

appearance. He has five children as follows: Mrs. Alonzo Best, Mrs. Harmon Vroman, Mrs. Addison Cornell, George A., and Charles W., the latter two occupying the old farm that has been in the Vroman family since 1711.

Although Mr. Vroman is naturally reserved, yet he is firm in his convictions, and free in his expressions of right, and in the community in which he resides, as in his family, is looked up to as a wise counsellor, generous neighbor and an unflinching patriot. It was Mr. Vroman's grandmother and youthful aunt that were murdered at the foot of the Onistagrawa by the Indian Seths Henry and his accomplice, Beacraft, the demoniac Tory. His father also was made to feel the vengeance of the unmerciful foe, in being their prisoner and forced to endure insults and hardships, which planted a hatred of Indians and Tories in the family breast that has been transmitted, and will be undoubtedly for several generations, and gave birth to a staunch patriotism that truly is undying.

CHAPTER XIV.

HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF MIDDLEBURGH.

BEAUTY OF SCENERY—THE MOUNTAINS—WEISER'S DORF—CONRAD WEISER—HIS DAUGHTER—JOHN PETER G. MUHLENBERG—HIS PATRIOTISM—CONRAD WEISER, JR.—INTERPRETER—SETTLERS OF THE DORF—RELICS OF THE PAST—REFORMED CHURCH—ITS EARLY HISTORY—EDIFICE REBUILT IN 1785—PETITION TO ASSEMBLY—OTHER PAPERS—PASTORS' REFORMED CHURCH—LUTHERAN CHURCH—METHODIST—EPISCOPAL—THE TRUE REFORMED CHURCH—MIDDLE FORT—DESCRIPTION—FIRING UPON THE FLAG—

ZIELIE FAMILY—FIRST ZIELIES IN THE VALLEY—FAMILY RELIC—COLONEL ZIELIE—HIS CHILDREN—PETER SWART—OLD CLOCK—LOW DUTCH BECKERS—BORST FAMILY—GRIST MILLS—LOUCK'S FAMILY—ECKERSON'S—FIRST MERCHANT—GRIST MILL—BELLINGER FAMILY—HARTMAN'S DORF—RICHTMYER FAMILY—REBUILDING OF THE VILLAGE—ALEXANDER BOYD—J. M. SCRIBNER—JOHN HINMAN—NATHAN HINMAN—BUILDING THE BRIDGE—JONATHAN DANFORTH—ATCHINSON HOUSE—FREEMIRE HOUSE—MERCHANTS—FREEMAN STANTON—JOHN P. BELLINGER—D. D. DODGE—TANNING—DANFORTH FAMILIES—GENERAL DANFORTH—PHYSICIANS—LEGAL FRATERNITY—HON. LYMAN SANFORD—NATIONAL BANK—MASONIC LODGE—I. O. G. TEMPLARS—G. A. R. POST—CORNET BAND—INCORPORATION—HUNTER'S LAND—SUPERVISORS—BOUNDARIES.

IN approaching Middleburgh village from Schoharie by the valley road, one is not so much impressed with the beauty of the scenery as when passing over the hill from the Cobleskill valley, by the way of the poorhouse, there is presented one of those placid landscapes, for which Schoharie County is noted. The broad well kept flats that stretch from the giant evergreen hills upon the west, to the sloping ones and the cliff on the east, are dotted here and there with spacious residences and out-buildings that bespeak the wealth and prosperity of the occupants, and present a winning picture of plenty and contentment. Old Mohegontee* stands out boldly as a terminus of a chain of picturesque hills, while Ocongona and Onistagrawa, in romantic contrast, look down upon the quiet scene below and give to the whole, grandeur and sublimity such as mountains only can give to rural sceneries. Upon their lofty summits and along their sides, the Aborigines of the country wandered for the deer, fox and

* Judge Brown, in his pamphlet history, gives the following names to the three mountains: Mohegan, Conegena and Onisto Graw.

bear, while at their bases was reared the wigwam, to which the first settlers of civilization in the valley, resorted for succor, in the winter of 1713, when they sought the "promised land" as refugees from the toils which selfish officials had woven to entrap them and make them unwilling servants to a monied aristocracy.

Here where the pleasant village now stands, the "seditious" Conrad Weiser made a choice for his settlement, which alone was evidence enough that he was not as ignorant as tradition and royal officials have represented him to be.

By consulting the second chapter of this work, we find that during the land difficulties, Weiser and his followers left the valley and settled in Pennsylvania about the year 1722. There the old man died and was buried a few miles from Reading, within a plot of ground marked out by himself. He was a prominent man in his neighborhood, and much esteemed by all who knew him. His daughter, Anna Maria, married Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg, D. D., the founder of the Lutheran church in America.

John Peter Gabriel Muhlenberg was a son who gave to the world a glorious example of true patriotism.

He was educated for the ministry and ordained in the year 1768, and at the outbreak of the Revolution, was stationed at Woodstock, Virginia. Of him, Lossing in his Field-book of the Revolution, says:—

"In 1774 he was chairman of the committee of safety in his county, and was also elected a member of the House of Burgesses. At the close of 1775, he was elected colonel of a Virginia regiment when he laid aside his pastoral character. In concluding his farewell sermon, he said, that in the language of Holy Writ, 'There was a time for all things; a time to preach, and a time to pray, but those times had passed away,' and then, in a voice that echoed like a trumpet-blast through the church, he said 'that there was a time to fight, and that time had now come!' Then laying aside his sacerdotal gown, he stood before his flock in the full regimental dress of a Virginia Colonel. He ordered the drums to be beaten at the church door for recruits, and almost his entire male audience that were capable of bearing arms joined

his standard. Nearly three hundred men enlisted under his banner on that day. He was in the battle at Charlestown, in 1776, and served with fidelity in the Southern campaign that year. Congress promoted him to the rank of Brigadier-General, in February, 1777, and he was ordered to take charge of all the Continental troops of the Virginia line in that State. He joined the army of Washington, and was with him in all his movements until the year 1779. By the close of that year he was again ordered to take command of the Virginia troops, and was active until the attack of Cornwallis at Yorktown. At the close of the war he was elevated to the rank of Major-General. He removed to Pennsylvania, and in various civil capacities served the State. He was a member of the first and third Congresses, and in 1801 was elected a United States Senator. The same year he was appointed supervisor of the internal revenue of Pennsylvania, and in 1802 was made collector of the port of Philadelphia. He remained in that office until his death, which occurred at his country-seat near Philadelphia, on the first of October (his birthday), 1807, at the age of sixty-one years."

John Conrad, Sr., was an Indian interpreter and agent and was succeeded by his son, John Conrad, whom it will be remembered was tutored as an interpreter while living here, for which Adam Vroman made a charge against his father to Governor Hunter in 1715. Young Weiser was employed by the government for many years as such, and was often in company with Washington in making treaties with the Indians. Tradition says that when Washington was enroute as President of the United States, to the city of New York, he traveled many miles out of his way to visit the grave of his much esteemed friend.

We find the descendants of the Weiser family quite numerous and occupying prominent positions; and when we look upon the life of General Muhlenberg we cannot but believe that the spirit of Weiser was inherited by him, which was called "rebellious, seditious and obstinate, and an outgrowth of ignorance," when the family lived at the camps and in the Schoharie valley. It is to such spirits we are indebted for our po-

litical and religious liberties, and upon which oppression has always tried to trample.

We might with propriety here state that all of the descendants of the followers of Weiser, were true patriots in the Revolution without a single exception to our knowledge.

There was one of the Beckers that removed with Weiser, whose last heir it has been supposed, died several years ago leaving a vast property which has remained without an ownership since, but it is a mistake, as the family now living near Philadelphia are more numerous than those of the Schoharie settlement to-day. The progenitor was of the High Dutch family and brother of Johannes, who settled on Fox's creek.

When the Germans came to the valley there were a small number of Mohegans living to the north of the confluence of the Little Schoharie, with the main stream. There could not have been many, yet it must have been in their hospitable wigwams they found shelter after their dreary march through the deep snow, from Livingston's manor. This portion of the Schoharie tribe dwindled away to a few in number, and the land they occupied was taken by the Zielies and Eckersons as early as 1730, and perhaps earlier. The Indians gave way as the whites increased, and at last congregated at and near the castle in Vromansland where they were in 1750, with the exception of a few straggling ones, found here and there along the streams. Queen Anne had directed implements of all kinds to be sent from England with the Germans, but it cannot be supposed Weiser and his followers were allowed to share in them since they mutinied and left the Camps, "against repeated orders," but were forced to depend upon their ingenuity and that of the Indians in building without them, and when spring came, to plant for a better subsistence than "roots and herbs."

Although they were destitute for a while, it was not long before they managed to obtain the necessary utensils to till the ground and build their huts and from the tenor of Adam Vroman's letter to Governor Hunter, bearing date July, 1715, they had horses, and that they drove them upon his grain in the night, beside "tied bells upon their necks and drove them

to and fro." Judge Brown tells us, "nine of them owned the first horse, which was a gray," but we find in little over two years after they settled here, they had "horses." Perhaps the Judge had not reference to Weiser and his clan, but to those who came after by the way of Albany and the Helleberg, and settled lower down the valley, but his dates correspond nearer to this settlement, yet in them he is inaccurate. Weiser located to the east of the present Methodist church, and we are fully convinced after a careful study of the matter, that another settlement was made by his immediate followers to the west, where the Reformed church now stands. It may and may not have been directly under his charge as "list master" or business man, it matters not. There was a settlement made, but there being so many people upon a small space of ground the settlement broke up in a few years, as Hartman's dorf did, for broader fields, that each could ply their vocations as farmers, principally, more extensive. That together with Weiser's, proper, and Hartman's, made three settlements within a distance of less than two miles, and contained at least one hundred and sixty families according to tradition and documents heretofore copied. Thus the practical reader will see at once that they could not subsist without great inconvenience, and would, as soon as possible, divide and settle upon farms. They did so, and by the year 1730 the whole valley was, as far down as the Island opposite of the present village of Sloansville, taken up by them and new comers, and under a fair state of cultivation. Many that came with the first parties, removed to the Mohawk, while others from there came here, especially during the land troubles. They were for the first few years a very uneasy people, and made it so for those around them. Not only for Adam Vroman, but for the Indians, and officials both district and colonial. They firmly believed they were to be entrapped by land sharks, and were not far from right, and finding they could not obtain a "redress of their grievances," many of them left the valley for ever, which satisfied the honorable government officials that it was better to give way to many of their foibles, especially than lose "so valuable an acquisition to the frontier," which was experienced by those

lar organized services, as at present, but perhaps they brought their organization with them from Germany. Their first religious proceedings were not recorded, as a general thing and if at all, they were kept in a rude unbusiness-like manner, and became lost. As we intimated before, we have faint light to guide us in the early history of the church.

Corwin's Manual says, Hendrick Hager preached in Schoharie between 1711 and 1717 as a missionary. Undoubtedly he came as soon as a settlement was formed, and appearing among a people who were religious by birth, he formed or re-formed an organization among them. There being a deep enmity existing between the Germans and their Holland neighbors, at that time, and for several years we are led to believe the latter were not admitted in their society, but numbering several families, and being also a religious people, they held meetings in their own neighborhood, and perhaps formed an organization. Upon the coming of the Zielie and Eckerson families, who settled among the Germans, and the removal of Weiser and his excitable followers, a friendly feeling was courted and in the course of a few years, the High and Low Dutch worshipped together, and when a new church edifice was to be built, they united in the erection of it. A few years later the Low Dutch gained the entire control of it, and the High Dutch society was consumed by them. It was after, or when the Low Dutch began to control or obtain a foot-hold, that the dates of 1732 and 1733, which we have relating to the church, began to appear, which has given the impression the church was then formed. Thus, regardless of which branch was first formed, since they merged into one, and this settlement being of at least five years the senior of Fox's dorf, the present Reformed church must be the parent church of the valley.

Through the politeness to present, and care to preserve, Mr. Hiram Zielie, of Webster City, Iowa, a grandson of Martinus Zielie, has furnished us with a few facts as recorded in his Grandfather's Low Dutch Bible. Upon the fly-leaf it says, "Our new brick church was dedicated on December the 18th day, 1737. Text from the Acts of the Apostles, 7th Chap. 47 to 50th verses inclusive. Rev. Dominic Snider Preacher."

Tradition has told us the building was of stone, and "built after the model of the ancient Dutch church in Albany, with a steeple rising from the center, but reference was had to the Fox's dorf church in the style of building. From French's history we learn that Johannes Schaffer, Hendrick, Conradt, and Johannes Ingold, sold fourteen acres of land to Jonas LeRoy and Peter Spies for the support of the Middle church on January 3, 1737.

Now the question is, was it a High or Low Dutch church originally. It is thought by many to have been the latter. We are of the opinion that it was the former, from the fact that if it had been a Low Dutch, the building would have been placed upon the Low Dutch ground, upon which the present church stands. Without doubt both branches worshipped within the same building at this time.

The ground upon which the building was placed, was that, or a part of it, which was the "bone of contention" between the Palatines, Schuyler and others who purchased it of Hunter in 1714. It will be remembered the Germans refused to quit the land or to pay rent. They built their houses upon it, and the church also, and did not receive a title of the church property until years after. By a quit-claim deed now in the possession of Henry Cady, bearing date the "18th of June, in the twenty-sixth year of His Majesty's reign, Anno Domini, one thousand seven hundred and fifty-three, for the sum of Five shillings current money of New York," twenty-seven acres of land were conveyed by Myndert Schuyler, Margaret Livingston, Philip Livingston, Philip Schuyler and Johannes Bough (Bouck,) of Albany, to Johannes Schuyler, minister; Bartholomew Vroman, Josias Swart and Thomas Eckerson, elders; Johannes Becker, Jun., rector; O. Zielie and David Laroway, deacons; for church purposes. The land was divided into small lots, and many of them are still owned by the church, being leased to the occupants at a yearly rental. As the Reformed church at Schoharie was organized as a "High Dutch," and soon wafted over to the control of Low Dutch, so we think it was the case with this organization. The Low Dutch found here, among whom were the Vromans, Zielies, Beckers and the Holland Ecker-

Also the charter bearing date, 21st of October, 1797, which is upon parchment, and signed by "Rynier VanNese, minister; Pieter Zielie, Adam Vroman, Jacob Hager, and Peter Swart, elders; John A. Becker, John P. Becker, Martinus Vroman, Jr., and Johannes Hager, deacons." There are also others, many of which are written in Dutch.

Pastors of the Reformed Church.—As the first records of the church are lost, it is impossible to arrive at any accuracy in regard to them. The "Reformed Church Manual" gives the date of organization, 1732, and it may be correct, but we have our doubts, and believe light will yet be given to prove it an error. It also says the first pastor was Schuyler (Johannes,) who was the Schoharie Reformed pastor from 1736, to 1755, and again from 1766, to his death. We have found through the Zielie Bible, Dominie Snyder was the preacher at the dedication, and by tradition coming through the Eckerson family, that Snyder was the first resident pastor of this church. Ministers were not plenty at that day, and if Schuyler was, or was to be the regular pastor, we think he would have performed the service. If we were to make the list of pastors, it would be headed with Henry Hager,* from 1713 to 1720, also John Frederick Hager, and John Jacob Ehle and George Weiss, as missionaries, until the pastorate of Dominie Snyder commenced, in 1732, and perhaps earlier. Between this date and 1763, this church, as did the Schoharie and others, ranged itself with the "Dutch Reformed church," to form an "American Ecclesiastical Indicatory."

During Schuyler's first pastorate at Schoharie, we think Dominie Snyder officiated here, and may have been the High Dutch minister, as it is said by many of the old families, that they were told by their aged grandparents, that Snyder was here a long term of years. If Schuyler preached here within that period, he doubtless preached to the Low Dutch branch, but we think Snyder was the regular minister, and both High and Low Dutch worshipped together at this time. Upon Schuyler's re-call at Schoharie, in 1766, he then took charge of this church, in connection, and officiated until his death, in

* Corwin's Manual.

1778. If Schuyler had charge of this church from 1736 to 1755, and the connection between the two churches continued, then Johannes Mauritinus Goetchins labored here from 1757, to 1760, Abraham Rosenkrantz to 1765, and followed here by Schuyler, in 1766. Schuyler dying in 1778, a young man officiated occasionally, by the name of Schneyder, until the invasion of Johnson and Brant, when the people were so thrown in confusion and poverty, that church matters stood still until peace was proclaimed. The next and first resident pastor was Rynier VanNess, from Long Island, who remained to the coming of DeVoe, in 1808, who preached. The latter remained to the year 1815, and from that to the present time we will accept the list given in the Manual.

1816-1827—J. F. Schermehorn.

1827-1833—J. Garretson.

1834-1838—J. B. Steele.

1840-1842—Joshua Boyd.

1842-1845—L. Messerreau, Presbyterian Sunday school.

1845-1852—Jacob West.

1852-1854—I. M. See.

1855-1863—E. Vedder.

1863 —W. E. Bogardus.

1863-1870—John L. Lott, D. D.

1870-1876—Sanford W. Roe, D. D.

1876-1880—J. S. Gardner.

1880 —Elbert N. Sebring, present pastor.

The church at the present time, is one of the leading ones of the County in earnest interest, liberality, and promptness of duty to all religious demands, without that boisterous display that is so often practiced by many of our modern churches, and which reverts the desired and intended aim. The membership numbers one hundred and fifteen, among whom are many of the leading families of the community, who take a just pride in the ancient organization and church edifice. The exterior of the building is the same as when first built, with the exception of a portion of the steeple which was remodeled in a measure in 1813, when the first bell was purchased and placed within it. The interior has been changed at different times, to suit the changing taste of the acting generations, and has lost nearly all of its originality, except in the

the church's spirit and consists of one hundred and twenty-five teachers and scholars.

The Methodist Church.—The Methodist Church edifice is the largest and most costly structure for divine worship in the County.

While this society's existence has been short in comparison with the Reformed and Lutheran, yet its present prosperous condition exhibits the energy and spirit that is so becoming in the laborers of the "vineyard."

The first notice of an organization was read by Rev. John W. Dennison in the school house of District No. 7, of this town on the 1st day of December, of 1832, and on the 9th of the same month the following were elected trustees:

Malachi Potter,
Anthony Engle,
Peter W. Mann,
James Sternberg,
Harvey Watson.

An edifice was built at the head of Main street in the same year, which became too small for the congregation, and which forced the society to build the present structure in 1875, at a cost of thirty five thousand dollars. Through the labors and courtesy of Rev. James L. Atwell, the present pastor, we find the records complete. Among them is a list of the Presiding Elders of the Albany District, since the year 1832. As a goodly share of the County is in his jurisdiction, under the Methodistical system we will here give them, with the year in which they presided.

1832-1835—Henry Stead.
1836-1839—Miner Sherman.
1840-1843—Charles Sherman.
1844-1847—Ephraim Gorse.
1848 —John Lindsey died.
John Clark was elected to fill vacancy and remained till 1851.
1852-1855—Truman Seymour.
1856-1859—Henry L. Starks.
1860-1863—William Griffin, D. D.
1864-1867—Rodman H. Robinson.
1868-1871—Samuel Meredith.
1872-1875—Chester F. Burget.
1876-1879—Homer Eaton, D. D.
1880 —J. L. Sawyer, present incumbent.

The pastors of the congregation have been as follows:—

1832—John Harlam and John Dennison.
1833—William Ames.
1834—James R. Goodrich.
1835—Roswell Kelly and Henry Williams.
1836—Roswell Kelly and Henry Burton.
1837-1838—Henry Coleman and Peter W. Smith.
1839—Henry Williams, Valentine Brown and Joseph Crouse.
1840-1841—Hiram Chase.
1842—David Poor, Isaac DeVoe.
1843—David Poor, Charles Gilbert.
1844—Amos Osborne,
1845-1846—Madley Witherell.
1847-1848—Charles E. Giddings.
1849-1850—John W. Belknap.
1851-1852—Charles DeVoe.
1853-1854—Bishop Isbell.
1855-1856—J. D. Burnham.
1857-1858—Selah W. Brown.
1859-1860—John Pegg.
1861-1862—William Clark.
1863-1864—Horace L. Grant.
1865-1866-1867—Jeremiah S. Hart.
1868-1869—Aaron D. Heaxt.
1870-1871—James B. Wood.
1872-1874—John A. Savage.

The foregoing officiated in the old church while the following have officiated in the new.

1875 —Sylvester W. Clemins.
1876-1877—Charles F. Noble.
1878-1880—John L. Atwell, present pastor.

The class-leaders are at present (1881):

H. D. Wells, M. D.,
S. Requa,
John H. Cornell,
L. D. Mann,
E. Winegar,
John Avery,
M. Rickard.

The trustees are:—

H. D. Wells, M. D.,
Almerin Cornell,
J. H. Malory,
G. E. Borst,
W. H. Albro.

pastor. Henry and Marcus Bellinger, of Sharon, were the main pastors, in connection with other churches scattered around the eastern part of the State. The latter gentleman, a short time previous to his death, in a conversation with the writer, claimed this charge as a monument of his labors in the cause of Christ. While their strict Calvinistic doctrines are looked upon as peculiar by the majority of the Biblical scholars of the nineteenth century, we find large congregations here and there that closely adhere to them and hold a power but little realized by those of unlike religious sentiments.

Middle Fort.—We have thus given considerable space to the affairs relating to the Reformed church, as the organization is the oldest landmark in the town, and around the history of which there has been a cloud of doubts. We will now turn to the next object of interest, the old Fort, which recalls the stirring events of the Revolution and awakens a deep, deserving pride of patriotic ancestry.

The portion of the building that remains was the wing or kitchen part of Johannes Becker's mansion, and was first barricaded with rails and timbers, to serve as a fort on the threatened invasion of Captain McDonald and Crysler in August, 1777. The militia and continental soldiers that assembled here upon that day marched up the valley to meet the foe, as stated in Chapter III, and the miniature fort was not utilized upon the occasion, except to shelter the patriots upon their return. Being centrally situated and in the midst of a prosperous farming section, when the authorities located buildings for defense, later in the fall of 1777, this house was chosen and made as impregnable as their means and material would allow. By looking over the ground, and bearing in mind the number of citizens and soldiers that frequently assembled here, besides what tradition tells us, there must have been nearly three acres enclosed within the pickets.

The barn belonging to the farm was enclosed and stood about ten rods to the east of the house and was used as barracks for the soldiers together with another building built for the same purpose to the south of it. The citizens built

huts for their own accommodation within the enclosure, and to them they resorted each night for safety. By the side of the house, which was about thirty by fifty and joined the wing on the south, was a staging or cupola that overlooked the valley and in which the patriots stood upon the eventful 17th of October, and directed their death dealing missiles in the enemy's ranks. "Upon the Northeast and Southwest corners of the enclosure," says author Simms, "were block-houses where cannons were mounted." "A brass nine-pound cannon was mounted on the southwest and an iron one at the diagonal corner, each of which as the block houses projected, commanded two sides of the inclosure."

An oven was built in which forty loaves of bread could be baked at a time, and in which, weekly, were put the neighborhood's bakings. An old lady tells us, her mother looked back to the time spent in the old fort with the most pleasing recollection. We have numbered no less than ten marriages that tradition tells us were contracted here between the sturdy soldiery and the buxom, warm-hearted girls that necessity compelled to remain a goodly share of the time at the fort. Here we may say that a better opportunity of selecting a "help meet" could not be presented, and a better class to select from was not to be found. It is a fact worthy to be brought to notice that the girls and women of those days were, exceptionally, robust, vigorous, healthy, and through the teachings of their religious mothers, conscientious to a fault, tidy and industrious, affable and exemplary. Beneath the present building was the magazine that was so faithfully guarded by Colonel Vroman upon the day of battle, and which held such a meagre supply of powder that the Colonel was fearful of the consequences in letting his men know the fact.

He stood firm and dealt it out himself, saying each time, "there is plenty left"—"fire away and make each shot count!" When we consider the strength of the foe, at least four to one—and the destitution of the garrison, powder, bullets and nearly everything, we cannot but admire the patriot's courage and fortitude there displayed, and not wonder at the fears Major Woolsey entertained of making an effort to oppose the blood-thirsty foe. But they were

When Woolsey reprimanded him for so doing Murphy shouted "You be damned." When the act was repeated by Murphy he swore he would blow "his (Woolsey's) damned brains out before the flag should enter."

When Zielie fired upon the flag, he did so by Murphy's order, the latter withheld his own to repel the Major if he made an attempt to carry his threat of "running them through" with his sword if they repeated the act. The second time the flag advanced, Murphy was maddened to a high pitch and fired upon it himself, at the same time daring Woolsey to attempt to execute his threat. By the side of Murphy and Zielie stood Elerson and Bartholomew Vroman, either of whom would have dispatched the Major if he had attempted to injure Murphy. Martinus Zielie died near Auburn, N. Y., November 2, 1833, in the eighty-ninth year of his age. His children removed to Wisconsin and Iowa, and ever regretted, as they had a right to, the absence of the father's name in history in connection with the events of the 17th of October, 1780.

Zielie Family and House.—At what particular time the Zielie family came to the Schoharie valley, we are unable to learn for a certainty, but at some time previous to 1732. They were Hollanders, and children of Peter Zielie and Cornelia Dawen, who first settled upon Long Island, at a very early date. We find two brothers, Peter and David, who came to the valley about the year 1725, were the first ones bearing the name in Schoharie. Peter married Anna Ackerson the 4th of June, 1724, and David married Engeltie Vroman, daughter of Peter, as noticed in Chapter XIII. The former had ten children and the latter seven.

The property the family possessed lay around the present old stone house, called the "Zielie house," and during the Revolution, it was in the possession of Peter U, (sometimes written Peter W.), and afterwards became the property of his brother, Johannes. When Johnson and Brant's forces came in sight of the village, the Zielie family were at home, and each member hastily caught up some article of furniture, and ran to the fort. An old negro, then a slave, belonging to the family, took down a looking-glass he knew

was highly prized by them, it having been brought from Holland many years before, and ran for dear life. Being rather clumsy, he tripped, fell upon the glass and cracked it. It was preserved, however, and fell into the hands of Martinus Zielie, brother of Peter, above mentioned, and upon his removal to Cayuga county, and his children to the distant west, it was taken along, and now can be seen at the home of Hiram Zielie, a grandson of Martinus, in Webster City, Iowa. The glass fell from the frame a few years ago, and broke in several pieces, but the largest was placed in a neat oval frame, and is much prized by the family. Colonel Peter W. Zielie, was the Peter U. above referred to, and lived after the war upon the farm now occupied by Hezekiah Swart. He had but two children, both daughters. Cornelia married Johannes Becker, son of Johannes, the owner of the stone fort. Upon the death of Mr. Becker, by drowning, she married VanEpps. The other daughter, Elizabeth, married Tunis Swart. Not having a son, the Colonel adopted his nephew, Peter Swart, the father of Mrs. J. M. Scribner, the late Tunis Swart, of Schoharie, and Peter Z. Swart, Mrs. George Danforth, and Mrs. Benoni Spafford. The old German clock, owned by Colonel Zielie, is now in the possession of Mrs. Scribner, and is a relic of great worth. Its movements are as "good as new," after a continued use of at least, one hundred and twenty-five years, if not one hundred and fifty. It was recased, as were many others in the valley, by one "Vogel," who was a dealer in clocks, (and undoubtedly the first "jeweler" in the valley,) for many and long years ago. The Low Dutch Beckers, of Middleburgh, the Zielies, Swarts, Eckerson and Vroman families, became wonderfully mixed up in marriage, as will be seen by noticing each family lineage. These families were, in early times, the aristocrats of the valley, having come here with abundant means; but through the losses occasioned by Indian and Tory invasions, they were reduced to a level with their German neighbors, which, doubtless mitigated in a measure, the ill feeling that was early sown and nourished towards each other.

The Borst Family.—Besides the families already mentioned, that were early settlers, and

Cornelius, Andrew and William. Cornelius settled in Sharon, and the other brothers in this town. Andrew was the chorister in the Lutheran church at Schoharie, to whom Author Simms referred, and his children were Jeremiah, William and Mrs. William P. Loucks, of Sharon. Jeremiah was in the fort upon the 18th of October, and received a wound upon the head. He was the father of Henry J. Loucks, who resides upon the parental farm at the present time. William the brother retained the old place and was the father of the present owner and occupant, John P. Loucks. William, the brother of Andrew the singer, was an inveterate Tory as were the most of his family. He lived nearly opposite of Henry J. Loucks' present residence. His children were Andrew and Peter, of Sharon, Jeremiah of Middleburgh, and Mrs. John Ingold, Jr., of Schoharie. His children by his second wife were John W., Jacob, Henry, William W., David, Mrs. Storm Becker and Mrs. William Borst. The sons nearly all settled in Sharon.

When Johnson invaded the valley in 1780, all of the Loucks' buildings were burned with the exception of William's, which proved to be a resting place and supply station for Indians and prowling Tories throughout the war. There were quite a number of families in this neighborhood that sympathized with the Crown, and gave needed assistance to the enemy.

The Eckerson Family. First Merchants and Millers.—At some time previous to 1700, three brothers came to America from Holland, Thomas, Cornelius and John Eckerson. They brought with them, the family tradition says, a cargo of goods, but were shipwrecked when near New York harbor and lost them all. Being of a wealthy family they were again supplied with goods and traded in New York City for a while, when John settled upon Long Island, and Thomas and Cornelius wandered to the Schoharie valley and settled at Weiser's dorf, when quite advanced in years. We think their settlement here was about the year 1725, at least as early as that date. They engaged in trade, building a brick store upon the grounds now occupied by the residence of Dr. Linas Wells and a residence nearly opposite. The buildings stood at

the time of the invasion of Colonel Johnson, and were burned. Whether the settlers manufactured the bricks used in these buildings and the church built in 1737, or not, we are unable to say, but undoubtedly did, as to cart them from Albany or Schenectady, would have been a very tedious job, beside being expensive as they had not the roads, or necessary wagons etc., to transfer such heavy articles without great labor and untold inconveniences. As they had other tradesmen it is quite likely they had brick-makers.

Cornelius Eckerson was unmarried, but Thomas was fortunate at least in a financial point of view as well as in influence, to marry the daughter of a wealthy man and government official. His children were four sons and four daughters, namely, Thomas, Cornelius, Tunis, John, Agnes, Mrs. Henry Becker, who settled at Prattsville, Elizabeth, (Mrs. John Zielie,) Maria, (Mrs. Martinus Zielie) and Anna, (Mrs. Silas Gray, of Johnstown,) whose husband was a Colonel of the Revolution, stationed part of the time at the "middle fort." All of these children, tradition tells us, were married during the war.

Thomas Jr., as he will hereafter be called, married Margaret Slingerland, of Albany. The Eckersons were a business family, and were connected with all branches of industry that were started in the valley, as well as foremost in the church. The first mill at this place was built by them, and we find they possessed the present site of Steven's mill, near the stone fort at Schoharie, at an early date, and we think built the one that stood there in the Revolution. They were large land-holders, and when the Revolution commenced, were very wealthy for people of the frontier. Thomas Jr., was commissioned Major, and proved a loyal and efficient officer. Through some unknown cause, many of the descendants of this family have changed the name somewhat, by dropping the *son*, and writing only Ecker, while others go still farther, and drop the *E*, and supply with *A*, making it *Acker*.

Rev. R. Randal Hoes, a descendant of the family, says: "The founder of the family in this country was Jan Thomaszen, of New York City. About the year 1692, he assumed the surname Eckerson, which was retained by his chil-

knives that were nearly destroyed by rust, but of sufficient form to give an idea of their "style" and workmanship. One that undoubtedly has many times divided the venison "steak" and quartered many smoking johnny-cakes for the hungry Palatine, is yet in a good state of preservation, and proves to be of superior temper. The blade is short and narrow, and plainly shows it was a "home-made" article, as well as the spoon. Those relics are of great value, as they are all that is left of the utensils used by the settlers of Hartman's dorf. Several old apple tree stumps still remain that were, according to Judge Brown, the first trees planted in Schoharie.

The Bellinger brothers assure us that the first wheat sown or planted in the County was in the lot between the barn and highway.

Judge Brown says, in referring to Garlock's dorf:—"Here was an Indian Castle, though on the west side of the Schoharie creek, in which Lambert Sternbergh raised the first wheat that was ever raised in Schoharie." It is evident that Garlock's dorf was not settled as early as this dorf, that it was at least five years its junior, and it is not at all probable that the settlers were five, four, or three years in the valley before they experimented on the raising of wheat. If we are to believe that wheat was first raised at Garlock's, we are also to believe it was planted within the pickets of the castle, as stated, but when we consider that the castle was not built until after 1750, it will be seen that the Judge was in error. Lambert Sternbergh may have planted the first wheat, but was a resident of this dorf, and when Kneiskern's dorf was formed in 1728 and 1729, removed there and occupied in part the land upon which the castle was afterwards built, but previous to the removal, hundreds of bushels of wheat must have been raised yearly in the valley. The Judge was misinformed or misunderstood in this case, and without doubt the Bellinger tradition that has been handed down from one generation to another is correct.

The amount of wheat received from a skipple (one peck) planted, was eighty-three, as told by Brown and the Bellinger tradition showing that the same "planting" and result of harvesting was referred to by both.

But two families that first settled here remain upon the original ground. The Rickard or Rickert family is one, and was quite numerous in that day. As before stated, one family settled upon the Reformed church grounds and removed to Brunnen dorf with the Schaeffer's. One at least wandered to Pennsylvania with Weiser, and the other settled in this dorf near the mountain. Each family from that day to the present have been independent of each other and long years ago were referred to as the Hartman Rickerts, and Fountaintown Reckerts, and each at the present time trace their ancestry back to those dorfs, and still claim relationship.

The Bellinger Family.—Among the first settlers of this town, was a Bellinger family. Three bearing that name, came over in 1710, whose names were Frederick, Henry, and Marcus, and settled upon lands now owned by John I., David and William J. Bellinger. One of the three settled upon the Mohawk, below Spraker's Basin, and one where Utica now stands. Marcus remained here and had one son, Johannes, from whom sprang the present Bellingers of the County. The sons of Johannes were Marcus, Peter and John. The latter settled in Sharon, Peter upon the Cobleskill, and Marcus retained the old homestead in Hartman's Dorf. He was Supervisor of "Schoharie" from 1767 to 1796, through all the forms of government that were in force during those years. His sons were Henry, the father of the present Marcus, and John M., the father of the present brothers that occupy the original homestead as before intimated. His children are David, William J., John I., Alexander, Mrs. Alexander Bouck, and Mrs. Philip Richtmyer. Each one of the children had large families, and with few exceptions, their descendants possess large estates, it being characteristic of the family to accumulate wealth.

The three that came across the ocean, were brothers and young men, and in after years, we find these Mohawk and Sharon Bellingers intermarried.

David, John I., and William J., living upon the east side of the creek, are sons of John M., and the lands upon which they reside, have been in the possession of the family at least one hundred and sixty-eight years.

Mrs. Christian Richtmyer was in the "middle fort" the day of Johnson's invasion, and feeling indisposed—undoubtedly through fear—she lay upon one of her feather-beds that was taken there for safety—in the attic. As the bombs flew over the house she became frightened, and while descending the stairs, the bomb that hustled Rickard out of his retreat also tore open the bed she had just left, and scattered the feathers around the room. The same bed is now in the Loucks family, and through a machine renovation but a short time since, was made as "good as new."

Rebuilding of the village.—Having referred to settlers and matters of dates before and during the war, let us consider the re-building of the village, and the changes made by the onward march of intelligence.

As we have already stated, the people were made poor by the war, we may say with propriety, except in land. That remained, uninjured, but stripped of all improvements, and still theirs by title, yet they were poor, as a class, not having anything with which to bear the expenses of re-building. The Eckersons re-built a mansion and store. The store was abandoned and the "Inn" only, continued by the family. In 1811, one Watkins was the proprietor, and was followed successively by Dewitt & Knowlton. The building was chiefly built of the brick that was in the first storehouse that stood upon Dr. Linas Wells' grounds, and was burnt by Johnson. Many of the same were used in the construction of Dr. Henry Wells' present residence, and the Zielie's, the present store-house near the site of the old village. The Low Dutch being in control of the Reformed church, they superintended the erection of the edifice and placed it upon the grounds purchased by them in 1737, for the support of the "Low Dutch church of Middletown and Schoharie." Having thus erected the church near the creek, the settlement naturally drew towards it and in a few years quite a village was formed around it.

Michael Borst built an inn to the north of the church, that was for many years a terror to the moral part of the community. The present residence of Mrs. John M. Scribner was built soon after 1790 by Michael Borst, as a first class

residence, and still stands as a creditable relic of the march, progress made, after peace and freedom spread their exhilarating influences over the valley. Immediately after the war closed, Alexander Boyd came to the place and engaged in business and proved to be a very energetic and useful man. He was born in Philadelphia, of Irish parentage, and while a young man located in Albany and came from that city to this place. He labored for the Eckerson's on the mill for a while, and about the year 1800, built a mill where William and Peter Borst's mill now stands. The old building yet stands and is used as a wagon house by the Borst Brothers.

Mr. Boyd was quite a politician, as we find him in 1813 to 1815 in Congress, and at different times holding local offices, and we may here mention the fact that during the campaign of General Jackson's second election, Mr. Boyd was considered the most obstinate man in the County. Colonel William Dietz, of Schoharie, was upon the Electoral ticket and the County endeavored to give the largest majority, according to numbers, of any county in the State. Middleburgh was to do her best and upon election day gave every vote cast in the town for Dietz, with but one exception. Alexander Boyd refused to desert his Federal principles for etiquette, and cast his ballot for Henry Clay. Among papers in the possession of Henry Cady we find the following, penned by Boyd, bearing date March 5, 1822:—

"For value received I promise to deliver unto Peter Vrooman a Good new Iron Shod two horse wagon on or before the first of August next as witnessed my hand

ALEXANDER BOYD."

Wagons at that time for farm use were made with and without a tire. The first "iron shod" wagon wheels were made by bolting the tire on in sections instead of being welded together as now. He built the grist-mill at Cobleskill in 1830 and engaged in all kinds of business in which profit was to be gained. The wife of Jehiel Larkin, of Sloansville, is a daughter of Mr. Boyd and we believe the only member of the family in the County. Mr. Boyd hired workmen to manufacture wagons and did a heavy business for those times. But very few light

them. The venerable H. H. Marsellus, upon taking the school, was more humane and handed his name down in grateful remembrance by adopting the "toe the crack and stoop over" penalty.

Nathan P. Hinman was born in the village and entered the law office of William H. Engle, and after that of Sanford & Danforth. Upon being admitted to the bar he formed a connection with Major Houck, at Schoharie village, which ceased upon the death of that gentleman. He remained alone until his brother was admitted, when a co-partnership was formed and continued to the year 1872, when Nathan withdrew and removed to Albany City, where he is now located. Mr. Hinman beside being well read in law and possessing a keen perception, is without doubt the most natural orator that has graced the Schoharie County bar. His language is plain, free from inflated expression, and comes with such unusual ease and fluency as to win interest, and with such fervency as to excite, which, coupled with sagacious reasoning through a pleasing voice, makes him a force before a jury or audience that brother professionals find hard to overcome.

BUILDING OF THE MIDDLEBURGH BRIDGE.

Upon the building of the bridge in 1813, the village that was in two parts began to connect by the erection of a portion of the present Atchinson House and others, whose ancient appearance bespeak the date of their erection. Stores and inns occupied the open space, and as each year rolled around we find additions were made until the ancient High Dutch and more youthful Low Dutch villages were united. By an act of the Legislature in 1813, William C. Bouck, Thomas P. Danforth, Peter Swart, John Gebhard, Peter Swart, Jr., and Peter Shafer, Jr., were made a corporate body for the building of the bridge. During that season the work was commenced but the structure was not finished until the year 1819. Thomas P. Danforth became the owner and his heirs still hold the property, from which a paying dividend is yearly realized.

The turnpike known as the "Loonenbergh road," running through the village, and built by

legislative act of 1802, was built by issuing stock certificates, of which Mr. Danforth purchased the controlling influence. For long years the turnpike was called "Paine Danforth's road," and over its bed a vast amount of business has been done. The old bridge, and other structures that span the stream, are monuments of honest workmanship. Sixty-eight years of constant use have passed away—many rushing floods passed through its arches, with the power and strength equalled only by the hand of the Omnipotent that ruled them, and yet, we find the old bridge still firm as a rock.

Danforth.—About the year 1793, Jonathan Danforth, from Connecticut, settled here after a short sojourn in the city of Albany. Upon the formation of the County in 1795, he was appointed one of the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas. He had two sons, George and Thomas Paine. The former studied law and after a successful practice, died in Savannah, Ga. The late General George E. Danforth and ex-Judge Peter S., were sons. Thomas P. Danforth was appointed Assistant Judge of Common Pleas in 1823, and was father of the Dr. Volney Danforth and John J., who removed to Amsterdam and died without heirs, in the year 1830.

Engle.—Martinus Engle settled upon the Bouck Brothers' present farm soon after the Revolution, and was succeeded by Anthony Engle, of Berne, Albany county, who was the progenitor of the present Engle family of the town with the exception of William H. Engle, who is a nephew of Anthony.

Atchinson House.—Immediately after business began to be brisk upon the road, Daniel Dodge built an inn which is a portion of the Atchinson House. Mr. Dodge dying, the property was occupied by Cyrus Smith, who was afterwards elected Sheriff of the County (1840) and removed in 1842, when it was run by Mrs. Dodge and her son, (the late Daniel D. Dodge,) upon the son becoming capable of assisting in the management. They were followed by John Foland, James McDonald, Judge N. T. Rossetter, John Shafer, — Lowe, S. S. Mitchel, and the present proprietor, E. D. Atchinson, who took possession in the spring of 1863.

made the acquaintance of General Jay Cady and the late Judge Paige. That acquaintance ripened into friendship, and for over half a century General Cady and Mr. Stanton have been as brothers. Soon after Mr. Stanton became of age, he removed to Middleburgh, and commenced mercantile business, in which he continued for over thirty years, when he retired to his farm about one mile out of the village of Middleburgh. He married soon after he commenced business, the daughter of Abram Lawyer. Mrs. Stanton died about a year since. In 1824 he was elected a member of the State Legislature, and immediately attracted the attention of the sagacious statesman at Albany, as a young man of sound judgment, and more than ordinary sagacity; and such men as Marcy, Flagg, Hoffman, Bouck and Crosswell, have sought his counsel and advice. The writer of this obituary remembers well a most interesting interview at which he was present, between Mr. Stanton and Governor Marcy, a short time before the National Democratic Convention, held at Baltimore, in 1852. When the late Governor Bouck received the appointment of Assistant Treasurer at New York City, from the President, he would not accept the position unless Mr. Stanton would agree to go with him and take the place of cashier, giving to Mr. Stanton the privilege of selecting his assistant. On this condition Mr. Stanton accepted the appointment, and most faithfully did he perform the work assigned to him. Mr. Stanton, by his amiable disposition, his kindness of heart, and his many liberal acts, made ardent admirers and devoted friends. He has gone to his grave, it is believed, without an enemy. The entire community feel that a good citizen and a kind neighbor has passed away and will fondly cherish his memory. To his large family of children he has left a rich legacy, for it can be truly said Freeman Stanton was an 'honest man, the noblest work of God.'

John P. Bellinger.—Contemporary with Stanton and Dodge, was John P. Bellinger, who removed from Cobleskill about the year 1838, and built the store-house now occupied by his successor, M. Geurnsey. Mr. Bellinger was in trade in Cobleskill for several years, and repre-

sented that town in the Board of Supervisors five terms. He was a very successful business man and highly respected as a man of integrity and vim, with broad views and energy sufficient to carry them out with success. He was a son of Peter Bellinger, and grandson of Marcus, the Revolutionary Supervisor. After a number of years of pleasant retirement, he died at a good old age, in August, 1878.

Daniel D. Dodge was a son of Daniel D. Dodge, a former landlord of the "Atchinson House," and a very enterprising man for the day in which he lived. The former early in life engaged in trade, and was for a long term of years one of the substantial business men of the town and County. Upon his death, which occurred in 1878, the *Schoharie Republican* said: "In the death of Daniel D. Dodge the village of Middleburgh loses one of its most enterprising citizens. His memory will be gratefully and lovingly cherished. He was for many years a successful merchant, and for sixteen years an acting magistrate of the town, discharging the duties of the office with rare ability. He represented his County in the Assembly of the State in 1850, and for some eight years was President of the Middleburgh & Schoharie Railroad."

The Tanning Interest.—Nearly opposite the Methodist church, at an early day, was a small tannery, perhaps the first one that made a regular business in the place, and which was purchased by the father of the late Zodac Pratt, of Greene county. It was here that the veteran tanner, dairyman and agriculturist was born and received his first instruction in those branches of enterprise in which he afterwards engaged, and which made him one of the prominent men of his day. He early removed to the old time named place "Schoharie Hill," and by his energy established one of the largest tanneries to be found in the State. The business he established drew around him a large force of laborers and tradesmen, causing a thrifty village to spring up, and in honor of its founder it was called Prattsville. Other small tanneries have from time to time succeeded the old one near the church, which it is useless to mention. We will only refer to the large establishments that "were, but are not," that

Gaasbeck, of the same city, a young man of promise, to locate here and continue his practice, which began about the year 1805 and ended in 1863. During his time several were contemporary with him, of whom we cannot be certain as to the dates of their services.

Dr. Cary, of Schenectady, followed Van Gaasbeck, about the year 1812, and continued till the year 1820.

Dr. Wheeler, came about the latter year, and was followed by Dr. Samuel B. Wells, in 1824, who formed a partnership with him. Wheeler soon removed to Canada.

In 1830, Linas Wells a brother of Samuel, came and studied in the office and commenced practice in 1836.

Dr. Samuel B. Wells was a student of Dr. Green of Gilboa, and came from Connecticut as a school teacher. He practiced until his death which occurred on the 15th of January, 1870, at the age of seventy-one. The Doctor identified himself with all the interests of the place and accumulated a fine property through his close application to his profession and other extensive business relations.

He was succeeded by his son, Henry D. Wells, who together with his brother Linas continues the practice, established fifty-seven years ago, and with marked success.

Volney Danforth commenced in 1810, and continued until his death in 1880.

John D. Wheeler another skillful physician of the Eclectic school was a student of Dr. Simons, of Charlottesville. He graduated in 1865 and immediately settled here, and beside attending to an extended practice, he represented the town upon the board of supervisors in 1873, 1874, 1875, 1876, 1877. During his residence in Fulton, he was also elected to the same position in 1863. He contracted the "slow but sure disease" and died in 1879, at the age of forty-seven. Beside Doctors Linas and Henry Wells, we find at the present time—

James Lawyer,
John Rossman, Jr.,
C. S. Best,
J. W. Ferris.

Each according to their favorite theory, trying to overcome the diseases to which "flesh is heir," and gain the laurels that skill and industry mete to the deserving.

Past Legal Fraternity.—The first legal gentleman that settled here was John Gebhard, of Schoharie, soon after finishing his studies in the office of his brother, Jacob Gebhard. George Danforth, son of Judge Jonathan Danforth, studied in his office and followed his profession here until ill health compelled a change of climate, which he sought at Savannah, Ga., where he died in 1831.

David F. Sacia also studied in the same office, and was appointed District Attorney for the County in 1821, which office he held for one year. He removed to Canajoharie, Montgomery county.

John O'Brien came and settled here about the year 1818, and removed in 1830 to Durham, Greene county.

Robert McClellan settled here about the year 1828, and was one of the leading members of the bar. He was District Attorney in 1836, and Representative in Congress in this, then the Twenty-fifth District, in 1837 and 1839, and upon his removal to the city of Hudson in 1840 he was elected to the same position from 1841 to 1843.

Contemporary with him was Benoni Spafford, who followed him in the office of District Attorney in 1837. While upon a tour for his health, which was declining, he died at Toledo in 1838.

John C. Smith and Mitchell Sanford came about the year 1839, and the latter was followed by and became connected with his brother, Lyman, in the same year.

Mitchell Sanford was one of those quick, discerning professionals that easily adapt themselves to the position in which they are placed, and when aroused by sarcasm, hurl with ease and grace, the most piercing cuts upon their antagonists. While with his brother, Lyman—marked care and decorum in all cases won the honor and respect of every court and bar. As we were engaged in the compilation of the "Bar of Schoharie County" we were apprised of the death

"His home was a sacred spot, filled with refinement, tenderness, delightful associations and old-fashioned hospitality.

"As a Judge, he was upright and just; as a lawyer, thorough and efficient; as a neighbor, social and obliging; and in both private and public life a man of spotless integrity."

A number of students read law in the several offices of the place from time to time, that located in other sections, without forming a practice here, whom we would be pleased to notice but space forbids.

Of those now in practice, a sketch of each may be found in Chapter VI, under the head of "County Bar."

The First National Bank of Middleburgh was organized on the first day of August, 1880, with a capital of \$50,000, under the following as Board of Directors:—

Peter H. Mitchell, President.
David Becker.
G. N. Frisbee.
Jacob Neville.
George Dodge.
Duryea Beekman.
D. C. Dow.

The banking rooms are in the Sanford block and prove a great convenience for the business men of the village and vicinity.

The following are the present officers:—

Duryea Beekman, President.
G. N. Frisbee, Vice-President.
W. E. Mitchell, Cashier.

The following are the present Directors:—

Peter H. Mitchell.
David Becker.
Nathaniel Manning.
George W. Dodge.
G. N. Frisbee.
Jacob Neville.
Duryea Beekman.
George L. Danforth.

Middleburgh Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons.—This lodge was organized in 1867, it being preceded by an order that faded from exist-

ence during the exciting anti-masonic days. In the beginning of the century an "Ames Mark" lodge was organized here by Captain Thomas Machin.

The present lodge is No. 663, and consists of one hundred and twenty-five members.

The following are the present officers:—

William E. Thorne, W. M.
Montraville Geurnsey, S. W.
John Rossman, J. W.
George S. Lynes, S. D.
William G. Shafer, J. D.
P. Richtmyer, Tiler.
Rev. J. S. Harkey, Chaplain.
George W. Dodge, Treasurer.
John T. Dunn, James Becker, M. of C.
William Mitchell, Marshal.
A. G. Rosekrans, Organist.
Duryea Beekman, Montraville Geurnsey,
William H. Albro, Trustees.
Hadley Snyder, Harmon A. Vroman, William McGraw, Finance Committee.

Middleburgh Lodge of I. O. G. Templars.—This society was organized October 18, 1867, and is one of the strongest of the County. The charter members were:—

Charles A. White.
James Lawyer.
H. D. Wells.
W. J. Lounsbury.
G. S. Lynas.
G. W. Bishop.
Rev. J. S. Hart.
A. Gardner.
George Slater.
C. Kline.
J. W. Best.
Elliot Danforth.
J. H. Cornell.
C. A. Hinman.
H. Wilsey.
Rev. D. Swope.
Joseph Borst.
H. A. Blodgett.
C. W. Devol.
Aurelia S. Blodgett.
Sarah Cornell.
Helen E. Watson.

MEMORIAL

OF

HON. LYMAN SANFORD.

Upon the opening of the March term of the County Court and Sessions of 1881, the legal fraternity assembled and took appropriate action in expressing their honor and appreciation of the subject of this memorial, and tender condolence in the death of their legal brother and associate. His Honor, Judge Charles Holmes, presided, and was thus addressed by Hon. Peter S. Danforth:—

“It is not, your Honor, to contribute to a mere ceremony, or to conform to any custom, upon such an occasion, that I supplement these resolutions with a few remarks. My feelings are far too deep for such lip service demonstration.

“It was my fortune to have enjoyed an intimate acquaintance with the deceased for almost the half of a century. He was my tutor in the years of 1832 and 1833, preparing me for college in the classics and mathematics. In the fall of the latter year we separated, he soon after going to New York and I to Union Col-

lege. I saw him then, frequently at New York, where he had established himself in a large and lucrative practice. In 1837 I received a letter from him kindly inviting me to attend his wedding, and how well I remember that bright, beautiful day at the old family mansion of Governor Bouck, where he was united in marriage to the accomplished daughter of the Governor. It was a joyous occasion. How well he has filled the position of husband and father. His home has been a model home. He removed from New York to Middleburgh in 1839. On the first of January, 1840, I having just been admitted as co-partner, we commenced the practice of law. How changed since that time! As I stand here to-night and bring up to my mind those days, no wonder, your Honor, and I know I will be pardoned, if my lip quivers and my eyes are filled with tears. I stand here almost alone, as my hand rests on the broad shoulder of my brother, Brewster, who came to the practice in July, 1840. Of all those who were engaged in the practice of the law

"On his countenance rested always the genial smile and in his utterance the warm greeting that revealed the heart of the man. Decline could not destroy it, and nothing but the grasp of death could extinguish the external evidences of a kindly, noble and loving nature.

"To his neighbors therefore the recollections we all delight to cherish, come down to a recent date. But the bar need nothing to remind them of the pleasure his presence gave. It will be fresh and green in our memories as long as 'life and thought and being lasts.'"

Hon. William C. Lamont in full, earnest and feeling remarks, paid a high compliment to the virtues and ability of Judge Sanford and attested that:—

"Amid all this, the highest praise that can be awarded to man, rightfully was his. In all places requiring ability of a high order, integrity, the best and proudest thing that can be said, he did his duty. *It was well done.*"

Hon. Hobert Krum followed and in referring to the Judge's legal status said:—

"He was not a great lawyer, but he was a good one; and he was a noble county judge. As a lawyer he scarcely ever entered the arena of the bar, or mingled with the fights and strifes of the trial of a cause.

"His modesty and diffidence made him shrink from such an encounter, and therefore he never took such prominence in the profession as his abilities justly entitled him, and although he was known as a safe counselor, as a good pleader, and as a fine office lawyer, yet his legal ability

was never fully made manifest until after he was promoted to the bench.

"In that position he exhibited the well read lawyer, one well grounded in legal principles who could carefully discriminate cases, and when his opinion was rendered, it pronounced the law. He was an honest lawyer and an honest judge, because he was an honest man."

John B. Grant, Esq., George L. Danforth, Esq., Hon. William S. Clark, W. P. Thomas, Esq., Almerin Gallup, Esq., and Lyman Sanford Holmes, Esq., followed in feeling and eloquent language, expressive of the appreciation the younger members of the bar held towards the deceased who had welcomed each in turn to the profession, and encouraged them in their first efforts to gain their present prominent and successful positions. Hon. Henry Smith being indisposed, and not in attendance, paid by letter, a high tribute to the deceased, which was read by the clerk when his Honor in conclusion made the following remarks:—

"Gentlemen of the bar:—For myself I do not expect by the few suggestions I shall offer, to supplement to the grateful tribute of respect which you have already so well and deservedly rendered to the memory of our respected departed brother and friend. Yet to me it seems most fitting and appropriate that from this bench, once so highly adorned by Judge Sanford, an expression of approval and endorsement should come, commendatory of your action, which I most cheerfully give. I had known Judge Sanford quite intimately, since the fall of 1855, when he was elected to the

Mary H. Wharton.
 Mary Rosseter.
 Gertrude H. Moase.
 Louisa Wilsey.
 Nellie K. Rosseter.
 Eva V. Tuttle.

The present officers (1881) are:—

W. C. T., C. A. White.
 W. V. T., Gertrude H. Moase.
 W. S., Elliot Danforth.
 W. A. S., Mary A. Wharton.
 W. F. S., James Lawyer.
 W. T., H. D. Wells.
 W. C., Rev. J. S. Hart.
 P. W. C., Rev. D. Swope.
 W. M., H. A. Blodgett.
 D. W. M., Nellie K. Rosseter.
 W. J. G., Aurelia S. Blodgett.
 W. O. G., G. S. Lynas.
 R. H. S., Ellen E. Wilsey.
 L. H. S., Ellen E. Watson.

G. A. R. Post Stanton.—This Post was organized September 2, 1878, and named in honor of Jay C. Stanton, of Co. H, 76th Reg. N. Y. S. Volunteers, who was mortally wounded at the battle of Bull Run, August 29, 1862. The following are the charter officers and present members of the organization:—

H. A. Blodgett, Commander.
 Alonzo Parslow, S. V. C.
 William C. Brazeo, J. V. C.
 Samuel Dennison, Adjutant.
 S. L. Rifenburgh, Q. M.
 Walter Wheeler, Sergeant.
 Rev. J. S. Harkey, Chaplain.
 J. K. Alberson, O. D.
 George W. Bishop, S. M.
 Edward H. Becker, Q. S.
 Charles H. Bartholomew.
 Peter G. Brazee.
 William J. Blodgett.
 William H. H. Boorn.
 John H. Babcock.
 George W. Babcock.
 Edward Dennison,
 William Doty.
 Orrin Duncan.
 Reuben Canie.

Malachi Coons.
 Henry Eggleston.
 George D. Eggleston.
 Albert Efner.
 Linard Heal.
 Leopold Huysong.
 Lewis B. Hans.
 John Holmes.
 David Jackson.
 David Layton.
 George McBain.
 William M. Myers.
 Albert Nasholts.
 Leonard Pratt.
 Jacob Parlianan.
 John Rorick.
 Melvin Richmond.
 Hiram Wright.
 A. M. Wilday.
 Henry D. Wood.
 Martin Wilsey.
 John D. Rodgers.
 John S. Smith.
 John Schram.
 Edmond Shaver.
 Calvin Traver.
 William H. Vroman.
 Reuben Wiley.
 Charles H. Wright.
 Jacob Williams.
 Levans H. Wilsey.
 John Whitbeck.
 David Weyman.

Of the part taken by the town in the late Rebellion we copy from a speech delivered by William E. Thorne upon Decoration day, 1880, at Middleburgh:—

“The town of Middleburgh alone furnished two hundred and eighty-nine volunteers out of a voting population of but seven hundred and forty. Twenty-nine of those volunteers who left their homes, bid adieu to affectionate and loving friends, endured the deprivations and hardships of a soldier's fare, and braved death for their country's cause, lost their lives in the service and are still sleeping upon southern soil where their comrades have laid them. But their memories are still fragrant and the recollection of their heroic deeds is still tenderly cherished here.”

The total number of votes cast at the election was two hundred and fifty-eight, of which one hundred and eighty were cast for, and seventy-eight against an incorporation.

OFFICIALS.

Middleburgh has had a long list of officials, and many of them the most prominent, as will be seen by Chapter VI. The early records of the town are not accessible, much to our regret, as we desire the names of the supervisors, at least. Those that we are privileged to examine, date back only to 1844, leaving forty-seven years without a record. The following, with the date of service, are the names of the supervisors :—

1844—David B. Danforth.
 1845—Mathew Franklin.
 1846— do
 1847—Uriah Rider.
 1848—Henry Hauver.
 1849—Stephen Vosburgh.
 1850—George Bouck.
 1851— do
 1852—George W. Tibbits.
 1853—David Becker.
 1854—Edward Pinder.
 1855—George E. Danforth.
 1856— do
 1857— do
 1858— do
 1859— do
 1860— do
 1861—Wm. Shafer.
 1862— do
 1863—Peter Z. Swart.
 1864—Nicholas Beekman.
 1865—Volney Danforth.
 1866—Hamilton Becker.
 1867—Alex. Bouck.
 1868— do
 1869—Bartholomew Becker.
 1870—Peter Z. Swart.
 1871— do
 1872—Nathaniel Manning.
 1873—John D. Wheeler.
 1874— do
 1875— do
 1876— do

1877—John D. Wheeler.
 1878—Hadley Snyder,
 1879— do
 1880— do
 1881— do
 1882— do

HUNTER'S LAND.

At the time the lands around Schoharie, including Middleburgh, were surveyed in 1710, they were named in honor of Governor Hunter, by whose orders they were surveyed and explored. But those immediately along the valley, as by custom among the Indians, retained their original name Schorie, or Schoharry, and the country lying east upon higher grounds, for a long distance back, was called Huntersfield. Johannes Lawyer, the second, purchased a large tract in 1768, which is now included in that part of the town called Hunter's Land. The settlement was not made at an early date, and with very few exceptions, until after the Revolution. The Posson family came before that event. The grandfather of Peter W. Posson came from Germany and settled about the year 1760. We will here state that the father of Mrs. Posson, Philip Bartholomew, came over with LaFayette at sixteen years of age and held a captain's commission under him during the war, and when the general returned, Captain Bartholomew, as did hundreds of his soldiers, resigned his commission and became a citizen of the united colonies, and after a few years wandered to this part of the country. We find many from near counties located here, among whom was Jesse H. Alger, from Saratoga county, who came in 1810. After a quiet and successful life, he died in 1867. Daniel Barkman also came about the year 1815, from Rensselaer county, and was elected justice of the peace in 1840. Mr. Barkman held the office up to the year 1876, when age demanded of him retirement, and Merritt McComber, succeeded him. It is a very uncommon occurrence in these days of political jealousies, for one to hold an office that term of years, and it bespeaks confidence, integrity and acknowledged ability of the people in and of the official.

Adam Snyder & Sons we find are engaged in

trade and blacksmithing, they being immigrants from Lorraine in France, but of German origin. They settled here in 1840, and have identified themselves with the business of the place.

Town boundary by act of 1713, "And at that part of said county of Schohary beginning at the place where the Cobleskill road crosses the Punch-kill, thence with a straight line to the northwest corner of a patent grant to Michael Byrne and others, thence with a straight line to the west corner of the house now or late of Jacob Best near the head of the north branch of the West-kill, thence continuing the same line to a tract of land called Blenheim, thence easterly along the northerly bounds of Blenheim, until it strikes Schoharie creek, thence easterly with a straight line to the north east corner of the dwelling house now or late of Moses White, thence with the same line continued to the bounds of the county, thence northerly along the same to the south east corner of the town of Schoharie, thence along the southerly bounds thereof to the place of beginning, shall be and continue a town by the name of Middleburgh."

CHAPTER XV.

HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF SHARON.

FORMATION OF NEW DORLACH — SHARON —
DORLACH GRANT—FIRST SETTLERS—LATER
SETTLERS — PETER SOMMERS — MERENESS
BROTHERS—WILLIAM BEEKMAN—EARLY AF-
FAIRS—BATTLE OF SHARON—COLONEL MA-
RINUS WILLET—AMBUSH FORMED—INCIDENTS
OF THE DAY—LEEM AND HOPPER FAMILIES—
MARIA LEEM—CAPTURE OF MYNDERT AND
OTHERS—WILLIAM KNEISKERN—REV. PETER
N. SOMMERS—ST. JOHN'S CHURCH—REFORMED
CHURCH—CONDITION OF SETTLERS—TURN-
PIKES—TAVERNS—BEEKMAN'S CORNERS—PETER
A. HILTON—ROBERT ELDRIDGE—ELDRIDGE

FAMILY—DR. PALMER—SOUR KROUT MES-
SAGE—PETER PARADOX—ENGLE'S MILL—
LEESVILLE—DORMANT VILLAGES—LEESVILLE
LUTHERAN CHURCH — LEESVILLE BAPTIST
CHURCH—CEMETERY—ROCKVILLE— SHARON
SPRINGS—PUBLIC HOUSES—ANALYSIS OF WA-
TER—MERCHANTS—ROMAN CHURCH—SHARON
CENTRE — JOHN BEAKLEY — SHARON HILL
AND HOLLOW—E. S. WALES — ZACHARIAH
KEYES—HOTEL—MERCHANTS—KILLING OF
VAN SCHAIK — STAGE HOUSE — JOHANNES
LOUCKS — WILLIAM DAVENPORT — OTHER
LOUCKS' FAMILIES—LEMUEL CROSS—KLING
SETTLEMENT—JOHN ADAM KILTS — SLATE
HILL CEMETERY—BELLENGER FAMILY—VAN-
VALKENBURGH — TILLAPAUGH — GILBERT'S
CORNERS—REFORMED CHURCH OF SHARON
—MASONIC LODGE—OFFICIALS—BOUNDARIES.

THE territory of this town was embraced in the county of Tryon, from March 12, 1772, to April 2, 1784, when old Tryon was changed to Montgomery, in honor of General Richard Montgomery, whose patriotic principles proved more agreeable to the victorious patriots than to the Colonial Governor. Upon the formation of Otsego county on the 16th of February, 1791, a portion of Carlisle, all of Seward and Sharon, formed the town of "New Dorlach," agreeable to the wishes of many of the first settlers here found that immigrated from Dorlach in Germany from 1750 to 1760, and located here in 1754 and 1760.

When Schoharie was formed, the town or the eastern part of it was annexed to it, under the name of Sharon, from a town in Connecticut, from which Calvin Rich and John Rice with their families came immediately after the Revolution.

While the bounds were defined in part at that time, yet a perfect formation of the town was not made until 1797. Dr. Tinas Pynneo represented the town as "New Dorlach" in the Board of Otsego Supervisors in 1795, and at Schoharie in 1796 and 1797. Owing also to the fact of the settlers coming from Dorlach, a