

## CHAPTER IV.

It has been the intention of the writer, as expressed in the preface, not to confine this work to the limits of Schoharie county, but to garner up as much *unpublished historic matter* as possible. Tradition has preserved but few of the personal adventures originated in the French war. The facts contained in the following sketch were narrated to the author in 1841, by John L. Groat.

In the year 1716, Philip Groat, of Rotterdam, made a purchase of land in the present town of Amsterdam. When removing to the latter place, Groat was drowned in the Mohawk near Schenectada, by breaking through the ice. He was in a sleigh accompanied by a woman, who was also drowned. His widow and three sons, Simon, Jacob and Lewis, the last named being then only four years old, with several domestics, made the intended settlement. In 1730, the Groat brothers erected a grist-mill at their place, (now Crane's village,) thirteen miles west of Schenectada—the first ever erected on the north side of the Mohawk. This mill, when first erected, floured wheat for citizens who dwelt upon the German flats, some fifty miles distant. The first bolting cloth in this mill, was put in by John Burns, a German, in 1772.

When hostilities commenced between England and France, in the war alluded to, Lewis Groat was living at the homestead. He was a widower at the time with five children; and owning a farm and grist-mill, he was comparatively wealthy. In the afternoon of a summer's day in 1755, *two hundred Highland troops, clad in rich tartans*, passed up the valley on their way to Fort Johnson, six miles above—then the residence of Gen. William

Johnson. Groat, observing the swing gate across the road had been left open by the troops, went, after sun down, to shut it. When returning home, it began to rain, and for temporary shelter he stepped under a large oak tree: while there, three Indians, a father and sons, approached him. He took them to be Mohawks, and extending his hand to the oldest, addressed him in a friendly manner. The hand was received and firmly held by the Indian, who claimed Groat as his prisoner. Finding they were in earnest, and seeing them all armed with rifles, he surrendered himself. The captors belonged to the *Owenagunga*,\* or River tribe of Indians, whither they directed their steps. The object of their expedition, which was to capture several negroes, they soon disclosed to the prisoner, who told them if they would let him go across the river to Philips', he would send them some. "Yes," said the old Indian, holding his thumb and finger together so as to show the size of a bullet, "*you send Indian leetle round negar, he no like such.*"

They had proceeded but a few miles, when a pack was placed upon the back of the captive, after which he walked much slower than before. The old Indian threatened to kill him if he did not increase his speed. "*What can you get for a scalp?*" asked Groat. "*Ten livres,*" was the reply. "*And how much for a prisoner?*" he again asked. "*Two hundred livres,*" replied the Indian. "*Well,*" said Groat, "*if ten livres are better than two hundred, kill me and take my scalp!*" The Indian then told the prisoner that he would carry his own pack and the one apportioned him, if the latter would but keep up with the party. The proposition was acceded to, and they moved forward—the old Indian with two packs on. He took a dog trot and Groat kept near him. The feet of the savage often had not left the ground, when those of his captive claimed occupancy of it. The warrior exerted all his strength to outrun his prisoner, who kept constantly "bruising his heel:" until the former, exhausted and covered with perspira-

\* The Owenagungas settled above *Albany*, on a branch of Hudson's river, that runs towards Canada, about the year 1672.—*Colden's History of the Five Nations.*

tion, fell upon the ground. They had run about a mile and were both greatly fatigued, but Groat had triumphed.

When the Indian had recovered from his exhaustion, he told Groat if he would carry one of the packs, he might travel as he pleased. After this adventure he was kindly treated, and often on the way did his captors give him plenty of food and go hungry themselves, saying that they were Indians and could endure hunger better than himself, because accustomed to it. Nights, his feet were tied to temporary stocks made by bending down saddles, but always secured so high that he could not reach the cord as he lay upon the ground. After journeying a day or two, the prisoner resolved on attempting his escape. One evening when unbound, he hoped to give his captors the slip, but suspecting his motives they cocked their rifles, and not being able to gain even temporary covert of a large tree, he abandoned the hazardous project.

Near Fort Edward, the party fell in with two Mohawk Indians, one of whom, being an old acquaintance, gave the prisoner a hat, of which he had been plundered by his captors. The Mohawks were on a hunting excursion, and remained in company with the party for a day or two, in the hope of affording the prisoner an opportunity to escape. The captors were to be made drunk by liquor in possession of the Mohawks; but as the time for the expedient drew near, Groat fell sick, and had to see his friends depart without him. He, however, gave one of them his tobacco-box, and requested him to carry it to his family, and tell them when and where he had seen its owner, that they might know he was still alive. The Indian did return and deliver the box as requested: but the family were suspicious the Indian had killed him and fabricated the story; which his protracted absence tended to confirm. When he got back, he presented the friendly Indian with a fine horse.

They proceeded some distance by water down Lake Champlain, and on landing at an Indian settlement, Groat had to run the gantlet. His captors had conceived quite an attachment for him, and offered before arriving at the village, to place a belt of wampum around his neck, which, according to the custom of their

tribe, would have entitled him to the same privileges as themselves; and exonerated him from the running ordeal. He thought the acceptance of the belt would be an acknowledgment of his willingness to adopt the Indian life, and refused the offer proffered in kindness, which he regretted when too late. As the lines of women and boys were drawn up through which he was to flee, and he was about to start, his captors, who had relieved him of his pack, buried their faces in their hands, and would not witness his sufferings. He was beaten considerably, and on arriving at the goal of freedom, the blood from some of his bruises ran down to his feet. A short time after, Groat was sold to a French Canadian, named Lewis De Snow, who told him, on going to his house, that he was to be his future *master*, and his wife his *mistress*. The former replied that he had long known his master—" *he dwells above,*" he added, pointing his finger upward. At first the Frenchman treated him unkindly. He was willing to work, but would not submit to imposition; and on being severely treated one day, he assured his Canadian master, that sooner than put up with abuse, he would poison him and his wife, and make his escape. Learning his independent spirit, his owner ever after treated him like a brother. The next summer, war was formally declared between Great Britain and France. Groat was claimed as a British prisoner previous to the capture of Quebec, and was for six months imprisoned at *St. Francis'-way*, near Montreal: where he suffered from short allowance of food. He was finally liberated and returned home, after an absence of *four years and four months*, to the surprise and joy of his family, which had considered him as lost forever—was again married, and my informant was a son by his second wife. John L. Groat died in January, 1845, aged about 90 years.

Early in the French war, Eve, the wife of Jacob Van Alstine, who resided in the Mohawk valley, not far from the Groat family, was proceeding along the road on horseback, with a little daughter in her arms; and while in the act of opening a swing-gate which obstructed the road, was fired upon by a party of hostile Indians, and wounded in one arm. The enemy then dispatched

and scalped her, but sparing her child, carried it to Canada. After a long captivity, the child returned,—and now, (1843,) at the age of nearly a century, is still living with her nephew, J. C. Van Alstine, Esq., at Auriesville, Montgomery county.

The following particulars relating to Sir William Johnson and his family, which were mostly derived from Mr. Groat, will, I trust, prove interesting to the reader. Lewis Groat, his father, lived on terms of intimacy with the Baronet, from his first arrival in the Mohawk valley, to the day of his death.

Sir William Johnson was born in Ireland in 1714, and was descended from honorable parentage. His uncle, Admiral Warren, (Sir Peter Warren,) secured a title to some fifteen thousand acres of land, lying mostly within the present town of Florida: not long after which, Sir William became his agent for those lands. Young Johnson had been disappointed in a love affair in his native country, and was possibly sent to America on that account. He arrived in the colony of New York between the years 1735 and 1740, and settled at a place then known as Warren's Bush, a few miles from the present village of Port Jackson. On his arrival, the Mohawk valley was mostly peopled by Indians. Small settlements had, indeed, been made by Germans at Canajoharie, Stone Arabia and the German Flats; and the Dutch were tardily extending their settlements westward of Schenectada; but the white population in the valley was, comparatively speaking, very limited. He at once resolved on a permanent settlement—closely observed the habits and customs of the natives, and being an adept in the study of human nature, soon acquired their confidence and good will.

He had not been long in the valley before he became an agent of the British government, for the Six Indian Nations, possibly through the instrumentality of admiral Warren. Johnson had been only a few years at Warren's Bush, when his friend Lewis Groat, who lived but a short distance from his own residence, asked him in a familiar manner *why he did not get married?* He replied that *he wanted to marry a girl in Ireland—that his parents were opposed to the match, and that since he could not*

*marry the girl of his choice, he had resolved never to marry, but would multiply as much as he could.* It is believed that he faithfully observed this resolution for many years. Near the two canal locks below Port Jackson, some two miles from Johnson's residence, lived at that time, Alexander and Harman Philips, brothers. With those brothers, was living in the capacity of a servant girl, Miss Lana [Eleanor] Wallaslous, unless I am mistaken in her name, of German parentage. She was a native of Madagascar, and on arriving at New York at an early age, was sold into servitude, to pay her passage. She was an uncommonly fair—wholesome looking maid. Groat, knowing his friend's determination not to marry, asked him why he did not go and get the pretty High Dutch girl at Philips's, for a housekeeper? He replied, *I will do it!* and they parted.

Not long after this interview, Groat was at Philips's on business, and not seeing her, enquired of one of the brothers where their *High Dutch* girl was? Said Philips, "Johnson, that d—d Irishman came the other day and offered me *five pounds* for her, threatening to *horse-whip me and steal her* if I would not sell her. I thought *five pounds* better than a *flogging*, and took it, and he's got the gal." Johnson obtained the girl in the precise manner he had assured his friend he would proceed. This German girl was the mother of Sir John Johnson, and the wives of Col. Guy Johnson, an Irish relative of Sir William, and Col. Daniel Claus.

Henry Frey Yates, Esq., in a communication to his son, Bernard F., in which he notes several exceptions to sayings of Col. Stone, in the *Life of Brant*, which memoranda have been kindly placed in the hands of the writer by the son since the above was written, quotes from the first volume of that work, page 101, a remark that "the mother of Sir John Johnson was a German lady," and thus discourses:—"Mr. Stone has been misinformed as to the history of the mother of Sir John; she was not a German lady. She was a German by birth." After naming William Harper, a former judge of Montgomery county, and his brother, Alexander, as authority for what he says, he thus continues:—"The facts with respect to the mother of Sir John are, that she

was a poor German girl, who, on her arrival in New York, was sold for her passage over from Germany. That was then the universal practice, and the only method that the poorer class of German emigrants had, when they wanted to emigrate to this country. They were obliged, before they embarked on ship-board for America, to sign articles by which they bound themselves to the captain, that, on their arrival here, they should be sold for their passage money, for one, two, three, or four years, as the captain could make a bargain with the purchaser, the captain being obliged to board them, &c. Whenever a ship arrived, it was immediately advertised that she had brought so many male and female immigrants, who were to be sold for their passage."

They were usually sold into servitude, to such persons as would take them at the shortest period of services, and pay the captain, in advance, his charges for their passage and contingent expenses. Purchasers were bound, on their part, to treat those servants kindly, and release them at the expiration of their time. This custom continued for some twenty-five years after the close of the American Revolution, and numbers who proved valuable citizens, availed themselves of this method of crossing the Atlantic. When passengers were advertised for sale, says Mr. Yates—"The wealthy Germans and Low Dutch, from various parts of the country, would then repair to New York and make their purchases. Sometimes one would purchase for a number of families. In this way it was, that the mother of Sir John was purchased for her passage across the Atlantic by a man named Philips, residing about twelve miles above Schenectada, on the south side of the Mohawk; and nearly opposite Crane's village on the north side of the river. Sir William, seeing the young woman at the house of Mr. Philips, and being pleased with her, bought her of him and took her to his dwelling at the old fort. Sir William had three children by her, Sir John, Mrs. Guy Johnson and Mrs. Col. Claus. Sir William never was married to her, until on her death bed, and then he did it only with a view to legitimize [legitimatise] his children by her. The ceremony was performed by Mr. Barkley, the Episcopal minister residing at Fort Hunter,

where he officiated in a stone church built by Queen Anne for the Mohawk Indians."

At page 387, vol. 1, of Stone's *Brant*, Molly Brant, a sister of that chief, is spoken of as the *wife* of Sir William Johnson. With reference to this woman, says the memoranda of Yates—"It is true that Sir William was married to Molly according to the rites of the Episcopal church, but a few years before his death. The Baronet, feeling his life drawing to a close, and abhorring living longer in adultery, to quiet his conscience, privately married Molly to legitimize his children by her, as he had done those by the German girl, who was the mother of Sir John and his sisters."

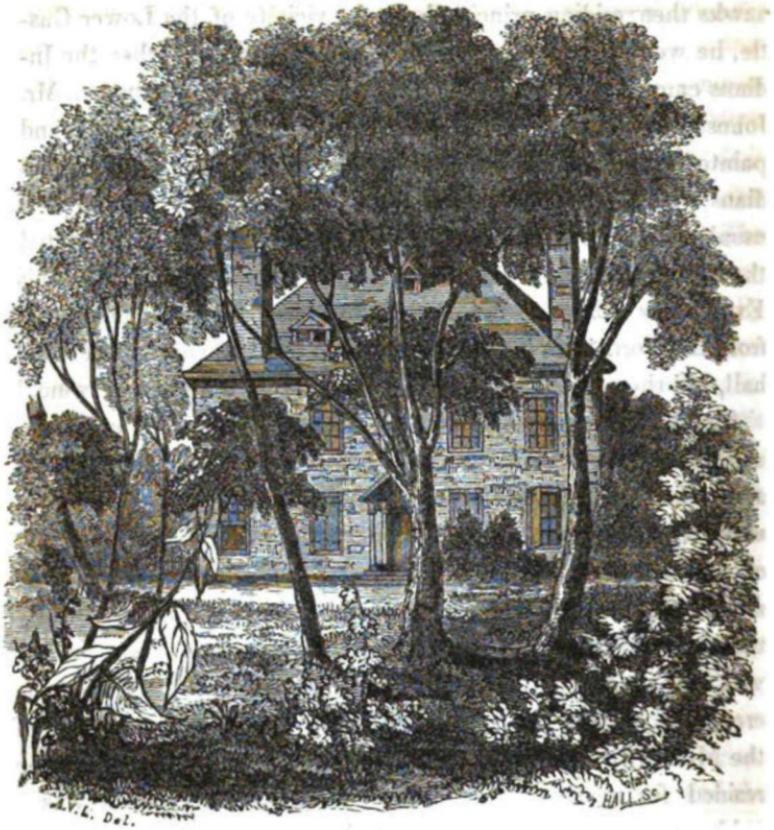
Among the few who witnessed the ceremony of the Baronet's second marriage, the memoranda names Robert Adams, a merchant of Johnstown, and Mrs. Rebecca Van Sickler: to the last mentioned he accredits his authority. Mrs. V. S., as the manuscript continues, "was always received into all the respectable families in Johnstown as a welcome guest, and was very fond of relating anecdotes of Sir William. Molly was a very exemplary woman, and was a communicant of the Episcopal church. Among all the old inhabitants on the Mohawk, Molly was respected, as not only reputable, but as an exemplary, pious, christian woman. The care that she took of the education of her children, and the manner in which she brought them up, is at once a demonstration of the depth of the moral sense of duty that she owed her offspring."

As early as the summer of 1746, *Colden*, in his Indian history, speaks of *Mr. William Johnson* (afterwards Sir William Johnson) as "being indefatigable among the Mohawks." "He dressed himself," says that writer, "after the *Indian* manner, made frequent dances according to their custom when they excite to war, and used all the means he could think of, at a considerable expense, (which His Excellency, George Clinton, had promised to repay him,) in order to engage them heartily in the war against *Canada*. [The same writer, noticing the efforts made by Johnson to engage the Mohawk Nation in the British interest against the French, in a war then existing, says that with a part of the Mo-

hawks then residing principally in the vicinity of the Lower Castle, he went to Albany to attend a treaty.] "That when the Indians came near the town of *Albany*, on the 8th of August, Mr. Johnson put himself at the head of the Mohawks, dressed and painted after the manner of an *Indian* war-captain; and the Indians who followed him were likewise dressed and painted as is usual with them when they set out in war. The Indians saluted the Governor as they passed the fort, by a running fire, which his Excellency ordered to be answered by a discharge of some cannon from the Fort. He afterwards received the sachems in the fort-hall, bid them welcome, and treated them with a glass of wine."

Sir William was a military man of some distinction in the colony, and during the French war, held a general's commission. Soon after the signal defeat of Baron Dieskau, in 1755, by the troops under Gen. Johnson, in the northern wilds of New York, the title of *baronet* was conferred upon him, with a gift of parliament to make it set easy, of *five thousand pounds sterling*, nearly twenty thousand dollars—in consideration of his success. His *fortune* was now made, and he was the man to enjoy it. Previously, he erected *Fort Johnson*, a large stone mansion on the north side of the Mohawk, about three miles west of Amsterdam, where he resided for nearly twenty years. This building, which was a noble structure for the middle of the last century, is pleasantly situated near the hill on the west bank of a creek, on which the Baronet built a grist mill. This dwelling, which was finished inside in a then fashionable style, is said to have been fortified from the time of its erection, until the conquest of Canada and termination of the French war.

This place, (now owned by Dr. Oliver Davidson,) is called Fort Johnson to this day. At a latter period he erected dwellings for his sons-in-law, Guy Johnson and Daniel Claus. That occupied by the first named, a large stone dwelling, is still standing one mile above Amsterdam, and was formerly called *Guy Park*. Previous to its erection, he occupied a frame building standing upon the same site, which was struck by lightning and consumed.



SOUTH VIEW OF FORT JOHNSON.

The mansion of Col. Claus, which was about centrally distant between Fort Johnson and Guy Park, was also constructed of stone, and was large on the ground; but being only one and a half stories high, it presented a less imposing appearance than did the other Johnson buildings. The cellar of the latter house is still to be seen. Each of those dwellings had a farm attached to it of one square mile, or six hundred and forty acres. About ten years before his death, Sir Wm. Johnson erected *Johnson Hall*, a large wood building with detached stone wings, situated one mile west from the village of Johnstown; and on his removal to that place, (at present owned and occupied by Mr. Eleazer Wells,)

Fort Johnson became the residence of his son, who, during a visit to England, had also been gifted by royalty with a title to his name; and an annual stipend of *five hundred pounds* for the honors of knighthood. Sir John married a Miss Watts of New York city. He was also on terms of intimacy for several years with Miss Clara Putman of the Mohawk valley, by whom he had several children



EAST VIEW OF JOHNSON HALL.

The following notice of the Baronet is from the September No. (1755) of the *London Gentleman's Magazine*. The article was an extract from a journal written in America.

“Major General Johnson, (an Irish gentleman) is universally esteemed in our parts, for the part he sustains. Besides his skill and experience as an old officer, he is particularly happy in making himself beloved by all sorts of people, and can conform to all companies and conversations. He is very much of the fine gentleman in genteel company. But as the inhabitants next him are mostly Dutch, he sits down with them, and smokes his tobacco, drinks flip, and talks of improvements, bears and beaver skins. Being surrounded with Indians, he speaks several of their languages well, and has always some of them with him. His house is a safe and hospitable retreat for them from the enemy. He takes care of their wives and children when they go out on parties, and even wears their dress. In short, by his honest dealings with them in trade, and his courage, which has often been successfully tried with them, and his courteous behaviour, he has so endeared himself to them, that they chose him one of their chief sachems or princes, and esteem him as their common father.”

Sir William Johnson lived in comparative opulence from the time of his knighthood to the day of his death, which occurred suddenly at Johnson Hall, on the 24th of June, 1774. He died at the age of nearly sixty years. It was supposed by many of his neighbors at that time, that he found means to shorten his days by the use of poison. Col. Stone, in his *Life of Brant*, expresses a different opinion; but several old people still living, who resided at that time, and have ever since, but a few miles from Johnson Hall, believe to this day that he took the suicidal draught. There were certainly some very plausible reasons for such a conclusion. As the cloud of colonial difficulty was spreading from the capital of New England to the frontier English settlements, Sir William Johnson was urged by the British crown to take sides with the parent country. He had been taken from comparative obscurity, and promoted by the government of England, to honors and wealth. Many wealthy and influential friends around him, were already numbered among the advocates of civil liberty. Should he raise his arm against that power which had thus signally honored him? Should he take sides with the oppressor against many of his tried friends in a thousand perilous adventures? These were serious questions, as we may reasonably suppose, which often occupied his mind. The Baronet declared to several of his valued friends, as the storm of civil discord was gathering, that "England and her colonies were approaching a terrible war, but that *he should never live to witness it.*" Such assertions were not only made to Lewis Groat, but also to Daniel Campbell and John Baptist Van Eps, of Schenectada, and to some of them repeatedly. At the time of his death, a court was sitting in Johnstown, and while in the court house on the afternoon of the day of his death, a package from England, of a political nature, was handed him. He left the court house, went directly home, and in a few hours was a corpse. The foregoing particulars are corroborated by the researches of Giles F. Yates Esq. The excitement of the occasion *may* have produced his death without the aid of poison; but as he died thus suddenly, his acquaintances believed he had hastened his death. The three

individuals named, being together after the event, and speaking of the Baronet's death, agreed in their opinion that his former declarations were prophetic, and that he was a man sufficiently determined to execute such design if once conceived. Col. Guy Johnson succeeded Sir William at his death, as the superintendent of Indian affairs for the colony of New York.

In 1775, Guy Johnson abandoned his situation on the Mohawk, and, with Joseph Brant and a formidable number of the Six Nations, went to Canada. Whether Colonel Claus accompanied Guy Johnson or Sir John to Canada, is uncertain; but sure it is, he also left his possessions in the valley and removed thither. Sir John, violating a compact of neutrality made with General Schuyler, set out for Canada in the month of May, 1776, accompanied by about three hundred followers, mostly Scotch settlers in and around Johnstown. After a march of nineteen days through an almost unbroken wilderness, suffering severely for the want of provisions, they reached Montreal. The wife of Guy Johnson died a short time after her removal to Canada.



NORTH VIEW OF GUY PARK.

Guy Park, which was just completed when its owner left it, was occupied during the war by Henry Kennedy; Fort Johnson by Albert Veeder; and the Claus' house by Col. John Harper, until it accidentally took fire from a supposed defect in the chimney, and burned down. A tavern was afterwards erected near

its site, and was for years known as the Simons place. These buildings, and the lands of their owners, with Johnson Hall and the lands belonging to it, were confiscated to the United States; as was also the property of Col. John Butler, one of the King's justices for Tryon county, a man of influence and wealth, who removed at the beginning of the war from the same neighborhood to Canada.

The commissioners appointed March 6th, 1777, for disposing of confiscated personal property in Tryon county, were Col. Frederick Fisher, Col. John Harper, and Maj. John Eisenlord. The latter was, however, killed in the Oriskany battle, early in August following, and his place supplied by one Garrison.

When the personal property of Sir John Johnson was sold, which was some time before the sale of his real estate, his slaves were disposed of among the "goods and chattels." Col. Volkert Veeder bought the confidential one with whom the Knight left his plate and valuable papers, who buried them after his former master left. He kept the concealment of those valuables a secret in his own breast for four years, until Sir John visited the Mohawk valley in 1780, and recovered them and the slave.

The commissioners for selling real estates in Tryon county, were Henry Otthout and Jeremiah Van Rensselaer. They sold Johnson Hall, with seven hundred acres of land, to James Caldwell of Albany, for £6,600—who soon after sold it for £1,400. Caldwell paid the purchase in *public securities*, bought up for a song, and said he made money in the speculation, although he disposed of the property for £5,200 less, "on paper," than he gave for it. This transaction will serve to show the state of American credit at that period—probably in 1778 or '79.

Tradition says that a black ghost appeared several times during the Revolution, in a room in the north-west part of Fort Johnson, while occupied by Veeder. In one of the rooms at Guy Park, a female ghost resembling the then deceased wife of Guy Johnson is said to have appeared, to the great annoyance of the credulous Kennedy family. Even in the day time, they were more than once alarmed. About this time a German, a stranger

to the family, called there, and inquired if the lady of its former proprietor had not been seen; and when answered in the affirmative, he requested permission to tarry over night in the haunted room. It was readily granted, and he retired at an early hour. In the morning before his departure, he told the family they need be under no further apprehension, that the ghost would not again appear; and in truth she did not. The mystery of the visits to those dwellings, which was a favorite theme on the tongue of the marvelous for many years, has never been revealed, and some of the old people living in the vicinity still believe that the visitants were supernatural beings, or real ghosts. The truth probably is, that the black ghost seen at Fort Johnson, was not the *ideal*, but the flesh and blood person of the confidential slave of its former proprietor; who, by showing his ivory to some purpose, took advantage of the fears of the family to bear off some valuable article secreted in some part of the building by its former occupants. Nor is it unlikely that a similar mission prompted some female to visit Guy Park—for ghosts never travel by daylight—that she could not find the article sought for, and that consequently a man, a stranger to the family, whose agent she may have been, knowing she had failed to obtain the treasure, visited the house, and by gaining access to the room, found the object desired, and could then tell the family confidently that the ghost would not reappear. Many valuable articles were left behind by Tories in their flight, who expected soon to return and recover them; and when they found the prospect of their return cut off, or long delayed, they then obtained them by the easiest means possible—and surely none were easier than through the mystery of superstition.

From the great facility of Sir William Johnson to obtain lands, he became a most extensive land-holder. He was remarkably fond of women; and is believed to have been the father of *several scores*—some say an *hundred* children; by far the larger number of whom were part native, some by young squaws, and others by the wives of Indians who thought it an honor to have them on *intimate* terms with the king's agent; and would even bring them a great distance to *prostitute* them to his insatiable

lust. The Five Nations, says *Colden*, carried their hospitality to distinguished strangers so far, as to allow them their choice of a young squaw, from among the prettiest in the neighborhood, (washed clean and dressed in her best apparel) as a companion during his sojourn with them; *who performed all the duties of a fond wife*. Of this custom, which was in vogue when the Baronet settled among them, he availed himself. He had a rich scarlet blanket made, and bound with gold lace, which he wore when transacting business with the Indians, and it being a partial adoption of their own style of wardrobe, it pleased them very much. He often boasted of the pleasurable scenes of which that blanket was the sole witness. He erected buildings at a place called the *Fish House*, on the south bank of the Sacondaga river, some twelve or fifteen miles north-east of Johnstown, where he kept two white concubines, by the name of *Wormwood*. After the death of the mother of Sir John Johnson and his two own sisters, the Baronet took to his bosom Molly Brant, with whom he lived until his death. She was the mother of seven of his children.

Many pleasing anecdotes are related of Sir William Johnson, who perhaps exerted an *unbounded influence* over a *greater number* of Indians, than it was ever the lot of another white man to obtain in North America. His *general character* was rather happily delineated by Paulding in his *Dutchman's Fireside*. When he had trinkets and other presents to distribute among the Five Nations, and they assembled around *Fort Johnson*, and afterwards *Johnson Hall*, his tenants and neighbors were invited to be present. He was extravagantly fond of witnessing athletic feats, and on such occasions was gratified. On those festivals, not only young Indians and squaws, but whites, both male and female, were often seen running *foot races*, or *wrestling* for some gaudy trinket, or fancy article of wearing apparel. Men were sometimes seen running foot races for a prize, with a meal-bag drawn over their legs and tied under the arms. The ludicrous figure presented by the crippled strides and frequent tumbles of those competitors, was a source of no little pleasure. Not unfrequent-

ly a fat swine was the prize of contention. Its tail being well greased, the *whole hog* was given its freedom, and the individual who could seize and hold it by the tail became its lawful owner. It required a powerful gripe to win, and many a hand did such prizes usually slip through. An old woman is said to have seized on one, amid the jeers of the laughing multitude, after it had escaped the grasp of many strong hands, and firmly held it. The secret was, she had prepared herself with a handful of *sand*. On one occasion, half a pound of tea was awarded to the individual who could, by contortion of feature, make the *wryest* face. Two old women were sometimes heard scolding most vehemently, the successful one to be rewarded with a bladder of Scotch snuff. The erection of a straight pole, after it had been peeled and well besmeared with soft-soap, with a prize upon its top worth seeking,—and after which the young Indians, in a state of nudity, would climb, was an oft repeated source of amusement. Children were sometimes seen searching in a mud-puddle for coppers Sir William had thrown in. His ingenuity was taxed for new sources of merriment, and various were the expedients adopted to give zest to the scenes exhibited on those gala days. He was also a man of considerable taste, and discovered not a little in the cultivation of shrubbery around Fort Johnson.

As the Johnsons were extensive land-owners, and preferred leasing to selling land, their disaffection to the American government, and its final confiscation, was a good thing for the country, as it became subsequently occupied by *freeholders*. The confiscated lands of the Johnson family, must have yielded no inconsiderable sum to an impoverished treasury.

The following anecdote is related of Sir William Johnson, who preferred retaining in himself the right of soil to his landed possessions. He one day visited a tenant who was engaged in chopping wood for him. After some little conversation, the chopper described a certain *one hundred acre lot* in Albany bush, (now the eastern part of Johnstown,) and asked the Baronet what he would take for it, and execute him a deed. The latter, supposing the man had very little money, named a sum which was about the

real value of the soil. "I will take it," was the quick and emphatic reply of the laborer; and he began counting out the money to his astonished landlord, upon the very stump the last fallen tree had left. "I would rather not have sold it for twice that sum," said Sir William, "but since you have fairly bought it, you shall have a title to it;" and taking the money, he executed a deed to him. He was the patron of many laudable enterprises, and I must suppose him to have aided in establishing Queen's College, N. J., as he was the first trustee named in the charter.

In the summer of 1764, says the *Gentleman's Magazine*, published soon after,

"Sir William Johnson, with a body of regular and provincial forces, to which more than one thousand friendly *Indians* have joined themselves, has lately marched to visit the forts of *Oswego*, *Niagara*, *Detroit*, *Pittsburg*, &c., in order to strike terror in the Western nations, and to reduce them to reason; many of these nations are unknown to their brethren, and some have already offered terms of peace; the *Shaunese* are the most formidable of those who stand out: And the friendly *Indians* express great eagerness to attack them. Since the march of these troops, the back settlements have enjoyed perfect tranquility; and the *Senecas* have sent in a great number of *English* prisoners, agreeable to their engagement."

In the May number of the same Magazine, for 1765, I find the following additional notice of the Baronet:

"Sir *William Johnson* at his seat at Johnson Hall, in *North America*, has had a visit lately paid him by upwards of a thousand *Indians* of different tribes, all in friendship; greatly to the satisfaction of his Excellency, as tending to promote a good understanding with those nations, for the good of his Majesty's subjects."

Before his death, Sir William Johnson willed to his children by Miss Brant, the valuable lands known as the *Royal Grant*, which he obtained so easily from the celebrated warrior Hendrick. After death, his remains were placed in a mahogany coffin, and that inclosed in a leaden one, previous to being deposited in a vault beneath the Episcopal Church; which building was erected in Johnstown about the year 1772. At some period of the Revolution, lead being very scarce, the vault was opened and the leaden coffin taken by the patriots and moulded into bullets. The coffin

containing the body having become somewhat broken, a new one was made after the war closed, and the Baronet's remains transferred to it. The lid of the first coffin, which bore his name in silver nails, was afterward suspended in the church. Not many years ago, the edifice was fitted up at considerable cost, at which time the vault was filled up with sand. In a destructive fire which subsequently visited Johnstown, the church was burned down; and on its being rebuilt, the site was so altered as to leave the grave of Sir William\* outside its walls.—*Alexander J. Comrie.*



**HENDRICK, GREAT CHIEF OF THE MOHAWK NATION.**

“The brave old *Hendrick*, the great SACHEM or Chief of the *Mohawk Indians*, one of the Six Nations now in Alliance with, and subject to the King of Great Britain.”

\* A portrait of Sir William Johnson was owned in Johnstown until about the year 1830, when it was purchased by a member of the Col. Claus family for a small sum, and taken to Canada.—*Mrs. W. S.*

At the bottom of the picture is the preceding explanation. This celebrated warrior, commonly called King Hendrick, was, for a time, the most distinguished Indian in the colony of New York. For the picture from which the above was engraved, I would here acknowledge my indebtedness to John S. Walsh, Esq., of Bethlehem. This interesting relic of the Mohawk valley, around which cluster associations of classic interest, connected with the *colonial history* of the state, was sold in the revolution among the confiscated property of Sir John Johnson, went into the Cuyler family for a length of time, and subsequently into that of Mr. Walsh. The tradition in the latter family is, that Hendrick visited England in the evening of his life, and that while there was presented, by his Majesty, with a suit of clothes richly embroidered with gold lace, in which he sat for his portrait. As he is represented in full *court dress*, it is highly probable the tradition is correct. The original picture is a spirited engraving—colored to life and executed in London, but at what date is unknown; probably about the year 1745 or '50. He visited Philadelphia some time before his death, says the historian *Dwight*, at which time his likeness was taken; from which a wax figure was made, said to have been a good imitation of his person.

King Hendrick was born about the year 1680, and generally dwelt at the *Upper Castle* of the Mohawk nation, although for a time he resided near the present residence of Nicholas Yost, on the north side of the Mohawk, below the Nose. He was one of the most sagacious and active sachems of his time. He stood high in the confidence of Sir William Johnson, with whom he was engaged in many perilous enterprises against the Canadian French; and under whose command he fell in the battle of Lake George, September 8th, 1755, covered with glory. In the November number of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, for 1755, is the following notice of his death:

“The whole body of our *Indians* were prodigiously exasperated against the *French* and their *Indians*, occasioned by the death of the famous *Hendrick*, a renowned *Indian* warrior among the *Mohawks*, and one of their sachems, or kings, who was slain in the battle, and whose son upon being told that his father was killed,

giving the usual *Indian* groan upon such occasions, and suddenly putting his hand on his left breast, swore his father was still alive in that place, and stood there in his son."

The tract of land owned by Sir William Johnson, and called the Royal Grant, which contained nearly one hundred thousand acres of choice land, now mostly situated in the county of Herkimer, was obtained from Hendrick in the following manner. Being at the Baronet's house (Fort Johnson) the sachem observed a new coat, richly embroidered with gold lace, which the former intended for his own person; and on entering his presence after a night's rest, he said to him, "Brother, me dream last night." "Indeed," responded the royal agent, "and what did my red brother dream?" "Me dream," was the chief's reply, "that this coat be mine!" "Then," said the sagacious Irishman, "it is yours, to which you are welcome." Soon after this interview, Sir William returned his guest's visit, and on meeting him in the morning said to him, "Brother, I dreamed last night!" "What did my pale-faced brother dream?" interrogated the Sachem. "I dreamed," said his guest, "that this tract of land," describing a square bounded on the south by the Mohawk, on the east by Canada creek, and on the north and west by objects familiar to them, "was all my own!" Old Hendrick assumed a thoughtful mood, but although he saw the enormity of the request, he would not be outdone in generosity, or forfeit the friendship of the British agent, and soon responded, "Brother, the land is yours, but you must not dream again!" The title to this land was confirmed by the British government, on which account it was called the Royal Grant.—*Henry Frey Yates, Esq.*

In the summer of 1754, a plan of colonial alliance was proposed in the American colonies, to resist the encroachments of the Canadian French and Indians, in furtherance of which the chiefs of the Six Nations of New York met the commissioners of the several governments at Albany on the 2d of July; when those Sachems were addressed by James De Lancey, then lieutenant governor of the colony. Hendrick, whose speeches are said to have been correctly reported for the *London Magazine*, in

which I find them, was the principal speaker; and as those speeches will compare for reasoning and pathos with those of modern statesmen, indeed, would not have disgraced a Demosthenes, and will serve to introduce the young reader to an almost extinct race of men, I insert them.

Abraham, Sachem of the Upper Castle of the Mohawks, rose up and said—

“Brethren, You, the governor of *New York*, and the commissioners of the other governments, are you ready to hear us! The governor replied, they were all ready.

“Then *Hendrick*, brother to the said *Abraham*, and a Sachem of the same castle, rose up and spake in behalf of the Six Nations as follows:

“Brethren, just now you told us you were ready to hear us; hearken unto me.

“Brother *Corlaer*, (a name given to the governor of *New York* by the *Indians* long ago,) and brothers of the other governments, Saturday last you told us that you came here by order of the great king our common father, and in his name to renew the antient chain of friendship between this and the other governments on the continent, and us the Six United Nations: And you said also, there were then present commissioners from *Massachusetts's Bay*, *New Hampshire*, *Connecticut*, *Rhode Island*, *Pensylvania*, and *Maryland*; and that *Virginia* and *Carolina* desired to be considered also as present: We rejoice that by the king's orders, we are all met here this day, and are glad to see each other face to face; we are very thankful for the same, and we look upon the governors of *South Carolina* and *Virginia* as also present. [a belt.

“Brethren, We thank you in the most hearty manner for your condolence to us; we also condole all your relations and friends who have died since our last meeting here.

[gave three strings of wampum.

“Brethren, (holding the chain belt given by his honor and the several governors in his hand,) We return you all our grateful acknowledgements for renewing and brightening the covenant-chain.

“This belt is of very great importance to our united nations and all our allies. We will therefore take it to Onondago, where our council-fire always burns, and keep it so securely, that neither thunder nor lightning shall break it. There we will consult over it, and as we have lately added two links to it, so we will use our endeavors to add as many links more as it lies in our power: And we hope when we shew you this belt again, we shall give you reason to rejoice at it, by your seeing the vacancies in it filled up (referring to his honor's explanation of it in his general speech). In the mean time we desire that you will strengthen yourselves, and bring as many into this covenant as you possibly can. We

do now solemnly renew and brighten the covenant-chain with our brethren here present, and with all our other absent brethren on the continent.

“Brethren, As to the accounts you have heard of our living divided from each other, it is very true, we have several times attempted to draw off those of our brethren who are settled at *Oswegatie*, but in vain; for the governor of *Canada* is like a wicked deluding spirit; however, as you desire, we shall persist in our endeavors.

“You have asked us the reason of our living in this divided manner; the reason is, your neglecting us these three years past; (then taking a stick and throwing it behind his back) You have thus thrown us behind your backs, and disregarded us; whereas, the *French* are subtle and vigilant people, ever using their utmost endeavors to seduce and bring our people over to them. [a belt.

“Brethren, The encroachments of the *French*, and what you have said to us on that article on behalf of the king our father; as these matters were laid before us as of great importance, so we have made strict enquiry among all our people, if any of them have either sold or given the *French* leave to build the forts you mention, and we cannot find that either sale has been made or leave has been given; but the *French* have gone thither without our consent or approbation, nor ever mentioned it to us.

“Brethren, The governor of *Virginia* and the governor of *Canada* are both quarrelling about lands which belong to us, and such a quarrel as this may end in our destruction. They fight who shall have the land; the governors of *Virginia* and *Pennsylvania* have made paths through our country to trade, and built houses without acquainting us with it; They should have first asked our consent to build there, as was done when *Oswego* was built. [gave a belt.

“Brethren, It is very true, as you told us, that the clouds hang heavy over us, and it is not very pleasant to look up, but we give you this belt [giving a belt] to clear away all clouds, that we may all live in bright sunshine, and keep together in strict union and friendship; then we shall become strong, and nothing can hurt us.

“Brethren, This is the antient place of treaty where the fire of friendship always used to burn, and it is now three years since we have been called to any public treaty here; 'tis true, there are commissioners here, but they have never invited us to smoke with them (by which they mean, the commissioners had never invited them to any conference), but the *Indians of Canada* came frequently and smoked with them, which is for the sake of their beaver, but we hate them (meaning the *French* Indians): We have not as yet confirmed the peace with them: 'tis your fault, brethren, we are not strengthened by conquest, for we should have gone and taken *Crown Point*, but you hindered us: We had concluded to go and take it; but we were told it was too late, and

that the ice would not bear us. Instead of this you burnt your own fort at *Saraghtogee* and run away from it; which was a shame and a scandal to you. Look about your country, and see you have no fortifications about you, no, not even to this city. 'Tis but one step from *Canada* hither, and the *French* may easily come and turn you out of doors.

"Brethren, You desired us to speak from the bottom of our hearts, and we shall do it. Look about you, and see all these houses full of beaver, and the money is all gone to *Canada*; likewise your powder, lead, and guns, which the *French* make use of at the *Ohio*.

"Brethren, You were desirous we should open our minds and our hearts to you; look at the *French*, they are men; they are fortifying every where; but we are ashamed to say it; you are like women, bare and open, without any fortifications."

At the close of the above speech, Abraham, a brother of *Hendrick*, rose up and said :

"Brethren, We should let you know what was our desire three years ago, when Col. *Johnson* [he was promoted to Major General in 1754] laid down the management of *Indian* affairs, which gave us great uneasiness; the governor then told us, (governor of New York) it was in his power to continue him, but that he would consult the council of New York; that he was going over to *England*, and promised to recommend our desire, that Col. *Johnson* should have the management of *Indian* affairs, to the king, that the new governor might have power to reinstate him. We long waited in expectation of this being done, but hearing no more of it, we embrace this opportunity of laying this belt [and gave a belt] before all our brethren here present, and desire that Col. *Johnson* may be reinstated and have the management of *Indian* affairs; for we all lived happy whilst under his management; for we love him, and he us; and he has always been our good and trusty friend.

"Brethren, I forgot something; we think our request about Col. *Johnson*, which governor *Clinton* promised to carry to the king our father, is drowned in the sea; the fire here is burnt out; and turning his face to the New York commissioners for *Indian* affairs in *Albany* there present, desired them to notice what he said."

On the same day, *Hendrick*, in the name of the *Mohawks of the Upper Castle (Connejoahary)* in a private audience, delivered the following speech—in the presence of several sachems of each of the other nations, to the governor of New York :

"Brother, We had a message some time since to meet you at his place when the fire burns; we of *Connejoahary*, met the messenger you sent with a letter at Col. *Johnson's*; and as soon as we received it we came running down, and the Six Nations are now here complete."

The Governor replied—

“Brethren of the Six Nations, you are welcome. I take this opportunity, now you are all together, to condole the loss in the death of your friends and relations since you last met here; and with this string of wampum I wipe away your tears, and take sorrow from your hearts, that you may open your minds and speak freely.”  
[a string of wampum.]

Hendrick continued—

“Brother, We thank you for condoling our loss; for wiping away our tears that we may speak freely; and as we do not doubt but you have lost some of your great men and friends, we give you this string of condolence in return, that it may remove your sorrows, that we may both speak freely: [gave a string.] (Then *Hendrick*, addressing himself to the Six Nations, said,) “That last year he attended *Col. Johnson* to *Onondago* to do service to the king and their people; that *Col. Johnson* told them, another governor was expected soon, and they would then have an opportunity of seeing him, and laying their grievances before him.—That the new governor arrived soon after, and scarcely had they heard of his arrival, but they had an account of his death: and that now he was glad to see his honor, to whom he would declare his grievances.

“Brother, We thought you would wonder why we of *Connejo-hary* staid so long; we shall now give you the reason. Last summer we of *Connejo-hary* were at *New York* to make our complaint, and we thought then the covenant chain was broken, because we were neglected; and when you neglect business, the *French* take advantage of it; for they are never quiet.—It seemed so to us, that the governor had turned his back upon the Five Nations, as if they were no more; whereas the *French* are doing all in their power to draw us over to them. We told the governor last summer, we blamed him for the neglect of the Five Nations; and at the same time we told him the *French* were drawing the Five Nations away to *Oswegechie*, owing to that neglect which might have been prevented, if proper use had been made of that warning; but now we are afraid it is too late. We remember how it was in former times, when we were a strong and powerful people: *Col. Schuyler* used frequently to come among us, and by this means we kept together.

“Brother, We, the *Mohawks*, are in very difficult circumstances, and are blamed for things behind our backs which we do not deserve. Last summer, when we went up with *Col. Johnson* to *Onondago*, and he made his speech to the Five Nations, the Five Nations said they liked the speech, but that the *Mohawks* had made it. We are looked upon by the other nations as *Col. Johnson*’s counsellors, and supposed to hear all the news from him, which is not the case; for *Col. Johnson* does not receive from, or impart much news to us. This is our reason for staying behind, for if we had come first, the other nations would have said that we made the

Governor's speech; and therefore, though we were resolved to come, we intended the other nations should be before us, that they might hear the Governor's speech, which we could hear afterwards.

"There are some of our people who have large open ears, and talk a little broken *English* and *Dutch*, so that they hear what is said by the Christian settlers near them, and by this means we come to understand that we are looked upon to be a proud nation, and therefore stayed behind. 'Tis true and known we are so; and that we, the *Mohawks*, are the head of all the other nations. Here they are, and must own it. But it was not out of pride we *Conne-joharies* stayed behind; but for the reason we have already given."

A speaker followed *Hendrick*, in behalf of all the Six Nations. After expressing his joy at the renewal of the *ancient covenant-chain* between all his Majesty's governments on the continent and the Six Nations; for the promises on the part of the New York Governor of future protection; and the danger he thought they would be in, if *Col. Johnson* left off the management of *Indian affairs*,—observing, *if he fail us, we die*,—he alluded to what the Governor of Pennsylvania, through Mr. Weiser, his interpreter, had said on the day before, respecting a new road from *Pennsylvania* to *Ohio*. "We thank the Governor of *Virginia*," said he, "for assisting the *Indians* at the *Ohio*, who are our relations and allies; and we approve of the Governor of *Pennsylvania* not having hitherto intermeddled in this affair. He is a wise and prudent man, and will know his own time." He closed as follows:—

"Brethren, We put you in mind in our former speech of the defenceless state of our frontiers, particularly of the country of *Chonectady*, and of the country of the Five Nations. You told us yesterday you were consulting about securing both yourselves and us. We beg you will contrive something speedily: you are not safe from danger one day. The *French* have their hatchet in their hands both at the *Ohio* and in two places in *New England*. We don't know but this very night they may attack us. One of the principal reasons why we desire you to be speedy in this matter is, that since *Col. Johnson* has been in this city, there has been a *French Indian* at his house, who took measure of the wall round it, and made a very narrow observation of every thing thereabouts. We think him (*Col. Johnson*) in very great danger, because the *French* will take more than ordinary pains either to kill him or take him a prisoner, upon account of his great interest among us, being also one of the Five Nation." (*Col. Johnson* is one of their *Sachems*.)

[Gave four strings of wampum.]

The Governor replied—

“ I have now done speaking to you ; but before I cover up the fire I must recommend to you to behave quietly and peaceably to all your brethren and their cattle, in your return home.”

Hendrick responded—

“ Your honor told us you now covered up the fires, and we are all highly pleased that all things have been so amicably settled ; and hope that all that has passed between us may be strictly observed on both sides.

“ Brethren of the several governments, We hope that you will not fail in the covenant-chain, wherewith we are mutually bound, and have now so solemnly renewed and strengthened ; if we do not hold fast by this chain of friendship our enemies will laugh us to scorn.

“ Brethren, We wish you would all contribute to make some provision for us in our return home, which will effectually prevent our people from killing the inhabitants' cattle ; and we desire you will provide some wagons for us to go to *Chenectady*. We think this expense will fall too heavy upon our province, as we have the presents from all to carry up. We beg we may take all care of the fire of friendship, and preserve it, by our mutual attention, from further injuries. We will take care of it on our sides, and hope our brethren will do so on theirs. We wish the tree of friendship may grow up to a great height, and then we shall be a powerful people.

“ We, the United Six Nations, shall rejoice in the increase of our strength, so that all other nations may stand in awe of us.

“ Brethren, I will just tell you what a people we were formerly. If any enemies rose against us, we had no occasion to lift our whole hand against them, for our little finger was sufficient ; and as we have now made so strong a confederacy, if we are truly earnest therein, we may retrieve the ancient glory of the Five Nations.

“ Brethren, We have now done. But one word more must we add : If the *French* continue their hostilities, the interpreter will want assistance—three or four to be joined with him ; but this matter we submit to the Governor. We have now fully finished all we have to say.”

The following speech, delivered at the same convention by one of the River or Stockbridge Indians, is too full of figure and melancholy truth to be omitted in this place :

“ Fathers, We are greatly rejoiced to see you all here ; it is by the will of Heaven that we are met here, and we thank you for this opportunity of seeing you all together, as it is a long while since we had such a one.

“Fathers, who are here present, We will give you a short relation of the long friendship which has subsisted between the white people of this country and us. Our forefathers had a castle on the river: as one of them walked out he saw something on the river, but was at a loss to know what it was; he took it at first for a great fish; he run into the castle and gave notice to the other *Indians*; two of our forefathers went to see what it was, and found it a vessel with men in it; they immediately joined hands with the people in the vessel, and became friends. The white people told them they should not come up the river any further at that time, and said to them they would return back from whence they came, and come again in a year's time, and come as far up the river as where the old fort stood. Our fathers invited them ashore, and said to them “Here we will give you a place to make you a town; it shall be from this place up to such a stream, (meaning where the petteroon mill now stands,) and from the river back up to the hill. Our forefathers told them, though they were now a small people, they would in time multiply, and fill up the land they had given them. After they were ashore some time, some other *Indians*, who had not seen them before, looked fiercely at them; and our forefathers observing it, and seeing the white people so few in number, lest they should be destroyed, took and sheltered them under their arms; but it turned out that those *Indians* did not desire to destroy them, but wished also to have the same white people for their friends. At this time which we have now spoken of, the white people were small, but we were very numerous and strong; we defended them in that low state: But now the case is altered; you are numerous and strong, but we are few and weak; therefore we expect that you will act by us in these circumstances, as we did by you in those we have just now related. We view you now as a very large tree, which has taken deep root in the ground, whose branches are spread very wide. We stand by the body of the tree, and we look round to see if there be any one who endeavors to hurt it, and if it should so happen, that any are powerful enough to destroy it, we are ready to fall with it.

[gave a belt.

“Fathers, you see how early we made friendship with you; we tied each other in a strong chain: That chain has not yet been broken: We now clean and rub that chain to make it brighter and stronger; and we determine on our parts that it shall never be broken; and we hope that you will take care, that neither you nor any one else shall break it; and we are greatly rejoiced, that peace and friendship have so long subsisted between us.”—*Gentlemen's Magazine*.

The three Castles of the Mohawk Nation, says *Colden*, were all surprised and captured by a party of six or seven hundred French and Indians, on the 8th of March, 1693. The *Lower*

*Castle* was bravely defended by the few warriors who chanced to be in it, until they were overpowered by numbers.

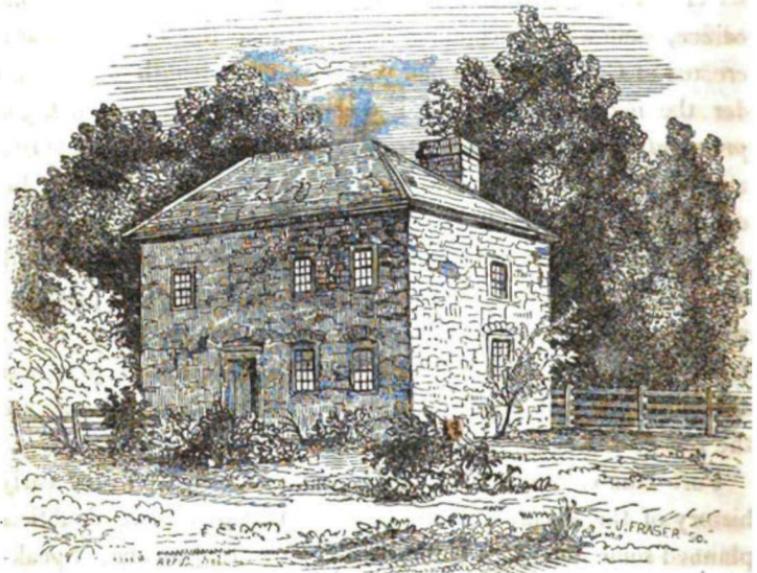
In the reign of Queen Anne of England, and about the year 1710, a frontier military post was established at the junction of the Schoharie and Mohawk rivers, on the east bank of the former, and near the eastern Mohawk Castle. Captain John Scott, an English officer, erected a small fort of hewn timber at this place, and called it Fort Hunter, in honor of Robert Hunter, then governor of the colony; which fort was intended to protect the natives against the hostile French, and secure their trade. About the same time a small church was built near the fort, and called *Queen Anne's Chapel*. It was erected by the Queen, whose munificence endowed it, says *Colden*, "with furniture, and a valuable set of plate for the communion table." It was a substantial stone edifice, somewhat resembling in appearance the one afterwards erected at Caughnawaga, and was for a great length of time under the management of an Episcopal Society in England, for propagating the gospel in foreign parts, which society supported a minister at this place as a missionary among the Mohawk Indians. The entrance to the chapel was on its north side near the centre. The pulpit, which was provided with a sounding board, stood at the west end, and directly opposite were two pews finished for the occupancy of Sir William Johnson and the minister's family; the floor of which was elevated. Johnson's pew was also furnished with a wooden canopy. Moveable benches served the rest of the congregation with seats.

Fort Hunter was a place of no little importance in the early history of the Mohawk valley; and at that post were doubtless planned some important enterprises against the Canadas. Speaking of the Indian "war dances," *Colden* says:

"An officer of the regular troops told me, that while he was commandant of *Fort Hunter*, the *Mohawks* on one of these occasions, (that of a war dance,) told him, that they (the Indians) expected the usual military honors as they passed the garrison. The men presented their pieces as the *Indians* passed, and the drum beat a march; and with less respect, the officer said, they would have been dissatisfied. The *Indians* passed in single row one af-

ter another, with great gravity and profound silence; and every one of them, as he passed the officer, took his gun from his shoulder, and fired into the ground near the officer's foot: They marched in this manner three or four miles from their Castle. The women on these occasions follow them with their old clothes, and they send back by them their *finery* in which they marched from the Castle."

The ruins of old Fort Hunter were torn down at the beginning of the Revolution, and the chapel enclosed by heavy palisades. In the corners of the yard were small block houses mounting cannon. This place, which continued to be called Fort Hunter, was garrisoned in the latter part of the war, and Capt. Tremper, from below Albany, was its commandant. The chapel was torn down about the year 1820, to make room for the Erie canal.



QUEEN ANNE'S CHAPEL PARSONAGE.

Queen Anne's chapel was early provided with a small bell, which is now in use on the Academy in Johnstown. A glebe or farm of three hundred acres of good land was attached to it, which was conveyed at some period by the natives to Dr. Barclay, and by him to the society alluded to, *on their reimbursing*

*him moneys expended upon it.* The parsonage house, said to have been built about the time the chapel was, is still standing in Florida, half a mile below the Schoharie, and a few rods south of the canal, from which it is visible. It is a stone building, some twenty-five by thirty-five feet on the ground, two stories high, with a quadrangular roof, presents a very ancient appearance, and is possibly the oldest house west of Schenectada in the Mohawk valley. The chapel farm was disposed of some years ago, and part of the proceeds, nearly fifteen hundred dollars, were laid out in erecting the Episcopal Church at Port Jackson, in the same town; and the residue, an equal sum, invested in the Episcopal Church of Johnstown.—*Spafford's Gazetteer, Peter Putman, J. L. Groat, A. J. Comrie, and others.*

The chapel parsonage at Fort Hunter, is now owned and occupied by Nicholas Reese. The last occupant under the patronage of the Missionary Society, was the Rev. John Stuart, who was officiating there at the beginning of the revolution. He removed, with the Indians under his charge, to Canada—they choosing to follow the fortunes of the Johnsons and Butlers. I have in my possession a bill of sale from Mr. Stuart to John Conyn, who returned to the Mohawk after the revolution, of a male slave called Tom Doe, who went from Fort Hunter with his master to Canada. The sale was for \$275 in specie, and was dated at Montreal, November 19, 1783. At the close of the war, Mr. Stuart settled on Grand river, and resumed his ministerial labors. In 1720, Captain Scott took a patent for the lands extending from Aurie's creek to the Yates and Fonda line, near the present village of Fultonville. Aurie is the Dutch of Aaron, and the creek was so called after an old Indian warrior named Aaron, who lived many years in a hut which stood on the flats now owned by J. C. Yost, on the east side of the creek. The adjoining village was named after the stream.

Early in the eighteenth century, three brothers named Quackboss emigrated from Holland to the colony of New York; one of them locating at New York city, and the other two at Albany. Peter, one of the latter, settled on Scott's patent, only two or

three years after it was secured. He resided near Aurie's creek at the now Leslie Voorhees' place. Mr. Quackenboss had several children grown up when he arrived in the country, and David, his elder son, after a somewhat romantic courtship, married Miss Ann, a daughter of Captain Scott, and settled on *Scott's Patent*, where the Montgomery county poor house now stands. A young officer under the command of Captain Scott, requested young Quackenboss, then in the employ of the captain, to speak a good word for him to Miss Ann, which he readily promised to do. While extolling the good qualities of her admirer, he took occasion to suggest his partiality for herself. The maiden, who had conceived an attachment for Quackenboss instead of the young subaltern, shrewdly asked him why he did not make advances *on his own account*. He had not presumed on so advantageous a match; but the hint was sufficient to secure his fortune and happiness. His son John, a fruit of this connection, born about the year 1725, was the first white child born on the south side of the Mohawk—west of Fort Hunter, and east of the German settlements some distance above. Captain Scott had one son who became a general officer.—*John Scott Quackenboss*.

About the year 1740, a small colony consisting of sixteen families of Irish immigrants was planted, under the patronage of Wm. Johnson, afterwards baronet, on lands now owned by Henry Shelp, a few miles south-west of Fort Hunter, in the present town of Glen. Several years after they had built themselves rude dwellings, cleared lands, planted orchards, and commenced their agricultural labors, a disturbance arose between the Indian Confederacy of New York and the Canadian Indians, which the colonists conceived endangered their domestic tranquility; in consequence of which the settlement was broken up, and the chicken-hearted pioneers, then numbering eighteen or twenty families, returned to the Emerald Isle. Traces of their residence are visible at the present day.—*John Hughes and Peter Putman*.

The first merchant in the Mohawk valley west of Schenectada, was Maj. Jelles (Giles) Fonda, a son of Douw Fonda, an early settler at Caughnawaga. For many years he carried on an ex-

tensive business for the times, at the latter place—trading with the white citizens of the valley, and the natives of western New York; the latter trade being carried on at old Fort Schuyler, now Utica; Fort Stanwix, (called in the revolution Fort Schuyler,) now Rome, and Forts Oswego, Niagara and Schlosser. An abstract from his ledger shows an indebtedness of his customers at one time just before the revolution, amounting to over *ten thousand dollars*. Many of his goods he imported directly from London. To his Indian customers he sold blankets, trinkets, ammunition and rum; and received in return, peltries and ginseng root. The latter was at that time an important item among the exports of what was *then*, Western New York; and the two named added to the article of pot-ash, almost the only commodities purchased in a foreign market.

The following anecdote is believed to be true. In the employ of Sir William Johnson a few years before his death, was an Irishman named McCarthy, by reputation the most noted pugilist in Western New York. The baronet offered to pit his fellow countryman against any man who could be produced for a fist fight. Major Fonda, tired of hearing the challenge, and learning that a very muscular Dutchman named John Van Loan, was living near Brakabeen, in the Schoharie valley, made a journey of some forty or fifty miles, to secure his *professional services*, for he, too, was reputed a bully. Van Loan readily agreed to flog the son of Erin, for a ten pound note. At a time appointed, numbers were assembled at Caughnawaga to witness the contest between the pugilists. After McCarthy had been swaggering about in the crowd for a while, and greatly excited public expectation by his boasting, inducing numbers to bet on his head, his competitor appeared ready for the contest—clad for the occasion in a shirt and breeches of dressed deer-skin fitted tight to his person. A ring was formed and the battle commenced. The bully did his best, but it was soon evident that he was not a match for his Dutch adversary, who slipped through his fingers like an eel, and parried his blows with the greatest ease. Completely exhausted and almost bruised to a jelly, Sir William's gamester was

removed, looking if not expressing—*peccavi*.—*Abraham A. Van Horne*, who obtained the facts from a son of Van Loan.

I have spoken in the preceding chapter, of the custom of providing refreshments at funerals; a practice which continued in vogue in some degree for at least one hundred years, and until about the year 1825. Smoking was an attendant on the prevailing habit, as the following order from Col. D. Claus, will show.

"SIR—I have sent the bearer for four dozen of Pipes and a few pounds of Tobacco, for the burial of Mr. Raworth's child wh please to charge to me.

"Monday, 27th Aug., 1770.

D. CLAUS."

"To Maj'r Jelles Fonda."

The trade with the Indians along the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence, was carried on by the aid of boats propelled from Schenectada up the Mohawk at great personal labor, in consequence of their being several rifts or rapids in the stream. The first obstruction of the kind was met with six miles above Schenectada, and was called *Six Flats' rift*; proceeding west came in course similar obstructions known as *Fort Hunter rift*; *Caughnawaga rift*; *Keator's rift*, at Spraker's, the greatest on the river, having a fall of ten feet; *Brandywine rift*, at Canajoharie, short but rapid; *Ehle's rift* near Fort Plain; *Kneiskern's rift*, a small rapid near the upper Indian castle, a little above the river dam; and the *Little falls\**, so called as compared with the Cahoes on the same stream near its mouth. At the Little Falls, a descent in the river of forty feet in half a mile, boats could not be forced up the current, and it became a carrying place for them and merchandise, which were transported around the rapids on wagons with small wide rimmed wheels, the water craft re-

\* The village of Little Falls, so romantically situated on the Mohawk, already has a population numbering some three thousand inhabitants, and is rapidly increasing. It seems destined to become the largest place between Albany and Utica in the Mohawk valley. A manufactory for woollen goods has recently been erected here, and an academy, a large stone edifice, constructed of massive granite from the vicinity, recently completed, was opened in November, 1844, with a male and female department; the former under the charge of Merrit G. McKoon, A. M., and the latter under the superintendance of Miss Amanda Hodgeman, a young lady of real merit.

launched and and re-loaded to proceed onward. On such occasions one of the party usually staid with the goods deposited above, while the team returned for the boat. Small batteaus, known in early times as three-handed and four-handed boats, were in use on the Mohawk, which carried from two to five tons each; and so called because three or four men were required to propel them. These boats were forced over the rapids in the river with poles and ropes, the latter drawn by men on the shore. Such was the mode of transporting merchandize and Indian commodities to and from the west, for a period of about fifty years, and until after the Revolution. A second carrying place in use at an early day was near Fort Stanwix, from the boatable waters of the Mohawk to Wood creek. Passing into Oneida lake, the batteaus proceeded into the Oswego river, and from thence to Oswego on lake Ontario. From Oswego to Niagara, a place of much importance, merchandize was transported in the same boats or on sloops. Major Fonda, as his papers show, had much to do with the navigation of the river in the French and American wars with England.—*Joseph Spraker.*

After the Revolution, the tide of emigration was "Westward Ho!" and a corporate body, known as the "Inland Lock Navigation Company," constructed a *dam* and *sluice* to facilitate business at Wood creek, and built several locks at Little Falls, so that boats might pass and repass without unloading. These locks were constructed under the supervision and direction of Gen. Philip Schuyler, whose memory, for services rendered his country in her most trying period, will ever be held in grateful remembrance by the citizens of New York. The locks at Little Falls were completed in 1795. The following original paper, given by Gen. Schuyler to a namesake, and son of the Rev. Mr. Schuyler, of Schoharie, will show at what time the business was most actively prosecuted.

TO MR. PHILIP SCHUYLER :

"By virtue of the powers vested in me by the directors of the Inland Lock Navigation Companies in this state, I do hereby appoint you an Assistant Superintendent, to superintend, direct and

command the mechanics and labourers, and their respective overseers, already employed in the service of the said companies, hereby requiring the said overseers, and others so employed, in all things to pay due obedience to all your lawful requisitions and directions.

“Given under my hand, in the county of Herkimer, this eighth day of May, 1793.

“PH: SCHUYLER,  
“*President and Superintendent.*”

In June following, Gen. S. gave his namesake the annexed very flattering testimonial, which shows the usual caution of that great man in guarding against accidents :

*Falls, June 22, 1793.*

“DEAR SIR :—I experience so much satisfaction from your attention, and the readiness with which you comprehend the hints given by me for the construction of the works, that I consider it as a duty to give you this written testimony of my perfect satisfaction of your conduct, and to evince my sense of it by a pecuniary reward. Your compensation, from the original time of agreement, will be two dollars per day ; this, however, I do not wish you to mention, least others should conceive that I made a discrimination unfavorable to them, although in reality I do not, for their services are by no means as important to the Lock Navigation Company as yours.

“Least an accident should happen to me, which might deprive you of the benefit of the above mentioned allowance, you will keep this letter as a testimony thereof.

“I am, Dear Sir,

“Your friend and humble servant,

“PH: SCHUYLER,

“*President of the Board of Directors.*

“To Mr. PHILIP SCHUYLER.”

After the locks were built at Little Falls, business on the river greatly increased, and apples and cider were then among the commodities sent west. The clumsy batteau, which had for half a century usurped the place of the Indian's bark canoe,—the little craft which had danced on the bosom of the Mohawks' river for many ages,—soon gave place to the *Durham boat*, carrying from ten to fifteen tons, and constructed, in shape, not unlike a modern canal boat. Few of them were decked over, except at the ends, but all were along the sides, where cleets were nailed down to give foothold to boatmen using poles. Boating, at this period was attended with great personal labor : the delay of unloading at Lit-

the Falls had been obviated, but it was found more difficult to force large than small craft over the rapids. Several boats usually went in company, and if any arrived first at a rift, they awaited the approach of others, that the united strength of many men might aid in the labor before them. Those boats were often half a day in proceeding only a few rods, and not unfrequently were they, after remaining nearly stationary on a rapid for an hour, when the strength of numbers was united with poles and ropes in propelling, compelled to drop below the rift and get a new start. Twenty hands, at times, were insufficient to propel a single boat over Keator's rift. When boat's crews were waiting at a rapid for the arrival of their fellows, they usually did their cooking on shore. Poles used on those boats had heads, which rested against the shoulder, which was often calloused or galled, like that of a collar-worn horse. Black slaves, owned by settlers in the neighborhood of rapids, both male and female, were often seen assisting at the ropes on shore, when loaded boats were ascending the river.

Accidents sometimes occurred to boatmen, though seldom attended with loss of life. A three-handed boat once struck a rock in Keator's rift, upset, and a negro was drowned. At Fort Hunter rift, a three handed boat upset, when Wm. Hull and Kennedy Failing were drowned,—the third person in the boat, a son of Abraham Otthout, of Schenectada, swam ashore. One of the last accidents of the kind on the river, occurred while the Erie Canal was building, to a Durham boat, one of the best of that class of river craft, called the Butterfly. It was descending the river, then swollen, laden with flour, when it became unmanageable, swung round, and struck its broadside against a pier of the Canajoharie bridge, and broke near the centre. The contents of the boat literally filled the river for some distance, and a hand on the boat was drowned. His name was afterwards ascertained to be John Clark. His body was recovered twelve miles below, and was buried on the river bank, in the present village of Fultonville. His bones having been disclosed by the spring freshet of 1845, they were taken up and buried in the village burying-

ground. The owner of the boat, a Mr. Myers, had its fragments taken to Schenectada and rebuilt, after which it entered the canal, (the eastern sections being completed,) and from thence he transported it into Cayuga lake. While there engaged, his boat sunk laden with gypsum, and he was drowned. Thus ended the Butterfly and its owner. Boats managed by skilful hands sometimes sailed down the rapids at Little Falls when the river was high, but it was always attended with danger. Several row-boats, constructed expressly to carry some twenty passengers each, from Utica to Schenectada, and tastefully curtained, were in use on the Mohawk some forty years ago. They were called river packets.—*Myndert Starin.*

The first bridge of any importance in the Mohawk valley, was built by Maj. Isaiah Depuy, a resident of Glen at the time of his death (1841), and was erected across the Schoharie at Fort Hunter. It was commenced in October, 1796, and on the 4th day of July following, the anniversary of *Liberty* was celebrated upon it. The next bridge worthy of note in the valley, was an elliptic or arched one over the Mohawk at Schenectada. It was begun in 1797, and when nearly completed, the winter following, was upset by the wind, taken down, and rebuilt on piers. While this bridge was building, an incident of no little interest occurred. After the string pieces had been laid, and before they were planked, a young son of the contractor walked unobserved over the middle of the stream. A workman discovering the urchin upon the timbers, directed the attention of the father that way. With feelings of deepest anxiety he beheld his darling boy in a position from which a misstep would inevitably launch him into eternity. Prudence dictated silence, and after the little fellow had surveyed the premises to his satisfaction, he returned to the shore, to the great relief of his agitated parent, who gave him a good basting for his motherly curiosity.

A bridge was begun at Canajoharie before the Schenectada bridge was completed. This was also an elliptic, and required to be taken down at the end of a year or two, when it was placed on three piers. Some years previous to the erection of this bridge,

a ferry was established at Canajoharie, and owned by the Messrs. Roseboom, who traded where the ferry was located, one mile east of the village. At an early period, a good bridge was built over the east Canada creek, which afforded a pattern for one constructed at Caughnawaga—where, for many years, there had also been a ferry. The last mentioned bridge was put up in the summer and completed by the following winter, so as to be used on one track, but the first spring freshet carried it off. Afterwards, the Mohawk Turnpike Company erected another, some thirty rods farther up the river, which is still standing. A bridge was stretched across the river many years ago, a little below the Nose, but it was soon after swept away by the ice and never rebuilt. Bridges have also been erected over the Mohawk at Cahoes Falls, Amsterdam, Fort Plain, Little Falls, Herkimer and Utica.

Archibald and James Kane, brothers, established themselves in the mercantile business on the Mohawk about the year 1795; locating between the Rosebooms and the present village of Canajoharie, where one of their buildings, having an arched roof, is still to be seen. The Kanes were, for a time, the heaviest dealers west of Albany. At this period there was much gambling and horse-racing in the Mohawk valley. Indeed, there continued to be until about the year 1825. *Intemperance*, the parent of many vices and miseries, was an attendant, and to such an extent did it stalk abroad for thirty or forty years, that numerous churches were seriously affected by it, their ministers often setting the example, then prevalent in New York and New England, not only of placing the *beaded liquid* before friends, but of drinking with them at taverns. On a certain occasion in 1797 or '98, when a party were playing cards (a game of *lieu*) at Canajoharie, with stakes upon the table amounting to some five hundred dollars, Archibald Kane became indebted to Barney Roseboom for nearly one hundred dollars, and another of the gamblers becoming the debtor of Kane for about the same sum, a difficulty originated in trying to reconcile the liability of the parties to each other, and Kane gave Roseboom a challenge to personal combat. It was supposed that the challenge would not have been given, had the

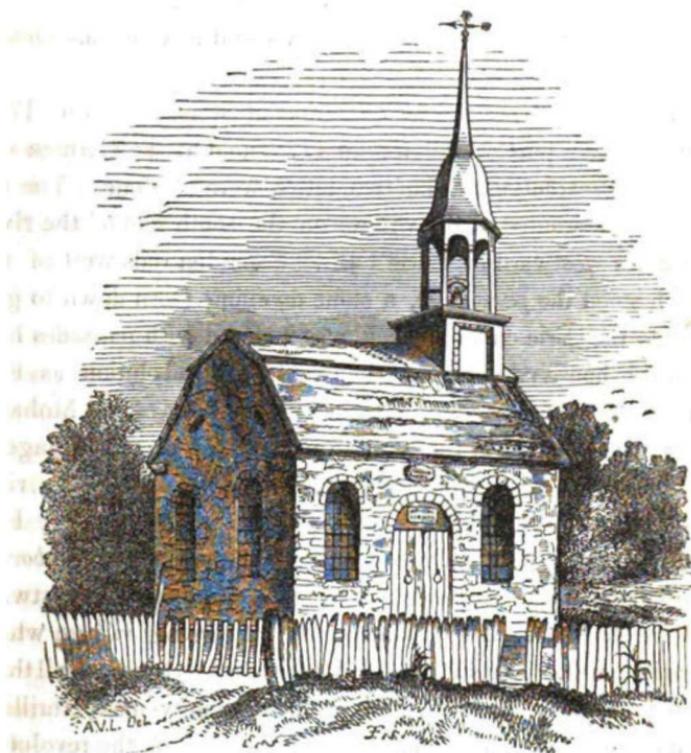
challenger believed his antagonist would have accepted it, the latter having a lovely wife and several interesting children; but it was accepted, ground paced off, and shots exchanged with a brace of trooper's pistols. Kane was wounded in his left arm, and with the wound his bruised honor was healed; the combatants became as warm personal friends as ever, and thus ended an affair which created no little excitement for a time, in Western New York. A few years after the transaction above related, Archibald Kane went to Hayti, married into the family of the governing nobility, and died there.

A pleasing story was originated when the Kanes were trading at Canajoharie, about an imposition practised by a shrewd Yankee, upon an honest Dutch justice of Herkimer county, who had arrested him for journeying on the Sabbath. According to the story, the Yankee was stopped, but as his business was urgent, the man of equity agreed to give him a written permit to proceed for a nominal sum. The justice, requesting the traveler to write it, is said to have set his hand unconsciously to an order on the Messrs. Kane for some fifty dollars, instead of a permit to travel; which, when presented for payment, he pronounced the *tam Yankee pass*: but James Kane, who now resides in Albany, pronounces the whole narrative a hoax.

The Caughnawaga church, a land mark of former days, is a stone edifice, and was erected in 1763, by voluntary contributions. Sir William Johnson gave liberally towards building it. The steeple was placed on it in 1795. Of this church and congregation, the Rev. Thomas Romeyn was the first pastor. He died, and was succeeded in June, 1795, by the Rev. Abraham Van Horn, one of the earliest graduates of Queen's College, New Jersey. Mr. V. H. was settled in Ulster county five years previous to taking charge of the congregation at Caughnawaga, and married, during his whole ministry, about *fifteen hundred* couple—more, perhaps, than any clergyman now living in the United States. He died suddenly at an advanced age, January 5, 1840.

This church was without a bell until the confiscated property

of Sir John Johnson was sold in the revolution, when the former dinner-bell of his father, Sir William, was purchased by several male members, conveyed to it on a pole by friendly Indians, and placed upon it. On the bell is the following inscription—"S R William Johnson Baronet 1774. Made by Miller and Ross in Eliz. Town." It weighs something over one hundred pounds.



CAUGHNAWAGA CHURCH.

This edifice, now under the management of the Rev. Douw Van Olinda, who has fitted it up for a classic school, is hereafter to be known as the *Fonda Academy*; the first term of which institution commenced with flattering prospects in the latter part of 1844, under the tuition of Mr. Jacob A. Hardenbergh, a graduate of Rutgers' College, New Jersey.

At an early period, a small church was constructed of wood

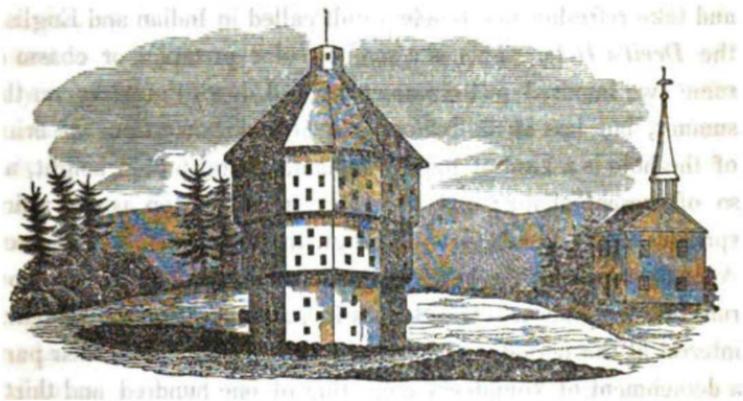
near the Upper Mohawk Castle, at which place the missionary minister, resident at Fort Hunter, sometimes officiated. This church was provided with a small bell, similar to the one on Queen Anne's chapel, and after the revolution, the Indians who had removed from its neighborhood, made application to obtain it. Being denied their request, they succeeded in getting it down in the night; and in a canoe paddled up the Mohawk with it unmolested—transporting it as best they could to Canada.—*Joseph Wagner.*

Churches were erected by *Lutherans* at Stone Arabia in 1770, in the western part of Palatine in 1772, and at the German flats before the revolution. The two latter were of stone. The last named was situated in the valley, on the south side of the river, four miles westward of Little Falls. Some ten rods west of this church stood the *parsonage*, a stone dwelling (torn down to give place to the Erie canal) which was inclosed with palisades having block-house corners, and known in the revolution as Fort Herkimer.\* Fort Dayton, another military post of the Mohawk valley, was situated in the western part of the present village of Herkimer. In going from the former to the latter fort, the river was crossed at a rapid one mile above Fort Herkimer. Fort Plain, a military establishment of great importance in the *border* transactions of the Mohawk valley, stood eighteen miles eastward of Fort Herkimer, and within the present thriving village which bears its name. Forts Plain, Herkimer and Dayton were all three erected as early as 1776, and in their vicinity many thrilling events transpired, which characterised the war of the revolution on the frontiers of New York; not a few of which have gone down to oblivion.

There was much speculation in new lands in the interior of New York, between the French and American wars with England, and thousands upon thousands of acres changed owners for a mere song—land now valued at millions of dollars. Among

\* Some writers have stated that Fort Herkimer stood near General Herkimer's house—not so: although called after him, it was six miles westward of his residence.

the speculators were Sir William Johnson, Governor Tryon, Major Jelles Fonda, and Colonel John Butler. Lands on the Sacandaga river were brought into market at this period.



FORT PLAIN.

Above is a view of this Fort as it was seen in the revolution, except that it was inclosed by strong palisades. The little church seen in the right of the picture, was burned down by the Indians during the war.

The following sketch of a transaction not generally known, is no doubt the most authentic account of it ever obtained. It is drawn, by permission, from notes of a journey to Niagara, made by a friend in 1806.

In the summer of 1759, Sir William Johnson landed with a body of troops at the mouth of a creek four miles from Niagara, since called Johnson's creek, and took possession of forts Niagara and Schlosser, posts of much importance, on the east side of Niagara river, as they commanded the trade of the upper lakes. In 1760, Mr. Stedman, an Englishman, contracted with Sir William to construct a portage road from Queenston Landing, now Lewiston, to Fort Schlosser, a distance of about eight miles. The road having been completed, on the morning of the 17th Sept., 1763, 15 wagons and teams, mostly oxen, under an escort of 24 men, commanded by a sergeant, and accompanied by the contractor, Stedman, and Capt. Johnson, as a volunteer, set out from Fort Niagara,

with stores, &c., intended for the garrison at Fort Schlosser. Arriving something over two miles from the top of the mountain above Lewiston, and ten or twelve from Niagara, the escort and wagons halted about 11 o'clock, on a little savanna of green sward to rest and take refreshments, beside a gulf called in Indian and English, the *Devil's Hole*. This is a semi-circular precipice or chasm of some two hundred feet diameter up and down the river on the summit, but less at the bottom. A little distance from the brink of the hole is a kind of natural mound, several feet in height, also of crescent shape; and sixty feet from the top issues a fine spring, which dashes down through the underbrush to the river. A small brook in the neighborhood, called the *bloody-run*, now runs into the chasm. The Seneca Indians continued in the French interest at this period, and fearing a hostile movement on their part, a detachment of volunteers consisting of one hundred and thirty men, under the command of Capt. Campbell, marched from Queenston to strengthen the escort. Just as the troops under Capt. C. reached the spot where the escort had halted, about five hundred Indians, who had been concealed behind the mound, sprang from their covert with savage yells, and like so many tigers began an indiscriminate slaughter of the troops, who were thrown into the utmost confusion. Resistance against such odds did not long continue, and those of the party who were not killed or driven from the precipice with their teams, attempted their escape by flight. In the midst of the conflict, Stedman sprang upon a small horse, and giving the faithful animal a slap on the neck with his hand, it bore him over the dead and dying, and through the thick ranks of the foe, who discharged their rifles, and hurled their tomahawks in vain at his head.

Of those who jumped directly down the precipice in front, some seventy or eighty feet, which has an uneven surface below, only one escaped with life. This was a soldier named Mathews, from whom these particulars were obtained by the tourist. He was then living on the Canada shore, near Niagara, and familiarly called *Old Britannia*. Several trees were growing from the bottom of the hole, the tops of which reached near the surface of the ground.

Into one of these trees Corporal Noble leaped and hung, in which position eleven bullets riddled his body. Captain Johnson, of the escort, was killed, and Lieut. Duncan, of the relief, a native of Long Island, and a promising young officer, was wounded in the left arm, of which he died. The whole number of troops and teamsters was about one hundred and seventy-five, of this number only some twenty-five escaped with life, and all of them, except Stedman and Mathews, did so below or near the north end of the hole, at a little sand ridge, which served to break the fall. Of Capt. Campbell's command, only *eleven* escaped with life. The loss of the enemy was inconsiderable compared with that of the British. A short time after this horrid affair, the Indians, who considered Stedman a charmed man, gave him as a reward for his daring feat, a large tract of land, which embraced all that he rode over in his previous flight. He returned to England, taking along this favorite horse, and never afterwards would he allow it to be saddled or harnessed.

My friend T., in whose journal I find the above facts, first visited the Devil's Hole, with a relative, August 10th, 1806, at which time he entered it by descending a tree, to search for evidences of the event related. In the bottom of the chasm he found the skulls of several oxen "mouldering and covered with moss," a piece of a wagon, and the small part of a horn; which latter relic he took from the place, and after retaining it in his possession thirty-eight years, kindly presented to the author.

The close of the French war left the colony of New York deeply in debt, and resort was had to direct taxation to sustain the government. The assessment was levied "By virtue of three acts of General Assembly of the Colony of New York; the first for the payment of the second £100,000 tax, the second for the payment of the £60,000 tax, and the third, for the raising and collecting the arrears of several acts therein mentioned." The commissioners of the county, who set their hands and seals to the warrant sent "Mr. John Fonda, Collector for Mohawks," were "Rens. Nicoll, Marte Halenbeck, Abraham Douw, and Cornelis Van Schaack." The warrant was dated at Albany, July 17th,

1764. The tax on the citizens of the Mohawk valley amounted to £242,17 6—\$607 19, and was collected, except \$2 81 bad debts, and receipted by John Stevenson, in Albany, the 11th of October following. Were not part of this tax list gone, I would present it to the reader. The following are some of the largest sums taxed to individuals on the portions of the manuscript remaining :

	Valuation.	Assess.		Valuation.	Assess.
Sir Wm. Johnson,	£167	£20 17 6	Peter Young,	£13	£1 12 0
Margrit Flipse,	24	3 00 0	John Nukerk,	13	1 12 0
Marte Van OLinda,	21	2 12 6	Hans Klyn,	13	1 12 0
Lewis Groat,	20	2 10 0	Daniel Clas,	10	1 5 0
Davit Pruyt,	20	2 10 0	Guy Johnson,	10	1 5 0
Isaac D. Graf,	18	2 5 0	John Have,	10	1 5 0
Hans Antes,	17	2 2 6	Jacob Potman,	10	1 5 0
James McMaster,	16	2 0 0	Clas D. Graf,	9	1 2 6
Harme Vedder,	16	2 0 0	Harmanis Mabe,	9	1 2 6
Wouter Swart,	16	2 0 0	Cor's Potman,	9	1 2 6
John Johnson,	16	2 0 0	Cor's Nukerk,	9	1 2 6

The following tax list will show the names of many of the citizens living in and near that part of the Mohawk valley now embraced in Montgomery county, and their comparative wealth at that period. The manuscript, which has been preserved among the papers of the late Maj. Fonda, is without date: it is written in a fair, legible hand, and must have been executed a few years prior to the revolution.

*"A List of the persons that are assessed above five pounds, with the sums they are to pay, and the number of days they are to work upon the King's highways, annexed.*

PERSONS NAMES.	Quota.	Annual Assess.	No. Days Work.	PERSONS NAMES.	Quota.	Annual Assess.	No. Days Work.
John Bleven,	£ 6s 1d	6	4	Christian Earnest,	£ 13s 3d	5	5
Abraham Hodges,	10 1 6	4	4	John Waters,	12 3	5	5
John & Evert Van Eps,	15 3 0	5	5	Christopher McGraw,	9 1 6	4	4
Wm. & Woulter Swart,	10 1 6	4	4	James Phillipse,	10 1 6	4	4
Martinus Van OLinda,	17 3	5	5	William Snook,	8 1 6	4	4
Mary Phillipse,	17 3	5	5	Samuel Pettingall,	8 1 6	4	4
Abraham Phillipse,	6 1 6	4	4	Patrick McConnellly,	8 1 6	4	4
William Allen,	15 3	5	5	John Van Dewake,	10 1 6	4	4
John Souts,	6 1 6	4	4	Peter Young,	10 1 6	4	4

PERSON'S NAMES.	Quota.		Annual Assess.		PERSONS NAMES.	Quota.		Annual Assess.	
			No.	Days Work.				No.	Days Work.
Jacobus Cromwell,	15	3	5		Timothy Lenderse,	15	3	5	
Andrew Frank,	16	3	5		Charles H. Van Eps,	15	3	5	
Abraham Van Alstine,	18	3	5		Peter Jost,	6	1	6	4
Crownidge Kincaide,	10	1	6	4	Philip Phillipse,	13	3	5	
John S. Vrooman,	7	1	6	4	Jacob Van Dewarke,	9	1	6	4
Adam Sternbergh,	15	3	5		John Everse,	7	1	6	4
Henry and John Lewis,	6	1	6	4	Malkert Van Duesar,	12	3	5	
Abraham Yates,	20	3	5		Mrs. Sophia Denniston,	6	1	6	4
David and Peter Lewis,	10	1	6	4	Capt. Norm'd McLead,	6	1	6	4
Hendrick Divendorf,	7	3	5		Widow Vrooman & son,	6	1	6	4
David Potman,	15	3	5		Dow Fonda,	16	3	5	
Lips Spinner,	15	3	5		John Funda,	6	1	6	4
Samuel Rose,	10	1	6	4	Jelles Funda,	40	9	8	
Hendrick Hoff,	10	1	6	4	Barent B. Wemple,	8	1	6	4
Adam Gardeneer,	13	3	5		Gilbert Tice,	6	1	6	4
Arent Bradt,	13	3	5		Peter Cooley	7	1	6	4
Adam Dagstader, Sen.	18	3	5		Samson Simens,	15	3	4	
Fredrick Dagstader, Sen	20	3	5		John Wemple,	6	1	6	4
Hendrick Dagstader, Sr.	20	1	6	4	Andries Wemple,	6	1	6	4
John Bowen,	7	1	6	4	Peter Conyn, Esq.,	30	5	6	
William B. Bowen,	6	1	6	4	Harman Visser,	27	5	6	
John V. Potman,	7	1	6	4	Hanse Clement,	8	1	6	4
John Butler, Esq.,	27	5	6		Lewis Clement,	14	3	5	
John Nare,	12	3	5		Michael Staller,	10	1	6	4
John and Jacob Kilts,	20	3	5		Daniel McGregor,	10	1	6	4
Conradt Linkefelter,	11	3	5		Philip Weamer,	6	1	6	4
Arent Potman,	7	1	6	4	Baltus Ergetsinger,	8	1	6	4
Sir Wm. Johnson, Bart.,	202	12	9		Robert Adams,	14	3	4	
Sir John Johnson, Kt.,	25	5	6		Martin Lessler,	10	1	6	4
Col. Daniel Claus,	21	5	6		Frans Salts,	15	3	5	
Col. Guy Johnson,	21	5	6		Hanse Clyne,	12	3	5	
Frederick Degraff,	6	1	6	4	Jacob Potman,	9	1	6	4
Nicholas Degraff,	6	1	6	4	Cornelius Potman,	10	1	6	4
I. Degraff & son Jer'h,	13	3	5		Harmanus Meaby,	8	1	6	4
Lewis Groat,	16	3	5		Garrent C. Newkirk,	8	1	6	4
Jacob Bushart,	7	1	6	4	John Newkirk,	10	1	6	4
Hendrick Bushart,	7	1	6	4	Peter Martin, Esq.,	13	3	5	
Adam Fonda,	9	1	6	4	Isaac Collier,	10	1	6	4
Peter Whitmore,	6	1	6	4	Adam Zeelie,	13	3	5	
John & Conradt Smith,	6	1	6	4	Ephraim Wemple,	13	3	5	
Guysbert & Garret Van Brachler,	6	1	6	4	Barent Hansen,	7	1	6	4
James Davis,	6	1	6	4	Hendrick Hansen,	7	1	6	4
Peter Frederick & sons,	12	3	5		Abraham Quackenbush,	8	1	6	4
John Wilson,	7	1	6	4	Jeremiah Quackenbush,	11	3	5	
J. Rupart & Lottridge,	8	1	6	4	N. & P. Quackenbush,	10	1	6	4
Peter Service,	18	3	5		Vincent Quackenbush,	6	1	6	4
Hans Albrant,	7	1	6	4	Ab'm Quackenbush,	7	1	6	4
Andries Snyder,	8	1	6	4	John Malatt,	8	1	6	4
Hans Doren,	7	1	6	4	Samuel Gardeneer,	18	3	5	
Philip Cromwell,	17	3	5		Jacob Gardeneer,	12	3	5	
Volkert Veeder,	6	1	6	4	William Schylder,	6	1	6	4
Widow Smith and sons,	17	3	4		Hans Wart,	7	1	6	4
John V. Veeder,	27	5	6						
					Total Assess.	£14	11	6	555

I have observed that RUM was one of the principal articles of traffic with the Indians on the frontiers of New York. Says *Colden*—

“There is one *vice* which the *Indians* have all fallen into, since their acquaintance with the Christians, and of which they could not be guilty before that time, that is *drunkenness*. It is strange, how all the Indian nations, and almost every person among them, male and female, are infatuated with the love of strong drink; they know no bounds to their desire, while they can swallow it down, and then indeed the greatest man among them scarcely deserves the name of a brute.”

*Alcohol* has, in a very great degree depopulated the state of a noble race of men and women, and much demoralized and enervated its present race of inhabitants. One single invoice now before me, of rum purchased in New-York, in October 1770, and designed for the Mohawk valley trade, was for ten hogsheads and twenty barrels, containing seventeen hundred and seventy-nine gallons; which, at the low price of two shillings and four pence, amounted to over *five hundred dollars*.

Tryon county, so called after the Governor of New York at the time, was organized in 1772, and took in the present counties of Montgomery, Fulton, Herkimer and portions of several others. *The first court of general quarter sessions of the peace* for this county, was held in Johnstown, so called after Sir William Johnson, on Tuesday September 8, 1772. The Bench consisted of

“Guy Johnson, *Judge*.

“John Butler, Peter Conyne, *Judges*.

“Sir John Johnson, knight, Daniel Claus, John Wells, Jelles Fonda, *Assistant Judges*.

“John Collins, Joseph Chew, Adam Loucks, John Fry, Fr. Young, Peter Ten Broeck, *Justices*.”

In 1791, the county of Herkimer was organized from Tryon, and called after General Herkimer who fell at Oriskany; and in 1794 the name of Tryon county was changed to that of Montgomery, who fell at Quebec.

About the year 1800, might have been seen, as in New England at a still later period, at some public place in every town in New York, a public whipping-post and stocks; and justices of the

peace had authority to order that individual confined in the stocks, who got drunk or used profane language. Criminals guilty of petty thefts, and other violations of the law, were not unfrequently seen with their hands tied, and their arms drawn up to their extent around the public post, which was made square, receiving upon their bare backs, from the hands of a sheriff or constable, the scorpion lash of justice.

A few moments may not be unprofitably spent, in reflecting on the great and important changes that have passed over New York since the peace of 1783—changes not only visible on every water-course and thoroughfare, but on almost every acre of ground, from the then frontier settlements of Albany and Tryon counties to the shores of St. Lawrence and the great western lakes. In the territory named, and at the period to which I have alluded, where were dense forests, unbroken for many miles, may now be seen waving fields of grain, and flocks and herds upon a thousand hills—may now be heard the complicated machinery of the mechanic arts—may now be felt the genial influence of unfettered science. The revolution in mind and individual interest in eastern New York, under cultivation two generations removed from the present, is almost as apparent as that in matter, where then roamed the happy savage in quest of his game. The difference in the mode of traveling, particularly in the Mohawk valley, in the last thirty years, is worthy especial notice. Public conveyance was then either in stages or boats propelled on the river by manual labor;—rail-road cars, moved by steam power have now not only driven post-coaches from the valley, but the commodious canal packet drawn by horses, now subserves the purpose of the slow moving Durham craft. Indeed, the New England tourist, who might then have been seen mounted on horseback, with an enormous portmanteau fastened upon his saddle, journeying in the valley, is seen no longer: his economy is rendered unnecessary by the cheapness of the passenger line-boat.

Extensive manufactories—indeed large cities and villages have sprung up as if by enchantment, where but little more than half a century ago might have been heard the dismal howl of the

wolf; the frightful scream of the panther; or the terrific yell of the savage. In fact, little hamlets, in number almost countless, with the domes of their seminaries and church spires towering aloft, are scattered over the hunting grounds of the mocasined Indian; the site of whose little bark dwelling and intricate foot-path, has been usurped by an iron-bound road, or an artificial river.

Not only has enterprise peopled those portions of New York lying west of the frontier settlements at the close of the revolution, with a population of *one and a half millions* of freemen, with an estimated valuation of property exceeding \$100,000,000, and a real one more than five times greater; but it has thickly populated several States west of New York; and the American Eagle, as if undetermined where to alight, is conducting the hardy sons of New England and New York toward the shores of the great Pacific. Judging from the past and present, what may we reasonably expect will be the future condition and resources of the Empire State?—resources which now more than equal those of the thirteen States, when under British tyranny.