

## **The Hilltown Thomas Family.**

BY A. K. THOMAS, DOYLESTOWN, PA.

(Meeting in Wycombe Baptist Church, October 7, 1902.)

The name of Thomas was very common among the Welsh speaking people of 200 years ago. The meaning of the name is "A Twin." Tom is the popular form of Thomas, and has been in vogue for many centuries. The Christian name, though not used generally before the Norman conquest, is now one of the commonest of baptismal appellatives and surnames. It has been an abundant source of nicknames, represented in our family nomenclature by Thomson, Thomerson, Thomason, and Thompson. Some of the Welsh Thomas families are of antiquity, though the surname is of comparatively recent assumption.

The Thomas family was represented among the earliest arrivals in New England. Evan Thomas was a town officer in Boston, and John Thomas came to New England about 1643. Another John Thomas came to New England in the "Hopewell" in 1635. By a perusal of the life sketches of many prominent men bearing the family name it will be found that the Thomases have been actively and intimately associated with the civil, industrial and commercial affairs of America. They have attained prominence in the field of science and medicine, while in statesmanship the family has produced men of thought and action. Some have attained eminence at the bar and in the administration of justice, while clergymen, educators and lecturers descended from the ancestral tree have occupied high places. As heroes in the Colonial, Revolutionary and later wars they have rendered to their country patriotic service, each of whom has added lustre to the name of Thomas.

So much for the origin and characteristics of the family as a whole. In Bucks county there are several distinct and separate branches of the Thomas family. They are mostly of Welsh origin, but so far as I can learn these branches bear no relationship other than that they are descended from Welsh ancestry.

My purpose, however, is to speak more particularly of one

branch of the Thomas family, whose emigrant ancestor settled in Bucks county nearly two centuries ago, and from whom has sprung a vast progeny, now scattered throughout the entire country, with living descendants in almost every State of the Union. The name of this ancestor, of whom the writer is a descendant, was William Thomas. This pioneer was a native of Wales. He came to America in 1712. In his native country he was a preacher and exercised his talents in the ancient Baptist church at Llanwenarth, organized in 1652. Because of severe religious persecution in the old country, Rev. William Thomas, with many others, was obliged to leave the land of his birth and seek religious liberty in the new country beyond the sea. Prior to 1695 these dissenters, including Baptists and Congregationalists, had no place of worship in the mother country, and they were compelled to meet in the most secluded spots among the mountains and in the valleys of Wales. Many of these spots in Wales are now historic as having been the refuge of those persecuted men and women who longed for religious liberty. After weary years of waiting this liberty was granted to an extent that the worshippers were permitted to hold public service, and the church at Llanwenarth was dedicated. Rev. William Thomas was most likely present at the dedication. The walls of the original building are still standing as a part of the present house of worship.

William Thomas, the father of the family of whom I am about to speak, was a man of some means, or at least he possessed a competency sufficient to warrant his seeking a new home in America. He was a cooper by trade, and for some years after settlement in this country followed that business in connection with his calling as preacher of the Word. Remaining in Wales until the death of his parents, he embarked for America in the winter of 1712, landing in Philadelphia after a voyage of several weeks. It is related that when Elder Thomas and his family were ready to sail from Bristol, with their goods stored away in the sailing vessel, they decided to visit some relatives in the old country, intending to return before the time set for the vessel to sail. They returned at the time assigned for the sailing, but found to their great grief that the ship had departed, but was not yet out of sight. Mr. Thomas secured passage on a smaller craft and endeavored to overtake the ship, but all to no purpose.

The vessel was lost sight of and the family left destitute. They took passage on the next vessel bound for America, arriving in Philadelphia on February 14, 1712. They made inquiry concerning the vessel which contained all the valuables of the family, but learned to their chagrin that the master of the ship had absconded and the craft was in the possession of others. They even saw some of their clothing on the backs of persons who had purchased them of the dishonest master of the vessel, yet they were not able to recover anything.

Thus reduced to poverty, Elder William Thomas and his young family, consisting of a wife and one son, were face to face with complete poverty. He was obliged to borrow money to pay for his passage across the water, so that when he commenced life on this side of the Atlantic he was absolutely penniless.

With a determination to make the best of things, Mr. Thomas sought a home at Radnor, Delaware county, where he carried on the coopering business for some years, and by dint of the most rigid economy managed to save a little money. Looking around for an opening where he could purchase some land and establish for himself a home, he came to Bucks county, and in 1718 purchased 440 acres in Hilltown township, bordering on the Montgomery county line, near the present village of Hockertown. Here he built a house and made his home. This house stood until 1812. Having attained a foothold in the new country, he made other purchases in the same neighborhood, the last tract having been secured in 1728. It was his aim to provide a farm for each of his seven children, and before the close of his life his wish was realized. The purchases comprised six tracts amounting to 1258 acres, all in the township of Hilltown, for which the sum of £361 was paid. This land when Elder Thomas first set foot on it was an unbroken wilderness, requiring much hard labor to clear and make fruitful.

After his arrival in America Elder William Thomas deposited his membership with the Montgomery Baptist church, which was established in 1719. Living quite a distance from the mother church, the Elder set about to establish a house of worship nearer home. Accordingly he set apart a piece of ground from his extensive tract and prepared to build a meeting-house. With his own hands he labored to build the house, which was

completed in 1737. In this little log house he preached for twenty years, or until 1757, and wherein his son John followed him in the ministry.

In those days the Indians were somewhat troublesome at times. It is related that the Elder, fearing an attack at an unguarded moment, was accustomed to take with him to the meeting-house his gun and ammunition and deposit it at the base of the log pulpit, hewn from a gum tree.

This log house stood until the close of the Colonial period. In 1771 it was removed and a larger building erected of stone, and this in turn has given way to the present neat structure known as the Lower Hilltown Baptist church. The body of the founder of the church lies in the graveyard near by, and the marble slab which covers it bears the following inscription:

"In yonder meeting-house I spent my breath,  
Now silent, mould'ring here I lie in Death;  
These silent lips shall wake, and yon declare  
A dread amen to truths they published there."

His wife, Ann, lies buried at his side, and his five sons and two daughters likewise are buried in the yard near by, as well as numerous descendants of the family down to the fifth and sixth generation.

The children of Rev. William Thomas were as follows: Thomas, John, Ephraim, Manaseh, William, Jr., Ann, Gwentley. From these seven children, have sprung a vast number of men and women, located in nearly every State in the Union. Thomas, the oldest, was born in Wales. He was a member of the Montgomery Baptist church. He was twice married. His first wife was Margaret Bates, of Montgomery, and the second Mary Williams. Thirteen children were born to him—three by the first wife and ten by the second. Thomas became an extensive landholder in Hilltown. He inherited the old homestead, on which he died in 1780.

Rev. John Thomas, the second son of Elder William Thomas, succeeded his father in the ministry. He was born one year after the Elder's arrival in America. He preached for about 40 years in the church at Hilltown with conspicuous success in the building up of the congregation. His wife was Sarah James, of Radnor, by whom he had four children—Ann, Rebecca, Leah and Sarah. The

salary or "living" of the pastor of the Montgomery and Hilltown Baptist churches at that time was equivalent to £40 a year.

Ephraim, the third son, was born in 1719 and married Eleanor Bates. He also spent his life in Hilltown. He was a devout member of the Hilltown Baptist church, in which he was a ruling elder. He had ten children, and among his descendants are numbered the families of Morris, James, Milnor, Beck, Foster, Lewis, Griffith, Mathews, Mathias, Rowland, McEwen, Hough, Swartz, Foulke, Dungan, Hamilton, Riale, Lunn, Williams, Kutcheon and many others.

Manaseh, the fourth son, was born in 1721. He married Elizabeth Evans. He too was a member of the Hilltown church, and spent his life on the old plantation inherited from his father. He died in 1802, in the 81st year of his age.

William, Jr., was born in 1723 and married Abigail, daughter of Joseph Day. He too inherited a portion of the land owned by his father. He died in 1764, leaving three minor children.

Ann, one of the daughters of William Thomas, was born in 1719. She married Stephen Rowland, of Wales. She died without leaving any children.

Gwentley, the other daughter, was born in 1716 and married Morris Morris. She was the ancestor of several distinguished descendants, among them being a member of Congress, prominent educators and members of the Legislature. The names of some of her descendants are Dungan, Mathias, Pugh, Kellar, Griffith, Phillips, Lloyd and Magill.

It is a singular fact that while the descendants of Rev. William Thomas were once so numerous in Hilltown and other parts of Bucks county, very few are found in Hilltown to-day. Only a single male descendant bearing the family name is residing within its limits. Many of them early in the last century moved to the Western country, and from them have sprung families who have never seen the ancestral homestead in Bucks county.

Rev. Jefferson Harrison Jones, of Alliance, Ohio, is a descendant of Leah Thomas, daughter of Rev. John Thomas. In June, 1902 Mr. Jones was 89 years old and his voice is still heard in the pulpit. He began to preach when 14 years old, and was known as the "Boy Preacher." In August this year he married his 89th couple. He was regarded for years as the most elo-

quent preacher in Ohio. He was a close friend of the late President Garfield, and pronounced a touching eulogy at his grave.

Elias Thomas, Jr., grandson of Walter Thomas, who moved from Bucks county to Indiana in 1837, is a prosperous farmer in Jay county, in that State. He is a graduate of Liber College.

Howard Malcolm Kutchin, a descendant of the family through Ephraim Thomas, was born at New Britain, Bucks county, in 1842. He is the eldest son of Thomas T. Kutchin, a Baptist clergyman, once pastor of the New Britain church. Mr. Kutchin is a newspaper man by profession, having owned and edited several prominent papers in the West. He has been an active Republican all his life and has occupied several government positions, including that of collector of internal revenue of Wisconsin and postmaster of San Diego, Cal. In 1887 he was appointed by President McKinley commissioner of fisheries of Alaska, and is now returning from his annual visit to that country in the interest of the United States Government.

Judge Albert Duy Thomas, of Crawfordsville, Ind., is descended from the Thomas family of Hilltown through Ephraim Thomas. His father, Horatio J. Thomas, emigrated from Philadelphia in 1836 and settled in Williamsport, that State. Judge Thomas is a graduate of the Law School of Michigan, and has practiced law in Indiana since 1866. He was elected judge of the common pleas and afterward judge of the circuit court. His name has been mentioned frequently in connection with the supreme bench. When first elected he was the youngest judge in Indiana. At this writing he is again the candidate of his party for judge of the circuit court.

Captain Abel Thomas was descended from William Thomas through Thomas and Asa. He lived in Bucks and Montgomery counties. His father Asa was a soldier in the Revolutionary War and did service at the battle of the Brandywine. Abel Thomas was captain of several military organizations in Bucks county, and in Montgomery was elected to the office of county commissioner in 1838. Several of his children are still living.

Asa Thomas, the great-grandfather of the writer of this paper, lived on the family tract in Hilltown all his life. When the war of the Revolution broke out he was among the first from Bucks

county to respond to the call of his country. He was commissioned August 21, 1775, as a private, and on the same date William Thomas and Jonah Thomas, of Hilltown, joined the Continental army. Asa Thomas was 20 years old when mustered into the service. He was at the battle of the Brandywine in September, 1777. It is related that while engaged in guarding the ford of the Brandywine the order was issued for every man to get behind a tree, Indian fashion. In the retreat of the army Mr. Thomas stopped at a tavern along the roadside. Not deeming it safe to remain there, he went on to a private house, where he rested and received some refreshments at the hands of a good Quaker family. Looking back, Thomas saw the British soldiers entering the inn at which he had stopped. The good Quaker admonished him to flee quickly and hide behind a hedge in rear of his house. He promptly obeyed and thus retained his liberty. This Revolutionary soldier died in his 82d year and lies buried in the Lower Hilltown Baptist burying-ground. His wife survived him some 15 years, dying in the 89th year of her age, April 14, 1854.

At the reunion of the descendants of Rev. William Thomas, at Chalfont, in August of this year (1902) there were descendants present from various States of the Union, and the writer is in possession of many letters from members of the family now scattered far and wide from ocean to ocean and from Canada to Mexico. Thus from this single emigrant ancestor, who sought civil and religious liberty in the new country nearly two centuries ago, has sprung this vast progeny, now numbering many thousands.

## Revolutionary Events about Newtown.

BY SAMUEL GORDON SMYTH, WEST CONSHOHOCKEN, PA.

(Meeting in Wycombe Baptist Church, October 7, 1902.)

There are but few persons, comparatively speaking, outside of students, investigators, novelists and the like, who, from choice, are familiar with or are even interested in the wealth of facts which may be found in those valuable series of State publications, commonly called the "Colonial Records" and "Pennsylvania Archives."

It was a wise thought which suggested the preserving to us and our posterity, in this manner, this interesting collection of historic documents, correspondence, journals, military records, &c., which embody not only the annals of colonial and provincial times, but those of that intensely dramatic period which ended in the establishment of our national independence.

Why should not these books be more frequently found in the libraries of our schools, and such use made of them in the course of study that would popularize the history of our State from its very beginning? In that way the love of country would be encouraged and its lessons impressed upon the young, while the deeds and bravery of its people from the formative period to its development as one of the free and independent commonwealths of the United States, would be familiar to the mind of every scholar in the land.

From the publications to which I have referred and from other reliable authorities I will quote such references as relate to Newtown and its vicinity in the Revolutionary decade.

In Pennsylvania Archives, second series Vol. XV, page 343, et seq., will be found a portion of the minutes of the Committee of Bucks county, covering a period of about two years. A perusal will show with what patience the inhabitants of this county bore their share of the political abuses and tyrannous measures which were imposed upon the country by unwise Provincial legislation, and the acts of Parliament enforced by the British ministry.



Bucks county was among the first to voice her protest against these wrongs. Passing from protest to sterner measures a call was made for her inhabitants to meet at Newtown July 9, 1774, where many prominent people gathered, some of whom were destined to harder experiences than they ever dreamed of. Gilbert Hicks presided, and William Walters was made clerk. Passing over the explanation of the nature and purpose of their gathering, "the meeting proceeded to the Business thereof," and the "Resolves" of that first convention of the citizens in the cause of American liberty are now a matter of history, viz:

"Resolved, That the inhabitants of this county have the same opinion of the dangerous tendency of the claims of the British Parliament to make laws, binding on the inhabitants of these Colonies in all cases whatsoever, without their consent, as other of our fellow American subjects have.

Resolved, That it is the duty of every American, when oppressed by measures either of Ministry, Parliament, or any other power, to use every lawful endeavor to obtain relief, and to form and promote a plan of union between the parent country and colonies in which the claim of the parent country may be ascertained and the liberties of the colonies defined and secured, and no cause of contention in future may arise to disturb that harmony so necessary for the interests and happiness of both, and that this will be best done in a General Congress to be composed of delegates, to be appointed either by the respective Colony's Assembly, or by the members thereof in convention."

John Kidd, Joseph Kirkbride, Joseph Hart, James Wallace, Henry Wynkoop, Samuel Foulke and John Wilkinson were appointed a committee to meet with like committees from other counties of Pennsylvania, at Philadelphia, July 15, 1774. One of the resolutions of that Congress was to recommend the appointment of committees in the several towns and counties "to observe the conduct of all persons, and recommending, also, to the voting freeholders of the county, a number of persons to be chosen for a new committee."

At Newtown, December 15th, following the election, the gentlemen who were chosen to compose this important committee of observation, met. They were; Joseph Galloway, John Kidd, Christian Minnick, John Bessonett, Joseph Kirkbride, Thomas Harvey, Thomas Jenks, Henry Kroesen, Joseph Hart, James Wallace, Richard Walker, John Wilkinson, Joshua Anderson, John Chapman, Joseph Watson, Benjamin Fell, John Kelly, David Wagner, Abraham Stout, Thomas Foulke, John Jamison, Jacob

Strahn, James Chapman, Henry Wynkoop, Jacob Beitleman, Thomas Darrach, Robert Patterson and David Twining.

This committee was to have gotten together again at Newtown, on December 29th, but "a great fall of snow" prevented attendance; the meeting was therefore postponed to January 16, 1775.

Coincident with these proceedings at Newtown, similar action was taken in other counties, all tending to crystallize public sentiment regarding the persecution which aimed to destroy their liberties, and to unite the people into organized opposition to coercion—that weapon of royal power now used by a military force to subdue the Colonies and make them mere slave-like, tribute-yielding dependencies of the crown.

In Massachusetts, where British soldiers—sent to enforce the impositions of parliament—overran the Province, the people were paralyzed with the burdens they had to bear. A situation little short of starvation stared them in the face. Already martyrdom for liberty's sake was suffered by citizens who dared to stand steadfast in their rights under the English Constitution. That they did not die in vain, we all know, for the blood they shed served but to christen the infant Republic.

Such news, echoing the impending doom, swept through the Colonies. The timid shrank and sought refuge behind the throne of Britain, while those whose kindred fought on foreign fields for principles such as these, rose, as by a common impulse, and "resolved" now to be free, peacefully if possible, but by force, if necessary.

When the gentlemen of Bucks county met on January 16, 1775, Joseph Hart was elected chairman, and John Chapman, clerk. The third "resolve" adopted at that meeting was as follows:

"That we hold it our bounden duty, both as Christians and as countrymen, to contribute toward the relief and support of the poor inhabitants of the town of Boston, now suffering in the general cause of all the Colonies; and we do hereby recommend the raising a sum of money for that purpose to every inhabitant or taxable in this county as soon as possible."

It will be seen that Bucks was as prompt to respond to the calls for the relief of her distressed countrymen as she was to denounce the evils inflicted by the parent country. By the following October, the sum of £135 15s. 7d. had been collected for the sufferers

by the Boston Port Act, and was forwarded by the treasurer, Henry Wynkoop.

At this meeting it was voted that Joseph Hart, John Wilkinson, Henry Wynkoop, Joseph Watson and John Chapman, or any three of them, be a "Committee of Correspondence," and "that Henry Wynkoop be treasurer and receive such charitable donations as may be collected in pursuance of the third resolve of this committee."

The minutes of May 2, 1775, show "the alarming situation of public affairs, rendering it necessary that something should be done toward warding off the oppressive measures now too manifestly carrying into execution against us."

The alarming situation here referred to was the silent night march of the British troops to Lexington on April 19th, the ensuing conflict with "the embattled farmers" and the firing of that shot that was "heard 'round the world." Even now Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold were before Ticonderoga, and Crown Point was soon to fall!

On May 8th the Committee of Correspondence met at the house of Richard Leedom and appointed Messrs. Hart, Kidd, Wynkoop, Kirkbride and Wallace as delegates to attend the second Continental Congress to be convened in Carpenter's Hall two days later. Here they for the first time met George Washington, a representative from Virginia, clad in the buff and blue regimentals in which he had seen service on the frontier and on Braddock's Field. He had ridden from his home prepared for war. He had foreseen that the time was at hand when no man must halt between two opinions.

The Provincial Convention which met at Philadelphia January 23, 1775, among other measures recommended the people to "form themselves into associations to improve themselves in the military art, that they might be rendered capable of affording their country that aid which its particular necessities may at any time require." So it came about that at a meeting of the committee held June 12th, the officers of the different associate companies were notified by Joseph Hart "to meet at the house of John Bogart on the 20th of July, to choose field officers, and such other purposes as shall be found necessary." John Bogart kept

a tavern at Centreville, in Buckingham township, which was frequently the rendezvous of the committee after this time.

While assembled at Bogart's the committee had to review several accusations brought against persons in the county for acts and expressions prejudicial to the cause of liberty, complaints arising out of rivalry in the formation of companies, and also to afford an opportunity for those holding views of non-resistance to retire from the board; as witness the following advertisement which the committee instructed Henry Wynkoop to publish:

"Whereas, Several persons who were chosen members of this committee in December last have hitherto neglected to attend the same, and others who have attended have, from scruples of conscience, made application to be discharged, the committee therefore request that all those who do not propose attending for the future to advertise their respective townships with their determination, at the same time appointing some convenient time and place for the inhabitants to meet, and choose other suitable persons in their room, who are desired to meet the committee on Monday, the 21st of August, at the home of John Bogart, in Buckingham township."

When the committee met again at Bogart's, August 21st, these changes were found to have been made in the personnel of the committee: Jacob Strahan, of Haycock, and Abraham Stout, of Rockhill, who had declined to act; Philip Pearson and Samuel Smith were chosen in their stead. John Wilkinson, Jonathan Ingham, Thomas Foulke and John Chapman, being Quakers, and having scruples of conscience were relieved from any further attendance; their places were taken by Benjamin Siegel, of Richland, vice Foulke; James McNair, of Upper Makefield, vice Chapman; Joseph Sacket, of Wrightstown, vice Wilkinson; Augustine Willet, of Middletown, vice Thomas Jenks; John Coryell, of Solebury, vice Ingham, and William Carver, of Buckingham, vice Joseph Watson.

This meeting was important also in the fact that the lists of all officers of the different districts were furnished the committee, with the names of associators and non-associators. (For full and complete list of associators and non-associators see Pennsylvania Archives, Second Series, Vol XIV, pages 143, 227.)

Henry Wynkoop, writing from Bucks county, September 25th, to Col. Daniel Roberdeau, states that he has received the returns of the associators and non-associators for all but three townships, and one company lately raised; "and the number stands:

Associators, 1,688; non-associators, 1,613. I have received some of the association rules, but am afraid the signing will go heavily, chiefly arising from the Quakers and others who chuse it staying at home and doing nothing." Henry mentions that his "Cozin Gerardus Wynkoop" is the bearer of this despatch.

In the minutes of this meeting, August 21st, it is noted also that Treasurer Wynkoop reported having received donations for the Boston sufferers to the amount of £75, 8s. 4d, which he had paid to John Adams, one of the convention from Boston. At a previous meeting a similar report had also been made that a sum for the same purpose had been raised, £51, 15s. 4d, and paid into the hands of Samuel Adams, "one of the delegates at Continental Congress for the Province of Massachusetts Bay."

The following shows evidence of political disturbance at that time in the neighborhood of Newtown:

"Sundry of the inhabitants of the township of Newtown offering to contest the election held there, it was recommended to them and agreed by both parties to hold a new election of which the clerk is directed to notify the electors of that township previous to the next meeting."

The committee met frequently now, alternating their sittings between Newtown and Bogert's tavern. Much of their time was taken up with the examination of persons who were considered to have made disrespectful remarks regarding the cause of the Colonies. One man in Upper Makefield was charged with the following intemperate expression: "That the whole was nothing but a scheme of a parcel of hot-headed Presbyterians, and that he believed the devil was at the bottom of the whole; that the taking up of arms was the most scandalous thing a man could be guilty of and more heinous than a hundred of the grossest offenses against the moral law, etc."

"Resolves" were taken against this man and he was forced, later, to publish his repentance.

On December 26, 1775, the new committee chosen at the various township polling-places met. They were James McNair, Upper Makefield; Josiah Brian, Springfield; Samuel Smith, Rockhill; John Lacey, Buckingham; Henry Wynkoop, Northampton; Joseph Sacket, Wrightstown; John Kidd and James Benezet, for Bensalem; John Coryell, Solebury; Thomas Harvey and William Biles, The Falls; Joseph McIlvain and John Cox, of Bristol; Samuel

Yardley, Newtown; Arthur Watts, Southampton; Richard Walker, Warrington; Joseph Hart, Warminster; Adam Lowdesleger, Haycock; Robert Patterson, Tinicum, and James Wallace, Warwick.

The committee organized by appointing Joseph Hart chairman, and Henry Wynkoop, clerk and treasurer. Joseph Hart, James Wallace, Samuel Yardley, Arthur Watts and Henry Wynkoop were chosen a committee of correspondence for the ensuing year.

On January 22, 1776, James Biddle and Joseph Wharton, members of the Provincial Committee of Safety, visited the Bucks county committee, at Newtown, for the purpose of inducing the manufacture of saltpetre among the inhabitants of Bucks county, "who are desirous of being useful to their country at this important and dangerous crisis of our affairs," and for this purpose the general committee offered to pay the expenses of the persons appointed by the Bucks county board, to and from Philadelphia, to witness the method of its manufacture. Messrs. Wallace, Kechline and Joseph Fenton, Jr., were selected to be instructed in the making of saltpetre. Wallace was afterward appointed an officer to receive the saltpetre "which shall be manufactured in the county."

Durham, a new township being lately organized near Northampton county, desired representation on the board, and it was ordered that the township choose a person for that purpose.

When the committee met at Bogart's tavern February 27, 1776, a petition was presented asking the committee to extend the age limit of associators from 50 to 60 years,

"As there are many able-bodied men between the ages of 50 and 60 years, possessed of large estates, who are entirely exempt from military duty and expense, the tax upon non-associators is considered merely as an equivalent for personal services, and the associators have not compensation for their arms and accoutrements, not to mention the danger they will be exposed to when called into actual service, your Petitioners pray that an additional tax be laid upon the estates of non-associators proportionate to the expenses of the associators necessarily incurred for the general defense of property."

They also asked that

"The colonels draught from their battalions such number as shall from time to time be requisite, thereby affording an opportunity for those whose circumstances will not always admit their going, to get volunteers

in their stead, and at the same time using sufficient force in every part of the country to quell any local insurrections."

March 27, 1776, a letter from the Provincial Committee of Safety, dated March 19th, was read, requesting that the associators in this county be properly equipped so as to be in condition to march at an hour's warning, and that a strict attention be paid to their arms and accoutrements, "as there is the greatest reason to apprehend that General Howe intends to attack upon this province."

General Washington had written on March 17th, to Governor Cooke, from Cambridge:

"I have the pleasure to inform you that this morning the ministerial troops evacuated the town of Boston without destroying it, and that we are now in full possession."

All the arms held by the non-associators were ordered purchased by the committee and put into the hands of Henry Wynkoop. Orders were issued to have the battalions in readiness if required to march immediately.

April 24, 1776, the committee met at Bogart's and agreed to fine themselves 1s. 6d. each, "who shall not attend the meeting of the committee within the space of one hour after the time appointed for the meeting." Richard Walker was now chairman, Joseph Hart having become the colonel of the Second Battalion; Robert Shewell, lieutenant colonel; James McMasters, 1st major; Gilbert Rodman, 2d major; Joseph Shaw, standard bearer, and William Thompson, adjutant.

At the meeting of May 22d, at Bogart's, we find Gilbert Hicks returned as a member from Middletown. He then lived at "Four-Lanes-End," later called Attleborough and now Langhorne. An important item of business at that meeting was the action taken relative to the sending of delegates to meet deputies from other counties, at Philadelphia, "to agree upon and direct the mode of electing members for a provincial convention, to be held at such time and place as the said conference of committees may appoint, for the express purpose of establishing a new form of government." At the next meeting, held at Newtown June 10, 1776, it was decided "by a large majority," to send Joseph Hart, John Kidd, James Wallace, Benjamin Siegel and Henry Wynkoop as delegates to the convention.

The minutes of the meeting held "July ye 1st," at Bogart's, state that from information received, sundry persons had refused to surrender arms in their possession to the collectors. A resolution was then adopted authorizing the collectors to call upon the militia to enforce the "resolves" regarding this matter.

July 10th resolutions were adopted embodying about 400 associators in this county, and making the following appointments: Joseph Hart, colonel; John Folwell, William Roberts, William Hart, Valentine Opp and John Jamison, captains; John Kroesen, Henry Darragh, Hugh Long, Philip Trumbower and Tennis Middlemart, 1st lieutenants; Abram DuBois, James Shaw, Jacob Drake, Samuel Drake, Samuel Deane and John Irvine, 2d lieutenants; William McKisseck, William Hines, Joseph Hart, Stoeffel Kellar and John McCammon, ensigns; John Johnson, adjutant; Joseph Benton, Jr., surgeon, and Alexander Benstead, quartermaster. With such the "flying-camp" was constituted. Gerrett Dungan was chosen to "cause all the firearms collected from non-associators in this county to be immediately rendered fit for use," and Matthew Bennett for the 1st battalion, and Jared Irvine for the 2d, 3d and 4th battalions, were to size the guns and mark the same on the breech-pin, or lower end of the barrel.

Each battalion was to be furnished with two quarter-casks of powder. The collectors turned in 39 guns from Rockhill, 13 from Bedminster and 2 from Haycock.

Major James McMasters, John McKonkey and John Keith were appointed to collect firearms in Upper Makefield, vice James Torbert, Barnet Vanhorne and John Burleigh, who had declined.

At Bogart's, on the 29th of July, letters were read from General Roberdeau, urging the immediate march of the militia. The committee agreed to send the proportion for this county for the "flying-camp" and facilitate their immediate march.

Complying with a recommendation of the General Committee of Safety, that judicious persons be selected to distribute to distressed families, whose husbands were now in actual service, and to give them such allowance as they shall think reasonable, etc., the committee appointed the following gentlemen:

Benjamin Britten, Robert Patterson, Bristol borough and township; John Kidd, Bensalem; John Sampler, Buckingham; William



Biles, Falls; Abram Mack, Lower Makefield; Gabriel Vanhorn, Middletown; Samuel Yardley, Newtown; Henry Kroesen, Southampton; Isaac Hough, Warminster; Richard Walker, Warrington; James Wallace, Warwick; Joseph Sacket, Wrightstown; Thomas Dyer, Plumstead; Robert Darragh, Robert Maneely, Bedminster; Alexander Finley, New Britain; John Kelley, Tincum; Daniel Jamison, Nockamixon; James Chapman, Springfield; Samuel Smith, Rockhill; Thomas Foulke, Richland; Thomas Long, Durham; Gilliam Cornell, Northampton; James McNair, Upper Makefield; John Coryell, Solebury; Adam Loudensleger, Haycock; Andrew Trumbower, Milford.

In the record of that meeting appears the statement, that "as many members of this board are going with the militia into the Continental service, therefore, Resolved, that for the future nine members constitute a board." Fifteen had been the number heretofore.

On August 12, 1776, the committee appointed Rev. Robert Keith chaplain of the "flying-camp" under the command of Colonel Hart. At a later meeting (of which there is some confusion as to its date,) various sub-committees reported upon matters that had been referred to them at previous meetings of the board. These chiefly related to troubles incident to the collecting of arms, complaints of treasonable utterances by disaffected persons, etc. The minutes of this meeting abruptly terminate when about to record the "resolves," and leave us to speculate as to the cause. Enough has already been given to show that for the two years covered by these records, Newtown and Centreville were exceedingly interesting localities during, at least, the forepart of the Revolutionary period; and that which follows, while it is compiled from fragmentary notes, is none the less so, in that Newtown kept herself well before the public eye during the remainder of that critical era.

As foreshadowed by the minutes of August 21, 1775, considerable opposition had been manifested by disaffected persons to the election of representatives, at the polls that year. This feeling became more intense at the election held October 1, 1776, at Newtown. Whatever may have been the direct cause, the disturbance became very serious, as the following correspondence may enable us to judge:

Bucks Co., Neshamany, Oct. 2, 1776.

To the Council—Gentlemen: Noe Doubt you have heard of an election ben held Yesterday by the torey party at Nuetown in this county, the Bearer, Capt. Sempell, I have sent to inform you of what he knows concerning the Affear, as he was at the Election.

Yr most Obed<sup>t</sup> Hu<sup>ble</sup> Ser<sup>nt</sup>,

WILLIAM BAXTER, Lt. Col.

On October 3d the Council addressèd the following instructions to Henry Wynkoop:

“We are informed that some evil-minded persons, disaffected to the present government have attempted to prevent its establishment, by supporting the late Government under authority of the King of Great Britain for which purpose they have proceeded to an election of representatives under the said authority, in contempt and defiance of the authority of the good people of this State. As such a measure, if carried into execution, cannot fail to defeat this virtuous opposition to the tyranny of the King of Great Britain, it behooves us to take effectual measures to punish such contumacious offenders against this State. You are therefore desired to make inquiry concerning the said election and of the persons who are principally concerned therein, and communicate the same to this Board as soon as you conveniently can.

By order of the Council.”

In the treasurer’s reports for that year we find the sequel to this matter, in entries such as these—under dates of October 23d, 24th and 25th,

“The Council of Pennsylvania directs Mr. Nesbit, the treasurer, to pay Major McMaster £6, and charge the same to the State for expenses concerning the Bucks county election; Capt. John Jameson, £8, 15s. 10 d., and Capt. Thos. Wier £6 os. 4d., the expenses of their respective companies in going to Newtown to suppress the election there on October 1st and 2d, and to disperse the people.”

The payments were made on the avouchment of Lieut. Col. William Baxter, who commanded the second battalion.

That Bucks county soldiers of the Revolution had their share of service, with all its consequent hardships, there can be no question. In the campaign of 1776, they formed part of the Fifth Penna. regiment, under command of Col. Robert Magaw. This regiment was composed of the full companies of Captains Beatty, Benezet and Vansant, recruited in Bucks county; Miller’s, of Philadelphia county; Stuart’s, of Montgomery county; Spohn’s and Decker’s, of Berks county; and Richardson’s, of Chester county. The regiment was not in the disastrous defeat

of the American forces on Long Island, August 27th, as they were at the time stationed at Mount Washington in New York, but they joined the main army on the 29th, forming the rear-guard and covering-party of General Washington's masterly evacuation of Brooklyn. The Fifth Pennsylvania regiment continued on the move till October 16th, when it was ordered to take post at Fort Washington, while the main army proceeded to White Plains. This regiment held the garrison until the fatal 16th of November, when through the traitorous perfidy of its adjutant, William Dement, General Howe invested the fort with 3,000 men, made an assault upon it and compelled surrender. The soldiers were confined in the Sugar House prison, on Liberty street, New York, whose horrors have often been told. Many of them remained there for years. Among the list of captured were many from Bucks county. Those from Newtown were in Captain Vansant's company: Edward Hoveden, ensign; Thomas Stevenson, sergeant; John Sproul, corporal; and John Eastwick, corporal. Lossing, in his "History of the Revolution," gives very pathetic accounts of the sufferings of these poor fellows in the following story of an eye witness:

"In the suffocating heat of the summer of 1777, I saw every aperture of the strong walls filled with human heads, face above face, seeking a portion of the external air. In July, 1777, a jail-fever carried many of them off. They had no seats and their beds of straw were filled with vermin. The prisoners were marched out in companies of twenty to breathe the fresh air for half an hour, while those within divided themselves into parties of six each and alternately enjoyed the privilege of standing ten minutes at the windows. They might have exchanged this place for the comfortable quarters of a British soldier by enlisting in the King's service, but very few would thus yield their principles. They preferred to be among the dozen bodies which were daily carried out and cast into the ditches and morasses beyond the city limits."

Among the orders of Lewis Nichola, Town-Major of Philadelphia, December 8, 1776, is one commanding the Northern district to send a corporal, and the six town companies a man each; these to parade before the court-house next day, to escort some English prisoners to Newtown. The guard returned by the 16th, and we find Major Nichola issuing an order requiring them to turn in their arms to him on the following morning.

About this time Newtown became the base of supplies in

Washington's operations, which were intended to intercept the British advance into Pennsylvania. The British had already forced a retreat of the Continental army from the vicinity of Princeton and New Brunswick, and were pushing on toward Trenton and Philadelphia. By placing the river between them, however, and posting troops at all the ferries and fords along the whole front of Bucks county, and by securing the boats, Washington succeeding in keeping the enemy on the east bank.

On the 14th of December, General Washington moved up from Barclay's, opposite Trenton, to Keith's house, in Upper Makefield, where he established his headquarters "near the main body of my small army," he writes. From this date till Christmas day, Washington circulated between Keith's, Merrick's, and the camps of the troops, who were rapidly concentrating in the vicinity for the decisive stroke which the general was about to inflict upon the unsuspecting enemy. On the night of December 25th, the Delaware was crossed at McKonkey's Ferry (now Taylorsville) amid floating ice, the bitter winds sweeping down the valley, chilling and benumbing with cold the 2,400 Continentals and militia, but they were inspired by the confidence and example of their leader, one of the greatest generals of history. Marching promptly before dawn to Trenton, they struck the blow that glorified American arms and delayed the occupation of Philadelphia for nearly twelve months more. Such, in brief, are the facts leading up to the 27th of December, when Washington, his staff, his troops, and his trophies of war, entered Newtown, fresh from his victory at Trenton, bringing in his train nearly 1,000 prisoners, many cannon and large quantities of munitions of war. The Hessian captives filled the jail, the church, the inns and other places of security till removed to Lancaster soon after.

For the next three days Newtown was in the midst of all the excitement incidental to the presence of the commander-in-chief and his conquering army. He made his headquarters in the house of John Harris, on the west side of the creek, recently the property of Alexander German. His official family, among whom were Generals Greene, Sullivan, St Clair, Gates, Stirling, Mercer, Stephens and others, lodging elsewhere about the village. The troop of Philadelphia Light Horse, under command of Capt. Samuel Morris, were in attendance upon headquarters, its mem-

bers acting as bearers of dispatches from Washington to his generals.

A present-day evidence of the honor Newtown paid her distinguished, if transient residents, and symbolizing her patriotic ardor, may be found in the names of the principal streets of the borough, which are: Liberty, Congress, State, Penn, Washington, Jefferson, Sterling, Greene, Mercer, Sullivan and Court streets.

For the first time since Washington took command of the army, he was now able to send a congratulatory address to Congress, "upon the success of an enterprise which I had formed against a detachment of the enemy lying at Trenton."

General Washington left Newtown on December 30th in advance of his troops, crossed the Delaware at McKonkey's ferry and marched with them to Trenton, where battle was given Lord Cornwallis January 2, 1787; following up the advantage gained there he routed the British at Princeton next day, and sent them retreating across New Jersey. In the meanwhile Lord Stirling, who had accompanied Washington in his successful expedition against the Hessians, and had taken a cold thereby, was now laid up at Newtown with rheumatism. He was however placed in command of the post and watched the fords of upper Bucks county. He was there about two weeks and from his correspondence we learn that many prisoners captured at Princeton passed through Newtown enroute for Lancaster.

Newtown, after these incidents, so far as we know, lapses into a quiescent state, but during June and July considerable correspondence is found relating to the preparation of the different classes of militia for marching, providing blankets and other clothing. In this connection the following note is interesting:

New Town, Bucks Co., 31st July, 1777.

Sir: According to my Directions from Col. Kirkbride I have sent by Samuel Rees, wagoner, 100 of the best and cleanest blankets of those collected in our county, the remainder, about 200, shall send (this morning) to Thomas Jenks' Fulling, who says if the weather continues Dry he will complet them in a week. At which time shall expect orders for the delivery of them.

(Sig.) JOHN BENEZET.

Directed to Timothy Matlack, Esq., Sec. Ex. Council.

N. B. The Blankets were continued in the hands of Col. James Mc-Masters for the Militia of Billingsport.

Henry Wynkoop, on the 23d of August appointed committees for the different townships for driving off stock. (The British were approaching Pennsylvania by sea from another direction.) Peter Leffertse and Abraham Johnson were selected for Newtown township. The next day, Colonel Kirkbride writes President Wharton that he experiences difficulty in procuring substitutes in this county, "even for the extravagant sum of 60 dollars, which I have been forced to give for third class before I could get a man."

The defeat at Brandywine spread consternation through the country. The Executive Council, in haste, sent orders to county lieutenants to order out the reserves; Bucks county was ordered to send her 3d, 4th and 5th classes "with the utmost expedition to Swedesford" (a crossing of the Schuylkill river, now Norristown, Pa.); "urge every man to turn out in this alarming occasion, particularly those who are not in the classes now called out, and promise them that if they now step forward to free their bleeding country of these Ravages they shall hereafter be considered as having taken their tour of duty, &c."

General Washington, writing to President Wharton, on September 13th, to thank him for his prompt action in mobilizing the militia, adds the information that he is having the passes up the river fortified under command of General Armstrong. At Swedesford, where General Howe was expected to pass, earthworks were thrown up to defend the ford. On the 14th the American army left its camp at Falls of Schuylkill, crossed the river at Matson's ford (now Conshohocken, Pa.), and maneuvered to intercept the British, but they passed down through Valley Forge, crossed the river at Fatland ford, and marched triumphantly to Philadelphia.

Notwithstanding the vigilance of the militia which encircled Philadelphia during the British occupation of the city, the patience of Generals Armstrong, Potter and Lacey was sorely tried by the raiding parties which penetrated their lines and laid heavy hands upon the persons and property of the neighboring counties, Bucks, especially, suffering. As an instance of the daring of the English soldiers and their Tory partisans, the following account is given by Col. Walter Stewart, commanding the 13th Pennsylvania regiment, who writes from his "Camp near Bustle Town" Feby. 21, 1778, to President Wharton, at Lancaster, that he is "much

concerned to inform his Excellency that an express arrived in camp yesterday afternoon, with the disagreeable news of a party of light-horse belonging to the enemy, consisting of about 40, pushed up to Newtown, Bucks county, and took my Major, with a small party of men, prisoners, and all the clothing I had laid up there for my regiment." The captured officers were: Major Francis Murray, Lieutenant Henry Marsits, Ensign Joseph Cox. Murray was with his family at the time. Two thousand yards of cloth were also seized and carried off. Major Murray, who was one of Newtown's notable men, enlisted early in the service of his country. On an expedition to New York he was captured by the British, but was released on December 8, 1776, and later in the month was sent by Colonel Weedon to escort the Hessian prisoners from Newtown to Lancaster. On the 6th of February, following, he was commissioned as major by John Hancock, and attached to Colonel Stewart's regiment. Here he remained until captured by the British again, February 9, 1778; this time he was confined to Flatbush, Long Island, and was not released until 1780.

Francis Murray, an Irishman by birth, was a keen man of affairs. He settled early at Newtown in business, and by his tact and shrewdness became both popular and wealthy. During his long residence in Bucks county he held various offices of trust and honor. After serving with distinction in the American army, he returned to Newtown, where he was paid off March 24, 1781, then ranking as lieutenant colonel. He was made county lieutenant in 1783, and in 1790, general of the militia. His residence and place of business were on Court street, in the house, until recently owned by George Brooks. General Murray, who was born about 1731, died in 1816, and was buried in the Presbyterian churchyard—a church with which, in his lifetime, he was prominently identified. A daughter of General Murray became the first wife of Dr. Phineas Jenks, and a grandson was Col. Francis Murray Wynkoop, a valorous soldier of the Mexican War.

A notable event connecting Newtown again with Revolutionary affairs, occurred at the beginning of April, 1778, when commissioners from the two armies met there to arrange a satisfactory basis for the exchange of prisoners. For a lengthy account of this conference, reference may be had to "The Notes of Elias

Boudinot, Esq.," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, July, 1900, p. 291, et. seq. Briefly, the facts are these:

"The exchange of civil and military prisoners of war was a matter which continued in a very unsatisfactory state until the appointment by Congress, in June, 1777, of Elias Boudinot, Esq., as Commissary General of Prisoners." The commission to arrange a general cartel was chosen in 1778. Those on the British side were Col. Chas. O'Hara, Col. Humphrey Stephens and Capt. Richard Fitzpatrick, of the Coldstream, First and Third Regiments of Foot Guards, respectively. The American commissioners were: Col. William Grayson, Lieut. Colonels Alexander Hamilton and Robert H. Harrison, of Washington's staff, and Elias Boudinot, Esq. The Americans set out from Valley Forge on the 31st of March, and proceeded to Germantown, where they met the British delegation at the Benezet mansion, near the Market Square. They held meetings here till the morning of April 6th, when they adjourned to meet at the inn of Amos Strickland, in Newtown—then called the Red Lion inn. The commission on each side were attended by an escort of twelve light dragoons; the American troop was under command of Capt. Robert Smith, of Baylor's regiment. They remained at Newtown till the 12th of April, when, after vainly trying to reach an agreement, the conference closed without having reached a definite understanding.

On the 10th of May, of that year, the officers of the Light Horse of Bucks county were commissioned. The roll of the troop, as it stood June 18, 1781, is as follows: Captain, Jacob Bennett; Lieutenant, David Forst; Corporal, John Shaw.

Troopers: John Horner, Daniel Martin, William Ramsey, Nathaniel Burrows, Joseph Hart, Jr., John Roberts, Thomas Hughes, Joseph Sacket, Jr., Stacey Taylor, George Mitchell, Gabriel Vansant, John Fell, Peter Roberts, John Torbert, William Bennett, John McCammon, John Shannon, Aaron Hagerman, James Liddon, Jesse Britton, Robert Mearns, Benjamin Yoe-man, Jacob Kintner, Robert Craige, John Armstrong, Thomas Wilson, William McKonkey.

Early in the next year, Col. Thomas Proctor's regiment of artillery, whose term of enlistment had expired, were at Newtown: These numbered 96, and including Major James Parr, late of the



Seventh Regiment (Pa.), and Lieut. Col. Francis Murray, late of the Thirteenth Regiment (Pa.), were paid off by Messrs. Abm. DuBois and William Goforth, auditors of Bucks county, on March 24, 1781.

John Hart, writing to President Reed, April 3d, complains that he finds it very difficult to get recruits at Newtown, owing to the presence of an artillery regiment there. Attempts at recruiting, were, however, kept up in that locality. We find that Capt. Abraham G. Claypoole, of the Third Pennsylvania Regiment, was sent to Newtown, by General St. Clair, on July 13, 1781, to receive recruits. Finding no commissary, no provisions of quarters for himself, or any recruit that might be delivered to him, he writes to the Council of his lack of accommodation, whereupon the Council, under date of July 18th, authorizes John Hart, Esq., to "contract with some person to supply them, at as reasonable rates as can be obtained, the payment to be made in specie, which this board will endeavor to comply with."

In September the army had gone South, where, in conjunction with the French fleet, it began the operation which ended in the round-up of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown. In the meantime the infamous Arnold had planned an expedition under the British flag against New England. For some reason apprehension was felt that the movements of the enemy at New York threatened another invasion of Pennsylvania. An alarm was sent out September 11th and 12th to all the county lieutenants to prepare at once to assemble their militia at Newtown. On the 28th the orders came to rendezvous at that point "with the utmost expedition."

The light-horse of Lancaster county, the battalions of the 2d and 3d classes of Northumberland, objecting on account of the defenseless condition of their frontier, three companies, armed and unarmed, from Berks county, a troop of horse, under Campbell, from Cumberland, two companies of artillery from Philadelphia and some militia, with the men of Chester and Bucks counties, turned out and were all encamped at Newtown by October 11th, under the command of General Lacey.

When Newtown folk saw the hungry legions gathering, they must have felt some serious misgivings, probably lessons from

past experience, to have caused William McCalla, the commissioner of purchases for Bucks county, to write the Council at Philadelphia in this strain: "General Lacey and the Commissary of Issues at the Post of Newtown are Calling for Meat and other Supplys for the use of that post and its not in my Power to Supply them Without I be furnished with money as the people are Determined Not to Sell at Trust."

As the enemy had failed to materialize, the scare was over by the 16th of October. General Lacey on that day paid off the troops and dismissed them. An amusing incident in connection with the disbandment of the post at Newtown, was the meeting of a company of Col. MacVeagh's Philadelphia county battalion. The day following their discharge, Capt. Bushkirk with Ensign Strine, at the head of his company, marching to the tune of "The Rogues' March," proceeded to the quarters of Commissary General Crispin and demanded their canteens filled with whiskey, for each officer of the company, to use on his way home. On being refused they threatened to blow up the magazine. While the Commissary was defending this, Col. MacVeagh appeared upon the scene, paid the price for the rum out of his own pocket, and the men went their way rejoicing. Crispin demanded of General Lacey a courtmartial of these men, and refers him for witnesses to Capt. Craige, foragemaster, Lieut. Taylor, of the light-horse of Bucks county, and Quartermaster Samuel Davis.

Before concluding I desire to add a brief sketch of one whose zeal and devotion to the county in her critical period—as a citizen, soldier and judge—should stand in heroic measures upon the pages of her history.

I refer to Henry Wynkoop who distinguished himself in the stirring times, to which I have referred. He was of Holland ancestry; a son of Nicholas and grandson of Gerardus or Gerit Wynkoop, an early resident of Bucks county. Henry Wynkoop soon became identified with the public affairs of his vicinity, and as time progressed was recognized as one of its most active and forceful citizens. Living in Northampton township at a time when strong and determined men were required to assist in the defense of the country, he was chosen to represent his township upon the committee of safety, and, as we have seen, served them

from 1774 to 1776—as clerk, treasurer, &c. His membership in both the Provincial and Continental Congresses came as a result of his personal grasp and the close touch he had upon public affairs. It brought him into intimate relation with most all of the prominent men of the day, among whom Washington, Hamilton, the Adamases, Monroe and others were reckoned his personal friends. After serving some time as a lieutenant in the Revolution (in 1777), he was appointed a justice of the common pleas of Bucks county, and of which he was later president judge, he was reappointed in 1784. In 1783 he had been selected as one of the judges of the high court of error and appeal of Pennsylvania, resigning both positions when, after the adoption of the Federal Constitution, he was elected the first representative from Bucks county to the United States Congress, which met at New York in 1789. At the close of his term, in 1791, he was again returned to the bench of Bucks county as its first associate judge.

Henry Wynkoop was widely known and honored. A man of high moral character and of profound religious convictions. His was one of those strong personalities that leave such impress upon the times in which they live, that its influence in the community never entirely loses its power for good. He died in 1816 in the 80th year of his age.

NOTE.—April 21, 1737, Hennericks, son of Nicklass Wynkoop, was baptized in the Neshaminy church, by Rev. Cornelius Vansantvoort.

Neshaminy Church Records.