



Hunterdon Historical Newsletter

VOL. 16, NO. 1

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WINTER 1980



McVanguard
1st Lt. C. K. J. H. Comings
1st Lt. M. B. Stull Co. D
1st Lt. E. B. Nicholas Co. B
A. V. Wyckoff
(Serg. Major)
Sgt. J. VanHouten Co. C
M. Kline
(Serg. Drum Corps)
S. Rubadon - Paul Kohl Co. A.
(Color Serg.)
J. Van Antwerp Co. E
E. G. Budd Co. F
1st Sgt. W. E. Trimmer Co. G
1st Sgt. H. R. Merrill Co. H
W. Johnson
Gr. Tr. Serg.
J. R. McCaully
Lieut. Com. S. 7

Original 1864 print owned by Reactivated 15th N.J. Volunteer Infantry

'FIGHTING FIFTEENTH' TOPIC OF ANNUAL MEETING APRIL 13, 1980

It was August 1862. Sammy Stahler left his father's hayfield near Frenchtown. Rev. Haines came down from Hamburg. George Thompson walked out of the grist mill near Griggstown. John Laughton of Somerville laid aside his paint brush. Lambert Boeman of Flemington entrusted the store to his partners. All headed toward the rendezvous camp adjacent to the Flemington Fairgrounds and mustered into the 15th New Jersey Volunteer Infantry Regiment. The "Fighting Fifteenth" was in the middle of every major battle of the Army of the Potomac from Fredericksburg on and paid for its sobriquet with blood and sweat. Only 11 of the more than 2200 Union infantry regiments lost more men in battle. Of those named above, two lost their lives, one an elbow, another a finger.

The unit was remustered in 1959 to perpetuate the memory of the old 15th. Its newer version was selected in the 1960's as the official honor guard for the New Jersey Civil War Centennial Commission. As such it represented the state here and elsewhere at

various ceremonies and rededications. On Sunday, April 13th, two of its members, John Glokner and Society Trustee John Kuhl, will present a program and series of displays that relate the more personal story of the Civil War soldier.

The meeting is being held in the Meeting Room of the Flemington Methodist Church on Maple Avenue at 2 p.m. April 13. Refreshments will be served following the program.

CALENDAR

April 13, 1980: Annual Meeting

June 28, 1980: Spring Meeting
Announcement of program to follow

November 23, 1980: Fall Meeting
Announcement of program to follow

HUNTERDON HISTORICAL NEWSLETTER

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Membership Report

We welcome the following new members to the Hunterdon County Historical Society.

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Mrs. Paulene Stothoff
Membership Secretary

NOTES and QUERIES

Address correspondence to Genealogical Committee. Listing of ten lines free to members, non-members rate is 25¢ per line.

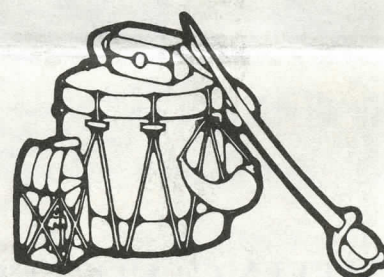
DORRIS: Family residents of Hopewell Township until 1785. Desire information on domicile, parentage of brothers John, William and Robert, other siblings. ADD: Carl E. Dorris, Foreign Service Institute, Dept. of State, Washington, DC 20520.

SMITH: Need information regarding Susannah Smith (widow) living 1790-93, claimed dower rights in land Hunterdon County Courthouse is built on. Joseph Smith owned land pre-1780. Who was Susillah Smith (widow?) living 1781, minor children Mary and Rachel. ADD: Nellie Thatcher, 15400 W. 7 Mile Rd., Apt. 202, Detroit, MI 48235.

MATTIS, MITCHELL: Desire any information on parents and families of Edward Mitchell (1755-1840) and wife Catharine Mattis. Need all data on her. Children baptised Readington Reformed Church. ADD: Mrs. Dora M. Alexander, R.D. 2, Box 361D, Whitehouse Sta., NJ 08889

CLARKSON, DUNHAM, GUILD, McKINNEY, WYCKOFF: Wish any info on Benew/Benajiah Dunham, lived Tewksbury Twp. 1779-89. Wife Joannah Dunham, d/o Nehemiah & Susannah Clarkson Dunham in 1772. Their dau. Susan m 1) Reuben Guild, 2) Abraham Wyckoff. Wish info on John/Johannes McKinney and Elizabeth Wyckoff, p/o Jane McKinney, b. 1802, m. John Dunham Guild. ADD: Mrs. A.L. Dyer, 5826 Clarendon, Wichita, KS 67220.

DISBERRY, SEAMAN: Any info on Wm. Seaman, Hopewell area 1778-1785, m. Amy Disberry. William d. 1814 Washington County, PA. ADD: Helen Vogt, 121 Blaine Ave., Brownsville, PA 15417.



HOW TO JOIN

Hunterdon County Historical Society
114 Main Street
Flemington, New Jersey 08822

Please enroll me as a member of your Society

Annual	\$9.00
Family	\$10.00
Contributing	\$25.00
Sustaining	\$50.00
Institutional	\$100.00 and up per year
Life	\$150.00
Student	\$1.00 (18 years of age or less)

for which I enclose my remittance in the amount of \$

Name

Address

.



GENERAL GEORGE WILLIAM TAYLOR
Hunterdon County's Only Civil War General

The general was dying hard. His tough mind and body had fought mightily to live. But he had lost a lot of blood and was delirious now, released at last from that terrible pain. He groaned and twisted from under his thin blanket. The bandages on the stump that had

once been his strong left leg were soaked through with blood and ooze, staining the bedding beneath. The captain resting nearby struggled painfully to his feet and leaned over his father. "Forward my brave boys, forward," the son heard his father say.

The Second Battle of Manassas — or Bull Run as the rebels called it — was to bring grief to many a New Jersey family, none more than the Taylors of Hunterdon County. General George Taylor had commanded the 1st N.J. Brigade. His son, Archibald S., had acted as his aide-de-camp. His brother's son, also named Archibald S., was a captain in the 3rd N.J. Infantry, one of the four regiments that made up the all Jersey brigade. All three Taylors had been cut down wounded within a few minutes. The son would recover to serve out a long career as a Marine officer. The nephew would also return to duty, but only to be killed several months later at Chancellorsville. The general would not be even that fortunate. He died later that 1st day of September 1862 on the bed at the Mansion House Hospital in Alexandria, Va. Death came from the effects of the wound and amputation on a constitution already weakened by the malaria of the summer campaign.

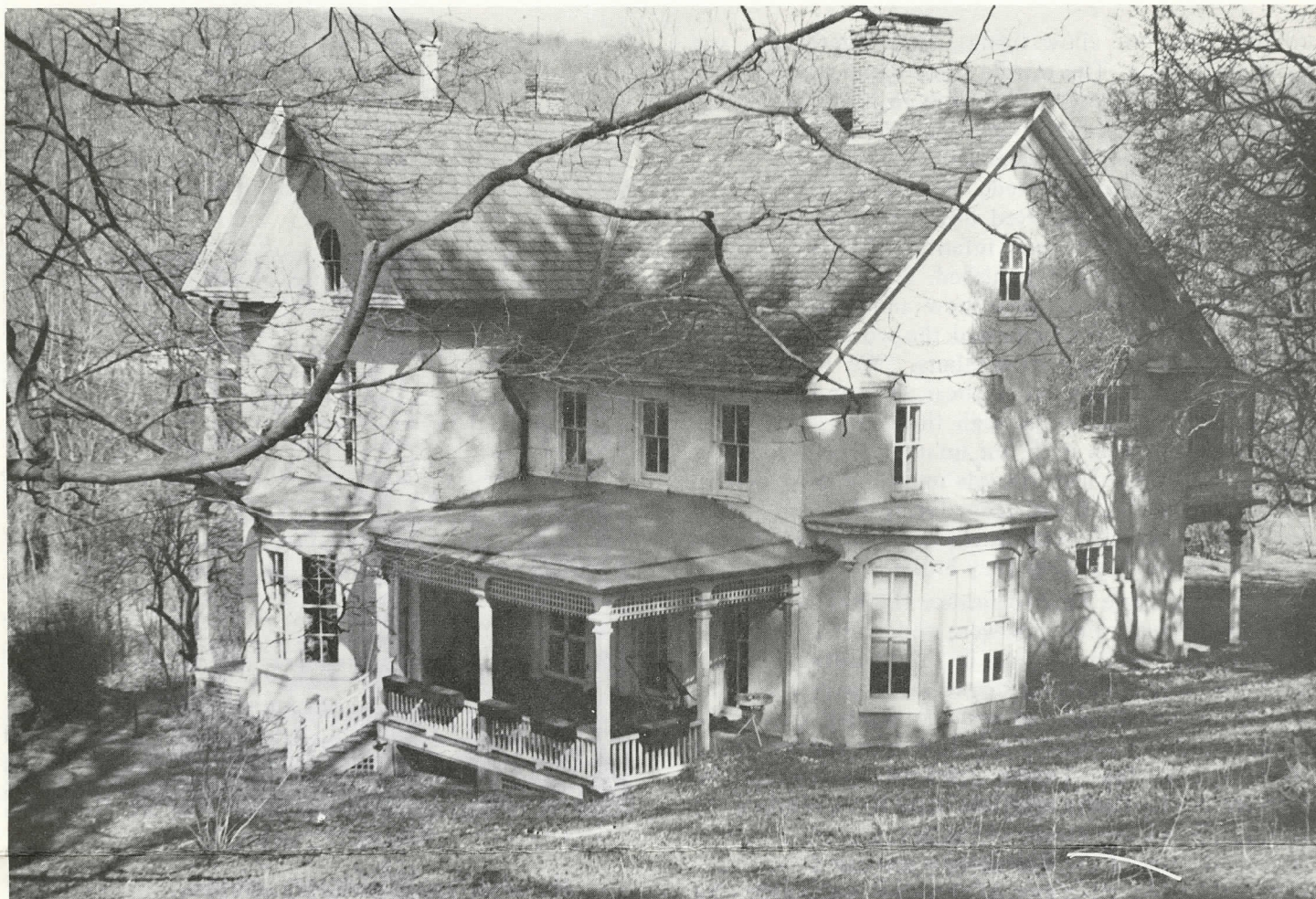
Governor Olden had desperately needed men with martial experience in the turbulent Spring of 1861. He found one in George William Taylor of Clinton and appointed him Colonel of the 3rd N.J. Infantry. Taylor had entered the Navy as a midshipman 35 years before. Switching to the Army, he had marched with Zach Taylor (no relation) against the Mexicans. George was known in the Army as a man who would do his damnest to carry out his orders. He wouldn't be splashy about his job but he would get it done if possible. He did have his limitations and would not be expected by most to rise to top command levels. While well grounded in military science, there were others more brilliant in its application. Most certainly he was not a good drillmaster but few would challenge his skill in the use of firearms. He was rugged physically, above average height, and carried very erectly the lean frame which at 52 was just beginning to show a bit of spread. As to his personality, Taylor was a quiet, private man, unassuming, and basic in his outlook. Strangers would mistake his manner for coldness. Even some of his own men would come to express outright dislike. Those who knew him well would term him the best and staunchest of friends. He was a very stern, almost harsh disciplinarian. Rules were rules and he was rather inflexible about that. (See footnote) Many an errant soldier wilted under the cold stare of his steely gray eyes. Like him or not, no one could ever find cause to seriously question either his personal integrity or his motivation. On one point all would agree. Never in even the worst of situations would he exhibit the slightest visible sign of fear. All in all, contemporaries considered him a solid man quite capable in brigade command and perhaps with seasoning, of a divisional assignment.

This, then, was the man who took the 3rd regiment south in 1861 and joined the Jersey Brigade of flambuoyant, one-armed Phil Kearny. Nicknamed "The Jersey Devil", Kearny turned them into soldiers, fostering a mutual bond of respect and affection they

would ever remember and a spirit that remained with them throughout the war. Neither Kearny nor Taylor, however, were totally successful in weaning them of their voracious and legendary foraging. Several versions abound because all were so fond of repeating it. In so many words Kearny once told President Lincoln that if he really wanted to take Richmond, he should put a hen house and a peach orchard on one side and his Jersey brigade on the other. Speaking affectionately of his "thieves", Kearny said they would get through all the fortifications of Richmond "in spite of Hell itself, Sir," to get at those hens and peaches. Kearny at first refused promotion rather than leave his "pets" but finally accepted in March of 1862. George Taylor then received his brigadier's star and in turn, moved up from regiment to brigade in time to direct it through McClellan's Peninsula Campaign.

At Gaines' Farm the brigade had been badly mauled, losing almost 1100 of its number while hanging stubbornly on under multiple attacks. There, too, an excited foreign aide of McClellan had come dashing up to Taylor shouting in a language he could not understand. The general turned to his aide and asked, "Who the devil is this and what is he talking about?" The aide spoke French and explained that the general was to give him a regiment to assist Porter's Corps. Taylor detailed off the 4th N.J. and directed the aide to go along and report back its location. The 4th and another pick-up regiment, the 11th Pa., were posted in an exposed location by the Frenchman. Porter soon pulled back his own men but in the confusion no one thought to notify the 4th and 11th, most of whom were either killed or captured after being entirely surrounded. The aide witnessed this disaster from a distance and rode back to report. "I found General Taylor, parading up and down the line of battle like a wounded lion, and in the midst of one of the most terrible battles I ever saw. As soon...as he saw me he said: 'Where is the Fourth?' I said: 'Gone to Richmond, Sir'. I shall never forget how the old fellow's eyes glared, as with sword in hand he turned to me and said: 'Young man, this is no place for levity'. I said: 'They are captured, every man of them'. He said: 'My God, my God' and fairly wrung his hands". A few days

Footnote.— An interesting exception out of character with most accounts was recorded by Taylor's aide, E.B. Grubb. At Malvern Hill Grubb came into camp late at night and collapsed in exhaustion against a tree. "The next morning at grey daylight I awoke with the most intense gnawing hunger that I had ever experienced. I had had nothing to eat but three hardtack, two cups of coffee, and some cherries for two days, and I had ridden probably fifty miles in those two days. I had, moreover, been in a pretty severe fight and had an ugly wound in my leg. As soon as I sat up and rubbed the sleep out of my eyes I saw within twenty-five yards of me a small pig rooting along on the ground . . . I also saw right close to me a rifle of the orderly's leaning against the tree. . . I knew there was a positive order against the discharge of any firearm without permission, but I was hungry and there was the pig. Simultaneously with the crack of the rifle came the voice of General Taylor: 'If you had missed him, Sir, I would have put you under arrest.' He was standing on the other side of the tree and had not lain down all night. The pig was cooked and eaten at once."



"SOLITUDE" BOYHOOD HOME OF GEORGE TAYLOR — Said by Joseph E. Hoffman of High Bridge to be the oldest (1725) house in the town and named by John Penn, a prisoner there in 1777 and 1778. The house sports a coat of stucco in this 1977 photo by Mr. Hoffman.

later at Glendale the brigade won laurels when a worn-out division dissolved under heavy pressure to threaten the entire Union position. Kearny, in charge of the sector and trying desperately to hold things together, sent an aide to his old brigade and asked for their help. Would they? Almost without Taylor's orders they swarmed to the attack with a wild chorus of huzzahs, drove back the enemy, recaptured the lost artillery, and restored the Union line, exulting afterwards that they had outpaced Kearny's own men. So spontaneous and vigorous had been their assault, that Taylor actually had had to restrain them. "Keep ahead of them and keep them from going too far", he had yelled to his aide as they swept along.

It had been a compliment, originally, to have been given so good a brigade. Its subsequent stout conduct under him on the Peninsula brought him much of that coin of the officer realm, favorable mention in dispatch and report. Even President Lincoln had come to chat in his field tent. With the summer of 1862 now nearly behind them, the focus of operations shifted gradually northward. Taylor and his brigade sailed up the Chesapeake and then the Potomac to Alexandria. Representing the vanguard of heavy reinforcements from McClellan to Pope, they arrived without artillery or cavalry support. Headquarters

scraped up two Ohio regiments and immediately pushed Taylor out southward towards Manassas to find Pope and chase the rebel raiders who had just overrun Federal supply depots there. Down the Orange & Alexandria R.R. they bumped into the Confederates just south of Bull Run Creek. Time was at a premium and Headquarters had given no hint at major enemy strength in the area. Leaving the Ohio units as support, Taylor crossed the bridge and pitched into the rebels with his whole force. The enemy lay atop a slight rise where they could both look down Taylor's throat and conceal the bulk of their own men. Federal intelligence had failed miserably. The luckless Jersey men had run headlong into two entire divisions of Stonewall Jackson's Corps. The rebels held their fire as the unsuspecting brigade came on, then finally opened with rolling barrages from their concealed artillery. Southern cavalry and infantry began simultaneously to move on both flanks. The exploding missiles were cutting swaths through Taylor's line but they kept coming. Douglas Freeman writes in his *Lee's Lieutenants*: "As the . . . Jersey men came on in the face of shells, Jackson watched them with admiration and felt that he should save them. . . . He halted the artillery fire, rode out in front of Poague's guns, waved his handkerchief and shouted to the enemy to surrender. In response, a Federal infantryman raised his gun (attack

doctrine did not allow firing), took careful aim and fired at Jackson. The missile came close enough for a cannoner near the General's side to hear the spiteful whistle. With such men there could be no other argument than the one they were using."

The artillery resumed, this time with deadly cannister and supplemented now with sheets of musketry from the Southern infantry. The Jersey regiments were being badly punished. They had done their best but there was no hope now and it was time to think of survival. Taylor passed the word to fall back. A Confederate major remembers, "We brought our batteries, four in number, to bear, shot and shell from which began to plow through their ranks before we opened up on them with our infantry. They closed up the gaps and marched towards us in the most perfect line of battle that I had seen during the war, and it was only when General Jackson's Corps enveloped them front and flank that they broke."

It took some time to retrace the mile and a half back to the bridge and they were under fire all the way. The Ohioans, relatively safe in their positions, would term the retreat overly precipitous. Conversely, some of the rebels thought it well conducted under the circumstances. Certainly, no time was wasted but it must be said that Taylor managed to contain the pressure on his flanks until the main force reached the bridge. The Confederates converged from three directions as the last of the Northerners recrossed the creek. The determined resistance of the Ohio units aided by those Jerseymen who could be rallied quickly, kept the enemy temporarily at bay. It was while attempting to reorganize his men that the minie ball slammed through Taylor's leg and knocked him from his horse. The soft lead bullet had flattened on impact and crushed both bones of the leg. His men wrapped the gushing wound as best they could and carried the general to the rear. He called out to an officer present, "For God's sake, prevent another Bull Run". Finally, the sheer numbers of the Confederates allowed them to cross the creek on both flanks and the Federals were forced to withdraw to safety on up the railroad. Lack of cavalry scouts, poor Federal intelligence, and impossible odds had brought Taylor defeat. Some, unfamiliar with the facts, would criticize him for pushing the attack. Those in the know, did not. Anyway, all that was behind the general now. He was back in Alexandria with the rest of the wounded, losing another battle, the one for his life.

Up the Camden & Amboy R.R. through Trenton late Tuesday, September 2nd, rolled the train carrying the body of George Taylor. In escort was nephew Archy, nursing the shell wound in his right leg. On north to Elizabeth they went, switching there to the Central R.R. for the last leg, west to Clinton Station (now Annandale). Readers of Trenton's *Daily State Gazette* the next morning were informed of the transit and told that Taylor while still conscious, had requested there be no special parade, display, or ceremony over

his remains. The Newark papers were full of the death of Phil Kearny, killed at Chantilly the same day Taylor died, but gave Hunterdon's general ample notice as well. Announcing the funeral services to Newark readers, the *Daily-Advertiser* also ran the Central's ad offering reduced rates to Clinton for funeral-goers.

of negotiating and settling and satisfied.
Newark, Sept. 4, 1862. 84-31*

CENTRAL RAILROAD OF NEW JERSEY.
THE Funeral Services of the late Gen.
G. W. TAYLOR will be held at his late residence, near CLINTON, N. J., on Saturday, Sept. 6th, at 11 A. M. To accommodate those wishing to attend.

EXCURSION TICKETS
will be sold to Clinton, from all stations on the road, except New York for the train leaving New York at 8 A. M. and the train leaving Easton at 9 A. M., at
HALF FARE!
Good to return on any of the way trains on that day.
The trains advertised above arrive at Clinton about 10.30 A. M., and trains leave Clinton for New York at 2.52 P. M., and for Easton at 2.26 P. M. 81-11

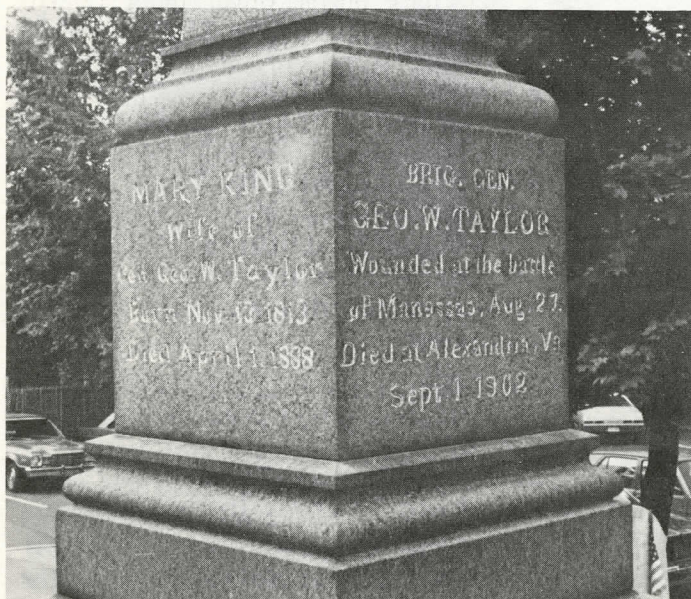
\$5 Reward.
STRAYED from the premises of the subscriber August 25th, a white and red 1½ year old **HEIFER**. Whoever will return her to the subscriber will receive the above reward.
THOS. CLOSE, Bloomfield.

NEWARK DAILY ADVERTISER — Thursday, September 4, 1862

Home at last, Wednesday morning, the body was unloaded from the train and transported the short distance to the general's large residence situated three-quarters of a mile from both the station and the town of Clinton. Among those waiting at home were his wife, the former Mary King, and seven of their eight children, five of them still quite young. Son Archy had been unable to make the trip. Shutting off the parlor, the undertaker and his assistant prepared the body and dressed it in the full uniform of a Brigadier General. The remains were then placed in an elegant casket covered with a rich, dark purple velvet and trimmed with silver mountings. The coffin was draped overall with heavy black lace and the arrangements topped off by resting the general's battle sword on the lid beside him. The parlor was then reopened for the family and callers until the funeral on Saturday. In anticipation of a large crowd they decided to hold the service in their church.

Saturday dawned clear and already hot. Many people from many parts began to assemble at an early hour. Representing Governor Olden was Colonel Scranton, himself a warm personal friend of Taylor. He coordinated the few military arrangements and supervised Dodworth's Band, imported from New York for the occasion. Also in attendance were a number of friends from the military, some like favorite aide E.B. Grubb, home on disability leave. Heading up the family present was George's brother and business partner, Lewis H. Taylor.

The Taylor family was not new to Hunterdon. The general's grandfather, Robert, had come to the area from Ireland in 1758 at the age of 16. After a short tenure as a school teacher, he hired on as a clerk for the firm of Allen & Turner at their Union Forge iron works. By 1769 he held full authority as its works manager. Cannon balls and iron were turned out for the Colonies during the Revolution. Robert Taylor had by this time moved into the mansion house on the company grounds and despite the alleged Tory sympathies of his employers, begun to make a name for himself. He evidently succeeded, for Congress entrusted him with the custody of two prisoners, John Penn and Benjamin Chew, the ex-governor and ex-chief justice of colonial Pennsylvania, respectively. The imprisonment was not overly restrictive but both found it quite lonely. Popular history has it that Penn gave the mansion the name it retains today, "Solitude". Robert finally purchased Solitude from the heirs of Allen & Turner, and along with it, the surrounding business property in the area of present-day High Bridge. He died in 1821 and was succeeded in the business by his forty year old son, Archibald S. The iron trade remained sluggish until the Mexican War and the expansion of the railroads brought a mild measure of prosperity. Archibald died in 1860 leaving four children surviving of eight born. Sons George W. and Lewis H. inherited his interest in the iron works. Both sons had in the previous dozen years tried their hands in various enterprises in the West and at home. None had met with any great success. George ultimately settled down to farming within a few miles of his boyhood home but when the war broke out, felt compelled to offer his services. Brother Lewis remained at home. He evidently finally got the hang of business, for he went on to build the iron works into the large corporation most of us remember as Taylor-Wharton.



The clock ticked towards the hour of one of the more notable funerals ever conducted in Hunterdon County. At about half-past eleven, relatives and friends who had filled the house all morning, filed by for one last look at the dead general. The coffin was then brought out to the hearse and the whole entourage followed in a long string of carriages on into Clinton. Arriving at the Presbyterian Church, the casket was carried to the shade of a tree to protect it from the broiling sun. There it was reopened to afford those at the church the opportunity to view him. When all had passed by, it was closed again and borne into the church under an arch formed of American flags bedecked with crape. The band kept up a low, solemn dirge. Not all the huge crowd could be accommodated inside. The plain, country church was unadorned except for the flag-draped pulpit. Rev. Dr. McNair, the church's regular pastor, was assisted by four other local clergymen. In between the usual prayers, hymns, and eulogy, Dr. McNair preached his message from *2nd Samuel*, "How The Mighty Are Fallen". After the benediction all moved outside and the general was laid to rest close by the west side of the church. Tragically for the family, they would have to go through it all again within a year. Nephew Archy, killed at Chancellorsville, was memorialized a few feet away. Their tall monuments dominate that section of today's cemetery.

Thus was ended the abbreviated Civil War career of Hunterdon County's only general officer of the conflict. Fate might have been kinder. Perhaps, in part, that's what his last opponent was trying to get at. Reporting on the battle that cost George Taylor his life, Stonewall Jackson had said: "The advance was made with great spirit and determination and under a leader worthy of a better cause."

Sources

1. OFFICIAL RECORDS OF THE WAR OF THE REBELLION
2. Period Newspapers of Trenton, Newark, & Flemington
3. BATTLES & LEADERS OF THE CIVIL WAR, Yoseloff Edition
4. LEE'S LIEUTENANTS, Douglas Freeman
5. MR. LINCOLN'S ARMY, Bruce Catton
6. County Clerk & Surrogate Records, Hunterdon County
7. Deats' Genealogical File, Hunterdon County Historical Society
8. HISTORY OF THE 1st NEW JERSEY BRIGADE, Camille Bacquet
9. NEW JERSEY & THE REBELLION, John Foster
10. TAYLOR-WHARTON IRON & STEEL CO., 200th Anniv. Booklet
11. Interview with Joseph E. Hoffman of High Bridge
12. Interview with Funeral Director Douglas Martin of Clinton

John W. Kuhl
December 1979



EARLY SETTLERS OF HUNTERDON COUNTY:

THE VAN FLEET FAMILY

(continued from Vol. 15, No. 3)

Continuing the series *Early Settlers of Hunterdon County*, initiated in Volume 11, Number 2 with the *Schomp Family*, and followed by the *Hummer Family* (Volume 11, Number 3), the author of these articles has selected the *Van Fleet Family*, who, like the Schomps and Hummers, left numerous descendants, including a number of our Society members. The author included sixty-five footnotes to this segment of the genealogy, which, for want of space, are deleted from the following account.

1. JOHN VAN VLIET, the first child of Frederick and Mary (Biggs) Van Vliet was born at Hurley¹⁶, and baptized on 9 August 1719 at the Dutch Reformed Church of Kingston, Ulster County, New York.¹⁸ His witnesses were his maternal aunt, Dina Biggs (born about 1690), and her husband, Hendrick Krom (baptized 9 December 1683).⁶⁶ John was named for each of his Grandfathers, Jan Van Vliet and John Biggs.

There is but one known record indicating that John attained adulthood. "Teunis Middagh" gave Frederick Van Vliet the following receipt:

Received this 3^d of June 1741 of M^r Frederick van Vliedt by the hands of his Son John the Sum of one pound & fifteen Shill for the Use of Docter Roseboom I Say Received by Me
Teunis Middagh³⁵

It is not known if John ever married. As he passed the age of 21, it is possible that he did. A son born to him could conceivably have been named Frederick. In the tax records for Readington Township in 1780 there appears one "Fraderick J Vanfleet", otherwise unidentified.⁶⁴ The anomalous use of the initial "J" could signify the name of this Frederick's father. John was the only son of the Patriarch whose name began with "J". Yet, it is just as conceivable that Frederick would have named this grandson in his will of 1779, which he didn't.⁴⁵ He may have previously provided for him.

JOHN VAN VLIET, the son of Frederick and Mary (Biggs) Van Vliet, died after June 1741, probably Readington Township, Hunterdon County, New Jersey; perhaps he married, and if so, may have been the father of:

10 i. FREDERICK, born, perhaps, *circa* 1745.

2. MARY VAN VLIET, the oldest daughter of Frederick and Mary (Biggs) Van Vliet, was named, in Dutch fashion, for her maternal Grandmother, Mary (Hall) Biggs. She was born in Marbletown, New York,¹⁷ and baptized at the Kingston Dutch Church on 25 June 1721.¹⁹ Her witnesses included

her mother's sister, Elisabeth Biggs, and Gerrit Konstapel, who had just married Margrietje Van Vliet, her father's sister.⁶⁷

Mary married, about 1745, Isaac Krom, and is referred to as his wife when she joined the Dutch Reformed Church of Readington on 13 September 1747.⁶⁸ Her husband was already a member of this church, having joined in 1736.⁶⁸ Previous to her marriage, Mary was a member of the "kerk up de Milston", where, after she married Isaac Krom, their only child was baptized about 1747:

Isack Krom Maria Phredrik Van Vliet
Marijtje Van Vliet Maria Biggs⁶⁹

Isaac Krom was the son of Willem and Wyntje (Roosa) Krom.⁶⁶ He was probably born in New York City, where he was baptized in the Dutch Reformed Church on 12 September 1711.⁷⁰ About 1715 the Kroms moved to the Raritan Valley of New Jersey and eventually settled in Readington Township "by Campbells brook where the lower side of a Road which leads to the Landing crosseth the same".⁷¹

During Isaac Krom's comparatively short life, he farmed a 256 acre "Plantation" situated in Readington Township. The farm had belonged to his father, Willem, and was sold to him by his brother Gisbert Krom, on 27 January 1743, for five shillings.⁷⁰ "Isaac Krom of Reading Town" was brought before the Hunterdon County Court during the "ffbruary Term 1754" on charges of a debt of £80 to Cornelius Low.⁷² About 1755-56 "Isack Crum" was among the seventy-five signers of a petition to "Jonathan Belcher Esq.^r Captain General and Governor in Chief" of the Province of New Jersey, requesting measures of defense be taken to insure the safety of the "neighbouring Provinces" during the French and Indian War.⁶²

On 26 January 1758 "Isaac Drom of Riding Town... Being in a Disease of Body" made out his last will and testament. In the will, he ordered that his "Dear & Loueing wife" was to have full possession of his estate "as Long as She Liues." Beyond this he ordered "that my Daughter Mary Shall be Pertaker of My Hole Estate Boath Reale & Personal Provided she Leaving an Easue Male or femal", and that "the Easue...from y^e Body of My Daughter Mary Shall Be y^e Next Pertaker". Cornelius Lane, Doctor "Georg Andreas vierselius" and Dirck Van Vliet witnessed the dying Isaac affix his "x" to the will.⁷³

Isaac was dead three months later, when on 26 April 1758 an inventory of his estate was made. Included among his affects were:

four Bedds & y^e firniture & y^e three Bed Stids £28.0.0
Tabels Chists & Chear two Sadels & y^e Bible & other Books
£6.01.6

y^e Swine & Cattle all & y^e Horsses & Mars £71.12.0

y^e Green wheat & plow & Tacklen & Harrow £38.01.0⁷³

It is not known how many years Mary Van Vliet Krom survived her husband. No known record is

found of her after 1 May 1758, when she signed, by mark, as the Executrix of her husband's estate.⁷³

The child of Isaac and Mary (Van Vliet) Krom:
11. i. MARY, born about 1747; married John Emans.

3. JUDITH VAN VLIET, the second daughter of Frederick and Mary (Biggs) Van Vliet, was named for her paternal grandmother, Judith (Hussey) Van Vliet. She was born in Marbletown, and baptized at Kingston, New York, on 17 February 1723.²⁰

On 24 December 1745 "Dirck Aten...of Hunterdon County yeoman", together with his eventual brother-in-law, "Isaac Crom", obtained a "Licence of Marriage for himself & for Judick Van Vliet Spinster."⁷⁴ Attached to the "Licence" was a note in which Dirck's father, Adriaen Aten, gave his consent for his under-age son to marry. Dirck, the son of Adriaen and Jacobje (Middagh) Aten was born 22 August 1721,⁷⁵ and baptized in the Dutch Reformed Church of the Raritan on 17 September 1721.⁷⁶

Dirck and Judith were married less than four years, during which they had one known child, a daughter, Jacobje, born about 1747.⁷⁷ Judith may have died in childbirth. She was dead by 16 August 1749 when her husband and "Volckert Douw" of Somerset County obtained a license of marriage in order that Dirck may marry "Ariantje Longstreet of Hunterdon County Spinster".⁷⁸

Dirck and Adriaentje (Longstreet) Aten had three children,⁷⁹ the first of whom, Judith, was named in honor of his first wife.⁸⁰ Adriaentje died before 1766, and Dirck married, for his third wife, Catharine Warner. They were the parents of nine children, the last born in 1781, when Dirck was sixty years old.⁷⁹

Dirck Aten was a resident of Readington Township until about 1760.⁷⁹ On 8 August 1754 "Derrick Aten, of Readens Town, Hunterdon county" advertised in *The Pennsylvania Gazette* that on "the 28th of July last", his slave "named Jack, about 30 years of age . . . much pock-marked, a lover of white women, and a great smoker" had run away, and he was offering a reward of £3 for his return.⁸¹ In the same newspaper, on 3 February 1757, "Dirck Auten, blacksmith, in the Township of Reading-town" advertised that "on the 21st of January last", a horse was stolen out of his stable.⁸² He was among the many signers who petitioned Governor Belcher to take "measures of defense", about 1755-56, at the time of the French and Indian War.⁶²

About 1760 Dirck Aten moved to Northampton County, Pennsylvania, where his father had purchased 306 acres in 1744.⁷⁹ He resided on a farm about seven miles below the Delaware Water Gap. He established a ferry which was known as Aten's Ferry, and remained in operation for 120 years. Dirck established the custom of ferrying people free in going to or returning from divine worship.⁸³ Dirck died 8 September 1809 and was buried in his

family cemetery on the bank of the Delaware River.⁷⁹

The child of Dirck and Judith (Van Vliet) ATEN:
12. i. JACOBJE, born about 1747; married Nicholas Albertson.

4. WILLIAM VAN FLEET, who always wrote his name "William Vanfleet", was the first child of Frederick and Mary (Biggs) Van Vliet to be born in New Jersey. He was probably born in Somerset County, in 1726, and baptized on 18 May 1727 at the "kerk up de Milston".²⁶ His witnesses were his maternal aunt, Sara Biggs, and her husband, Tunis Cole.

The derivation of William's name is uncertain, as he was not named for any of his parent's relatives. He was named for his older brother of the same name, who was born, and may have died, in 1725.²¹ This William's baptismal witness was "Wiljem Nottingham", and it is probably that in his honor the name William was introduced into the Van Vliet family.⁸⁵ Despite his Dutch surname, William was but one-quarter Dutch. Three of his Grandparents were English, which may account for the use of the popular Anglican name.

William Van Fleet married Mary Aten, whose older brother, Dirck Aten (1721-1809) had married William's older sister, Judith Van Vliet (1723-circa 1747). "William vanfleet" and his eventual twofold brother-in-law, Dirck Aten, secured, on 24 August 1748, a license for William to be married to Mary. As the bridal couple were both under-age, each submitted written permission by their fathers. William's permission, curiously, was written in his own hand:

Sir
I sand my son william vanfleet
by the Consant of me and my
wif for lisens

Fradrick vanfleet⁸⁶

Mary Aten, frequently referred to as Marytje, the daughter of Adriaen and Jacobje (Middagh) Aten, was born 15 January 1728,⁷⁵ perhaps in Readington Township, (then known as Amwell Township), Hunterdon County, and baptized in the Reformed Church of that Township on 25 February 1728.⁸⁷

William and Mary (Aten) Van Fleet were the parents of eleven children⁸⁸, nine of whom were baptized in the Dutch Reformed Church of Readington, of which William and Mary were members.⁸⁹ The Van Fleets resided in Readington Township, and eventually settled on a 121 acre farm given to William by his father, Frederick, on 18 May 1762. The land was located on the Old York Road, and next to his father's 206 acre "plantation".⁹⁰ As Frederick Van Vliet stipulated in his 1779 will that his son William already "hath had his full Divend of my Estate".⁴⁵ it may be that he gave him the 121 acre farm. By May 1778 William owned 143 acres, and was taxed

for this many acres by the Readington Township Assessor until January 1781.⁶⁴ At the time of the August 1785 assessment he was listed as owning 67 acres. Throughout this time he was also taxed for a saw mill, which was probably his livelihood at the time. His father's will that he be given "Two Large Augers" would also lend support to the fact that William operated a saw mill.

In January 1785 "William Vanfleet Senior" was described as a "Yeoman" of the "Township of Reading".⁹¹ The tax lists show him as the owner of horses, hogs and "horned cattle".⁶⁴ And at the time of his death, his estate also included "sheep With the Wool".⁹² A valuable "Sett of Wheelwrite Tools", also listed in his inventory, may indicate yet another occupation pursued by William.⁹²

In a constricted but firm hand, "william vanfleet" signed the *circa* 1755 petition requesting Governor Belcher to "restore Peace and Tranquility to the Province" during the French and Indian War. His signature is followed by that of his father and his brother Thomas.⁶² Though connected with the Reformed Church of Readington, on 25 August 1760 "William van Fleet Son of Fred" donated £1.0.3 toward the Church "Built at New = Channak".⁹³ Conversely, in 1776 and again about 1781 he signed a petition requesting that Casper Berger, of "Readingtown" be allowed to "Keep a Publick House or House of Entertainment."⁹⁴ From 1775 to 1784 William was a frequent customer at the Grandin Fulling Mill. Typical of the work done for him was that of 14 October 1782:

W^m Van fleet a Piece [of] gray Cloth to be
f^d [fulled] And made Coating for great Coats
24 yards

William Van Fleet had his material marked
for the Mill with the monogram ⁶¹

Though William Van Fleet lived at the time of the Revolutionary War, there is no indication that he served in the conflict. A William Van Fleet is known to have participated in the War,⁹⁵ however, as there were several of this same name, it is not certain as to which one was the soldier.⁹⁶

On 29 April, five days before his death,⁸⁴ "William Van Vleet of Readingtown" describing himself as "Very Sick and Weak in body", made his last will and testament. He gave his youngest son, Henry, "the plantation I Now Live upon", as well as "Tow Grey horses and brown breeding mare plough and Waggon Harrow [and] plasure Slay". He then ordered that the remainder of his estate be divided among the rest of his children, all named. William attempted to sign the instrument, but unable to write beyond the "Wi" of his name, he resorted to signing by mark. Interestingly, William made no provisions for his wife, Mary, who survived him by ten years.⁹²

William's oldest son, John, wrote in his Family Bible:
My father William Vanfleet Departed this life may
the 4 - 1798 at s[e]venty two y[e]ars old⁸⁴

The inventory of his estate was made on 25 May 1798, and in addition to the farm animals, there was listed the "Green Grain in the feild." Also inventoried were farm implements, household goods, "Wairing Apanel", and a "Number of Small Articles". A "Tobacco Box" and a "Barrel and box With Tobacco" may indicate that he smoked a pipe. The "Gun Sword powder horns a^d [and] bullet Moles [molds]" could mean that he was once in the military. And a pair of "spectacles" perhaps denotes that he had poor vision.⁹²

Mary Aten Van Fleet no doubt lived her remaining days with her son Henry, who inherited the homestead farm. She died 6 September 1808.⁸⁴

The children of William and Mary (Aten) VAN FLEET:

13. i. MARY, born 28 June 1749; married Michael Kenney.
14. ii. JOHN, born 12 October 1751; married Elizabeth Huff.
15. iii. JUDITH, born 20 April 1753; married Abraham Brokaw.
16. iv. WILLIAM, born 13 March 1755; married Ann Huff.
17. v. CATHARINE, born 14 May 1757; never married.
17. vi. ADRIAN, born 24 October 1759; married Elizabeth Switser.
18. vii. RACHEL, born 28 December 1761; married John Van Sickle.
18. viii. LEAH, born 26 June 1764; died 19 April 1860; never married.
19. ix. ELIZABETH, born 9 October 1766; married Peter Jennings.
20. x. HENRY, born 24 July 1769; married Dorothy Tumey.
21. xi. REBECCA, born 2 June 1774; married David Tumey.

[To be continued]

Fred Sisser, III

RESTORATION PROJECT ON DEATS GENEALOGICAL FILES

A \$5 contribution will defray costs for materials and xeroxing of an average family folder in the Deats Genealogical File restoration project. The Trustees gratefully acknowledge recent contributions for the following families.

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