striking workers during the Paterson silk strike of 1913.

Douglas, Minnie Radcliffe - 1877-1935 - born in Paterson. In the 1880s Minnie was a child roller-skating star performing throughout the US. Later she was a dancer, choreographer, and businesswoman.

Egg, Eleanor Marie - 1909-1999) - resided in Paterson. Eleanor was a pioneer woman athlete. In the 1920s, she was a well-known national track and field champion.

Fish, Marie Poland - 1902-1989 - born in Paterson. Dr. Fish was an oceanographer and marine biologist whose research in underwater sound detection helped the United States Navy to distinguish schools of fish from submarines. She was awarded the Navy's Distinguished Public Service Award, its highest decoration for a civilian.

Hobart, Jenny Tuttle - 1849-1941 - born in Paterson. Jenny was a philanthropist, community leader, prominent antisuffragist and Second Lady of the Nation from 1897-1899 when her husband, Garret Augustus Hobart was Vice President.

Silverman, Hannah - 1896-1950 - resided in Paterson. At age 17, Hannah was a labor activist during the Paterson Silk Strike. In 1913, she led the strikers' massive New York parade to Madison Square Garden.

Sullivan, Kathryn - 1951 - born in Paterson. Dr. Sullivan is an Astronaut. She was the first American woman to walk in space. Dr. Sullivan is a veteran of three shuttle missions and a 2004 inductee to the Astronaut Hall of Fame.

Terhune, Mary Virginia - 1830-1922 - resided in Wayne. Mary's pen name "Marian Harland" was a household word during her lifetime. She was a celebrated writer on domestic economy. Her son was the author Albert Payson Terhune.

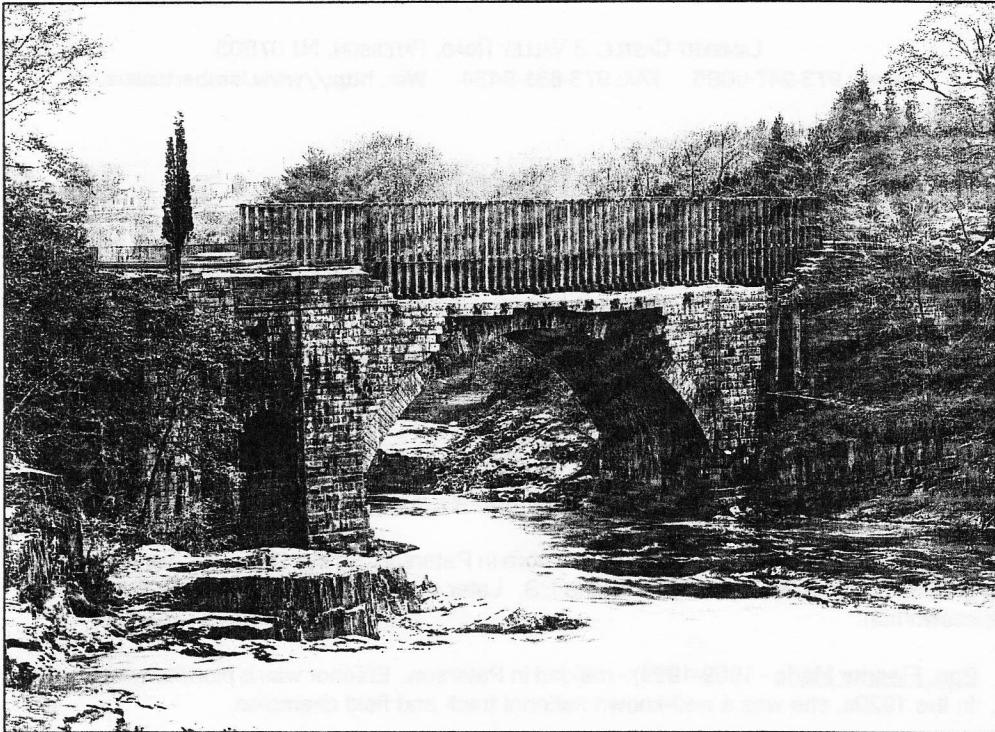
Woolley, Catherine - 1905-2005 - resided in Passaic. Catherine wrote 87 children's books including the "Ginnie and Geneva" series. She wrote books using her own name and also under the pen name "Jane Thayer," her grandmother's name.

THEN AND NOW

by Phil Jaeger

Our "Then and Now" section will focus on the Morris Canal aqueduct over the Passaic River between Totowa and Little Falls. The aqueduct, a huge stone arch of Little Falls brownstone, was completed in 1829. The brownstone came from the Evert H. Van Ness quarry in Little Falls that was slightly downstream from the eventual site of the aqueduct. Ira Dodd and Caleb Baldwin, both of Bloomfield, were the builders of the 80-foot long structure that reached 60 feet above the river.

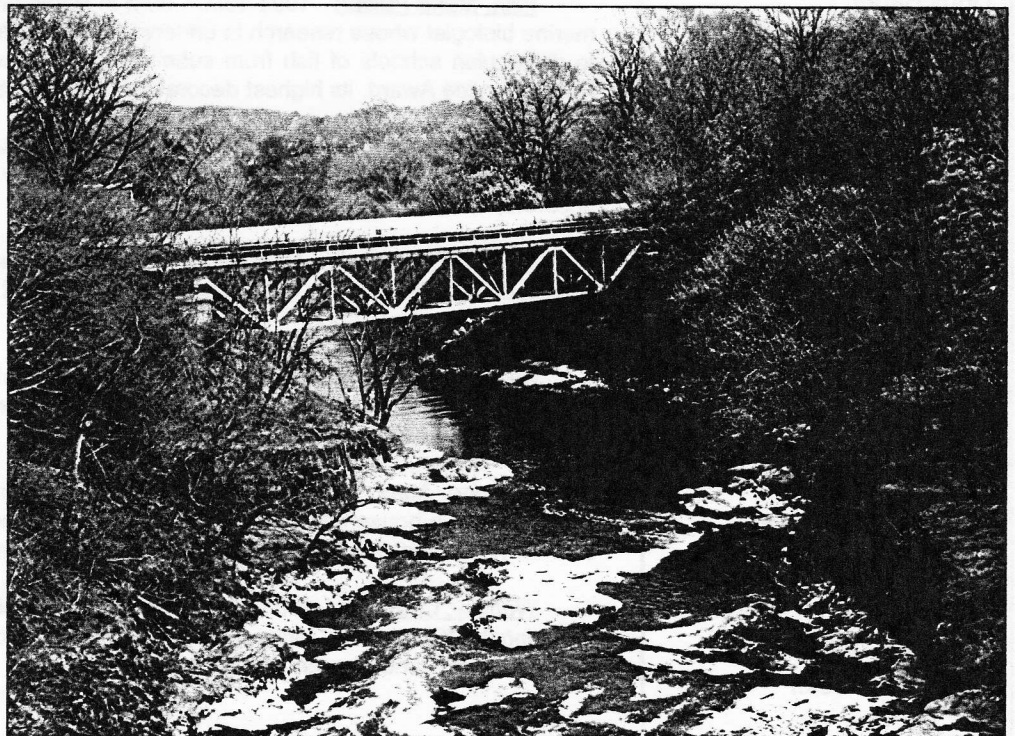
The "then" view of the aqueduct is from the late 1880s and looks downstream with Totowa at the left of the photograph and Little Falls at the right. By the 1880s many of the brownstone blocks comprising both the top and sides of the aqueduct had fallen off. The semicircular openings on the left and right side of the arch were created to alleviate pressure on the arch if the Passaic rose to that level.



During the construction of the aqueduct a brownstone tablet was embedded in each side of the aqueduct above the center of the arch. On one tablet was inscribed the names of the Morris Canal Company officials in 1829 as well as those involved in the aqueduct's construction. The other tablet contained the engineering specifications for the arch. Both tablets are now displayed in Memorial Park in Little Falls.

Dismantling of the Morris Canal began in 1924. The following year an attempt was made to destroy the Little Falls aqueduct using dynamite. It was still standing after the first blast. A second blast finally destroyed it. Alvin Harlow, a canal historian, called its destruction "an act of vandalism which moved every lover of beauty and history to indignation."

In 1927 Little Falls purchased the canal property throughout the township and later sold the property to the North Jersey District Water Supply Commission for their water conduit from the Wanaque Reservoir. As shown in the "now" view, twin pipelines of the commission now cross the Passaic River where the Morris Canal aqueduct reigned majestically for almost one hundred years.



ROBERT ERSKINE: MAPMAKER AND PATRIOT

by Robert Leslie Cohen

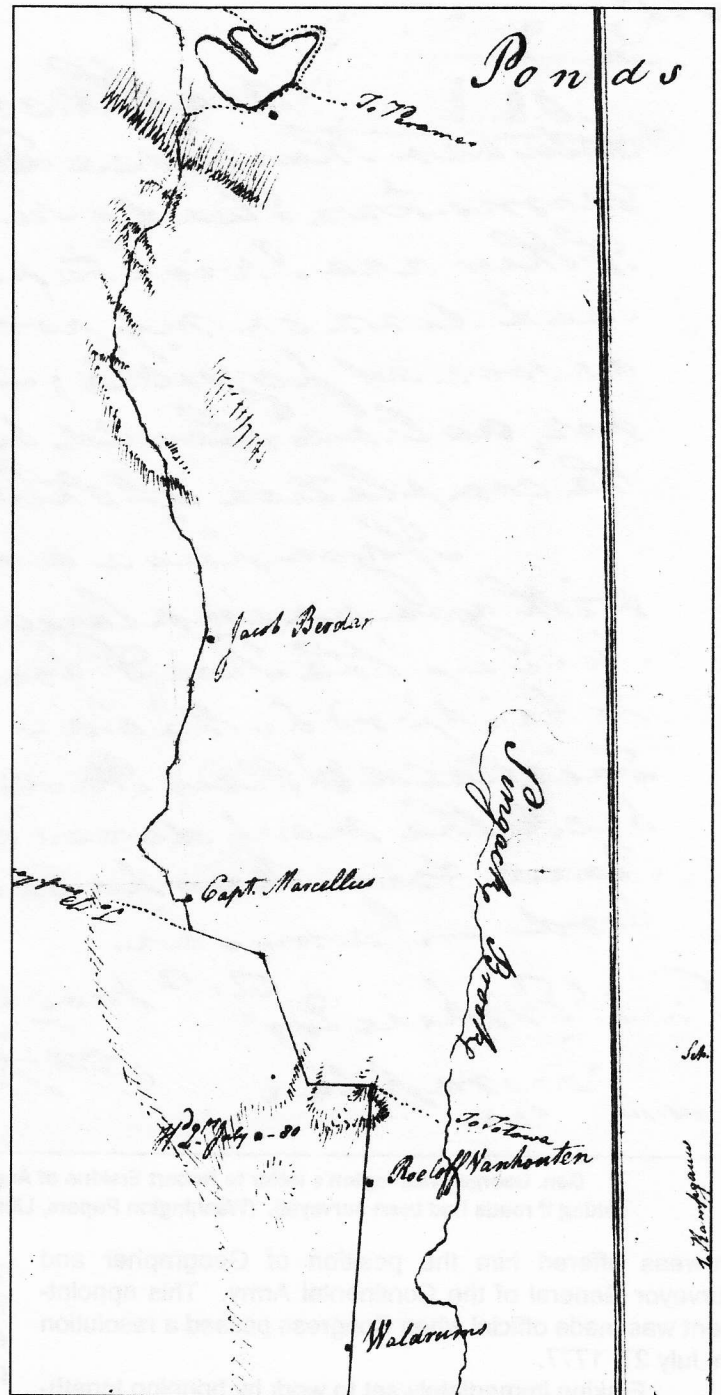
"I really think if Gentlemen of known Character and probity could be employed in making Maps (from actual survey) of Roads, Rivers, Bridges and Fords over them, the mountains and passes through them, it would be of the Greatest Advantage."

From a 1777 letter to Congress by General Washington.

There had been maps of the area as far back as 1527. The first one depicting the New York-New Jersey area was taken from the exploration of Giovanni da Verrazano when he glimpsed Manhattan from its harbor in 1524. The work known as the Gastaldi Map was published by Ramusio in Venice in 1556. As Verrazano was in the employ of Francis I of France he named the area around present day Manhattan, La Nova Francia. Manhattan is depicted as a peninsula as a storm forced Verrazano away from the area so he wasn't able to determine that Manhattan was an island. But Hudson on the *Half Moon* in 1609 and his charts gave a better view of the area and Block's Map of the Northeast finally depicted Manhattan as an island in 1614 and as time passed maps improved in quality depicting the New York-New Jersey area as well as the rest of the northeast. By the time of the Revolutionary War New York-New Jersey and its environs was very well depicted and quite accurately. But these maps were largely the product of British mapmakers and were used by the British armed forces in its campaign in the area. Thus the need for accurate maps for the American forces in order to campaign effectively.

Here is where we turn to Robert Erskine. He was born in Dumfermline Scotland in 1735. The young man was raised and educated in Scotland. He attended the University of Edinburgh and was trained in engineering. After some business dealings in England he emigrated to the Ringwood, N.J. area in 1771 and replaced Peter Hasenclever the talented but controversial manager of the American Iron Company headquartered in London England. In England Erskine also had experience as a surveyor and hydraulic engineer.

While trying to put affairs of the Iron works in order in 1775 Erskine saw the crisis developing between the colonies and England. With the advent of hostilities in order to protect the iron company from any hostile source Erskine formed a militia company. Though this company while ostensibly neutral even wearing green coats (which were worn by loyalists), he personally felt the American side was just and sided with them. Using his engineering talents he developed the marine "Chevaux de Frise" a tetrahedron composed of sharpened oak logs that was placed in several waterways in the States in order to disable and stop British ships from advancing. Benjamin Franklin who knew Erskine in England having signed a petition to get him into



Portion of Erskine's map number 108, "From Col. Deys to the Ponds and from Wyckoff to Bell Grove."
(Collections of the New York Historical Society.)

the Royal Academy, helped place this instrument into the Delaware River.

One of the most pressing needs of the Continental Army as the war progressed was for skilled mapmakers. In July of 1777 at Pompton on a stormy day General Washington who had heard of Erskine's engineering

L.R.

West-point Aug 7 - 79

111. Are the cross roads
between the Upper ~~Ponds~~ and
Morristown Roads surveyed?
If they are I wish to have them
said done on my pocket map
as soon as possible; - if they are
not, no time should be lost in
the completion of this ^{necessary} work. -

Have you any ^{officers}
with you unemployed, he may
survey the Road from the Pond
to Hartford by the way of Norwalk
Fairfield & New Haven. - & open
back the most direct Public
Road from New Haven to Bed
ford - I am Sir

Robt. Erskine Esq. Major Bedford Ser.
Geographer. G. Washington

114-111 10-92

Gen. George Washington's letter to Robert Erskine of August 7, 1799, asking if roads had been surveyed. (Washington Papers, Library of Congress.)

proress offered him the position of Geographer and Surveyor General of the Continental Army. This appointment was made official when Congress passed a resolution on July 27, 1777.

Erskine immediately set to work by bringing together a staff of assistants. He wanted "young gentlemen of Mathematical genius who have a taste for drawing." His department set to work making operational maps of the region from the Hudson Highlands to Philadelphia and elsewhere. His unit especially emphasized the northern part of New Jersey from Jersey City westward including Passaic County. Maps were also prepared showing parts of New York, Connecticut Pennsylvania and Maryland. These documents showed "surveyed and unsurveyed roads, foot-

paths, heights even taverns, and other landmarks." Washington used these maps in planning his troop movements.

While engaged as Washington's mapmaker Ringwood was headquarters for the Army's mapmaking agency though Erskine often traveled with the Army.

The New York Historical Society has many of Erskine's maps on file showing areas of New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland. Some of the titles in the collection are interesting and show that the Erskine mapmakers were concerned with accuracy. Examples of some maps are, "Contraction in the Jerseys 1 mile an Inch, From Col. Dey's to the Ponds & from Wyckoff to Bell Grove and From Elizabeth Town Point to Totowa (2 miles to an Inch)."

Erskine's staff was composed of approximately twenty surveyors in addition to chain bearers and other assistants. Maps were first sketched on a plane table. They were then contracted in size in a reduced scale. As this was the 18th Century the maps were given to trained draftsmen who made final copies that included supplemental information from field notes. Copies were made by hand and then distributed to high ranking officers as it was important to keep these documents out of enemy hands.

The surveyor's work was hazardous as they faced danger from inclement weather, dangerous animals and hostile enemy action. Despite these obstacles the maps were surprisingly accurate.

In September 1780 while Erskine was making surveys in the Hudson Highlands he contracted a severe cold which developed into pneumonia. He died on October 2, 1780, the same day Major Andre was hanged in Tappan, New York. General Washington attended Erskine's Funeral in Ringwood.

After Erskine's death his assistant Simeon DeWitt was appointed Surveyor General. He had been the only graduate in the class of 1776 at Queens College now Rutgers University.



From The County Historian

E. A. Smyk

REMEMBERING SAMUEL WILDER RICE, PASSAIC'S FIRST SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Samuel Wilder Rice is not exactly a name that leaps off the pages of Passaic's late 19th and early 20th century histories, but decades ago, and well beyond the memory of anyone alive today, Rice served as the city of Passaic's first superintendent of schools. He was a competent, accomplished schoolmaster, who in the tradition of his time possessed a sound knowledge of Latin, English grammar, and the classics. In his own unique way, Rice was the type of educator who had a natural talent for inspiring pupils to learn. As a consequence, he was a popular figure both in and out of the classroom. Popularity can frequently be a double-edged sword, and it was one of the unspoken factors which no doubt contributed to Rice's exit from the educational system in the summer of 1881.

"Professor Rice," as he was affectionately called, probably never thought he would fall victim to the petty jealousies and nonsensical intrigues which plague the human condition to this day. Yet here he was, a hard-working individual, born in Massachusetts, as steadfast as his Yankee forbearers, suddenly thrust into a messy situation that pitted him against certain members of Passaic's educational administration. It was a matter that did not have a happy ending.

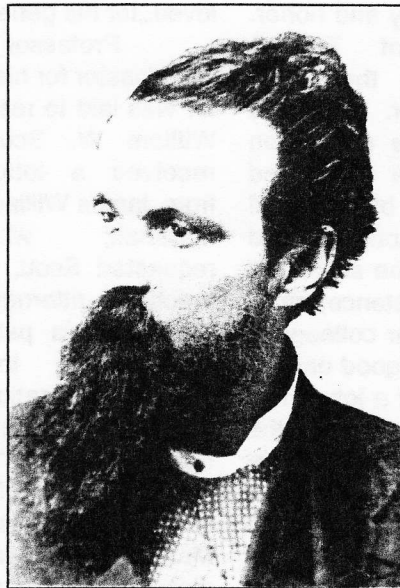
Exactly how Rice found himself in this predicament is not chronicled in William W. Scott's three-volume *History of Passaic and Its Environs*. Minutes of the Board of Education from 1881, which might have shed additional light on Rice's dismissal, cannot be located and are now presumed lost. Some of the facts, however, can be pieced together from news accounts preserved by Scott himself in the historian's voluminous scrapbooks. Scott, who relished a good story and invented some himself, was officially recognized in 1928 for his literary contributions, the year he became Passaic's first official historian. While preparing his multi-volume history, Scott omitted the details of Professor Rice's exit, possibly because he disliked mentioning gritty political incidents in his otherwise genteel account of the city's development.

Scott viewed history in a linear, progressive march

toward material progress, and in this context, he recalled Rice, his former teacher, with almost reverential respect. On June 28, 1877, the then 22-year-old Scott had an opportunity to display his flair for writing, as well as his positive feelings for Rice. In the comfort of Rice's home, Scott delivered an address on behalf of the graduates of School Number 1, the building where Rice once presided as principal. The original manuscript has survived. Scott wrote in his highly legible penmanship that Rice had a "pleasant face and cheery voice," telling his listeners "we cannot forget his

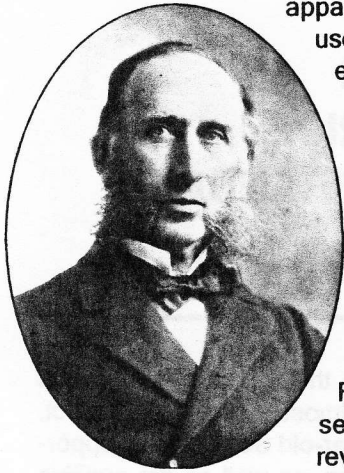
kindness toward us. No distinction was made nor partially shown to one scholar in preference to another. Kind as he was there was strictness in his manner. We were all required to know the lessons and if we did not we were obliged to remain after school and learn them."

Years later, Scott played a significant role in planning the reunion of Passaic High School's alumni classes of 1873-1881, and on June 14, 1912, the historian delivered a lengthy address tracing the history of the schools. It gave him the opportunity to review Rice's outstanding contributions. The alumni, as a gesture of respect to Rice's memory, commissioned a life size oil portrait of their beloved superintendent. At the dedication, Scott characterized Rice as a "born educator who started work for \$1,500 a year." Scott's account filled almost three-and-a-half columns of the *Passaic Daily News*. He mentioned that Rice "terminated his services here about the first day of September, 1881," and said nothing more about the circumstances surrounding the educator's



Samuel Wilder Rice served as the first principal and superintendent of Passaic's schools. Energetic and popular, Rice found himself out of a job in 1881 because he alienated a few of the Board of Education's trustees. (Photo: Scott collection, Passaic County Historical Society)

departure. Apparently, Samuel Wilder Rice was forced out of the school system he helped build because certain school board trustees disliked him. In June 1881 a committee of the board released their recommendations on who would be reappointed for the coming school year. Fifteen teachers would return, but three would not; among them was Rice. The community was shocked and outraged. Rice himself could not understand the animosity directed against him. Trustee Joseph W. Hawkins disclosed what in 1881 was



Rev. Dr. Philo French Leavens, prominent clergyman and school official, was one of the men who disliked Rice and launched a "savage attack" on him. In writing about Rice nearly twenty years later, Leavens omitted mention of the affair. (Photo: William W. Scott's *History of Passaic and Its Environs*)

and "denied the wicked things" said about him, but admitted "that at times he was so bad to use a little tobacco" and claimed "he had never taken a chew before the scholars." He refuted Leaven's statement about incompetence, arguing he "was not given the assistance his other colleagues enjoyed." Rice characterized his school as "a good one."

Rice nonetheless found himself out of a job. "The whole thing," said one of the local papers, "seems to be the result of personal animosity on the part of Dominie Leavens." The minister never lost his crusading zeal for unmasking moral lapses, whether it be gambling at the Clifton racetrack, or anything he perceived as injurious to the community. In November 1900, he gave a Thanksgiving sermon and the press summarized his viewpoint: "It is not necessary to be continually nagging public men or harping minor faults. But when things take manifestly a wrong turn, it ought to be understood that the pulpit will unmask its batteries and fire hot shell."

Almost two decades after Leavens made his "savage attack" on Rice, he wrote approvingly of his now dead interlocutor in the lavishly illustrated *News' History of Passaic*. He made no mention of the affair, and in a disingenuous comment, noted there "...were changes in the corps of instructors. The connection of Mr. Rice with the schools terminated. He had served eleven years and accomplished excellent work for its time." The rest of Leavens' remarks about Rice rang true: "His death shortly afterward called forth expressions of deepest affection. His memory is fondly and justly cherished by hundreds who, first and last, were

apparently a grave offense: Rice used tobacco. Hawkins fulminated in the press that "He would no sooner vote for a teacher who used tobacco than one addicted to the use of liquor."

Another individual exercised over Rice was Passaic's reigning arbiter of morality, the Rev. Philo French Leavens, Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church.

From 1879 to 1881, Leavens served on the board which reviewed teachers' qualifications, and because of his community standing, the clergyman commanded an immense influence in Passaic. He alleged the educator was a "complete failure," and asserted Rice had been involved in a conspiracy to "oust" him from his position of dignity and honor. Upon learning of Trustee Hawkins' charges, the press reported Rev. Dr. Leavens launched a "savage attack" on Rice. The educator responded

his pupils."

After his dismissal, Rice had to obtain a new appointment, and his search ended when he was hired by a school on Staten Island. He had to be up and about by 4 a.m. to catch his train, and it was later said "the air on the Island seemed not to agree with him." Perhaps it is more accurate to say the aftereffects of his discharge did not agree with him. Leaving the Passaic schools must have deeply wounded Rice psychologically, although outwardly he maintained a cheerful attitude. In early January 1882, Rice complained of not feeling well. The diagnosis was a common cold, yet Rice's condition worsened. His brother, a physician, was summoned, but was powerless to arrest what developed into "typhoid pneumonia." Rice died at 7:25 a.m. on January 14th as the bitter winds of winter swirled around his Lincoln Street home. He was 47 years old.

Rice's death and subsequent funeral produced an outpouring of grief in Passaic. The press accounts, in comparison with similar news coverage today, seem excessively saccharine, but the consensus was Rice had been a powerful force in the educational circles of his day. One reporter wrote, "A ripe scholar has fallen," noting Rice "...was loved...for his generous, kindly heart."

Professor Rice's dismissal and death was a financial disaster for his family. A few days after the schoolmas-

ter was laid to rest, William W. Scott received a letter from James William Marshall, who requested Scott, a practicing attorney, to prepare a petition asking the Board of Education to appoint Rice's daughter Maggie "a teacher in the public schools." Marshall had organized a Society to purchase a burial plot for the Rice family, and furnish a grave maker.

In 1912, Samuel Wilder Rice's memory was still vibrant in the minds of his former - and now elderly -

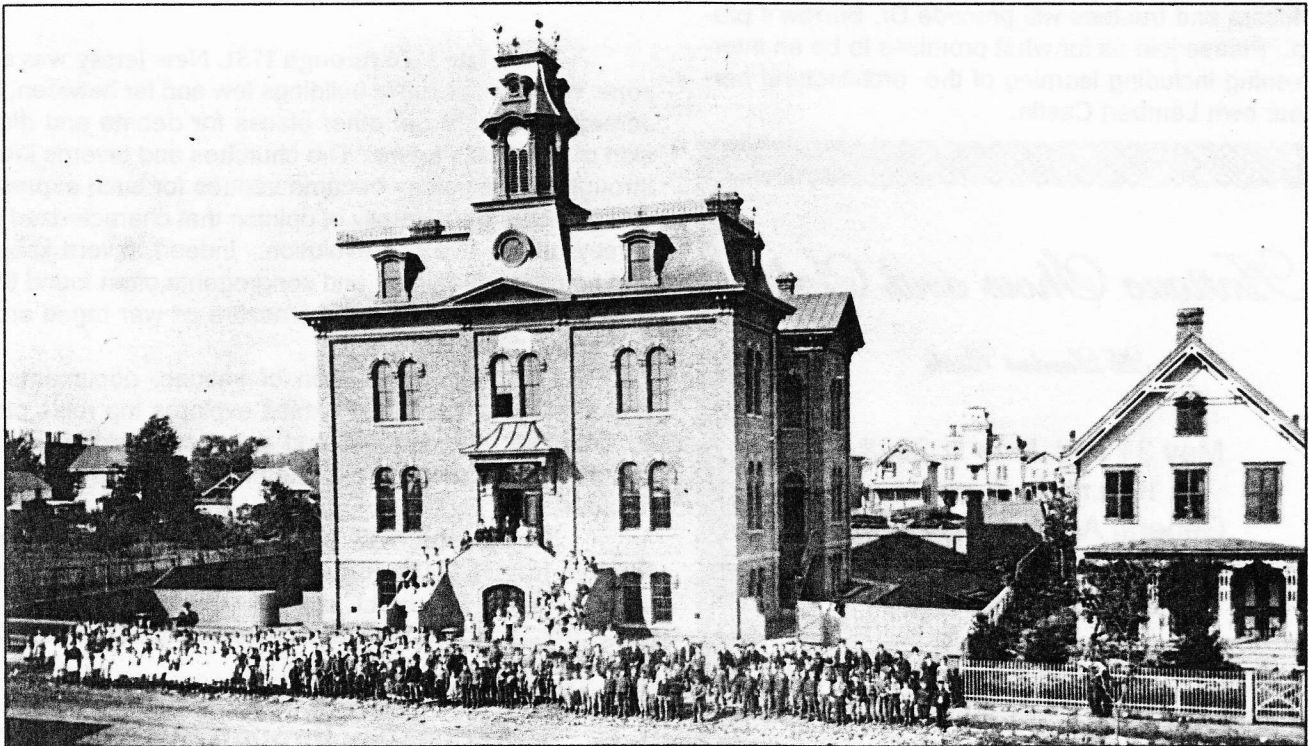
pupils. When Rice's life size oil portrait was presented to the Board of Education, Scott eulogized Rice as a "born educator...ever faithful to his work." It was nonetheless a tragic episode in Passaic's educational history that Rice's tenure had been short-circuited by those who could not rise above their petty prejudices.



William Winfield Scott became Passaic's first official historian in 1928. He was one of Rice's pupils, and always spoke of him in glowing terms. Scott failed to write about the circumstances which led to Rice's ignominious dismissal. (Photo: Graf Archives)

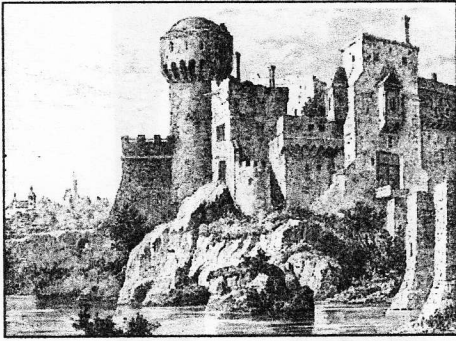


Superintendent Rice (first right, leaning on post) is pictured in the 1870s with teachers and pupils at old School Number 1. When Rice died in 1882, the city went into mourning. (Photo: Graf Archives)



Passaic's School Number 1, in the 1870s. Superintendent Rice is at top of stairs with the teaching staff flanking him, and pupils below. (Photo: Graf Archive)

MAY ANNUAL MEETING



The annual meeting of the Passaic County Historical Society will be on Wednesday, May 7, at 7:00 p.m. at Lambert Castle. Our guest speaker for the evening, archeologist Dr. Ian C. Burrow will

present "Medieval Castles of England and Wales." His slide presentation will illustrate and discuss many of the surviving castles in England and Wales. A chronological survey will highlight changing castle architecture through time as well as what to look for when visiting a castle.

Dr. Burrow is vice president and principal archeologist at Hunter Research. Hunter Research, based in Trenton, provides professional consulting services in historical research, architectural history, archeology and preservation planning.

This program is offered through the Horizons Speakers Bureau of the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, a state partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities.



NEW JERSEY COUNCIL
FOR THE HUMANITIES

A brief business meeting including the annual election of officers and trustees will precede Dr. Burrow's presentation. Please join us for what promises to be an interesting evening including learning of the architectural heritage of our own Lambert Castle.

Antique Show and Sale

At Lambert Castle

May 31 and June 1, 2008
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
General Admission: \$5.00

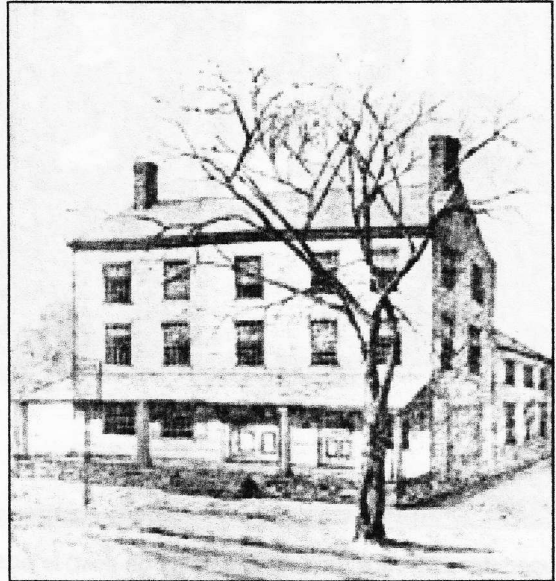
Special Preview Night
May 30, 2008
\$15.00

Call 973-247-0085 ext. 200 for
Preview Night reservations

~New Exhibit~

CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE: *Churches, Taverns and Revolution in New Jersey*

The Passaic County Historical is hosting a traveling exhibit by the New Jersey State Museum entitled *Caught in the Crossfire: Churches, Taverns and Revolution in New Jersey*.



The Arnold Tavern
Morristown, NJ

From late 1776 through 1781, New Jersey was a war zone. With official public buildings few and far between, New Jerseyans sought out other places for debate and discussion of America's future. The churches and taverns located throughout the colony became venues for such expression and reflected the diversity of opinion that characterized New Jersey on the eve of Revolution. Indeed, tavern keepers, and patrons, clergymen and congregants often found themselves literally caught in the crossfire as war raged around and about them.

Featuring a selection of images, documents and reproduction artifacts, the exhibit explores the roles played by churches and taverns and suggests insights into the sacred and secular spirit of the time when our nation was founded.

The exhibit will be on display from March 12 through July 31, 2008, during regular museum hours on the second floor of Lambert Castle.

**Lambert Castle Museum Hours
Wednesday through Sunday
1 to 4 p.m.**

Passaic's Victory Day: How Washington's Retreat Became Stabilized at Passaic

By William W. Scott, City Historian of Passaic

Reprinted from
The Passaic County Historical Society Bulletin
September 1, 1931

I wish I could impress upon the teachers of history and the pupils of our schools, one of the most important events of our Revolutionary War, transpiring right here in Passaic, then known as Acquackanonk Landing, and Acquackanonk Bridge, on the never-to-be-forgotten, November 21, 1776.

It is my wish that what I now write may arrest their attention and lead them to place a value upon that event, equal to any and superior to many events of that seven years' struggle for liberty and independence.

Because not one of the writers of American history was a Jerseyman, explains the scant attention paid to events here. Raum, Gordon, and Winsor simply state that the troops crossed the river and went to Newark, whereas sufficient happened to fill a volume.

The Great Retreat

The Great Retreat of the American Army across New Jersey with Washington in the lead, was incidentally begun August 27, 1776, following their defeat and the loss, in killed and prisoners of over 1,100 men and officers in the Long Island (Brooklyn) battle.

From Brooklyn they retreated to Harlem, where they were again defeated, September 15, following which they retreated to Fort Washington, on Mount Washington, in the vicinity of the present George Washington Bridge at 178th Street. Here they were besieged by the Hessians under General Knipphausen, a member of Sir William Howe's staff, and compelled to surrender, on November 16, not only the fort, but a great part of their artillery, some of their best guns and arms.

With the remnant of his troops, Washington took refuge in Fort Lee, on the Jersey shore of the Hudson River, a flimsy structure, totally inadequate to withstand a siege. To avoid further defeat the fort was abandoned, together with all but two of their cannon (the British reported the taking by them of 47), a thousand barrels of flour, between two and three hundred tents, and all their clothing, and a start was made on the nineteenth for Hackensack, where Washington and his officers arrived the same day, and the troops on the following evening of a cold, rainy day, and took post on the "Green" still in existence, wishing to escape being penned in between the Hackensack and Passaic Rivers, Washington decided to go to Acquackanonk Landing (now Passaic) cross

Acquackanonk Bridge, over the river and thus place that river between him and the British.

The March Begun

In the early afternoon of November 21, 1776, the American army of about 3,500 men, headed by Washington and his officers: Generals Beall, Ewing, and Heard, started from the "Green," led by Gen. Heard, mounted on "Britannia," considered the most attractive horse of the entire army; over five feet tall. The line of march was over Essex Street to the Polevey Road (now Terrace Avenue) over that road to Albert Terhune's lane, running along the north end of his dwelling, now the "Old Homestead," over that lane to Paramus road, now South Main Street, Lodi, over that road to Peck Hoek Road, over which the march was continued for about a thousand feet, and then turned toward the south, over a low marshy plain, which today (1930) is full of sand hills and hollows, remaining after excavating the sand. At the end of the march the road continued over higher ground, as it does today to the River Road, now Main Street, Wallington, which was followed to near Union Place. During the march Washington had time for reflection. Not only had he lost two forts and thousands of men by capture and death, but two full regiments had disbanded and left him, whose place he had endeavored to fill by recruits at Hackensack. But all in vain, as he found Bergen County a hot bed of Toryism, whose men, right before his eyes, were flocking to the King's standards, to his mortification and chagrin. These recruits included the most influential men, not only of Bergen, but adjoining New York county, noted among whom were preachers, doctors, lawyers, merchants, farmers, artisans, etc., whom Washington had expected assistance from (but all of them suffered the loss of all their valuable possessions). Their names and losses are set forth in volumes one and two of the Second Report of the Bureau of Archives, of the Province of Quebec, Ontario, 1904.

In an Enemy's Country

During their march from Hackensack it is recounted, scarcely one friendly door had welcomed them; all because the farmers along the way, in view of all their defeats and losses, believed that the struggle for liberty and independence, was lost, and that the Americans were on their last march, which would end the struggle. During this trying ordeal, Washington realized the manly words he had addressed to his troops that: "Each one for himself, resolving to conquer or die, and trusting in the smiles of Heaven, on so just a cause, would behave with bravery and resolution." That Washington was dissatisfied with the result of his campaign is evident from a letter to his brother, wherein he writes, "I am wearied to death with the retrograde motion of things," and solemnly protests that a pecuniary reward of twenty thousand pounds a year would not induce him to undergo what he suffered. It was not

alone his mental and bodily suffering - sufferings of one brought up in a home of plenty, but those of his troops, whose tents and clothes were insufficient to protect them from the weather - raw, rainy, November. This march was called "Mud Rounds" because of the half frozen roadway, over which these troops walked - some with no shoes and some with hay or straw bound around their feet.

In addition to this he was "heartsick" to reflect that a brother's sword had been sheathed in a brother's breast, and that the once happy and peaceful plains of America are either to be drenched in blood or inhabited with slaves. Sad alternative, but can a virtuous man hesitate in his choice." With it all, his troops never distrusted him, whose virtue and greatness shone resplendently, as they halted on the main road near Union place, this dark November day.

March to the Bridge

At this point they were welcomed by a committee from Acquackanonk, which had been chosen at a meeting of farmers held that forenoon in the Tap House on the hill; Henry Garritse, of the present Clifton, Halmagh Van Winkle, who resided near the bridge, owner of the land over which they were to march to that structure; Richard Ludlow, merchant, Adrian Post and John Sip, farmers, who led the cavalcade followed by the rank and file on foot. They left the road and proceeded across a hay field and through an apple orchard, to the bridge, whose entrance was about one hundred feet north of the present bridge, extending across the river, not at right angles to the shore line, but on a course of about north fifteen degrees east, to ease the pressure of the ice against the bridge, which had destroyed two other bridges which had stood there.

At the Bridge

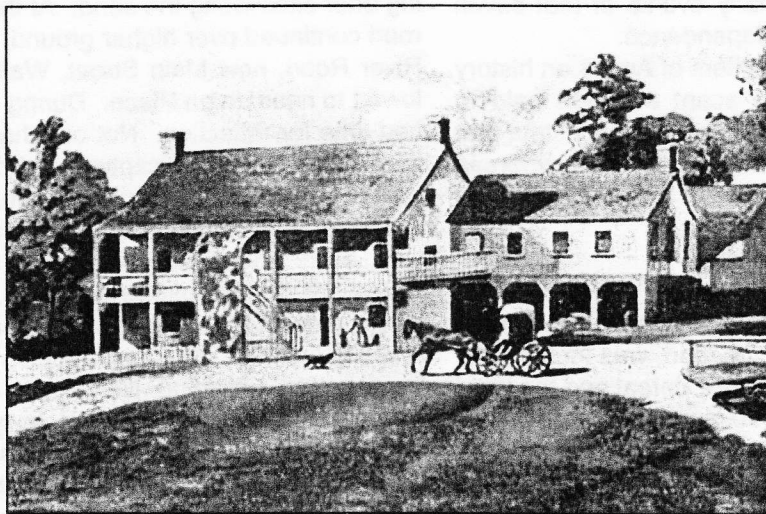
Arriving at the bridge they were welcomed by General Greene with his brigade sent there early in November to fortify it, and by General Stephen and his brigade, directed to assist in its protection. As if these, more than a thousand men, would not be sufficient to save the bridge General Mercer and his invincible troops, had arrived the day before. To witness, in addition to these soldiers the beaming countenances, and the cordial greetings of the Acquackanonk farmers, in striking contrast to the indifference of the Bergen County people, were such as to

put fresh courage in Washington, particularly when the Dominie of the Reformed Dutch Church (now our Old First) the Rev. Hendricus Schoonmaker, stepped up to Washington and said, in a most gracious manner: "Welcome Sir, to our shore." That was all, and yet it spoke volumes to him who stood in need of just such a welcome.

After the bridge was crossed Washington and his generals took post in the Tap House which stood on the west side of the river road, opposite the bridge, on an elevation, in front, and south of the church now owned by a Polish congregation. (The Tap House was destroyed by fire March 17, 1877.)

At the Tap House

Washington was accompanied to the Tap House (then a tavern kept by James Leslie) by a crowd of farmers led by the Dominie and Benjamin Helme, a lawyer both of whom delivered addresses of welcome to which Washington made a short reply and was escorted into the tavern through the center of which ran a wide hall on the first two floors. To the right on the first floor was the bar-room. To the left, a large reception room, into which Washington and his generals were conducted, and introduced to many of the farmers. Supper was served in a room in the rear of the reception room.



Tap House on the Hill at Acquackanonk
(Destroyed by fire in 1877)

After supper Washington and his generals inspected the troops

encamped in what is now Washington Park, pausing before some ancient gravestones and listening to the description of some of the men there buried, by the sexton of the old church, from who Thomas Paine who had accompanied the Great Retreat so far, was inspired thereby to begin writing his book "The Crisis," that very evening, after returning to the tavern. While he was thus engaged, Washington dictated a letter to his secretary, superscribed "Acquackanonk Bridge," directed to Governor Livingston, wherein he spoke of the retreat, the crossing of the bridge, etc., and that because terms of enlistment of many Jersey men would soon expire, he submits whether it would not be proper for him to call together such a number of the militia, as, in conjunction with the troops he should have left, would serve to cover the country and stop the progress of the enemy if they should attempt to penetrate it.

Washington was assigned a bedroom at the southeast corner of the second floor overlooking the bridge, and river, where he spent the night, undisturbed. At a public

meeting of farmers held in the tavern that morning, it was decided to render the bridge useless so soon as all of Washington's troops had gotten over.

But all were not over when the above stated letter was written, as three sharpshooters and three regiments had been left behind as covering parties. It was late that night when they crossed, and so dark that operations on the bridge were deferred until the next day.

Dismantling of the Bridge

Early the next morning Michael Vreeland, who had been chosen chairman of the committee the day before went to the bridge at the head of a party of soldiers, belonging to the brigades of Generals Greene and Stephens, custodians of the bridge.

In addition there was a crowd of men and boys, conspicuous among the latter being John H. Post, who rendered assistance. Vreeland figured that the counties could not afford to destroy, nor even harm the bridge, and simply directed the planks to be lifted up for about fifty feet, carried from the Bergen County end to the opposite end of the bridge where they remained piled up for ten days or until the last man of the enemy had left this vicinity. On November 26 Isaac Noble, a member of a company of British Light Dragoons determined to force a passage over the bridge from the Bergen County shore, to which he came with a small detachment of troops, whose attempts to get upon the bridge, being frustrated, led him to open fire upon the American troops on the bridge, who returned the fire in which Noble was shot in the head and fell to the ground whereupon his troops forsook him and fled. General Stephens went to him, and finding him unconscious called for a surgeon, which was responded to by Dr. Nicholas Roche, or Roach, who was the surgeon of the South Battalion of the Second Regiment of Essex (now Passaic) County, who subsequently married Antje Garritse, and resided with her father's family on Weasel Road overlooking the present Dundee Lake (not then in existence) Clifton. The surgeon found the man badly wounded in the head and had him carried to the Tap House, where he trephined his skull with a set of instruments which Dr. Gerret Stymets of Saddle River had given him by will.

Noble recovered with the loss of an eye and was appointed Deputy Commissary of Prisoners. He was considered a dangerous man by the Americans and a reward of five hundred dollars had been offered for his capture. He eventually was killed by an American and his large farm at Ramapo was sequestered January 26, 1779. His widow Rachel was harassed beyond endurance by her neighbors, compelling her one night, with a nine month infant, to abandon their home, walked to the Hudson River, where she secured passage on a vessel to New York, whence she sailed for the home of her parents in Germany. She and her husband were Germans. The name Noble he adopted when he came to this country.

No concerted attack on the bridge was made by the British, who in order to cross the river went from

Hackensack to the river near the corner of the present Outwater Avenue, Garfield, where they remained for several days, and then forded the river. Lord Stirling was placed in charge of the bridge with a suitable number of soldiers to protect it until the close of the war during which there were numerous conflicts, but no battle for possession of the bridge. Among the Jerseyman there, I mention the following for future preservation: Job Compton, officer of the guard, and his sergeant, Jacob Levy, who got after Tories and refugees in Bergen County, of whom one was killed and fifteen taken prisoners. John Stiles, who was Issuing Commissary. Peter Hill received a shot in his right arm which was dressed by Dr. Johones, surgeon. Isaac Bedell, who took first rank in number of wounds, Captain Josiah Hall, Chris Mayer, and James Wood, a sergeant were expert in gun shooting. Benjamin Thompson, who captured sixty Hessians, Sam Elston, a shoemaker and weaver, by trade, wore his long red hair in a braid hanging down his back, whereby he was nicknamed "Carrot." Captain John Ward, who the next year recruited the Ward Company, of 68 men. Captain Arteman Day in charge of the Polifly fort which was located on the east side of present Terrace Avenue, about two hundred feet north of Terhune Avenue, Hasbrouck Heights, one of two forts. He had a hard fight with the enemy at the bridge. Phineas Chichester and Dan Cook although wounded, remained at the bridge, until transferred to the fort and again wounded. It was at the bridge that Captain John Bell was mortally wounded. Expiring immediately in the arms of his friend, Samuel C. Seeley, who owned the land at the entrance to the bridge where he conducted a small country store.

A tablet which may be seen in the stone wall along River Road, refers to the old tavern as the Blanchard House of 1776. This is a mistake as Blanchard did not become proprietor until ten years later. James Leslie was proprietor in 1776 as appears by the following receipted bill:

*Acquackanonk Bridge, November 22, 1776.
Michael Vreeland, Chairman of Committee*

*To James Leslie, tavern keeper, dr.
two bottles of toddy for the soldiers at work on the bridge, six shillings.*

Received payment.

JAMES LESLIE

We should never forget the importance of the work of these men, the neglect of which might have resulted in the capture of Washington, his officers and men, putting an end to the war and all hopes of independence. To this aspect serious thought should be given by us, who partake of the benefits which the struggles and hardships of our ancestors secured for us, after seven strenuous years during which the farmers of old Acquackanonk never lost faith in Washington, or their cause.

THE LIBERTY POLE STORY - 1766-1783

By George Decker

News of the repeal of the much hated Stamp Act reached the American colonies in the month of May 1766. Jubilant English subjects gathered on the public greens and open fields of numerous hamlets, villages and towns to express their grateful thanks. Speech, dance, drink and merriment commenced everywhere. In addition, weeks later, these transposed Englishmen further demonstrated their unwavering loyalty to the Crown by publicly celebrating the June fourth birthday of King George III, their royal benefactor.

At one such celebration a great bonfire was kindled and the Royal Standard was proudly raised upon a tall pole to much sincere cheer. A second pole was hoisted on this occasion in honor of the efforts of King George and British Prime Minister Pitt to rescind the tax levy placed upon the colonies. This pole bore the simple inscription "King, Pitt and Liberty."

This loyalist Liberty Pole and many others that were mounted throughout the English colonies became the singular most visible rallying symbol for the cause of freedom, for the cause of liberty, indeed, for the cause of independence.

Here now, sample a few measures awakened by the Liberty Pole.

Tax collectors were tarred and feathered. One agent was strung on high by the seat of his pants upon a Liberty Pole.

An influential farmer near Reading, Pennsylvania erected a Liberty Pole in front of his home. When British soldiers arrived to cut it down they were confronted by more than 100 civilian riflemen. Their effort was soon abandoned.

In Savannah, Georgia, cannon that were assembled for celebration of the King's birthday were rendered useless and rolled into the river. A British sailor was then tarred and feathered and forced to kiss the Liberty Pole.

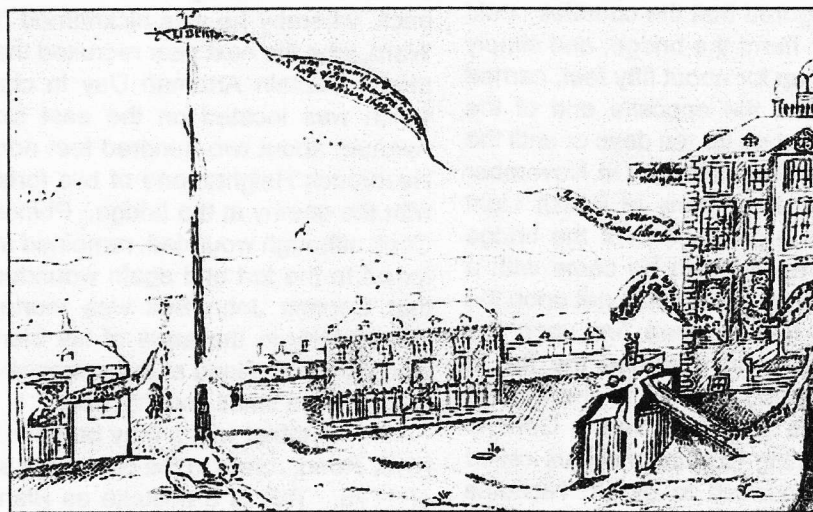
The town of Homes Hole near Boston erected a particularly tall and thick Liberty Pole. A British sea captain wanted the pole to use as a mast for his ship. If he was refused, he would have his ship's cannon fire upon the town. Reluctantly, the town folk agreed upon a price. Three patri-

ot girls had another idea. With the use of a carpenter's auger they drilled holes into the pole, packed powder, applied the hems of their skirts as wadding, and blew the pole to pieces.

New York City patriots erected a Liberty Pole. British soldiers destroyed it. This symbolic exercise continued for years. But in the year 1776, the matter turned violent. Local citizens were not complying with the Quartering Act which required the housing of British soldiers in private dwellings. In retaliation, the soldiers cut down the Liberty Pole. Several thousand unhappy patriots rallied to the Commons. The British then arrived to disperse the crowd. Civilian brick and rock throwing was responded to with bayonets. Several Americans were wounded.

In Concord, Massachusetts, the British burned the town's Liberty Pole along with several houses. This wanton Red Coat act caused the local militia to intercede. Here, then, the "shot heard round the world" set a flame to smoldering resistance. The war for independence was on.

In Chatham, a growing New Jersey hamlet on the Passaic River, a newly arrived Tory gentleman, late of



Liberty Pole, New York, 1770. Pen and ink drawing of P.E. Du Simitière Papers.

New York City caused much local agitation. Thomas Eckley spoke openly and often about the good King George. He bitterly opposed a rupture with the mother country. Neighbors, solidly patriotic, became greatly incensed and discussed drastic action against this man.

Upon hearing of possible violence against his person, Eckley beseeched the good Rev. Jacob Greene, pastor of the Hanover Presbyterian Church, to come to his aid. At Sunday service, Eckley stood before the assembled congregation. The Rev. Greene read aloud the repentant words of the Tory and spoke eloquently on his behalf. Thomas Eckley was thence not tarred and feathered at the Liberty Pole, but instead lived many peaceful years with not a single Tory whisper.

Finally, on Evacuation Day, November 25, 1783, British soldiers marched to their ships, never to return. The most coveted trophy they wished to carry on their way to England was the Liberty Pole. But, nay, it stood proudly tall and witnessed their humiliating departure.