

DELAWARE COUNTY

Chapter

III

In the Revolution

The American Revolution began with the battle of Lexington, April 19, 1775, and ended with the Treaty of Paris, September 3, 1783. New York City was occupied by British forces September 15, 1776, and was held by them until November 25, 1783. During the years 1777-1780 the brunt of the war centered in New York State, and the decisive battles were fought here in 1777. St. Leger was turned back at Oriskany, August 6, 1777, and Burgoyne surrendered at Saratoga, October 17, 1777. But these battles, however decisive, did not end the war. For five years thereafter Tryon County and the frontiers of Ulster County were raided continuously and with but little opposition, by Brant and his Indians and by troops of Sir John Johnson's regiment of loyalists from New York.

When the Revolution broke the Johnston settlement at Sidney was too close to the headquarters of Brant at Oquaga and Unadilla for safety and was abandoned in 1777. The settlements in Harpersfield, Kortright and Stamford were contiguous and came under the supervision, if not the protection, of the Tryon County militia commanded by Col. Peter Vrooman, and for a time received the hostile attention of Continental troops stationed at the Middle Fort in Schoharie. The settlements on the East Branch of Delaware came under the supervision, and sometimes the protection, of the Ulster County militia commanded by Col. John Cantine, who had a line of block-houses from Great Shandaken to Mamakating. Both of these settlements were equally accessible to Brant, and he sent parties of his Indians and Tories into and through them at will. It is probable that the majority of the inhabitants of these settlements were more inclined to favor the British interest than that of the Americans; but this is hard to say. Sentiment was mixed, and the troops of either side did not take much pains to distinguish those who adhered to the British from those who favored the Americans. The result was that the settlers were victims of the armed animosity, cupidity, rapacity and unlicensed behavior of the irregular forces of both sides, and suffered accordingly.

The first effect of the Revolution was felt on the East Branch of the Delaware in September, 1776, when Sir John Johnson, as reported, but Guy Johnson in fact, sent word to the Indians that they must take arms, one side or the other; that the young Indians had gone to meet Johnson at Oswego, and it was expected that they would strike on the frontiers very soon. An Indian named John Sheling, alias John Rinepee, came down the river from the "Cookhurse," (Deposit) after "King Philip," an Esopus chief, and told the settlers about Pepacton that they could no longer stay there in safety. At the same time in a report that the people "of Papaconck are in great fear of a rupture with the Indians," it was said that "an old squaw, weeping much, had desired the inhabitants to move this week to get out of danger, and (had said) that she would not see them in a long time." Silas Bowker, also said that "an old savage, a friend of his, had advised him to abandon the place without delay, with his family, to prevent their destruction." Although gunpowder, lead and flints had been distributed among them by a committee supporting the Revolution, Daniel Wynkoop Jr., of Kingston, on October 5, 1776, wrote, "Many of our back Satlers are moving in from Papaconck and Paghketacken upon Delaware on account of fear of the Indians." Early in May, Silas Bowker complained that John Middagh and Henry Bush were "spreading lies and false intelligence to the great discouragement of the good subjects of the State at Papaconck." In August, 1777, the Indians announced that they had "abandoned the Kookhouse and are all moved back as far as Anquago or Coletien, being afraid of the people of Esopus and Minisinck."

The Convention deliberating at Kingston upon a constitution for the as yet unorganized State of New York was disturbed on April 17, 1777, by the recital of an alleged tory plot to take its members prisoners. The story was that four hundred men from Albany and the upper part of Ulster County were to come to Kingston, take the members of the Convention prisoners, carry them to New Windsor and there put them on board a British man-of-war. In consequence of this rumor the Convention passed a resolution purporting to extend the power of courts-martial to try "all such persons as shall be taken in going off privately to the enemy." The first constitution of New York, adopted by this Convention April 20, 1777, has been said to have been adopted "with the scales of justice in one hand and a drawn sword in the other."

While the Convention was adopting this constitution and at the same time aiming a blow at those who denied its power to do so, Jacob Middagh, brother of John and Stephen Middagh at Pepacton, was busy soliciting his friends at Great Shandaken to withdraw to New

York, where if they did not find work they would be paid to join the British army. Jacob Middagh was a member of a loyalist regiment of foot formed in New York by Edmund Fanning, son-in-law and private secretary of Governor Tryon. Middagh was acting in conjunction with Jacobus Rose, also a member of the same regiment, but formerly an officer of the Ulster County militia from which he had been cashiered for refusing to draft men of his company by ballot for military duty. Rose called himself "Lieut. Rose over the Mountains," a designation obviously referring to the Catskill Mountains, and suggesting that he was from the East Branch of the Delaware, probably from Pepacton. Middagh's principal inducement to encourage those who hesitated to go with him was the assertion that they would be given land when the rebellion was suppressed. By these and other means Middagh induced Jacob Davis, Jacob Longyear, Andries Longyear, Peter Bush, Jacobus Furlong, Abraham Middagh, Hendrick Crispell, his brother Thomas Crispell, and others to join a party to make their way to New York.

While Jacob Middagh was at Great Shandaken, his brother John Middagh from Pepacton and James Markle from Pakatakan came to him there, and the result of their meeting was that James Markle joined the party to go to New York, and John Middagh returned to Pepacton. The subsequent activities of Jacob and John Middagh became objects of acute and extended interest on the part of the Kingston Convention and its successor the Council of Safety, and also of General George Clinton and the State militia.

Armed and in a body the adherents to their old allegiance gathered by Jacob Middagh set out from Great Shandaken on April 24th, four days after the new State of New York was organized. At the house of William Wood in the Cocksing Clove below Marbletown they were joined by Jacobus Rose from over the Mountains, himself, with another party, and were there enrolled by Daniel Irwin, a schoolmaster, who carried a loaded pistol in his hand. Here also they were joined by "a very dangerous person," according to George Clinton, "a man blind with the left eye," wearing a speckled jacket, an old brown surtout coat and blue stockings, with strings in his shoes. This intriguing person, thought by some to be a British officer, had a bundle of letters in his possession, carried a handkerchief in his hand—where the schoolmaster carried a loaded pistol,—said he came from the Mohawk river and had passed through Albany disguised as a shoemaker, "on an old

horse with a pack of leather behind him." He would not give his name, but he appeared to be an Irishman, and said he had formerly lived on the Susquehanna river.*

Below Marbletown these dissenters from the new State, now numbering more than fifty persons, skulked among rocks and caves, lay hidden in barns and brush fences, ate suppawn and milk supplied by women who came to them under cover of darkness, and sometimes drank a little rum. While they were hidden in a cave at Kyserike a "High Dutch Doctor," described as a "thick set man" of sinister appearance with swollen feet, came among them with a tale that he had "had a chance for his life by trial," and that if he thought he could be pardoned by the Americans he would enlist in the Continental service. This was Dr. Johannes Ossen, or Ansem, who in February, 1777, while being taken from Esopus to New Paltz for trial by court-martial, escaped at night across the broken ice of Wallkill river, and had since wandered a fugitive from the justice of the State militia. He was later caught hiding among the rocks in the mountains, when a journal, doubtless of great interest, was taken from him.

Proceeding under these equivocal auspices toward New York, somewhere in the Schunnemunk Mountains near Monroe, Rose and Middagh and nearly all of their party were taken by the militia, after an exchange of shots in which five of the adherents are said to have been killed. On April 30th and for five or six days thereafter thirty-eight persons so taken were charged with treason against the State of New York and were tried on this charge by court-martial at Fort Montgomery. Twenty-nine were condemned and sentenced to be hanged,—Hendrick Crispell, in consideration of his testimony against his brother and erstwhile companions, being acquitted and later pardoned. James Markle and John Stokes of Marbletown escaped when the greater number were taken; but they were later found hiding under a great rock

* He is supposed to have been Col. William Edmeston, who in a memorial to the Commissioners of Parliament for fixing the compensation to be paid loyalists who lost their property in the Revolution, in 1783-1789, said that he was settled at Mount Edmeston on the Unadilla river in 1775, where he had more than 10,000 acres of land; that he was made a prisoner May 28, 1776, and sent to Albany, "where they forgot to bind him by parole," and he could have escaped and have thus avoided many insults, dangers and very imminent risks, which he afterwards was exposed to; that he went into New York in February, 1777, and in March following returned to Albany on particular business of Lord Howe upon which he continued for ten months, "during all of which time many heavy clouds hung over his head ready to burst, such as three printers languishing and almost starving in gaol because they would not impeach him, and several things equally dangerous." He read a letter to the Commissioners from Mr. Percival Carr, dated July 1779, and his claim was supported by Benedict Arnold and Peter VanSchaak.

in the mountains by Capt. John A. Hardenbergh, and, sent to Fort Montgomery, were tried and convicted on May 5th.

The Convention at Kingston, on a review of the sentences of those convicted, confirmed all but the sentences of John Stokes, Lodowyck Seely¹ and Alexander Campbell, which were reversed. On May 3d, when but part of the proceedings of the court-martial had been submitted to it, the Convention "resolved that General George Clinton be requested to cause the said persons to be executed at such places as he in his discretion shall think proper." But when the court-martial was concluded, Clinton sent all of the condemned men to the jail at Kingston, with an order directed to Col. Jacob Hoornbeck to cause them to be executed "at such time and place as the Convention shall appoint." Unable to avoid the responsibility thus thrust back upon it, the Convention on May 10th pardoned eleven of those convicted, including James Markle. A list of the names of all the others so convicted having been prepared, on May 12th, the question being put "whether any more than Rose and Middagh be hanged, it was carried that no more be hanged." The Convention thereupon adopted the following resolutions:

(1) "Resolved, that the above named persons be pardoned, except Rose and Middagh; but that the said pardons be withheld from them, during the discretion of the Convention, or Council of Safety, or Governor of this State; and that the Members and Secretaries of Convention pledge their honors in the meantime to keep the said pardons secret."

(2) "Resolved, that with respect to all of the other persons sentenced to die, and pardoned, it be in the discretion of the Council of Safety, or Governor of the State, to deliver their pardons and discharge them when it shall to the said Council or Governor appear most expedient."

Three court-martial convictions were reversed; fifteen names, including Rose and Middagh, were on the list referred to in the first resolution; eleven of those convicted were pardoned on May 10th, and are those referred to in the second resolution. As to the eleven referred to in the second resolution, they could be told and doubtless were told of their pardons on May 10th. As to the thirteen pardoned on May 12th, why were their pardons to be kept secret? Rose and Middagh were ordered hanged on May 13th, when their prayer for a few days respite to enable them to prepare for death was denied. A few months afterwards Colonel Hoornbeck presented a bill of 11 pounds, 16 shillings, 6 pence, as the cost of hanging them. The Convention dissolved itself on May 13th, and the unlucky thirteen were left suspended between life and death, their death sentences confirmed, their pardons granted but withheld and concealed from them. It is perhaps significant that the constitution adopted April 20, 1777, omits the provision

(1) Lodowyck Seely was later with Brant at the battle of Minisink, July 22, 1779.

"nor shall cruel and unusual punishment be inflicted." On May 9th Arthur McKinney, one of the thirteen, presented a petition to the Convention stating that he was sixty-seven years old, and could neither read nor write; that he was "bound with iron bands in a dark and dismal dungeon," under sentence of death, "innocently brought into this dismal snare" by some ill disposed person, in that he knew nothing of Rose and Middagh and their party, except that he found them in his barn when he went to feed his cattle in the morning.

May 19th there were 175 prisoners in the Kingston jail, but on May 21st James Markle, Thomas Crispell, Jacob Longyear, Andries Longyear and Jacob Davis were discharged. John Stokes, whose conviction was reversed by the Convention, was still in jail on June 30th, when his Marbletown neighbors presented a petition for his discharge, representing him as "an honest, industrious boy." Some of those secretly pardoned by the Convention were still in jail as late as December, 1777.

Precisely why the Convention pardoned all but two of those convicted of treason by the court-martial held at Fort Montgomery does not appear. It was nowhere suggested at the time that the Convention was doubtful of the legality of the proceedings. However, at a court-martial at Peekskill, presided over by Henry B. Livingston in June, 1777, it was resolved that State prisoners ought to be tried by a state court with a jury, and not by court-martial under the Articles of War,—"and further we fear whilst we are struggling for the Sacred Name of Liberty, we are establishing the fatal Tendency of Despotism."

Forty-five years after these events, in which Jacobus Rose and Jacob Middagh fared so tragically, and James Markle came near doing so, Chief Justice Spencer of the Supreme Court of New York, in holding that the State of New York had no organized government until April 20, 1777, said it would be a very grave question which he would not discuss, whether until the adoption of the constitution treason could be committed against the imperfect and inchoate government which preceded the constitution. He said it could not be doubted that upon the formation of the new government, "such of the members of the old government only will become members of the new as choose voluntarily to submit to it. Every member of the old government must have the right to decide for himself whether he will continue with a society which has so fundamentally changed its condition." Speaking specifically of the Revolution, he said:

"The case occurred in which every member of the old society had a right to determine upon adhering to his old allegiance and withdrawing himself [for which he says he was entitled to a reasonable time], or to abide among us and thus tacitly or expressly yielding his assent to the change, become a member of the new society."

Treason is a breach of allegiance, and the Supreme Court of the United States later ruled that upon the occurrence of the Revolution all persons in the colonies were entitled to make their choice either to adhere to their old allegiance and withdraw, or to remain and become members of the new States. Manifestly the men departing from Great Shandaken on April 24, 1777, four days after the State of New York was formed, were convicted of treason by the Convention which adopted the new constitution for doing precisely what by the law of the land they had a perfect right to do. The question naturally arises whether the Convention, which embodied the Declaration of Independence in the constitution adopted by it, were inspired more by the recital that "governments instituted among men derive their just powers from the consent of the governed," by a desire to force their own will upon others, or by panic lest they be shipped prisoners on board a British man-of-war to New York. The "drawn sword" seems to have figured more largely than the "scales of justice" in their resolutions and actions of April and May, 1777.

Joseph Brant, the great war chief of the Six Nations, assembled his warriors and appeared at Oquaga and Unadilla in May, 1777. General Herkimer met him in conference at Sidney on June 27, 1777, when Brant told Herkimer, "You are too late. I am already engaged to serve the King." Despite Brant's proximity and engagement with the King, no particular trouble appears to have occurred on the East Branch of Delaware until July, 1778. In April, 1778, the Indians were active along the Delaware as far down as Cochection, and Nathaniel Park and Henry Bush had gone off with them. On June 5, 1778, Jacob Klock wrote that Brant was sending out raiding parties from Unadilla, which place he said, "has always been and still continues to be a common receptacle for all rascally Tories and runaway negroes." James Armitage, coach and chair maker at Acra, on July 6, 1778, stated that armed men were constantly passing his house on the road between Catskill and Batavia (Windham), on their way to "Paghkatakean." He said that these persons were Tories, some five hundred of whom left Burgoyne's army before its surrender at Saratoga. Armitage said that he was told that they were gathering at "Paghkatakean" preparatory to a march of fifteen thousand men under Col. John Butler through the mountains to meet Lord Howe at Catskill. In directing Colonel Cantine to increase his guards, Clinton said: "This is the most critical and unfavourable period to have the peace of our frontiers disturbed." But the peace of New York's frontiers was about to be disturbed with a vengeance.

Harmanus Dumond and others from Pakatakan went down the river to Pepacton on July 8, 1778. There at the house of John Barn-

hart they found twenty Indians and an equal number of tories under arms and about to proceed to Lackawack, "and so on to Rochester, and to destroy all before them." The tories assembled at Barnhart's seem to have been principally local residents, and included John and Stephen Middagh and Nathaniel Park; John Snow, a deserter from the American army, was also with them. Dumond did not go with these raiders, but immediately communicated his information to Colonel Cantine. The Indians and tories moved rapidly, however, and on July 9th fell upon Lackawack, where Captain Cuddeback reported, "they murther'd a few, took some prisoners, cattle, sheep and hogs." The same day Robert Jones, escaping from Oquaga, on his way through the woods to Minisink, "met about twenty Indians and white men with a number of prisoners, which they told him they got at Lakawak."

There was a small fort at Lackawack, and near it was a tavern kept by the widow Cole, whose son by her first husband was named Jacob Ousterhout. George Anderson, who had a mare he prized highly, frequented the widow's tavern, and happened to be there when the Indians arrived. The widow escaped in her night clothes, and wandering all night in the woods in the rain, made her way to Wawarsing. Ousterhout and Anderson were taken prisoners, and Anderson's mare was numbered among the "cattle" mentioned by Captain Cuddeback. When the marauders with their "prisoners, cattle, sheep and hogs" arrived at Pepacton, Anderson's mare remained there, but Anderson and Ousterhout, for whom cash would be paid at Niagara, were sent forward in charge of three Indians and certain squaws. Over a month afterwards, on August 11, 1778, Anderson and Ousterhout came in to Colonel Cantine at Hunk loaded with plunder. When within twenty miles of Niagara Anderson, single handed, killed the three male Indians with an axe, and he and Ousterhout returned to Hunk the 19th day after this exploit. On November 4, 1778, the state legislature awarded to George "Andries" the sum of one hundred pounds, "as a gratuity for his valor and resolute conduct in effecting the escape of Jacob Oosterhout and himself when captivated by the Indians." Either this recognition of his act, the hardship endured, or the habit of plunder engendered on his journey from Niagara turned Anderson's head. It is said that after the war he retired to a cave in the mountains where as an outlaw he subsisted on thievery, and otherwise misconducted himself to the extent that he became a public nuisance.

On July 3, 1778, Colonel John Butler with a large force of Indians and tories fell upon Wyoming and perpetrated the famous "massacre" of which so much lurid misinformation has been published. Butler, himself, later said that he organized Butler's Rangers, "with

whom he often fought the enemy, particularly at Wyoming in the year 1778, upon their own terms, where 376 of them fell."

On July 18, 1778, Brant at the head of five hundred Tories and Indians burnt Springfield and Andrustown, near the head of Otsego Lake, taking many prisoners and driving off two hundred head of horses and cattle. By two elderly prisoners whom he sent back he gave out that he was to be joined by Col. John Butler at Unadilla, "and then they intend to fall in on the German Flatts, and burn and destroy all that come before them." Brant told the old men that fight he would for he came on purpose to fight. Soon after this Butler sent Ben Shanks to Pepacton and Pakatakan "to desire the Tories to come to him" at Oquaga, but Cantine could not then hear that any had gone.

A few days before July 30th Lieutenant Westbrook of Colonel Cantine's regiment, "who laid on the frontiers at Asshokan," captured John Snow, "a noted villain," at Pakatakan. Snow was with the Pepacton party that made the raid on Lackawack, and when captured had with him a mare of the widow Cole of that place. "Snow," said Cantine, "is a Daring Villian, and will stick at nothing to make his escape; he Vellies him Self at Villeny, and has Contrivance more than Common, so that I fear that if he is not taken particular Care of he will find means to get off." It is unfortunate that the record is entirely silent as to the fate of John Snow. He is apparently the person of the same name who deserted from the New York line April 1, 1777. With his "contrivance" very likely he got off.

About August 12th or a day or two afterwards John Burch of Pepacton sent 136 head of cattle to Butler at Oquaga, and at the same time induced forty of his neighbors to join Butler. These are Burch's figures when he was seeking compensation. His witness, Joel Austin, said they went in with 110 cattle, 29 of which belonged to Burch, and there were 50 or 60 men, and that Burch was very active in getting the men to go.

John Burch, who had a store where dry goods and hardware were sold in Albany, purchased a large tract of land (6710 acres) from the Hardenberghs on the west side of the East Branch at Pepacton, May 6, 1777. He came from England in 1772, and opened his store in Albany soon after. On his lands at Pepacton he had dwelling houses, barns and outhouses, and wheat, rye, barley, oats, flax and hay, all destroyed by "a plundering party of Americans in 1778." He also had considerable live stock, a blooded stallion, two blooded mares, two wagons, a two horse curricule, a pleasure sleigh, harness, plows, harrows, tools, irons for a grist mill and a saw mill, and wearing apparel, all taken by the Americans, of a total value, as he alleged, of

1,598 pounds; besides three horses loaded with the most valuable of the goods in his Albany shop, and 80 pounds, hard cash, in York and Jersey money, taken near Schoharie, of a total value of 500 pounds, and his shop in Albany was worth 600 pounds. In addition to all of this, Burch in seeking compensation from the British government, said that in 1778 he sent to Colonel Butler at Oquaga the cattle and men above mentioned. When word of this came to the Americans, he was attacked three times in his house at Pepacton, and at last escaped by a window into the woods, whence he made his way to Niagara.

Thomas Cumming was Burch's superintendent at Pepacton, and Cumming's niece, Janet Clement, was in charge of his store in Albany. Cumming was captured, tried, condemned and sentenced to be hung, but was pardoned by the legislature. Janet Clement, in trying to remove goods from the store in Albany, aided by Hugh Alexander from Bloomville, was seized in Schoharie, her horses, goods and money were confiscated by Col. William Butler, and she and Alexander were held in jail in Albany for a long time.

On August 12, 1778, Colonel Cantine sent a detachment under the command of Captains VanKeuren and Nicolls to Pepacton, with these orders:

"You will proceed to Papaconck and Down the River Delaware as far as where the Middaghs live; you will apprehend all those upon said River who have taken an active part against the United States of America, especilly those who have committed hostilities against the Western frontiers, and treat them as Enemies (tho with humanity), not distressing the Women and Children by taking their apperel or means of subsistance; you will be exceeding Careful not to hurt our friends (if any there be) and make diligent inquiry who are our friends and who our enemies; you will act against John Middagh, Stephen Middagh, Hendrick Bush, Junr., and Nathan Parks, and all others who have lately committed hostilities at Lagewack, or any other parts of the frontiers, as open enemies; our friends you will give all the assistance you can in bringing them of with their effects, if they chuse to come. You will have Mr. Buyer and Avery with you as pilots, who will be able to give you better information to distinguish between friends and enemies than I can. George Barnhart you will apprehend and bring down, and all others by whom goods [were] robbed from the inhabitants, our friends, being found."

By August 19th Captains VanKeuren and Nicolls had returned, bringing with them three families who were friends of the United States, and five prisoners; they also brought thirteen or fourteen horses from Pepacton, including George Anderson's mare, and a few cows. They reported that Col. John Butler's party, apparently at Oquaga, was greatly in need of grain, and had requested the inhabitants of Pepacton to thresh theirs and send it to them. They also reported that John Burch, the Middaghs and Hendrick Bush Jr., had gone the day before the guard arrived with grain to the enemy. The

guard destroyed the remaining crop of John Burch. In communicating this information to Governor Clinton, Colonel Cantine said: "I would just inform you that there are a few friends left at Packatakan who give us information." Upon receiving this advice Clinton wrote to Cantine: "I am of Oppinion it will be best to remove, if possible the Grain and all kinds of Provision from the Settlements on Delaware in Ulster County, and if it cannot be effected I think it woud be better even to destroy it than let it remain there & fall into the Hands of the Enemy." To this Cantine responded that the grain at Pepacton could not be brought down, and that at Pakatakan could be secured, if at all, only with difficulty, "as the Road Cannot Be used with teems." On August 21st Cantine notified Clinton: "This moment I received Intelligence from great Shandaken that the few friends we had at Packatakan are Chiefly Come Down; Left many of their affects Behind them, and are Desireous to have a guard to go and fetch them, which I have directed to go with orders to fetch down our friends and affects, as also the tories and their affects if possible."

George Anderson's mare again appears on the scene on August 26th. It seems that Captains VanKeuren and Nicolls, having promised to bring her down for him, refused to let Anderson have the mare, and offered her for sale; whereupon Anderson appealed to the Governor, who issued an order to these redoubtable captains "that you cause the mare to be delivered to him on his making application for her." But the order of the Governor was no more effective than their promise had been; the mare was sold, and before Colonel Cantine got wind of the affair Captain VanKeuren had gone home. Cantine then advised Clinton: "The Scout who was Commanded By Capt. Nicoll & Capt. Vancuren, as I have Late Been Informed, have not acted agreeable to orders, haveing plunder in Vew, more than the good of their Cuntry."

The incident of George Anderson's mare illustrates a point of view of the militia not confined to Captains VanKeuren and Nicolls. Captain Ballard, sent out from Cherry Valley on a scout and urged to go forward and capture Brant, answered that "he did desire to see Brant, nor to fight with him, as his orders from General Stark were to bring off the cattle," the proceeds from the sale of which, according to Stark's orders, were to be divided among the party that brought them in. At the same time the Commissioners on Conspiracies informed Clinton that "the Spirit of plundering is so apparent among the Troops on the Frontiers, particularly those at Cherry Valley, that unless some Steps are soon taken to put a stop thereto, our Frontiers will be ruined; we have had Persons sent down by them under pre-

tence of being guilty of Treason, but suspect in fact that the motive proceeded only from having a better Opportunity to appropriate their Effects for the above Purposees." Col. William Butler of the Continental Army, with troops stationed at Schoharie, was guilty of like practices which he defended by mentioning "the great fatigue to the partys in bringing off those cattle out of the Jaws of a Savage Enemy, and the benefit there derives from rewarding good troops." But the Commissioners of Sequestration said: "We cannot find that they have taken any cattle or horses immediately out of the hands of the enemy."

With the practice of plundering prevalent among the troops guarding the frontier, the farmers cultivating their lands on the East Branch of the Delaware must have viewed the visits of their guardians with as much apprehension as they did those of Brant. Since the troops of neither side were in uniform, it was generally impossible for the farmers to tell to which side they were indebted for cattle lifting and other depredations.

Harmanus Dumond, one of the first four settlers at Pakatakan, was well known to Col. John Cantine. In fact the Colonel, as surveyor, had prepared the deed for Dumond's seventy-five acres opposite Margaretville in 1763. After reporting the personnel of the party that went from Pepacton to Lackawack in July, Dumond continued to furnish Cantine with information as occasion offered. As Brant and Butler increased their activities on the frontier the situation of those friends of the United States who remained in the valley of the East Branch became more and more precarious, and on August 26, 1778, a guard from Great Shandaken brought away all of the inhabitants of Pepacton and Pakatakan who would leave their homes. After the war the wife of Frederick Miller, who lived on the east side of the river above Pepacton, then herself but a girl of eighteen or nineteen, said that the night before they left she and neighboring women sat up all night repairing clothes and stockings for their children by the light of the blazing wheat stacks, burned to prevent the tories and Indians from securing the grain.

The morning of August 26th the departing settlers, with their guard, made their way up the valley of the East Branch and at Pakatakan were joined by all of those at that place who would leave. Harmanus Dumond and his neighbor John Burrows did not leave with the guard, but remained behind to secure certain property, intending to follow with their horses and loaded wagon. The guard with its convoy of women and children had scarcely arrived at Great Shandaken when Peter Hendricks came hurrying down with the news that two hundred tories had raided Pakatakan, shot Harmanus Dumond

"through the Belly," and taken away all of the cattle and removable property of those inhabitants who had not left with the guard. In addition to Peter Hendricks, it appears that Peter Burger, Albertus Sluyter, Simeon VanWaggenen and Frederick Kittle and their families had chosen to remain at Pakatakan.

But Peter Hendricks was mistaken in reporting that Harmanus Dumond was killed by the enemy. On August 24th Col. William Butler at Schoharie ordered Major Posey of the Rifle Corps, and Captain Alexander Harper of the militia, with their men to visit Pakatakan, describing the place as "chiefly inhabited by tories and people who had actually been in arms against the country." Major Posey has been described as a large, fine looking officer. Sixty years later an old lady of Schoharie remembered him as "the handsomest man she ever saw." He was doubtless a regular Peony of the Posey family. Alexander Harper was a brother of Col. John Harper of Harpersfield, and achieved some fame for himself when he was later captured by Brant and is said to have deceived his captor into the belief that the Schoharie forts were well manned at the time. The mixed troops from Schoharie reached Pakatakan on Wednesday, August 26th, and there, according to Major Posey, acted "as being in an enemies Country." The first house they came to was vacant. The second house, that of Simeon VanWaggenen at Arkville, was occupied by women. There Captain Harper, according to his own affidavit, after charges had been made against him, examined Mrs. VanWaggenen. "I asked the Woman of the House if she was as Great a Tory as she Us'd to be. She Answer'd she was not a Tory, and if I Did not believe her, I might Enquire of Hermanus Demong who was a Tory." Major Posey, who was also involved in the charges of misconduct, deposed that he himself examined the women. He said: "I came to a House wherein I found some women. I made a Halt for some short time and inquired of the Women what had Become of the People. They told me there had been a Scout which had taken them, and what Stock they had, into the Settlement."

After this examination of the women, Major Posey says he marched on. His deposition reads:

"Within the distance of Half a mile in a piece of Woods met two men, one driving a Waggon, the other Riding on Horse Back & leading another Horse with a Gun Slung to his Back. I Halted my Party & upon examination found the man with the Waggon to be one Demon. I ask'd him where he was driving his Waggon; he said he was moving his Goods into the Settlement, that a Scout had been from Esopus which had taken all the Stock and chief of the Inhabitants. I ask'd him if there had been any Scouting parties from Unandilla lately or whether Butler & Brandt frequently sent Scouting Parties into this Settlement; he

said they had sent Scouting Parties at different times; I ask'd him (the said Demon) whether he had assisted the Enemy; he answered he had Assisted His King in whatever he was able to do, he had given them Beef, Cattle and such Assistance as he cou'd from time to time. After I had ask'd him such Questions as I thought proper, I ordered Capt'n Harper of the militia to set three of his men as a Guard over Demon and the man who was with him, who I understand since is one Burrow."

Captain Harper testified to a somewhat different version. After eliciting from the women what, in the equivocal language used by him, Harper apparently hoped would be accepted as incriminating information against Dumond, they met Dumond with his loaded wagon and horses driving toward Esopus, accompanied by Burrows riding one of his horses and leading the other loaded with goods. Harper says: "I came up and Ask'd him his Name. He replied Demong." Thereupon the examination conducted by Harper, according to his sworn version, proceeded in this wise:

Harper: "Are you as Good a Man for the King as you Used to be?"

Dumond: "Yes."

Harper: "What did you ever do for the King, and how many Cattle Did you give to Brant's party?"

Dumond: "I gave four Cattle and Supply'd them with all the Provision that lay in my power."

Harper: "Will you supply them with any more?"

Dumond: "I would but the Rebels have Carried them all to Esopus with my family."

Harper: "I think you Look like a Rebel and I believe you are one."

Dumond: "No, by God! I am no Rebel."

Harper then turned to Burrows and asked how many cattle he had given to Brant. Burrows said "One," to which Harper rejoined, "I believe you are a Churlish fellow for not giving more," and Burrows replied that "it was all he had, excepting one Milks Cow."

After this testimony by the handsome Major Posey and the crafty Captain Harper, both under charges of misconduct, the reader will doubtless be interested in what Mrs. Simeon VanWaggenen, who had no axe to grind, had to say on the subject. As written by Col. Levi Pawling and verified by Mrs. VanWaggenen on Tuesday, September 15, 1778,—“Wednesday was a week,” being in error by one week,—Mrs. VanWaggenen's deposition reads:

“Catherine Vanwaggoner (wife of Syman Vanwaggoner) of Pough-
taughen Being duly sworn saith that on Wednesday was a week, a party
of Men who told her they came from Schogary, came to her house and

Enquired where all the Men was. She told them they were all gone down to Marbletown by order of Coll. Contine, who had sent a guard for them, and she Expected another guard and then they were all to goe down to Esopus. They answered She lyed, the Men was all gone to the Indians. She told them they were not, but was gone down with the guard that was come to fetch them. The[y] Insisted that she was a Dam'd Lyar. After a little time a waggon was heard. They askt her who that was with the waggon. She told them it was Hermanus Demun and John Barrow, who was come up in order to fetch some of their goods, that Dumun had moved down with his family the week before. By this time the waggon was at the house. Dumun was stop'd and the Horses taken out of the waggon. Duman and Barrow put on one of the Horses, and so went away with them. Not long after she heard two guns fired. About two hours after Dumon came to her house, and told her he was Shot, and that he believ'd he was a dead Man. Dumon told her further that the [y] had threatened to carry him to Butler, and that he told them he would Rather die than be carried to Butler; after which he attempted to Make his Escape from them and was Shott in Making the atempt. Some time after two of the sd. party came to the House and seem'd very Sorry that Demon was Shot. After this Deponent though [t] the whole party was gone, there came two of the party and threatened to tomhawk Demon as he lay on his Death Bed, took his Shoes, Buckles and hat away with them. This Deponent further saith that the party took three horse Kind the property of her husband, with many other things belonging to her, and further saith that Dumon Died some time after & further Saith Not.

Sworn before me this 15th

Day of September, 1778.

Levi Pawling

her

Catherine X Vanwaggoner

Mark

After the examination of Dumond and Burrows, Major Posey says a guard from Harper's company took them in charge with orders "to take particular care of them." How the guard performed this duty, and the details of the death of Dumond are disclosed in the deposition of Major Posey, which reads:

"I Pursued with all possible expedition down the Delaware, thinking as those men had demonstrated themselves Enemies to the country by the confession they had made, that they only intended imposing on me with regard to moving into Esopus that perhaps it might be a party of the Enemy which had been there. When I got near the lower end of the Settlement (which was about six miles) I was told the Guard which had the Prisoners in charge had come up without them; upon which I ordered them to be Brought to me & ask'd them where the Prisoners were; they told me they (the Guard) had taken the Horses out of the Waggon, mounted the two Prisoners on a Horse and each of them (the Guard) riding on the other Horses follow'd me; that after riding some distance the two Prisoners rode off to try to make their escape, upon which they (the Guard) immediately pursued & finding they (the Prisoners) were likely to get off thro' the Woods one of the Guard fired upon them & miss'd; they (the Prisoners) then dismounted one of them making his escape thro' the woods the other kept the road. After pursuing near a mile the one who continued the road was fired upon & Shot, who proved to be Demon; they (the Guard) left him in a House & made their way as Quiet as possible to the Party.

After my excursions down the Delaware in which I Gathered what Stock I possibly cou'd, which amounted to few, being chiefly drove off

by the other party, I returned to the House that I had conversed with Women before mentioned in which I found Demon the person who was shot by the Guard. I ask'd him his reason for Running from the Guard; his excuse was that he thought we were some of Brandt's or Butler's men. I asked him how he cou'd think so when I upon meeting him, ask'd him If any of Butler's or Brandt's parties had been in the Neighborhood lately, upon which you reply'd there had & that you had Assisted Brandt & Butler in Beef. I ask'd him if he cou'd deny what he had said to me, upon meeting me first. He said no that he acknowledged he said what I had asserted & said he really had assisted the King. After which I left him & march'd on towards Schohary."

Thomas Posey, Capt. Commdt.
Rifle Reg't.

By both accounts, that of Posey and that of Mrs. VanWaggenen, but two parties came to the house, with or to Dumond, after he was shot. It will be noticed that Mrs. VanWaggenen says two men of the party came first and were sorry, and two came later and threatened to tomahawk Dumond and stole his shoes, buckles and hat. Posey's account indicates that the two men who came first may have been two of the three men of the guard, who said they "left him at a house," though Mrs. VanWaggenen says it was some time after Dumond came, when the first two men came. Shot as he was, it seems reasonable that Dumond was assisted into the house, and if so, that the men who assisted him expressed sorrow. In any event but two parties came to the house after Dumond was shot, and one party expressed sorrow and one threats. Posey's account of his interview with Dumond suggests no expression of sorrow on his part. It follows that Posey was one of the two men who came last and threatened Dumond with a tomahawk in an effort to exonerate himself, and then stole his shoes, buckles and hat. Here is a fine business for an officer of Morgan's Riflemen to be engaged in,—conducting a third-degree, death bed examination of the victim of his rapacity, and stealing the victim's shoes, buckles and hat. While the accounts do not positively prove that Posey used the tomahawk in his death bed examination of Dumond, the basis for that inference is there, and an officer who plunders those whom it is his duty to protect cannot complain if inferences against his integrity are adopted.

Colonel Cantine, with seventy men, came to Pakatakan on August 29th and buried Dumond that afternoon. He says that Dumond died the night after he was shot, and repeats that while he was lying in his bed he was stript of his shoes, buckles and hat, and was threatened with a tomahawk. Two of Captain Harper's men at Pakatakan were sons of a former school teacher at that place, who later moved to Schoharie. It is said that the first open quarrel among the residents of Pakatakan due to divergent sympathies incident to the Revolution orig-

inated between two school boys attending this school. One of Petrus Dumond's sons, Isaac Dumond, was called a rebel by a boy named Markle, doubtless the son of James Markle; a fight followed in which older boys took part, and the result was the discontinuance of the school. Colonel Cantine reported that Harmanus Dumond was one of the chief men at Pakatakan depended upon by him for information from that quarter, and that Peter Burger and Albertus Sluyter, plundered by the Schoharie troops, were never known or held to be enemies of the United States.

On September 6th Governor Clinton wrote to Col. William Butler, inclosing affidavits showing, as he says, that Dumond "was lately cruelly murdered by a Party of men supposed to be from the Neighbourhood of Schohary," and demanding that the plundered effects be restored to the owners. Later, and after reviewing the facts of the case relating to the death of Dumond, Clinton, on October 5, 1778, wrote the following letter to Colonel Butler at Schoharie:

"Sir, I am favoured with your Letters of the 27th & Major Posey's of the 23d Ultimo with several Affidavits accompanying the same respecting the Death of Dumond. I never understood from the Complaints made to me of that Unhappy Affair, the least Intention of charging any of your Officers with Misconduct, and Please to assure Major Posey that I entertain too good an Opinion of him to doubt the Propriety of his Behaviour on that Occasion. It is not, however, so clear to me that Mr. Harper Judging from his own Account, did not make use of some Deception which might have betrayed a better Man than Dumond into Imprudent Expressions in his Situation which if so is wrong. The Soldier who had Dumond in charge, were Right in obeying Orders even tho at the Expence of his Life, as he was wrong in attempting to Escape out of their Custody. And tho' it is my Duty to guard the Rights of the Subjects of the State, I should be sorry were they to suffer for doing their Duty. Please to offer my best Respects to Major Posey & believe me your Friend & most Obed't Servant.

Colo. Butler.

(Sgd.) Geo. Clinton."

The reader is now in a position to judge for himself of the rights and wrongs in the death of Harmanus Dumond. The letter of Governor Clinton should not be judged too harshly. In the light of a bare recital of the facts it looks like a fawning attempt to whitewash the criminal negligence, if not worse, of the officers in command of the Schoharie troops. As Thomas Jefferson later said, Clinton was "a hero, but never a man of mind," a statement not only true of a multitude of "heroes," but one hundred per cent true of Clinton. The assertion that Dumond was wrong in attempting to escape has some queer echoes and implications. Did Governor Clinton get the idea from the fallacious argument of Socrates? Sentenced to death by the perverse and deluded verdict of the many, whose opinion he professed to despise, Socrates argued that it would be a wrong to the laws of his coun-

try for him to escape from the sentence of death so decreed. In other words, wrong masquerading in the form and name of right, and accepted by the majority as right, is right. The Revolution was based upon a very different conception of the nature of right and wrong. The rebellious colonists conceived that wrong, however labeled and by whatever majorities sanctioned and supported, was still wrong from which it was entirely praiseworthy to escape, even by shooting the jailer. The judgment of Socrates looks strange in the letter of a revolutionist. Dumond thought he had been captured by the British Colonel Butler's men. George Anderson, Isaac Sawyer and St. Ledger Cowley in a like situation were later to be rewarded by the legislature for their valor and resolute conduct in effecting their escapes. Governor Clinton was acting under heavy responsibility at a critical juncture in the affairs of the State, and misjudgment on his part in the Dumond matter does not necessarily prove a defect in his character, however much it impugns his intellect. But what are we to say of Major Posey, Captain Harper and the three guardsmen of the latter's troop? They had no vast responsibilities of state resting on their shoulders. They did, however, have the responsibility of acting like men representing a decent cause. They were not commissioned to rob and kill the people of the State.

What other excuse was there for the arrest of Dumond and Burrows than the fact that they had four horses? They were identified as residents of Pakatakan; their families had been taken to Great Shandaken for protection; they were on their way thither with a wagon and a horse loaded with household goods. The only excuse Major Posey had for pretending to believe they were adherents of the King was the answers given by them to himself and Captain Harper. Obviously Dumond and Burrows were justified in believing that Posey and Harper represented the British Col. John Butler and not the American Col. William Butler, from external appearances, the direction they were going and the questions put by them. And no hint to the contrary escaped Posey and Harper. And what of the three guardsmen who immediately mounted themselves on their prisoners' three horses? Is it probable that two men mounted on one horse were able to ride off and outstrip them in a pursuit? If so, are we to believe that while thus mounted and escaping, the prisoners dismounted and one of them running on foot for nearly a mile in the road so far outdistanced three mounted men that it was necessary to shoot him to prevent him from running away from them? And then, would the man be shot "through the belly?" The story the three guardsmen related to Major Posey seems hardly designed to impose on an officer of Morgan's Riflemen, and particularly upon so incredulous a man as the

handsome Major Posey, who thought that Dumond with his loaded wagon only intended to impose on him with regard to moving into Esopus.

Putting aside the permissible but not necessary inference that Major Posey himself threatened the dying Dumond with a tomahawk and stole his shoes, buckles and hat, it seems apparent that Major Posey and his riflemen and Captain Harper and his rangers, on this occasion at least, conducted themselves as mere highwaymen with robbery as their plain purpose and murder as an easy episode in its accomplishment. The only known tory at Pakatakan was James Markle, and after his experience with the court-martial and Kingston jail it is not likely that he was active in 1778, if he was in Pakatakan at all. The pretence that the place was chiefly inhabited by tories is so specious when coupled with the conduct of Posey, who other than Dumond and Burrows found only women in the place, as to show that the object of the expedition was plunder in the thin disguise of military duty. The murder of Dumond was simply an incident in a plundering expedition sent out by Col. William Butler and conducted by Major Thomas Posey* and Captain Alexander Harper, and deserves just that place in the history of the Revolution.

After the death of Harmanus Dumond, Colonel Cantine sent thirteen men to Pepacton to destroy any grain that remained and to bring away any stock that could be found. These men returned on September 4, 1778, bringing with them Thomas Cumming, described as a comrade of John Burch. They said they had wounded Burch, and seeing Hendrick Bush on the opposite side of the river, they called upon him to stand; Bush jumped behind a tree, when seven of them fired and lodged seven balls in the tree, and Bush ran, leaving his hat behind him. On this expedition Cantine says his men destroyed all the grain, except Indian corn, on the river for twenty miles, and brought off "Very Considerable of Sheeps, Hogs and Cattle, and also a Quantity of Dears Leather." Cantine said that after this the only persons left at Pakatakan were Peter Burger, Albertus Sluyter and Frederick Kittle and their families, with barely so much grain and enough milk cattle to maintain them. He says: "They Solesited it as a favour of me to let them Stay. I told them I was willing to do anything for the good of their families, But that I Exspected that ye favour they askt would prove their Ruin. Kittle has promised me to give Intellegenc if I send to him by persons who he can Depend will not Deceive him."

* Thomas Posey (1750-1818) had a conspicuous career after the Revolution; but far from the scene of his exploit at Pakatakan. He was Lieut. Gov. of Kentucky, U. S. Senator from Louisiana and Governor of Indiana Territory.

The fate of Peter Burger shows that Colonel Cantine's advice should have been followed; for very soon after, while gathering his crops, he was shot by an Indian and his eldest son was taken a prisoner to Niagara and remained in captivity until the end of the war.

At about the time of the expedition from Pepacton to Lackawack the tories at and below Pepacton established a sort of fort on the west side of the East Branch of the Delaware about a mile below Downsville. This was long known as the "Tory House," and was a rendezvous of maurauders, called "cowboys," whose business was the lifting of cattle to be sent as supplies to the Indians at Oquaga. John and Stephen Middagh and Nathaniel Park made their headquarters at the "Tory House" and became so active by September, 1778, that Governor Clinton ordered that a reward of \$100 each be offered for their capture, saying he had reason to believe that the greatest mischiefs arose through their agency. As John and Stephen Middagh were brothers of Jacob Middagh, hanged by the Americans at Kingston, energy was doubtless given to their activities by the urge for retaliation, and we can see how an evil act not only defeats itself, but injures the cause in the interest of which it is accomplished. In other words, in war as elsewhere one acts contrary to justice at his peril, and one finds rewards and subsidies necessary to overcome the consequence of unjust and evil acts.

At Downsville on September 8 or 9, 1778, the only thing approaching a battle of the Revolution on the soil of Delaware County was fought between fifty-two State militiamen under Captain Samuel Clark and perhaps thirty-five or more Indians commanded by "Captain" Ben Shanks. The battle raged from 5 o'clock in the afternoon until darkness fell. The next morning the Indians were gone, leaving four of their dead on the field, and two or three of Clark's men, killed in the fight, were buried on the spot. Ben Shanks was a well known Indian at Pepacton before the Revolution, and was one of the most active of Brant's subordinates in the leadership of parties sent into the Ulster and Orange county areas. He has been thus described:

"Shanks Ben (or Ben Shanks, as he was called on the Delaware) was at this time [1780] about forty years of age. In person he was tall, slender and athletic; his hair was jet black and clubbed behind; his forehead high and wrinkly; his eyes of a fiery brown color, and sunk deep in their sockets; his nose pointed and aquiline; his front teeth remarkably broad, prominent and white; his cheeks hollow and furrowed. Arrayed for war, he was one of the most frightful specimens of humanity that the eye could rest upon. Like the others of his party, he wore a coarse wagoner's frock of a grayish color, and a red handkerchief bound close around his head."

On September 5, 1778, a party of Indians and tories, led by "Captain" Shanks, burned buildings near Lackawack, and took scalps

and prisoners. Col. John Graham, sent in pursuit, was ambushed at Grahamsville, and he and several of his party were killed. The next day Colonel Cantine sent Captain Clark with fifty-two men to pursue "Captain" Ben as far as where the Middaghs lived. The battle resulted when Clark came up with the Indians in the valley of Downs Brook. It must be admitted that there is little definite information available as to this battle. But Louis Williams, son of Stephen Williams who settled at Downs ville at an early date, had the story from "an old Indian," and there is at least this confirmation in the Clinton Papers, that Captain Clark with fifty-two men was sent into the area in pursuit of raiding Indians at about the date mentioned by Williams. Unfortunately Captain Clark made no report of his expedition.

The Little Shandaken was a settlement or neighborhood in the valley of the Beaver Kill east of Mount Tremper, near which was the site of the block-house of Great Shandaken, both names being those of localities long antedating the Revolution. At Little Shandaken in October, 1778, Capt. Jeremiah Snyder had a command of forty-one privates, besides sergeants and corporals, with ammunition consisting of "three Cartirages a peice." Captain Snyder, with his wife and seven children, including a son Elias, lived in a log house in this valley, and by industry and frugality had accumulated a little property. The till of the family chest contained four guineas, and about two hundred dollars in Continental money. On May 6, 1780, while ploughing in a field near the house Captain Snyder and his son Elias were captured by Ben Shanks and John Renhope, accompanied by a party of Tories and other Indians, and were taken to Niagara and thence to Montreal, whence they escaped in September, 1782. Captain Snyder narrated the details of his captivity to Charles G. DeWitt, editor of the *Ulster Sentinel*, in 1827, when he was eighty-nine years old. The description hereinbefore given of Ben Shanks is from Captain Snyder's narrative. The following additional extracts relate to Pakatakan and the East Branch of Delaware. The date is May 9, 1780.

"Near sunset they reached the east branch of the Delaware, where they encamped. Runnip [Renhope] and another Indian then went towards Middletown, which they called Pohatoghon, in quest of potatoes, which, in fleeing from the country in alarm the autumn previous, the settlers had left in the ground, and were still in a good state of preservation. Four others, with Shank's Ben at their head, went a little way up the stream to cut down an elm tree, from which to make a bark canoe; while the other two Indians were sitting on the ground mending their moccasins. The tomahawks were lying on the ground, and the guns were by a tree not far from Elias; and just as he, by a silent signal between him and his father, was about to seize the tomahawks, with a view to despatch the two Indians near them and then escape, the four

Indians who had gone for the Elm tree came running into camp, thinking perhaps of their imprudence, and, taking Elias with them, thus defeated his plan.

In making a canoe, the bark is carefully peeled; the rough outside is removed so as to make it pliable; and then it is stretched inside out over twigs, in the form of ribs, to give it the right shape. Near each end the bark is pared down so as easily to bend and overlap; and thus the bow and stern are formed, where, and in knotholes, a kind of pulp of elm bark is placed to caulk them and make them water tight. Their paddles were split from small ash trees, and were mainly used to steer with, as Indians do not often move in still water or against the current. About noon the next day, Wednesday, the eight Indians, with their prisoners and packs, left in their canoe; and finding three miles below a log canoe, two Indians entered it with their baggage, giving the others more room. After floating down stream twenty-four miles, they spent the night on shore at Middagh's Place, where the Indians took two bushels of corn from a secret depot; it was somewhat musty, but answered well for food. The next morning, after floating down sixteen miles to Shehawcon (Hancock), where the eastern and western branches of the Delaware unite, they left their canoes."

At Niagara, where Captain Snyder and his son arrived on May 26th, they were questioned by Brant, and "a tory by the name of Burch, who had known Benjamin Snyder, a brother of the Captain, was kind to them, and sent them seven pounds of sugar and a pound of tea."

It will be seen that the history of the East Branch of the Delaware in the Revolution is the history of an area denuded of its population and resources by the Americans. No where, except in the case of Peter Burger, does it appear that Brant acted in hostility to the inhabitants or took their property without compensation. When we consider the number of inhabitants in the valley at the opening of the Revolution, and the few who claimed compensation from the British afterwards, it is manifest that but a comparatively small number were active in favor of the British. The majority seem to have taken part on neither side. It seems apparent that the destruction of the resources of the place was due to the inability of the Americans otherwise to prevent the British from acquiring them. Whether this was inevitable or was the consequence of poor military judgment may not now be determined. But, other than that of Col. John Cantine, the kind of military judgment, discretion and activity shown by the Americans on the frontiers will hardly justify the conclusion that all was done that could be done to preserve the resources of the East Branch from destruction.

The Revolutionary history of the West Branch of the Delaware follows much the same pattern as that of the East Branch. However, Harpersfield and Kortright were in Tryon County, and that county and the territory embraced within it had been for many years controlled by Sir William Johnson and his family at Johnstown. Sir William was a thoroughgoing exponent of power politics. For thirty years be-

fore 1770 he had used the Mohawk and allied Indians to overawe the colonial government of New York. By 1770 the Mohawks, Johnson's chief janizaries, had been crowded out of their lands by Johnson's avarice and cupidity, and he was already providing what he planned would be a substitute for the Indians in the shape of armed Highlanders, whom he was in process of gathering about him to function on the model of the clan system with himself in the role of chief. Where before he had paraded in Albany, painted and befeathered as an Indian at the head of a file of howling Mohawks, he now proposed to prance in kilt and sporran, with a tail of Highland retainers. There were many, of course, including the Harper family, who did not take kindly to the feudalism fostered by the Johnson family. On the other hand, Captain John McDonell and substantially all of the Scotch element in Kortright and Stamford yielded to the Johnson influence.

In the spring of 1777, Peter Swart and others, organized as militiamen from Schoharie, then in Albany County, turned out "to Harpersfield and from thence to the Delaware to take up the disaffected," and soon after they "went to Harpersfield and from thence to Charlotte River to take McDonald and send him to jail." Captain McDonell was not taken or sent to jail; but Hugh Fraser, who said he was "the first man that opposed the oath to Congress," was sent to jail at Albany at this time, from which, however, he soon escaped. Prior to August, 1777, probably in concert with Sir John Johnson, and also as a measure of protection against raiding militia from Schoharie, Captain McDonell organized a company of loyalists among the settlers on the Charlotte River and in Harpersfield, Kortright and Stamford. Those who would not enlist with him, he induced to take an oath of neutrality. Later John Harper said: "the peopell of Harpersfield unfortunately fell into the hands of McDanald, who amediately Swor them not to take arms against the King of Britan."

When in prosecution of the British plan of 1777 for their armies to meet at Albany, St. Leger and Sir John Johnson came to Oswego, the latter sent for the leading loyalists of Tryon County to meet him at that place. Captain McDonell went to Oswego and the plan was there formed for him to return to Tryon County, assemble his company of loyalists, and such Indians as he could muster, and march down through Schoharie and join Burgoyne, St. Leger and Lord Howe at Albany. Simms* says:

"And lastly, Captain McDonald, a noted tory leader,—a Scotchman who had been living for a time on Charlotte river, with a body of sever-

* References to Simms herein are to *Schoharie County and Border Wars of New York* by J. R. Simms, 1845.

al hundred loyalists and Indians, was making his way down through the Schoharie settlements, intending to meet the trio already named, and revel with them in 'the beauty and booty' of Albany."

McDonell accordingly returned to the headwaters of the Delaware and called his company of loyalists together at the houses of Dr. James Stewart and Neil McKay. How many men joined him does not appear. Doctor Stewart said that he and his son went, and that he induced fifty other men, twenty-four Scotch and twenty-six Dutch, to join. Neil McKay said that "a considerable party" assembled at his house, in consequence of which "he was advertised in the News Papers, and ordered to leave the country, or he would suffer for it." Hugh Fraser, having escaped from the Albany jail, returned to Kortright and joined Captain McDonell. Captain Lucas DeWitt of the Ulster County militia was to send men, but was apparently late in doing so. Captain George Mann of the Schoharie militia declared himself a friend of King George, and collected a number of Indians and tories, but never in fact joined Captain McDonell. A company of Indians, perhaps from Oquaga, was with Captain McDonell, but their number is unknown. The battle of Oriskany was fought on August 6, 1777, and while St. Leger was turned back, General Herkimer and many of the principal men on the side of the Americans in the Mohawk valley were killed. The people of Schoharie were much divided and disturbed, and the Albany Committee, August 11, 1777, reported that "the Appearance of a few of the Enemy's Troops on the Mohawk River would immediately make the Inhabitants lay lown their Arms."

In this critical situation of affairs, Captain McDonell broke over the Delaware hills and started his march down the Schoharie valley. On Sunday, August 10, 1777, he reached the creek above Breakabeen, and stationed guards and sent out patrols. Robert W. Chambers in *The Little Red Foot*, adds a touch of color when he speaks of "McDonald's guns in the valley and his pibroch on the hills." Colonel Peter Vrooman, with about twenty-five men, barricaded himself in the Stone House of John Becker at Middleburgh. Colonel John Harper had been authorized by the Council of Safety on July 17, 1777, to enlist two hundred rangers, but had been unable to do so because of McDonell's activity. On the afternoon of August 11th Colonel Harper arrived at the Stone House and asked Colonel Vrooman what should be done.

"Oh, nothing at all," answered Vrooman, "We be so weak we cannot do anything."

Colonel Harper thought otherwise, and mounting his horse started to Albany for assistance. Captain McDonell and his party came down to within a mile of Middleburgh and took possession of the Swart house, but did not proceed to Middleburgh or attack the Stone House.

All was confusion in Schoharie,—the time of all times it would seem to strike and to strike boldly. But McDonell faltered and held back, and while he delayed Harper rode to Albany, did his business there, and returned to Schoharie, where he arrived the forenoon of August 13th. He brought with him twenty-eight light horsemen, commanded by a French speaking officer, and accompanied by a trumpeteer. Colonel Vrooman described the reinforcements as “a small party of the Light Horse, which Colonel Harper procured at the risk of his life, and six Frenchmen raised at his own expense.”

Harper's force took prisoners at Captain Mann's house, though Captain Mann himself escaped, were augmented by militia, and proceeded at once to Middleburgh. Arriving at the Stone House, they installed their prisoners on its roof, where two men could guard them, and sought contact with McDonell, who had retreated to a place called *The Flockey*. Here, the Light Horse, with a blast of the trumpet, dashed in, and Simms says the Indians and tories, panic struck, “took to their heels,” which he ascribes largely to the trumpet. Whether this is fanciful on Simms' part or not, there seems to have been an impression that the Indians could not bear the sound of a trumpet or bugle, and later on Col. William Butler tells us that when he lay “on our Arms” at Oquaga under great apprehension of an attack he “had my Bugle Horn blown” at daybreak next morning. If the Indians could stand the screaming of the bagpipes, which are said to have enlivened McDonell's march, it seems strange that the blare of a trumpet or bugle could have stampeded them. The only casualties mentioned by Simms are Lieut. David Wirt, of the cavalry, and two privates of the Americans. Subsequently Hugh Fraser, Hugh Clarke and Neil McKay, who were with McDonell, all mention this encounter, but say that the Americans were beaten off. On August 20th, “by order of the Council of War,” Colonel Vrooman wrote from the Stone House, that “one-half of this valuable settlement lyes in ruin & deslution, our houses plundered, our cattle destroyed, and our well affected inhabitants taken prisoners and sworn not to discover the enemy's plots or proceedings, nor to take up arms against the King of Great Britain, or his adherents, and the Indians & Tories are now lying lurking in the woods waiting for another reinforcement.”

St. Leger and Sir John Johnson gave over the siege of Fort Schuyler at Rome on August 22nd, and forthwith retreated to Oswego. On Sunday, August 23d, Hendrick Freere, traveling in company with Wilhelmus Wolven from Zachariah Snyder's to Peter Baker's at Kaaterskill, was told by Wolven that Capt. Luke DeWitt of the Ulster County militia had received a letter from Captain McDonell, or “from the In-

dians from Harpersfield," to the effect that DeWitt with his company was to meet McDonell on Monday evening at Doctor Stewart's near Harpersfield, and if DeWitt could not be there at the time fixed, then McDonell would leave directions at Doctor Stewart's for Captain DeWitt how to proceed from thence to Sir John Johnson, and that McDonell could not wait any longer than Monday evening. Wolven also said that on Sunday, after receiving McDonell's letter, DeWitt met with some people to join him to go to Doctor Stewart's, but when he found he could not get men enough to his mind, he sent off some of those drafted to go with the militia to Doctor Stewart's to meet McDonell or to get his direction. DeWitt said he was now a captain, and if he could not procure men enough to go with him in company, he was afraid Sir John would not appoint him captain of a company. That is to say, DeWitt was then a captain of the State militia, and he would not give up that captaincy and go himself, as he was afraid Sir John Johnson would not appoint him a captain in his royalist regiment, unless he procured more men from the State militia to join the loyalists. Here was strange business for Captain DeWitt, inducing men drafted for his company to enlist with the enemy! On August 23, 1777, eight men were returned delinquent in Captain Lucas DeWitt's company of Colonel Snyder's regiment of the detachment then with Colonel Cantine.

Captain McDonell, with about twenty men, including Doctor Stewart, William Rose, Terrence McAlister, Hugh Clarke, John Cameron, John Livingston and Hugh Fraser, went by way of the Butternuts on Unadilla river, and joined Sir John Johnson at Oswego, on his retreat from Fort Schuyler. All but Fraser joined Sir John's regiment. McDonell was made a captain and Doctor Stewart surgeon's mate, and both served in these capacities until the end of the war.

Captain John McDonell is a figure of imagination and romance, much in the style of "Quentin Durward." He was born in 1728 in Knoydart, Scotland, the son of John McDonell of Croulin, and Janet MacLeod, and died at Cornwall, Upper Canada, April 15, 1810. His great-grandfather, Ranald McDonell, was chief of Glengarry in 1682, and through him Captain John was a descendant of Donald, Lord of the Isles. He married in 1747 his cousin, Catherine McDonell, daughter of Donald McDonell, "reckoned the bravest man of the clan," who fell at Culloden, and, as some say, was carried wounded from the field by marauders from a ship in Loch Ness and sold as a slave, and was later seized by Turkish pirates and held in bondage for the rest of his life. Captain John's children were Mary, Penelope, Miles, John and William Johnson, the latter born on Charlotte river in what is now Davenport.

Captain McDonell at the age of twelve was sent to the Scots College at Rome. Three years later he ran away from this place of learning and joined the Company of St. James of the Regiment Irlandia in the service of the King of Spain, operating in Italy. He was in the battle of Velletri, August 11, 1740, where he was left for dead upon the field, but at nightfall was found and removed to a hospital where he recovered. He was sent with money to Prince Charles in the Highlands in 1746, but before he arrived Prince Charles was in hiding, and the money was lost or stolen. After Culloden the Highlands were ravaged and the castle of Glengarry was burnt by the Butcher Duke of Cumberland, and Captain John, after months of hiding, was imprisoned in Fort William for nearly a year, due to the faithless act of Barrisdale, one of the McDonell family. Upon his release he married and lived upon his own property on the Sound of Sleat, as he says, "amusing myself in all the parties that that part of the country, with a numerous society of gentlemen, well polished and educated, could afford," until he came to America in 1773.

On August 30, 1777, the Council of Safety adopted a resolution that the Commissioners of Sequestration "seize the effects of all such inhabitants of the counties of Albany and Tryon, as are gone over unto and joined the enemy, and dispose thereof." Also, that they "remove the wives and children of such disaffected persons . . . from their habitations to such place or places as they shall conceive best for the security of the State," and, if General Gates thinks it advisable, "send all or any part of the said women and children to their said husbands." Under this resolution the property of Captain John McDonell and of all those with him was seized and sold, and Catherine McDonell and her five children were removed from the Charlotte river and detained in Schenectady and Albany until November, 1780, when with 159 women and children, mostly Scotch, they were delivered to the British by the New York authorities.

In February, 1780, Captain McDonell wrote to Governor Haldimand that his family "are at present detained by the Rebels in the County of Tryon . . . destitute of every support, in which condition they have been since the year 1777." Again in March, 1780, he wrote to Haldimand's secretary that his family were both naked and starving to such a degree that "my eldest girl of about sixteen was obliged to hire herself to an old Dutch woman to spin in order to prevent starving." Of this situation he said: "If nothing can be done to obtain their speedy deliverance, I beg as the greatest obligation you can lay me under that you apply to his Excellency to send a party of Savages to bring me their six scalps. . . If his Excellency has not prisoners to

give in exchange, I will most cheerfully head any party he may think proper, and make out their number, or perish in the attempt." In response to this letter Haldimand proposed that Captain McDonell "go himself to get his wife and family," and in the meantime that he send them some "hard money," which he said could easily be done. The blood of the Lord of the Isles was probably seething in Captain McDonell when he wrote the letter of March 20th. It could hardly have hurt Mary McDonell to spin for the old Dutch woman, and the demand for the six scalps of his wife and children, if not a mere explosion of temper, may have been intended as a reflection on Governor Haldimand and his use of savages to procure prisoners and scalps as much as anything else.

Christopher Servoss, commonly written Service, had 1500 acres of land on both sides of Charlotte River, partly in Harpersfield, acquired from Sir William Johnson in January, 1772, in exchange for a farm and improvements owned by Servoss near Johnson in the Mohawk valley. In 1770, in negotiating the exchange, Johnson described the land to be conveyed to Servoss as "lying between the place where the Germans formerly made canoes to go to Pensilvania and the place where John Bartholomew has taken up his land." Barnabas Kelly of the Butternuts, in 1778, said that Servoss was Sir John Johnson's uncle. If this was so, Servoss' wife, Clara, must have been a sister of the "wholesome looking" German servant girl, Catharine Weisenberg*, married to Sir William Johnson in June, 1739.

In 1778 Christopher Servoss was comparatively wealthy; he owned a well stocked farm and had a grist mill. He was active on the side of the British in the destruction of Cobleskill, May 30, 1778, and early in June, 1778, Brant with about 200 Indians and Tories lay on the Charlotte River near Servoss. On June 16th a scout from Schoharie reported that "nigh to Service's he saw where two canoes had been landed, where he found pieces of leather, by which he judged that the enemy had mended their shoes." He said also that "Service told him that last Sunday, eight days [June 7th], Brant was there and had sworn him and John Duxtader to be true to George the third."

On July 17th Lewis a Frenchman, "knowing in Albany," told Col. Peter Vrooman that an Oquaga Indian had told him that the enemy were "on their way coming up the west Branch of Delaware River" to Schoharie, and that the Indian had said "that they had made a wide road; he thinks it is to bring field pieces," and that their number was great. On July 18th Brant struck at Springfield and Andrustown, and

* Simms says her name was Lana [Eleanor] Wallaslous, but the *Dictionary of American Biography* gives it as above.

destroyed both places. Doubtless the Indian's story of the wide road up the West Branch of Delaware was put out to keep Col. Peter Vrooman at home in his fort at Schoharie.

About August 1, 1778, Col. William Butler came to Schoharie from White Plains, with a considerable force of Continental troops, including a company of Morgan's Riflemen. At the same time Col. Ichabod Alden had better than 200 Continentals at Cherry Valley. These troops were sent to these places to supplement the militia in the protection of the frontier. The first reported activity of Colonel Butler is that he "sent out a Subaltern with a small Scout to reconnoitre the country," which "proceeded about 25 miles to one Service's, a Noted Villian who has constantly supplied the enemy with necessaries. Service luckily was at home and upon his refusing to Surrender and making some resistance, one of the party shot him." This is Butler's official account. Servoss was shot by Tim Murphy, one of the scout sent out by Butler, and the circumstances, as related by Simms, strongly suggest murder on the part of Murphy, who took time to repulse the pleadings of Mrs. Servoss with a ribald jest. Later on the State confiscated the property of Servoss and sold it to settlers through Commissioners of Forfeiture, for \$3,125; less \$219 paid for claims and \$337 paid to Clara Servoss for her dower rights, the net proceeds to the State were \$2,569. Still later (1826), when justice had a word to say, grandchildren of Servoss sued these grantees of the State in ejectment in the United States District Court for the Northern District of New York, where the father of Roscoe Conkling was then District Judge, and recovered judgment that the State's grantees had no title, Servoss being dead at the time of the forfeiture, and the decree or fiat of forfeiture being inoperative against his heirs at law and wife. In settlement of this judgment the State paid to the grandchildren \$9,670.57; so that this adventure in murder and confiscation cost the State \$7,101 in taxpayers' money.*

On August 8th Colonel Butler seized Janet Clement and Hugh Alexander near Schoharie, with three horses, transporting John Burch's goods from his store in Albany, and confiscated the horses and goods. About the same time Colonel Butler sent Captain Gabriel Long of the Rifle Corps to intercept one Smith, going with a party of Tories to join the enemy. Long fell in with Smith somewhere on Schoharie Creek and shot and killed him and took his scalp, which was sent to Gen-

* An unusual aspect of this story is that British Commissioners, on Dec. 5, 1787, awarded Daniel Servoss, son of Christopher, £533 for loss of the same lands, on the assumption that the State confiscation was effective. Thus the heirs of Servoss collected compensation from both belligerents for the same land.

eral John Stark, of "Mollie Stark's a widow" fame, at Albany. In consequence of letters found on Smith, Butler sent Major Church with 120 men "to a canoe place about five miles beyond Service's." Nothing came of this, however, but the Major drove off "all the cattle in that neighbourhood."

The next activity of Colonel Butler in the protection of the frontier was the expedition sent by him to Pakatakan, where Harmanus Dumond was murdered on August 26, 1778, his hat, shoes and buckles were stolen, and all the cattle there to be found were driven away. But these were minor operations for a man of Colonel Butler's energies, and in October, 1778, he resolved to strike at the heart of Brant's activities at Oquaga and Unadilla. Prior to September 27th it was reported that Brant had 700 men at these places, but about October 1st spies informed Butler that Brant had left both places. The fact was that Brant had gone on an expedition down the Delaware and into the Mamakating valley, where on October 13th he attacked Colonel Newkirk, drove the inhabitants into blockhouses, and after killing several who resisted or delayed, drove off a large number of cattle without pursuit.

Colonel Butler left the Middle Fort at Schoharie on October 2, 1778, with a force of 161 officers and men of the 4th Pennsylvania Regiment, 77 officers and men of Morgan's Riflemen, 21 officers and men of Lieut. Dietz's Company of Rangers, and eight of the militia as guides and packhorsemen,—all told a force of 267 men. He took eleven days' provision, six on the backs of the men and five on pack-horses. His route was by a wagon road up Schoharie Creek to the mill of Hendrick Mattice at North Blenheim, thence by Indian path over the hill past Stamford and down the West Branch of the Delaware to the house of Isaac Sawyer near Hobart, which Butler locates as 15 miles from Mattice's "on the Head of Delaware." From Mattice's the path through the woods was bad, it rained and the going was heavy and disagreeable. Their encampment at Sawyer's was at the end of the second day's march, or on Saturday, October 3d. On Sunday they marched at ten o'clock and came to St. Ledger Cowley's below Bloomville, or, as Butler says, "marched to Cawlys down the Delaware 10 miles." Captain William Gray, who was with Butler and made a rough map of the route, calls the place "Will's Mill," and locates it below what is now Bloomville. Cowley's was the last habitation they met until they came to Unadilla. Leaving Cowley's early Monday morning, they crossed the Delaware, marched five or six miles and re-crossed the river just below Watauga Falls, and followed the Indian path on the west side of the river through Delhi to a point near Plat-

ner Brook, where they "struck across the mountains for the Susquehannah." From Cowley's the route down the Delaware was fifteen miles by their estimation. They encamped Monday night in the woods about three miles up Platner Brook, or a day's march of 18 miles.

The expedition came to Unadilla on October 6th and found the place deserted, except for two white men, who were made prisoners; one of these was John Glassford, who acted as a guide for the expedition to Oquaga. On October 7th Butler crossed the Susquehanna, as he says, three times and bivouacked that night at the mouth of Unadilla river. Here fresh footprints were noticed and runners were sent out, but with no result. At ten o'clock that night Lieut. Stevens was sent off to reconnoiter Oquaga. Stevens met the troops next day three or four miles from Oquaga, but he had not ventured into the town and his report was negative. The river was crossed that night about eleven o'clock, with the troops in order of battle, the Riflemen on front and flank, and the musketry with fixed bayonets in the center. The river was 750 feet wide and nearly up to the armpits of the men. The troops entered the town without opposition or interruption. The great barn like houses of the Indians were empty, and not a soul was seen to meet, greet or oppose the invaders. The interiors indicated that the occupants had fled in haste and confusion. Horses, cattle, chickens and dogs were about the houses and corn and provisions were found in large quantities. "It was the finest Indian Town I ever saw," reported Colonel Butler. There were fifty good houses built of squared logs, with good floors, stone chimneys, shingled roofs and glass windows; in other words, as good dwellings as any to be found in that part of the country at the time. The next morning every house, but one supposed to belong to an Oneida Indian, was burned to the ground, and Colonel Butler hurriedly left the place, under great apprehension of an attack. The next day it rained heavily and the troops, almost in a panic, crossed the river with great exertion. On October 10th and 11th a grist mill and all of the houses at Unadilla, except that of Glassford, were burned.* At Oquaga and Unadilla Colonel Butler estimated that he destroyed upwards of 4,000 bushels of grain. On Sunday, October 11th, the troops marched twelve miles up Ouleout Creek and Handsome brook, where they encamped. On October 12th they came back to the Delaware river at Platner Brook, and marching up the west side of the river, they found it too high to cross below Watauga Falls. Forced to find a way through the woods and over high ground which

* These houses and grist mill, in what Butler called "the Unidilla Settlement," were actually in what is now Sidney. Glassford owned land adjacent to that of Rev. William Johnston.

comes down close to the river here, they lost their way and turned up Elk Creek, and had proceeded six miles in the darkness when they discovered their mistake. They then encamped, and the next morning undertook to get back to Cowley's by crossing the intervening mountains. Despite the grain and food taken and destroyed at Oquaga, they were now without food. They wandered all of October 13th lost in the mountains between Elk Creek and Bloomville, and again that night were forced to encamp without finding the Delaware. The next day, October 14th, they crossed another mountain and came at length to Cowley's, or "Cawley's," being, as Butler said, "the first Inhabitants on the frontier settlements between there and Unidilla." On October 16th, about two o'clock they got back to the Middle Fort, where Butler ordered a "feu de joy" to be fired. Colonel Butler said that during the last two days "all I could furnish my men was an ear of corn per man, which they parched." Captain Gray said they returned "almost barefooted and naked; we suffered a good deal for want of bread, as we had not any of that useful article for four days." It will be noticed that Colonel Butler did not here bring off any cattle or grain "out of the Jaws of a Savage Enemy," despite the fact that his packhorses must have traveled unloaded on the return journey. The only casualty of the expedition was one man "shot through the Side and through the Brains, yet lived till we brought him within 40 miles of this place," meaning the Middle Fort, wrote Butler. By his estimates of distances, this could mean that the wounded man died while they wandered lost in the mountains up Elk Creek.

Clinton, who had urged the destruction of Oquaga for some time, was persuaded it would be attended with "the most salutary Consequences." The first, immediate and never to be forgotten consequence was the destruction of Cherry Valley on November 11, 1778. There were about 200 Continental troops at Cherry Valley, under command of Col. Ichabod Alden. Brant and Walter Butler, with 600 Indians and 200 Tories, attacked the place at noon on November 11th. Colonel Alden, fleeing toward the fort, was killed by a tomahawk. Twelve of the regiment, caught outside of the fort, were killed, and several were taken prisoners. Thirty inhabitants were killed, and seventy-one were taken prisoners, of whom forty-six were sent back. Twenty houses and as many barns and two mills were burned. So miserable was the conduct of the soldiers that the night of the main attack the inhabitants who escaped, with many children, were forced to lay on the ground outside the fort all night in a November rain.

American troops in the Revolution were divided into two entirely distinct organizations: one was the so-called "Continental Army," en-

listed, subsisted, governed and controlled by or under the Congress of the Thirteen Confederated or United States, who called themselves "the Continent;" the other was the militia of the several States, recruited, subsisted, officered and controlled by the State where raised. Inhabitants subject to service in the militia in New York were "all able bodied, effective men between 16 and 50 years of age." A company consisted of about 68 men and 12 officers; all officers being elected by the company, "influenced," as George Clinton said, "by a dram shop interest." Officers above the rank of captain were appointed by the State authorities. One-fourth part of the militia were designated minute-men, who were required to be specially trained, and to be in readiness for instant action or service. The others came and remained in service periodically as called. A State Historian has said that "the average militiaman of the day was an arrogant and insolent fellow, who knew his rights and asserted them with spirit. He was imbued with the idea that his country had more need for his services than he had need for the services of his country. He had but little faith in the officers who commanded him and frankly said so. . . . At times he flatly refused to serve. His farm invariably came before his country for the reason that the farm would compensate him for working it, while he had doubts as to what his country would do for him." It should be said also that he was forced to serve in places remote from his farm and family, while these were left open to attack by the enemy.

The militia were mostly farmers and their clothing was "the ordinary dress of farmers," as Timothy Dwight observed when he saw the arms, legs and bodies of many dead men protruding from the waters of a pond near Fort Montgomery, where they had been thrown by the British when that fort was taken October 6, 1777. Each man had to furnish his own arms, and if he had none the State supplied them and deducted the price from the man's pay, which in 1777 was at the rate of one shilling, nine and one-half pence per day, or 53 shillings, 4 pence per month. A musket and bayonet in 1775 cost 4 pounds, or 80 shillings.

A continuous and seldom remedied complaint of the militia was the lack of provisions, lack of clothing, and lack of nearly everything but incompetency. Troops would be ordered to a place in considerable numbers, and no provision would be made for subsistence. "This and other causes too tedious to mention," says Clinton, "greatly disgusted the militia and caused many to go home much displeased." So acute was the lack of supplies in December, 1776, that Clinton informed the Convention that the militia "must desert or starve," and he was quite sure they were not so "well disposed" as to submit to starvation.

But the militia were not always the victims. It was frequently observed that they were "but too apt to consider all they get as lawful plunder." The charge of plundering the inhabitants is one that reflects great dishonor upon the Revolutionary Army. For the most part the inhabitants plundered were those adverse to the Revolution, and those who robbed them were generally soldiers of the Continental Army, rather than the militia. But when accompanied by Continental troops the militia stole and lied as readily as their Continental companions. The officers of the Continentals had a notion that it was compatible with the honor of a soldier to confiscate the property of disaffected civilians and to divide the plunder among those who took it. Incensed by the refusal of those inhabitants designated "disaffected" to join in the war against George III, these officers easily identified disaffected inhabitants as enemies, particularly if they had horses, cattle, money or movable property or anything which a soldier could use or sell.

General Israel Putnam, the wolf-hunter, tavernkeeper, and ploughman-soldier of Connecticut, in command of the Highlands of the Hudson in 1777, was much given to "little expeditions" of this kind against the unarmed inhabitants of neutral territory. To Hamilton, who had written of these "unjust and dishonorable practices committed on the inhabitants," Clinton observed that the "Good Man," as he called General Putnam, knew all about it, as he had paid for teams to carry "those effects" into Connecticut, where they were sold. Clinton said he, himself, was fully convinced that "the soldiery claim as lawful prize everything they take within the enemy lines, though the property of our best friends, and whatever is taken beyond our advanced posts by generous construction comes within the above predicament." Of the application of this principle Clinton said: "little good can be expected of an army whose interest it is to suffer a country to be abandoned to the enemy thereby to justify plundering the inhabitants. Perhaps, and I don't know that it would be uncharitable to suppose, it is this little trade that makes some people so very fond of little expeditions." Surely not the "Good Man," for instance. The discussion points the moral to the "little expeditions" of Colonel William Butler, who went up to Schoharie from White Plains, where Putnam commanded in July, 1778.

Butler's incursions into the valleys of the East and West Branches of the Delaware and of the Charlotte River netted him considerable plunder, but his major expedition against Oquaga netted him nothing, though it did net the Oquaga Indians, and, by retributive consequence, the people of Cherry Valley, the loss of everything they had. It can

hardly be supposed that Washington looked upon military activity of this kind as worthy of the cause he represented.

The story of the capture of St. Ledger Cowley and Isaac Sawyer by Seth's Henry and three other Schoharie Indians has been variously told and has taken on much embroidery in the telling. Sawyer lived on the west side of the Delaware near Hobart; he does not appear in the 1790 Census for New York, and is said by Simms to have died at Williamstown, Mass. St. Ledger Cowley was sometime adjutant in Harper's Rangers, and is said to have lived below Bloomville. His house is doubtless the place referred to by Colonel Butler as "Cawley's," though Gray's map shows only "Will's Mill" below Bloomville. Cowley was living in Albany County in 1790, when he had three males over 16, one under 16, and four females in his family. His will, dated September 30, 1796, was the first will admitted to probate in Delaware County. He had mill property on the Delaware at Stamford village, where he is described as an early settler,—but obviously after 1790.

Upon his return from an excursion up the Mohawk river, James Clinton, brother of the Governor, on April 28, 1779, wrote of the appearance of Indians in different quarters, and said:

"One of the Parties attack the Houses of a certain Mr. Layer [Sawyer] and Cowley, back of Schohary, both of whom they took and plundered."

Lieut. William McKendry, who was at Cherry Valley in June, 1779,—and who says he saw Mr. Sawyer, "the man that kill'd the two Indians,"—under date of June 2, 1779, wrote that he had been informed that day that "not many days ago six Indians took two men prisoners from Turlough [error for Kortright] . . . carried them as far as Ocquaugo, where two of the Indians left the party to go on to inform their brothers of their success; when the four that were left got asleep, the two prisoners took their hatchets and killed two of the Indians; the other two awoke and started; the white men being too ready for them, wounded them both, and the two Indians fled;" whereupon, the two prisoners took the Indians' arms and escaped.

By McKendry's account the prisoners got no further than Oquaga; but Simms, who says he had the story from Lawrence Mattice and Henry Hager, who learned the particulars from the captives themselves, says they were taken as far as Tioga Point. Simms says that when captured Cowley and Sawyer told the Indians that they were friends of the King, and evinced a desire to go to Niagara with them, in consequence of which the Indians did not bind them; that they were co-operative captives eleven days, when they resolved to escape by the

murder of their captors, who slept without a sentry or guard. Simms tells in detail how two of the Indians were killed while asleep, and how two, one of whom was Seth's Henry, escaped wounded. A more recent account, published in Munsell's *History of Delaware County* (1880) (p. 232), adds further details, and says Cowley's son Jonathan, twelve or thirteen years old, was taken, and escaped at what is now Delhi. Upon their return Cowley and Sawyer removed from the Delaware to Albany County. The legislature on October 25, 1779, awarded "to Isaac Sawyer and St. Leger Cowley, each the sum of one hundred pounds as a gratuity for their valor and resolute conduct in effecting their escape when captivated by the Indians." On March 26, 1783, the award to "St. Ledger Cowley" was reduced to twenty pounds. Whether this was because of some defect in his "valor and resolute conduct," or the legislature discounted its gratuity by 80 per cent in deference to the dictum of Gov. Clinton that he was "wrong in attempting to Escape," does not appear.

When appraisal of the ethics of the Indians is undertaken, it should not be overlooked that Cowley and Sawyer evinced a desire to go to Niagara, and when the Indians were lulled into a sense of security, turned upon them and murdered two of them in their sleep. Seth's Henry is said to have been one of the most vengeful of the Indians ravaging the Schoharie settlements. He was a son of Seth, whom we met at Hancock in 1734 and again at Hobart and South Kortright in 1738. Seth is said to have met his death when he fell into the fire when drunk. A comparison of the behavior of the civilized whites and the savage Indians in the Revolution and elsewhere affords no basis for the assumption, common with fanciful writers, that the whites were less savage than the Indians. In many ways the Indians were less inhuman than the whites, but they did in all respects evince the same furor for retaliation when they were injured without cause or in breach of faith.

After reciting the capture and escape of Cowley and Sawyer with much circumstance, and their immediate withdrawal to Albany County, Gould, who got most of his information from a manuscript furnished by Asahel Cowley, a descendant of St. Ledger Cowley, says that in revenge for the acts of Cowley and Sawyer, a party of Indians soon after came up the Delaware, obviously looking for Cowley and Sawyer, and continued on to Odell's Lake in Harpersfield, where a family named McKee lived. The night was dark when the Indians arrived and sounded the war whoop. McKee was in Schoharie, and Mrs. McKee, with a child in her arms, ran from the house towards an outside cellar, and was shot by the Indians. A daughter Anne, sixteen years old, ran into a nearby swamp, but on the approach of an Indian gave herself up and

was taken prisoner. She was taken to Niagara, where she was nearly killed in running the gantlet of Indian women. She survived, was befriended by "some Scotch people then living in Canada," and returned to New York after the war.

In August and September, 1779, General John Sullivan, with about 4,000 men, devastated the Indian country from Waverly to Genesee and Waterloo, burning 40 villages, destroying 200,000 bushels of corn, much other grain, and killing thousands of fruit trees, leaving, it was said, what had been a garden of Eden, a desolate wilderness. Whatever others may have thought, including those who launched the thunderbolt, seventeen officers of the militia of Tryon County, who were on the scene, wrote to Clinton on September 30, 1779, that by the withdrawal of Sullivan's forces the Tryon County frontier was left bare, "an easy Prey to an enraged Enemy." They said that nothing was left to the Western Indians "but Submission or Revenge;" that the writers believed they would seek the latter, and asked for aid to oppose "all revengeful Designs of a cruel Enemy," lest "the Fruit of the Expedition" be lost. Clinton told them that "no further aid can be expected," and to protect themselves as best they could. We may perhaps see in this the futility of one of the most destructive military enterprises of Washington and Clinton in the Revolution.

In connection with the Sullivan Expedition, it was later written of Brant:

"As the leader of his dusky warriors, he was foremost in the fray, exhaustless in expedients to harass his enemy, of tireless energy, of dauntless courage, of lofty and chivalrous bearing, commanding the fullest confidence of his people, a tower of strength to his friends and a terror to his foes."

Brant's conduct at the battle of Newtown is thus eulogized by the same writer:

"Such was the commanding presence of the great Indian Captain and such the degree of confidence he inspired, that his undisciplined warriors stood their ground like veterans for more than half an hour, as the shot went crashing through the tree tops or plowing up the earth under their feet, and shells went screeching over their heads, or bursting in their ranks, while high above the roar of the artillery and the rattle of small arms, could be heard the voice of Brant, encouraging his men for the conflict, and over the heads of all, his crested plume could be seen waving where the contest was likely to be most sharp."

Brant's personal appearance was described by Jeremiah Snyder, who saw him at Niagara in 1780, as "good-looking, of fierce aspect, tall and rather spare, well spoken, apparently about thirty years of age. [He was in fact thirty-eight]. He wore moccasins elegantly trimmed with beads, leggings and a breechcloth of superfine blue, a short green coat, with two silver epaulets, and a small, round, laced hat. By

his side was an elegant silver-mounted cutlass; and his blanket of blue cloth (purposely dropped in the chair on which he sat to display his epaulets) was gorgeously adorned with a border of red. His language was very insulting, asking many questions.”*

The capture of Alexander Harper and seventeen others at Harpersfield and Stamford by Brant and nineteen Indians and Tories on April 7, 1780, was an early opening of the spring campaign after the destruction wrought by Sullivan, and has been the basis of much fabulous literature. The story was first told by Josiah Priest prior to 1830, as the narrative of Freegift Patchin, one of the captured, a fifer during the war, a resident of Harpersfield in 1790, but a member of Assembly from Schoharie County in 1804-5 and 1820-22, and who then resided in Blenheim, where he died in 1830. Priest was a coach painter in Albany, and became an itinerant spectacle and nostrum peddler, during which time he wrote, published and sold many highly colored narratives of Indian captivities, all notoriously garbled and inaccurate. A feature of his account of the capture of Harper and associates is a lie allegedly told and repeated by Harper to Brant that the forts at Schoharie were well manned when in truth they were much undermanned and could easily have been taken by Brant, whereby, the inference was, the lives of Harper and his companions and of many women and children at Schoharie were saved. Priest exalted this alleged lie into a virtue entitling Harper to eternal renown.

Alexander Harper was one of the Harper brothers, founders of Harpersfield. His wife was daughter of John Bartholomew, neighbor of Christopher Servoss on the Charlotte River. He was the deceptive examiner of Harmanus Dumond at Pakatakan in August, 1778, and was the brother of Mary Moore, captured by Brant and Butler with her three grown daughters at Cherry Valley November 11, 1778. Jane Moore, one of these daughters, was married to a Captain Powell of the British Army at Niagara the spring of 1780, and Brant at the same time and place was married by the English marriage service to the half-breed Indian girl,* daughter of George Croghan, who had been his

* Joseph Brant, otherwise Brant's Joseph (*Thayendanegea*), a Mohawk Indian, born 1742, died 1807; resided at Canajoharie prior to Revolution; was a brother of Mary Brant, the "prudent and faithful housekeeper" of Sir William Johnson, and mother of eight of his Indian children; he was educated at Dr. Wheelock's school at Lebanon, Conn., a member of the Episcopal Church and a translator of parts of the Bible and Prayer Book into the Mohawk tongue. John Fiske said he was "perhaps the greatest Indian of whom we have any knowledge." A grand-daughter of Brant was killed in a train collision at Deposit in 1852, in what was described as "One of the most reckless and careless transactions on any road."

* Sister of Susannah, wife of Augustine Prevost.

wife by Indian custom for several years. Brant was well acquainted with Harper and his family and had many personal and politic reasons for preserving his life.

Prior to April 8th, General TenBroeck, then in command of the militia of Tryon County, had ordered 200 of his brigade into the forts at Schoharie, but none had arrived by April 12th. In the meantime Colonel Vrooman had enough men in the three forts to maintain the same and to keep scouts constantly out. Harper's party of fourteen men was one of these scouts, and had been sent out about April 1st to watch disaffected persons in Harpersfield, Kortright and on the Delaware, and at the same time to make maple sugar in the woods of Harpersfield.

Sometime in the fall or winter of 1779-80, perhaps to capitalize upon the despair supposed to have been created by the Sullivan Expedition, the Americans had sent Abram and Johannis Kryn to Niagara under a flag of truce to negotiate terms of peace, and these emissaries had not yet returned in April, 1780.

In the situation outlined, Brant left Niagara with thirty Indians and Tories. At Oquaga he detached eleven Indians and sent them to Minisink. With the remainder of his party, fourteen Indians and five white men, Brant appeared in the woods of Harpersfield about 2 o'clock in the afternoon of Friday, April 7, 1780. Harper's party were engaged in the dispersed activities of a sugar camp; none were armed, and all were surprised, as until the Indians appeared among them they had no idea that there were Indians nearer than Niagara. Indians appeared at the same instant beside men at work in different parts of the woods. Three sugar makers attempted to fight or flee and were cut down by the tomahawks of the Indians. Those killed were James Stevens, Thomas Hendry and James Hendry. Those captured without resistance in the sugar bush were Alexander Harper, Freegift Patchin, Isaac Patchin, John Hendry, William Lamb, his son, William Lamb Jr., Ezra Thorp, Daniel Thorp, Cornelius Teabout, William Turnbull and Walter Elliot. A day or two later on Town Brook, David Brown and his three sons, John, Solomon and one called Doctor* Brown, in a subsequent list of prisoners, were taken. Those killed and taken in the sugar bush amounted in all to fourteen persons, five less than their captors. The prisoners taken in Harpersfield were bound and held in a log pen during the night. The next day they were loaded with the plunder of the camp and started down the Delaware. At a mill, the location of which is disputed, Brant lingered two days; two letters were written from here, and one of the prisoners was sent with them to Scho-

* "Doctor" was a proper name in the Brown family in Connecticut.

harie. At this mill Brant secured a quantity of shelled corn, which was divided and added to the packs of the prisoners. Priest's account of what occurred at this mill reads:

"I shall never forget the cruelty of three or four daughters of this man [the mill owner], whose name I forbear to mention, out of pity to his descendants. These *girls* insisted that they had better kill us *then*, for if, by any means, we should ever get back, their own lives would be taken by the Whigs; their father also observed to Brant that he had better have taken more scalps and less prisoners. When we were ready to proceed again, the miller gave Brant about three bushels of shelled corn, which was divided into eleven equal parts and put upon our backs, already too heavily burdened." [The Patchin narrative here omits Brown's sons and also Elliot who was sent with letters to Schoharie, about which the narrative says nothing].

Simms says that this mill was that of Hugh Alexander, who had a mill at Bloomville in 1778, and Jay Gould says it was the mill of James Calder, about a mile below Bloomville, designated as "Will's Mill" on Gray's map of 1778. James Calder owned the latter mill in and after 1800, but his eldest daughter, who married Francis O'Connor and was the mother of Edward O'Connor of Anti-Rent fame, was but two years old in 1780, and so Calder, even if he then lived on the Delaware (which is highly improbable as his name does not appear in the 1790 Census), could not have had the bloodthirsty *girls* mentioned by Priest. It is not known whether Hugh Alexander had such daughters or not, as he disappeared from the area prior to 1790.

David Brown, said by Priest to have been "a very old man," and whose adult sons are called grandsons to give emphasis to his age, was unwilling or unable to proceed with his captors, and was tomahawked and scalped near the mouth of Peake's Brook. This happened merely upon Brown's request that he be permitted to return, according to Priest, who says;

"He was now taken to the rear of the party, and left in the care of an Indian, whose face was painted entirely black, as a token of his office which was to kill and scalp any of the prisoners who might give out on the way. In a short time the Indian came on again with the bald scalp of the old man dangling at the end of his gun, hitched in between the ramrod and the muzzle."

Inasmuch as human bones were found by settlers at this point, the story that Brown was killed here is probably true. It is corroborated also by the narrative of Jeremiah Snyder, who was in the Bevot prison at Montreal in 1781, when a drunken Indian, calling himself a "Yankee," was thrust in among them, and Snyder says, "he came near being killed by a man named Brown, whose father had been murdered by Indians in Harpersfield." All of Brant's prisoners were taken to Niagara and thence to Montreal. Harper, in 1790, and Freegift Patchin, in 1813, were reimbursed by the State for lost military pay while they were

prisoners, as stated in the acts of reimbursement, from April 7, 1780, to November 28, 1782.

Priest's story is full of whirling tomahawks, "the snake eyes of Brant," his rattlesnake soup, the Indian painted black who stalked nemesis-like behind the toiling column of over-laden prisoners to dispatch any who fell by the way, and of the bleeding hearts, groans and tears of the captives. But he gloats most of all upon the perfect sincerity with which Harper lied about the troops at Schoharie, and the divine deliverance which flowed from that lie. He asserts also that Brant had 43 Indians and 7 Tories in his party.

Harper and his sugar-makers were taken on April 7th. On April 12th, Walter Elliot appeared at Schoharie as the bearer of two letters, one from Harper to his wife, dated Delaware, 8th of April, 1780, and one from Brant, written "in Indian," dated Delaware, April 10th, 1780. Elliot told Colonel Vrooman that "on Friday, the 7th of April, a party of Indians commanded by Joseph Brandt, 19 white Men and Indians, came to Harpers Field, . . . and killed three and took Captain Harper and Eleven More Prisoners, and said Walter Elliot was taken and kept almost four Days and three Nights." He gave the names of those taken and killed, but omits Teabout and Daniel Thorp. He said also that Brant's party informed him "that the Flag that was sent to Niagara would be detained Prisoners there till their Return," — that is, until the return to Niagara of Brant's party. Elliot names the five white men with Brant as "Hendrick Nellis, Archibald Thompson, Benjamin Begraft, William Smith and Henry Huffson." Colonel Vrooman reported that he was not informed of the capture for six days, "altho they Remained amongst them three days Making Canoes." Elliot's statement does not say canoes were made, and if there is any truth in Priest's story, none were made. It is apparent, however, that the party remained about the mill during two or three days, while the letters of April 8th and 10th were written, during which time it is probable that Brown and his sons were taken. Vrooman also says that "David Brown's Wife has sent word to me to fetch her out as soon as possible for she had nothing to live upon save a half a Schipple of Indian Meal, which was brought her by a Neighbour and has five Children to support."

Harper's letter to his wife reads:

"Delaware, 8th of April 1780.

"My Dear, by this you may know that I am Prisoner: and I am very glad that I am fallen into their hands that has me, seeing that it is my lott to be taken Prisoner, (to Witt Capt. Brant and Lieut. Johnson;) who used me and all them that is taken along with me exceeding well, and as for them that was kill'd there is no accounting for it; And as for Stephen's being kill'd at Walter Eliott's, I wou'd not have you look

the worse on him, for it, for he has suffer'd a great deal of loss, and has very near, sheared the same fate: And I wou'd not have you to revenge it upon the place at all, for I think the [y] new nothing of the party; And I hope that you will spare no pains nor cost, but apply immediate to the Governor, for an immediate Exchange, for I have been talking to Capt. Brant about an Exchange who says it can easily be obtained, and that it is the falt of the Country and none of theirs if it is not. And as for my advice to you, I cannot give any; you must try to do the best you can. I will ad no more; only remain your loving Husband; likewise give my love to all my Friends & to Father and mother. You must shew this immediately to the Comanding officer.

Alexander Harper."

The following was added to this letter when it was sent to Governor Clinton. "N. B. The above letter was wrote by one of those Disaffected Persons in Harpers Field in Presence of Brant. Peter Vroman." This is apparently erroneous, as there seems no doubt of the letter having been written by Harper: whether of his own accord or not may be another story.

We may now compare Harper's letter with that of Brant, written "in Indian," as translated and published in *The Old New York Frontier*, by Francis W. Halsey (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1917):

Delaware, April 10th 1780.

"That your Bostonians (alias Americans) may be certified of my conduct towards all those whom I have captured in these parts, know that I have taken off with me but a small number. Many have I released. Neither were the weak and helpless subjected to death, for it is a shame to destroy those who are defenceless. This has been uniformly my conduct during the war. These being my sentiments you have exceedingly angered me by threatening or distressing those who may be considered as prisoners. Ye are (or once were) brave men. I shall certainly destroy without distinction, does the like conduct take place in future."

Brant seems to have forgotten the sentiments expressed in this letter when he caused or permitted David Brown to be tomahawked at the mouth of Peake's Brook; an act directly falsifying his letter, if Priest's account is true. But Priest's account is probably untrue in this as in so many other things, so far as it leaves Brant open to the charge of complicity in the murder of Brown. With nineteen men leading fourteen able bodied prisoners, in view of the Sawyer and Cowley experience, it is likely that short work was made of attempts at escape. While Priest represents Brown as merely asking for his release, it is possible that Brown made some demonstration which the Indian with the tomahawk quieted quickly. The situation was not one for argument, and Brant's record, otherwise clean, should not be besmirtched by unnecessary confidence in Priest's account.

The reference in the examination of Walter Elliot to "the Flag that was sent to Niagara," has a notation by Governor Clinton that "Mr. Holt," a newspaper publisher, "can publish such extracts of the

aforego'g as he may think proper (except the latter Paragraph as far as it respects the Detention of the Flag, which for certain Reasons had better not be published)." On April 15, 1780, Senator Abraham Yates, Jr., the "Rough Hewer," wrote a letter to Clinton in which he says that the accounts from Harpersfield "Indicate No Peace (Abram & Johannis Kryn not yet Returned) but on the contrary Treatten a desultory campaign." Again, on April 18th Senator Yates wrote:

"I don't know how we are to understand these early exertions of the enemy: I suppose you have heard that Joseph Brant (who was Head of one of the Parties) has Discharged one of his Prisonners by Whom he sent a Letter (I have not seen the Translation). Purporting that he has used his Prisonners well, and he has heard we have not used some of ours so, that for the future unless we use ours well he will ill use his, and make no Distinction of age or sex; the man says also (this I have of Judge Dow) that Brant told him that Ab'm and Han Kryn (that were last fall or winter sent by the Commissioners to negotiate Peace) Should not return until he now arrived at Niagara.

If Mr. DeWit (who managed at the Treaty of Breda) was with them, I would suppose that the Negotiations of Peace were Protracted in order by these Previous steps to Convince us that Peace is as necessary to us as to them, as well to get more Reasonable Terms as to make the Peace (if Concluded) more lasting."

What was this peace mission sent to Niagara? And who were Abram and Johannis Kryn? One gets no light on these questions in available New York History, and certainly the Clinton Papers throw no light on the subject. It is apparent, however, that Brant was dealing in statecraft which had other aims than an attack by nineteen men armed with tomahawks and muskets on the three forts at Schoharie. These forts in 1780 had been occupied for three years by considerable bodies of American troops and must have been well fortified. However ill manned in April, 1780, Brant was not so foolhardy as to suppose that nineteen men, or even fifty men, armed as were his, could make any impression on these forts. It seems manifest that the exalted lie for which he praises Harper so highly was but a figment of Priest's own disordered imagination, whatever Freegift Patchin may have said about it. Walter Elliot was a person accepted by the Commissioners of Conspiracies in 1778 as bail for some of those sent to Albany as disaffected. One disaffected person could hardly be accepted as bail for another. Freegift Patchin told of Brant's numbers forty years after the event, and as fourteen men, of whom he and his brother were two, were killed or captured by Brant, may have had some motive to exaggerate. Walter Elliot told of them four days after he saw them, and had no conceivable motive to reduce the true number. Having in mind Brant's peculiar relation to Harper and the strong influence of women in Indian politics, the presence of American peace delegates at Niagara, and the small number of his own party, it seems manifest that Brant felt it the height of good fortune to have captured Harper,

and had no motive whatever to go on and attack the Schoharie forts. With the craft of the Indian, Brant says nothing of the peace mission in his letter, but drops remarks that permit Elliot to mention it to the bewilderment of Yates and perhaps of Clinton, — and certainly of present day readers.

Harper says that one of his captors was Lieut. Johnson, obviously an Indian, as Elliot mentions no white man by that name. But Johnson was a common Indian name in the Revolution. At the time of his death in 1774, the woods were full of Sir William Johnson's Indian children, and several Indians calling themselves Johnson are mentioned in the Clinton Papers.

It is perhaps probable that St. Ledger Cowley had the mill below Bloomville in 1778, despite Gray's designation of it as "Will's Mill," but not in April, 1780. The story of the ferocious daughters in Priest's version of Patchin's narrative of his capture is probably pure fabrication by Priest, whose real reason for concealing the name of the mill owner was that he did not want to be caught up on his fiction. As will subsequently appear, the upland at that point was in possession of a "Mr. Will," when the River Road was laid out in 1788, which gives substance to the designation on Gray's map of 1778. A third possible mill to which Brant might have resorted was that of Hugh Rose near the mouth of Rose's Brook. The true location and ownership of the mill where Brant lingered for two days and wrote his "Indian" letter and got his corn in 1780 is perhaps past solution.

The last known episode of the Revolution affecting what is now Delaware County occurred in June, 1780. On June 13, 1780, William Bouck, an elderly man, the first white child born in Schoharie, went from the Upper Fort to secure his crops, "taking with him a girl named Nancy Lattimore, a female slave, and her three children." That night Seth's Henry and three other Indians took them prisoners and marched them seven or eight miles, when they encamped. The march was resumed the next morning before daylight, and that night they reached the house of Hugh Rose on Rose's Brook near South Kortright. Rose made johnny-cake for the Indians, which they shared with the prisoners. He also gave them provisions to subsist upon part of the way to Niagara, and they left his house at 8 o'clock the next morning.

Bouck's son and companions, including two Haggledorns, came in pursuit of the Indians, and inquired of Rose if there were any in the vicinity. "Yes," said Rose, "the woods are full of them." Bouck asked in what direction those at his house had gone, and Rose told him. Simms says, "instead of sending them from, he directed them towards the enemy," — the implication being that only a "disaffected" person would direct a militiaman toward an Indian who had the militiaman's

father in custody. The Indians, on a rise of ground back of Rose's house, heard the scout approaching and leveled their rifles. Nancy waved her bonnet and warned the scout, which turned and fled. The Indians fired and wounded John Haggdorn, and sent a ball through Bouck's necktie. The scout with its wounded man returned to Rose's house, where Haggdorn was left. Presently another scout of twenty men appeared. In the meantime the Indians had gone further up the mountain, where they were mending their moccasins as this scout approached. This time the Indians were surprised and fled with a whoop, abandoning their prisoners.

On June 14, 1780, Col. Peter Vrooman wrote from the Middle Fort to General TenBroeck:

"D'r Genl. This morning I am informed a party of Indians came to the House of William Bouck, two miles above the Upper Fort; took him, a young woman and four Blacks Prisoners; they were seen at Hendrick Mattices in the Breackebreen this morning. Lieut. Harper and Lieut. Vroman with Forty Men are in pursuit of them; expect I will be able to give you a better account by to morrow."

On June 17, 1780, Colonel Vrooman again wrote to General TenBroeck:

"I have the pleasure to inform you that on the fifteenth in the morning the Party came up with the Savages who had taken Bouck Prisoner. They were sitting on a Cliff of Rocks mending their Shoes, when the Party first perceived them, who were then within twenty yards of them unperceived by the enemy, but had no Chance to fire on them because they were all mixed together; immediately on their discovering our Party, they all jump'd down the Rocks and made their escape, but left behind them every thing but their arms. Four of the Party fell in with the Enemy about half an hour before they retook the Prisoners; they were lying behind a Logg Fence, when our Party comeing out of the House where they were sent for Provisions, the Enemy fired on them, and wounded one man."

Simms calls Hugh Rose a tory. Rose came from Scotland before the Revolution, and was doubtless a brother of James and William Rose, who came in 1773, and who joined the British. What his sympathies were no where clearly appears. He settled on Rose's Brook and gave that stream its name. He built a log saw and grist mill near the mouth of the stream, and this is said to have been the first mill in the locality. Hugh Rose was a justice of the peace and judge of the Court of Common Pleas, and died November 7, 1824, aged 84 years and 9 months. So far as appears he was the only settler on the West Branch of the Delaware to continue there throughout the Revolution. This may suggest that Brant and his Indians had no reason to drive him out or to take him a prisoner to Niagara. Whether his mill was the first or not, it was not the only mill in 1778, as Gray's map shows Alexander's grist mill on Wright's Brook at Bloomville, and "Will's Mill" on the river below Bloomville.