Bicentennial Celebration of the Settlement of the Neversink Valley

The following paper was delivered at the bicentennial celebration of the settlement of the Neversink Valley on July 22, 1890, held by the Society at Caudebec Park in Cuddebackville, New York by the first President of the Society, the Reverend Samuel W. Mills. The second half of the speech will be included in the June newsletter.

Members of the Minisink Valley Historical Society and all, who are here present, I extend to you in the name of the Society a cordial greeting. To the resident members and to those who have come to us from a distance; to those who participate in these exercises or seek in any way to give interest to this occasion; to the wives and daughters of the members present, as well as to all who are here assembled, I give a hearty, joyous welcome. Welcome, too, most welcome to us all is the bright sunshine and the pure invigorating air of this gladsome day.

This second, semi-annual celebration by our Society brings us together again in this beautiful grove, which a year ago at the request of its owner we dedicated by the appropriate and historic name of Caudebec Park, under circumstances of more than ordinary interest. The day itself is one that should ever be held in remembrance by the people of this valley and of the whole surrounding country.

It was on the 22nd of July, more than a century ago that a most fierce and terrible conflict was waged between the defenders of their homes in this valley and their savage invaders - a conflict in which not only those inhabiting the valley whose dwellings, church, and other buildings, twenty-one in all, were burned, participated, but their neighbors across the mountain and lower down along the Delaware, making common cause with them, rallied to their aid to overtake and if possible, exterminate the murderous band that had caused so much suffering and woe.

The battle that followed, and which was fought some twenty miles west from the place where we are now assembled, was one which, while disastrous to our country's independence. Possibly some of these may be related in your hearing to-day. We do well to commemorate the 22nd of July 1779, and to recall the deeds of noble daring then performed and to hand them down to coming generations that those who come after us may learn something of the costly price paid by their forefathers in treasure, blood, and long privation and suffering to secure the liberties which they enjoy. Every one in the beautiful valleys of the Minisink country, or of its surrounding mountains and hills, or wherever their lot may be cast in whose veins flows the blood of the men who engaged in the strife of that hot July day, may well have a just and honest pride in the deeds of their ancestors and may tell them to their children and their children's children.

Another interest, however, attaches to our gathering at this time. We commemorate today an event which took place long anterior to these scenes of strife and blood -- one in which peaceful men came quietly and peaceably seeking in a just and honorable way for themselves, a home in this beautiful valley, one of the fairest and loveliest upon which the sun shines. Just when the white man first set foot upon the soil here, we cannot say positively.

We are inclined to the belief that as early as 1659 or 1660 the Hollanders had traveled over this entire valley and had constructed what has been called the Old Mine Road leading from Esopus or Kingston on the Hudson through Rondout and Mamakating valleys, on through this valley of the Neversink, and down the Delaware to the copper mines of Pahaquarry, in Warren County, New Jersey, this side of the Delaware Water Gap. This is not the time, neither is it the place to give the reasons for what some have disputed. (In the Albany Records under date of April 25th, 1659 is an entry relating to the copper mine at the Minisink.* (see note below)

But assuming that such a road had been constructed and used as has been claimed, it was for a special purpose and its use ceased when the control of the country passed from the Dutch to the English in 1664. No permanent settlements resulted from it except perhaps at its terminus at the mines.

The first settlement we have reason to believe was two-hundred years ago in 1690. Mr. Gumaer in his
History of Deerpark gives this as the year, and assigns, as we think, good reasons for the statement. It is certain that a patent for 1,200 acres was granted to the first seven settlers October 14th, 1697. Petitions addressed to the Colonial government asking to be protected in their title of about the same date on record at Albany, confirm this view. Mr. Gumaer says the first settlers were here occupying their land for some years before Jacob Codebec, one of their number, was sent to the Governor of the New York colony to procure a patent. This bears out his statement as to the year of settlement, and when his character for truthfulness, accuracy, and candor are considered, and his opportunities for obtaining information, and pains taken to seek it, we are disposed to believe that 1690 was the year of their location.

These settlers were seven in number; Jacob Codebec, Thomas Swartwout, Anthony Swartwout, Bernardus Swartwout, Jan Tys, Peter Guimar, and David Jamison. The spot upon which they located was a little over a mile south of where we are now assembled, across the flats each from the house now occupied by Cornelius Caskey and around a small hill which may be seen there. The site selected by the first seven settlers was called Peenpack, which was the name given to the district extending from Cuddebackville to Huguenot and by which it was known until a comparatively recent date.

About this same year, it is probable, one William Titsoort, a blacksmith, located in this same valley a little farther south, about one mile from Port Jervis. Titsoort had been driven out of Schenectady by the fearful massacre there in 1689, barely escaping with his life to Esopus, where he had friends, and being known to the friendly Indians, he was invited by them to take up his residence in the Minisink country. They voluntarily granted to him a tract of land "situate and being at Maghaghemek, known by the name of Schaikackamick in an elbow". **(see note below)** This description would seem to locate it about where the late Simon Westfall lived, including probably the property now owned and occupied by Benjamin Van Fleet. Titsoort obtained license to purchase October 15, 1698 and did so purchase. After remaining here some years, he sold to Jan Decker two parcels of land in 1713 and moved to Dutchess County.

About twenty years after the first settlers located here, others came to the valley and settled a few miles farther south and nearer Port Jervis, in what was called the Lower Neighborhood, extending from Huguenot to Port Jervis, and on both sides of the Neversink. These were all Hollanders or of Holland descent, coming here directly from Ulster County. From these two settlements the Delaware Valley below Port Jervis became settled as well as portions of Sussex County, New Jersey, in the Clove and at Deckertown, a large portion of whose inhabitants are of Holland or Huguenot descent.

It was no light undertaking at that time to come to a country such as this. It required a resolution and courage and energy equal to what is now required to go to Oregon, or even to Alaska to settle. This whole valley for forty miles in either direction from this point was an unbroken wilderness inhabited by wild beasts and through which the red man roamed unrestrained. No dwelling for civilized man was to be found in all its length and breadth and for many long miles in any direction -- not even a log cabin --nothing but the wigwam of the Indian was to be seen.

*See History of Wayne, Pike, and Monroe Counties published in 1886, p. 11. (back to this note in the text)*

**The bend in the Neversink River at that point. (back to this note in the text)**

The first half of the following speech appeared in our April newsletter. The following paper was delivered at the bicentennial celebration of the settlement of the Neversink Valley on July 22, 1890. The celebration was held by the Society at Caudefbec Park in Cuddebackville, New York by the first President of the Society, the Reverend Samuel W. Mills.

Of the first seven whose names appear in the Codebec and Guimar patent, all but one were Huguenots and Hollanders. Jamison was a Scotchman who, it seems, never settled permanently in the valley, since from 1697 to 1714 he served either as vestryman or warden in Trinity church, New York. He probably joined with the others in the purchase for speculative purposes but did not remain nor ever locate here.

Codebec and Guimar were Huguenots who were driven out of France by the persecution, which followed the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, by Louis XIV. By this inhuman and despotic measure 500,000 of the best, most intelligent, moral and industrious citizens of France were driven out of the country; 400,000 perished by hunger, fatigue, cold and the suffering inflicted in one form or other by their bloody persecutors; sixty millions of francs in specie were lost to her, as well as her most flourishing manufacturers. The people fled to England, to Switzerland, to Holland, to Prussia, to Denmark, to Sweden and to America.

Many of the best and most honored names in our country are those of persons who at this time fled here for refuge where they could have freedom to worship God and enjoy the rights of conscience. They came to South Carolina, to Delaware, to Maryland, and Virginia, to New Jersey along the Hackensack and to Westchester and Ulster Counties in this state. The settlement at New Palitz in Ulster County was composed entirely of Huguenots. Their descendants now comprise almost the entire community.
Among those who left France at this time never to return to it, were Jacob Codebec and Peter Guimar. Going at first to Holland or England they came at length to Maryland, and after a short stay there, to this state and finally located in this valley, coming here from Ulster County. The families to which they belonged in France were in comfortable circumstances. They could have retained all their possessions and lived in peace and quietness had they but renounced their faith and embraced Romanism.

They chose, however, to forsake all, home, country, kindred, and worldly substance rather than to give up their religion. They fled, or one of them at least, with their persecutors in close pursuit, barely escaping with their lives. The others were Hollanders, coming themselves or immediately descended from those who came from a country in which, unlike France at that time, the rights of conscience and full religious liberty were enjoyed.

They came from a noble country and were descended from a noble race, from men who by their industry, their indomitable courage and perseverance and reclaimed large portions of their country from the dominion of the sea; and whose love of liberty was such that when besieged by their enemies, as their last resort, rather than submit to them, they opened the flood gates and caused the waters again to flow over the land, exclaiming, "Better a lost land than lost liberty." It was a country that for eighty years maintained a struggle against the armies of Spain, at that time the proudest and most powerful kingdom of Europe, and who triumphed over them; a country that fought, and that successfully, the battles of civil and religious liberty for the world; that was the first of modern nations to guaranty the rights of conscience in matters of religion; where the New England Pilgrims, when driven out by oppression from their own country, found shelter and protection for eleven years before coming to Plymouth Rock; a country in which two centuries before our own Declaration of Independence, its very principles had been boldly proclaimed; and where by the compact of Utrecht the seven provinces of the Netherlands were formed into a free government in 1579 with their motto, "Eendragt wakt macht, union makes strength, which is but another and even more expressive form of our own American motto,"E Pluribus Unum;" And where two years later, in 1581 their Declaration of Independence was promulgated in these memorable words, which rulers and politicians of every land would do well ever to bear in mind, "The people were not made for the prince, but the prince for the people who always have the right to depose him if he should oppress them." It was a country that had its free schools supported by the state as recommended by John of Nassau, brother of William of Orange; and which the New England Pilgrims found in existence while in Holland, and which they brought with them to Plymouth Rock and here established as one of the glories of our country; a country that had its universities "whose doors were open to students of all creeds and nationalities at a time when all other seats of learning were closed to those who denied their dogmas in religion or did not commune with their Church. Free thought, free speech, inquiry, discussion, and the open Bible were unknown except in this little corner of Europe which its indomitable people had rescued from the sea; and waged perpetual battle with the ocean to keep."

It is from races such as these, Huguenots and Hollanders, men who loved liberty, both civil and religious, and who endured untold sufferings and sacrifices for its maintenance that the first settlers of this valley descended. We do well to recall this day their history, to remind ourselves and others of all that was noble and excellent in them. We honor, and that justly, the New England Pilgrims who for conscience sake crossed the ocean in the wintry month of December and landed at Plymouth Rock. They have never wanted for those to celebrate their deeds and virtues in prose and verse, in eloquence and song. Without detracting one iota from all that is due to them, we claim for the Huguenots and the Hollander equal honor and praise for all that they have done and endured in the cause of human liberty, but whose modesty in speaking of themselves has been such that the world has never yet learned how much it is indebted to them.

Ye descendants of the Huguenot and the Hollander, here and elsewhere, hold in high honor and esteem the races from which you have sprung. Cherish the memory of your ancestors. Let their religious principles and their love of liberty be deeply engraved on your minds and hearts. Imitate the virtues, which they practiced and count them a possession more priceless and enduring than any worldly substance inherited from them.

Bibliography - A ◆ designates that the book is available for purchase in our Gift Shop.
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Early Dutch Explorations into the Minisink Region
by Mead Stapler

During the years 1611 thru 1614, Capt. Adriaen Block in company with Captains Hendrick Christiansen and Cornelius Hendricksen extensively explored the area of eastern North America claimed by the Dutch as New Netherland. This area, based upon the 1609 voyage of Captain Henry Hudson and his search for the elusive Northwest Passage, was defined as between the latitudes of 38 and 41 north, or roughly between Delaware Bay and Cape Cod (deLaet 1625:36). These three sea captains and their crews, in individual vessels, carefully explored and charted the coast line and into the interior of the country via the Delaware, Hudson and Connecticut Rivers.

The potential of the region for commercial exploitation of its resources, and particularly the rich fur trade with the natives, was carefully noted and fortified trading posts were established at present Albany and Manhattan Island. One of the most-historically important results of this exploration was the so-called "Figurative Map Of Capt. Adriaen Block"(Williamson 1959:8). This map details the area of the 1611 - 1614 explorations plus the collective knowledge of the time. It was published after the return of Capt Block to Amsterdam in July of 1614.

On October 11, 1614 this map was part of a petition presented to the States General of the Dutch Republic by Block, Christiansen and twelve other Dutch merchants for a charter of trading privileges for their newly formed United New Netherland Company. The three year exclusive trading charter that was granted on this date specifically references the "Figurative Map" and accepts its first historic mention of the area as "Niew Nederlandt" (Williamson 1959:9).

This map is also amazingly accurate, considering the limitations of the available survey and navigational instrumentation of the time. The details not only of the coastline but to a considerable depth into the interior of the country is indicative of early activities of which we have very little detailed knowledge or appreciation of today. It can be safely assumed that the information imparted by this map not only details the discoveries of Block, Christiansen and Hendricksen but includes the accumulated knowledge of the time.

Cartography had become a major industry in Holland by the late 16th century as an essential service to the large and far ranging Dutch merchant fleet (Quinn 1977:559). Some details for the "Figurative Map" could also have been obtained from the logs of Henry Hudson, 1609, his correspondent Capt. John Smith (Quinn 1977:380), the fur trading voyage of Capt. Van Campen in 1610 (Williamson 1959:2), or even the visit to the North (Hudson) and South (Delaware) Rivers by the Dutch Greenland Company in 1598 (Scull 1790). But much valuable information on these early Dutch voyages was lost to us when many of the records of the Dutch West India Company were wantonly sold for waste in 1821 (Weslager 1961:43).

Any location on the planet earth can be located by knowing its latitude and longitude. Longitude is the measure in degrees of the circumferal distance around our globe parallel to the equator. Latitude is the measure in degrees of the distance north or south of the equator to the poles. This system was devised by the Greek astronomer Ptolemy in 150 AD, but longitude was very difficult to measure prior to 1714 AD and the development of accurate time pieces (Bruton 1979:86).

Latitude, however, could be measured quite accurately since about 650 AD by means of an astrolabe or other device capable of measuring the angle of the sun at noon or the North Star at night. This angle was then compared to charts which had been developed for the various days of the year. An astrolabe in the hands of an experienced navigator could be read to better than degree, especially on land (de Champlain 1604:41). This represents an accuracy of plus or minus 15 nautical miles or 17 statute or English land miles.
Of utmost importance to the historical application of the "Figurative Map" is the scale of degrees latitude inscribed on the right hand or eastern border. This enables us to relate locations on Block's map with our modern day maps. Longitude is not noted, as any east-west directions were only estimates of distance and not definable at this time. There are two scales, however, one at the top and one at the bottom of the map, which appear to be scaled in ancient Dutch miles, each of which was equal to about four English miles (Weslager 1961: 266). This scale appears to agree with measured distances between known points on the map.

For the purposes of this paper however, we will relate to the more precise measurement of latitude. On the accompanying enlargement of the western portion of Block's map, we have also carefully moved his scale of latitude from the far eastern portion of the original. (The original 18 X 26 inch map, if reduced in its entirety to the size of this page would not be readable in the area of concern. (Block 1614).)

In order that you may verify the latitude measurements of Captain Block, you will note that he has plotted "Manhates" (Manhattan) Island exactly where it should be, at 40 45' north! Capt. Adriaen Block and his crew of the "Tiger" spent the winter of 1613-14 here. Here their vessel accidently burned and in the frigid cold they laboriously built the small 16 ton yacht, the "Onrust" (Restless) from the remains. Up the Hudson (North or Mauritius River to the Dutch) is shown another island, later called Castle Island. Here Capt. Hendrick Christiansen and his crew of the "Fortune" built a trading station, "Fort Nassau", on the site of a prior and little known French fort of 1540-41, 69 years before Henry Hudson "discovered" the river! (Fiske 1901 :106). This was at the present site of Albany and plots to the proper 4245'.

Directly to the west of Fort Nassau is the word "CANOMAKERS" in the headwaters of two river systems, the Susquehanna and the Delaware. An arrow has been added to the map to aid in locating this important term. The approximate perimeter of this area can be outlined today by the present Cooperstown, Binghamton and Deposit, New York and between 42 and 4245' latitude. The confusion of stream directions existed until the later part of the 16th century (Smith 1769:45). The village of the Canomakers is indicated as well as five other tribes and villages along the two river systems.

In 1625, Johan de Laet, a Director of the Dutch West India Company with a commercial interest in the New Netherland, published his book "The New World" (de Laet 1625:36). This book became so popular that it was republished three times, in 1630, 1633 and 1640. Johan de Laet writes a very detailed description of the new colony based upon the many reports, notes and maps that were available to him in his position of Director at the time.

One whole chapter, Chapter 11 (de Laet 1625:51), is devoted to a detailed description of a voyage south along the coast of present New Jersey, around Cape May, and up the South (Delaware) River. Among the features, he lists the "several Nations of Savages --" who dwell along the River. Twelve tribes are listed, the six of the "Figurative Map" plus another six additional. One of these tribes again is the Canomakers. Unlike the other tribes listed, this appellation is not of Indian origin but of Dutch! They were named for their unique craft and product, a bark canoe of distinct design.

The derivation of the term Canomaker (Canoe-maker) is in order at this point. According to Webster's Dictionary, the noun CANOE is a word based upon the earlier Spanish term CONOA which was first described by Columbus as a narrow and light boat of the Caribs, moved by paddles. It should be noted that at the time of our map, 1614, the Dutch were just breaking free of the Spanish yoke and all Dutchmen were of necessity fluent in Spanish as well as their native tongue.

This term canoe, with many variations in spelling, i.e., canowes, conoos, etc. can be found in the journals of many of the early visitors to North America, from the Englishman John Brereton in 1602 (Brereton 1602:336) to the extensive journals of the Frenchman Samuel Champlain, 1604-1618 (de Champlain 1605:66). It is thus a European term and not American Indian as some may wish to believe. To finalize; the noun MAKER is a person who makes. MAKE is from the Anglo-Saxon, MACIAN, and derived from the German, MACHEN.

As a reminder, there are other and more familiar examples of the American native tribes being renamed by the Europeans with whom they had contact. Some examples are the English appellation of Stockbridge, Black Feet, Flat Heads, Fox and Delaware and the French designation of Sioux, Apache and Nez Perce. Each name was based upon some trait, opinion or location of the people. The Spanish did the same in their southern areas of activity with Pueblo and Seminole. In most cases these new designations have been accepted by all, including the natives, and their original name is lost in time.

On July 10, 1719, John Reading, Jr. a West Jersey Commissioner participating in a survey of the controversial New York/New Jersey boundary, describes in his journal meeting with the Canomakers and their unique craft at Cusathunk, now Damascus, Pennsylvania (Reading 1719:104). Their village is just across the Delaware River from Station Point, the northwestern point of the Royal Charter for New Jersey at 4140' north latitude that this survey party was sent to establish. John Reading is intrigued by the unusual boat of these Indians and spends the good part of a day watching them build their distinctive bark canoes. Most other Indians of the region laboriously hollowed out tree trunks to create their vessels. A day or two later several of the other New Jersey surveyors hired these same people to transport themselves and their equipment back down the Delaware in these canoes to Mahackamack, now Port Jervis, New York.
Richard Smith, a wealthy Quaker and land speculator from Burlington, New Jersey kept a detailed journal of his journey in the Spring and Summer of 1769. He travels up the Hudson, west on the Mohawk, then down through Cherry Valley to the upper Susquehanna at present Cooperstown, to survey his holdings in the Otego Patent. Here, he employs the later famous Mohawk Chief, Joseph Brant. Brant is employed to build a canoe and guide Smith down the Susquehanna, then the Delaware, back to his home in Burlington. (Smith 1769:47)

Richard Smith describes the construction of the canoe as follows: "28th., (May) Sundays I had an Opportunity of inspecting the Bark Canoes often used by the Natives; these Boats are constructed of a single sheet of Bark stripped from the Elm, Hicory or Chesnut, 12 or 14 Feet long and 3 or 4 Feet broad and sharp at each End and these sewed with Thongs of the same Bark. In Lieu of a Gunnel they have a small Pole fastned with Thongs, sticks across & Ribs of Bark, and they deposit Sheets of Bark in her Bottom to prevent Breaches there. These vessels are very light, each broken and often patched with Pieces of Bark as well as corked with Oakum composed of pounded Barked.” It should be noted here that suitable birch for the traditional birch bark canoe was not available in this region or in general, not below northern New England

There are mixed opinions on the durability of these boats. John Reading, Jr. reported that they were hazardous for the surveyors and their equipment on the trip down to Mahackamack. They became snagged in the many rapids of the upper Delaware resulting in tears in the hull, water damage to the equipment, and much time lost in repairs. Richard Smith however, fifty years later, does not mention many problems in his much longer journey down the Susquehanna to Brant’s village of Oquaga, then the portage across to the Delaware below Deposit, and then down through the rapids and rapids to Burlington. Chief Joseph Brant, the builder of this vessel, may have done a better job of construction, as when finished, he not only carried Mr. Smith to Burlington but had enough confidence in his work to carry along his squaw and her new papoose on the long journey. We are not told what route or means took Joseph Brant and his little family back home but they obviously went up through the Minisink.

And in exactly ten years, July 1779, Col. Joseph Brant would be back in the Minisink at the head of a raiding party of Loyalists and Mohawks against the rebelling settlers on the frontier (Leslie 1976:51-61).

The longitudinal accuracy and correct placement of the Canomakers on Block’s "Figurative Map" could only be the work of a white man with the knowledge and instrumentation of a navigator and actually present at the location. It could not be the result of heresay or reports of the natives. There is very good evidence that this portion of the map is the result of a survey expedition by a Dutchman named Kleytjen and two companions from the crew of the "Fortune". In the Spring of 1614 they left the newly constructed Fort Nassau (Albany) and wandered southwest only to be conveniently "ransomed" as is reported, from the Maquaas (Mohawk) Indians several months later by Capt. Hendricksen in the yacht "Onrust" on the lower Delaware.

This event is referred to in notations in Dutch in the western area of the "Figurative Map"(Weslager 1961: 112-113). From this evidence it is only logical that these men would have followed the same trails as Richard Smith, only a century and a half earlier. They met the same Mohawk Canomakers and sailed down the Delaware, through the Minisink, to a pre-arranged meeting with Captain Hendricksen. The reported "ransom" being simply a compensation to the Canomakers for their service. This is supported by Johan deLaet eleven years later, 1625, who states that "some of our navigators are well acquainted with these rivers, which they have discovered and have visited for several years" (deLaet 1625:53).

It is interesting to note that, while most Indian tribes were considered to be nomadic and rarely are reported in one place over a period of time, here we have documentary proof that the Canomakers lived within one relatively small area for more than 150 years!

The story of the Canomakers is further proof of the very early and extensive explorations of the Dutch in their New Netherlands and fully supports their knowledge of the area and ability to have attempted the exploitation of copper mining in the Minisink between 1645 and 1659 (Decker 1942:7-9)(Stapler 1976:3-17) (Bertland 1975: 37-45). By 1646 the "frontier" of Indian trade by both the Dutch and the Swedish interlopers from their New Sweden on the lower Delaware (Weslager 1961:135), had already expanded their trading area as far west as Lake Erie (Printz 1647:123)!

Thus, well before 1664 and the English takeover of New Netherland, the Dutch had two generations to test the full commercial potential of their region in furs, minerals, etc. And this knowledge was well known to those who had a right and a reason to know. The lesser value of the region for settlement and farming would come later, awaiting the essential increase in population and the westward movement of the Indians (Bertrand 1975:47).

References

ASTROLABE

An early basic instrument for the determination of latitude, now superseded by the sextant. This drawing from a photograph of an astrolabe owned by the French explorer Samuel Champlain, is approximately half size. The original was made of brass in 1603 and graduated in thickness from 1/8 inch at the top to 3/8 inch at the bottom. It was held or suspended by the top ring and the added mass-at the bottom held it vertical. The movable arm is rotated until the noon sun or north star at night aligns with the slotted sights or eyelets. The angle is then read from the precisely engraved scale graduated to one degree.

This particular astrolabe has a unique history and is contemporary with our story. It was lost by the explorer about 60 miles northwest of present Ottawa, Ontario. The date was June 7, 1613, within days of Block and Christiansen's departure from Amsterdam. It was found by a farmer while plowing his field in 1867. It is now in the New York Historical Society. (Zabriskie 1942:3)

This paper was written by MVHS member Mead Stapler. Mr. Stapler is a retired aeronautical engineer with experience in the manufacture of industrial electronic instruments using his own patents. His main interest is in the pre-Columbian and Colonial Period in North America from 900 to 1800 AD. Stapler's varied activities in this area have included historic archaeology at Norse landing sites in Maine, publications and lectures on the Colonial and Revolutionary War period in the Pompton and Delaware valleys and 17 years as Editor of the North Jersey Highlander, a historical quarterly of the North Jersey Highlands Historical Society.

Mead and his wife Mary are active and generous members of our Society. Through their generosity
they have rebound more than 300 books at our library archives and Mary has overseen all of the interior redecorating at the Kleinstuber House and Fort Decker.

The Society extends its hearty appreciation to the Staplers for their dedication and generosity to our Society's programs and buildings.

Ancient Highways in Neversink Valley and Vicinity

SPEECH Given Before the Minisink Valley Historical Society

Dr. W. L. Cuddeback

February 7, 1889

Gentlemen: As twelve days is altogether too short a time to gather information on such a subject as this, I shall endeavor only to give a general idea of the highways of this region during the time previous to the building of the Canal in 1826. The development of a system of roads depends upon the development of the resources of a county, the growth of its population, and the most available market for its production.

A review of the history of this region shows that at different times, there have been marked changes in the development of its resources, in its relations with adjoining localities, and in its relations, one part with another.

We may consider the first period of development from the original settlement in 1697 when the only road was the lonely trail from Mackheckemack Valley forty miles to Kingston or Esopus to about the time of the Revolutionary War when roads began to be opened to other settlements east and north of the valley. During this time Esopus was the market.

The second period dates from this time to the building of the Delaware and Hudson Canal in 1826. Turnpikes and roads were built across the mountain and eastward. Newburgh was the great market for all production of this section. During this time Peenpack Flats were the most thickly settled section, although houses began to dot the entire valley.

A third period subsequent to these followed the building of the canal in 1826, when a home market developed for the products of the valley. The newly opened stores and canal offices were the centers of business and the direction of activity in trade in the valley seemed reversed in consequence of it.

Previous to all this, however, tradition gives us history of a thoroughly well worked highway, which if it ever existed must have been abandoned about forty years before the first settlers, as we know them, came to this valley.

The Old Mine Road. Tradition is so positive concerning this that it should be mentioned first. From a letter of Samuel Preston in 1828 this is taken. In 1787 John Lukens, Surveyor General of Pennsylvania, told him, Preston, the following: that in 1730 Lukens and another were sent by the state of Pennsylvania to explore the country about the Water Gap and Minisink Flats. They found the country all settled by Hollanders who were grandchildren of the original settlers there, and were told that when rivers were frozen, there was a good road to Esopus from the mine holes on the mine road.

This undoubtedly must have been the first good road in the United States.

In 1664 when the country came under English control, these Holland miners stopped their mining and left the country. This is the tradition. The exact location of this road through this part of the valley can only be conjectured; but it is thought by many that the road east of the Delaware through the ford at Carpenter's Pt. is the old mine road, passing up the valley crossing the Neversink at Cuddebackville, then down the valley to Kingston.

This highway was continued as the market road to Esopus for many years. Some writers think that the name Minisink originated with this tradition Min-e-sink. Quinlan doubts the truth of this tradition as in 1694 Capt. Arent Schuyler passed through the Minisink region, crossing the Neversink near what is now Port Jervis, and gave an account of his trip, stating that he learned from Indians that traders and trappers occasionally passed through here, but no allusion was made to any former white inhabitants.

The patent of 1697 embraced the flat land between what is now Huguenot and Cuddebackville. This was divided by patentees into narrow strips extending across the valley. These strips were owned by the different ones alternately as is shown by a map of that patent still in existence. Their houses were together on a knoll in the center of the flats. Here undoubtedly centered the first trails or paths and from here to Esopus undoubtedly was the first travelled road.
On May 11th, 1734 the freeholders of Peenpack petitioned the General Assembly of New York, that certain parties living below them out of the state in West Jersey and Pennsylvania be compelled to work on and assist in repairing the road to Esopus as it was much travelled by them.

In 1770 there was filed with the Clerk of Mamakating in Ulster County by its Commissioners of Highways, Jacob Dewitt, Benj. Depuy, and Samuel Gonzales, a certificate that they had laid out "a Kings Highway" from the line of Orange and Ulster to Bashe's Creek, giving exact location of it by actual survey. This was to be four roads wide, just double the width of ordinary roads; and from its name and width we may gain some idea of the travel upon it. One other "Kings Highway" is mentioned in the history of this country. This was one of the direct highways, the mail route, I think, from New York to Albany. This road probably extended from what is now Cuddebackville down the valley, and when we consider how large the area was from which the inhabitants must pass through this valley to market at Esopus, we will not wonder at the width and name given to this highway.

Sullivan County was then a part of Ulster. Small settlements dotted the Delaware Valley. People from all this region as far as Cochecton traveled on foot or horseback along mountain trails or in canoe down the Delaware to Peenpack and from here journeyed by road to Esopus. Peter Gumaer, town collector of Mamakating in 1792, collecting a town tax of $37.56, says, "The only road to Cochecton, forty miles, was a foot path through the woods," and he traveled this carrying provisions and horse feed in his knap sack because the houses were so few along the way.

By this time there must have been many families down the Delaware Valley. These, too, traveled to Esopus for market. What is now the River Road in New Jersey was probably a part of their main highway in the first half of the last century (may possibly have been the mine road). What is now Clove Road joined it at Carpenter’s Point. About the place of residence of H. O. Rosencrance*, a branch road, at a later date, extended along the brow of the hill, to about the Corner of Church and Main Streets, thence along present Main Street to the Canal bridge, thence circling around on the brow of the hill where George Maven** now lives, and thence to Germantown hill, etc. (present Main Street in that region was a marshy woods). This was the original of our Main Street.

Just below what is now Carpenter’s Point was the ford of the Neversink, coming out about one third of the way in the present Laurel Grove Cemetery. From there curving along the edge of the hill perhaps one hundred feet west of present Main Street to the present Fowler property*.

The road then extended up the valley nearly parallel to the river to a point nearly opposite the residence of Elting Cuddeback** thence to the west side of the Westfall hill***, along the west side of this hill, thence over the ridge in the rear of the residence of Benj. Van Fleet, thence to about the location of the present highway near the "Golding" spring, then, to what is now Huguenot, then, down on the flats, passing the old Swartwout stone house**** located about where Benj. Swartwout lives, thence across flats just east of a knoll called "Joshenberche" about half way to the river and parallel with it to near old Gumaer stone house, thence about to the present road to Cuddebackville, the ford of the Neversink, etc.

Where this main highway crossed "Old Dam Brock,"***** (now on lands of A. T. Johnson****** there was a grist mill. There are timbers well preserved yet in the bottom of the brook at this point, although our oldest residents have never seen the mill. About a quarter of a mile above this was an old stone house. The stones of this house, a very old one then, which was torn down in 1814 or 1815, were placed in the foundation of the house, now occupied by Elting Cuddeback, by his father in 1815. The depression in the ground, made by its cellar, is still quite marked. A little farther up the road, at the end of a lane where Elting Cuddeback* now lives was a small log house. The present Westfall stone house** was at the end of a lane. About midway between Benj. Van Fleet and the Golding spring was the log house of Nat Van Auken (lived later). There was another old stone house at Huguenot where Philip Swartwout lived later. On Peenpack Flats a stone house of Depuy was located. Above there was another stone house at the ford of the Neversink of Grandus Gumaer. From near there, at the end of a long lane on the hill was the old stone house of Benj. Cuddeback. (This still stands just south of Port Clinton***).

Fords of the river were numerous, especially in the latter part of this period and after the Revolution. Coming down the Neversink ford at "Swackamack" was the first crossing to a house on the east side of the river about opposite the Huguenot Spring House*. The next ford was at Peter D. Swartwout’s. This led to a road across the mountain at Shin Hollow and was one way of going to Mount Hope, This road still exists; although hardly ever traveled. It is now an excellent road. I have traveled it within a few years.

Another ford was at the A. J. Cuddeback farm, where George Cuddeback recently died** this led to a road east of the Neversink, not far from the old stone house of Major Decker*** and from there teams crossed the mountain to Smith’s Corners during the last of the century. This road is used now again quite extensively for the last few years in carting milk to the railroad.

The road east of the Neversink crossed the mountain, passing Major Decker’s stone house then through what is now Shin Hollow; thence to Mount Pope. Later, about the beginning of this century, many roads crossed the mountain.

Private organizations received charters to build turnpikes throughout the country. Had one third of the turnpikes been built that were chartered, there would have been cross-roads every two or three miles
In those days and even down as late as the first third of the present century, turnpike stock and bonds were as dealt in as much as, proportionally, as railroad stock now is at the present day.

The first turnpike chartered was the Newburgh and Cochecton turnpike in 1801. This crossed the valley at Wurtsboro. The Owego turnpike crossed the valley at Milford. The Carpenter’s Point and Goshen turnpike through Shin Hollow and Mount Pope, etc., above described, was the outlet for this vicinity, and a very familiar sight upon it was a long line, perhaps a quarter of a mile long, of weary teams going to and from Newburgh. The Goshen and Minisink turnpike was transferred to the Town of Deerpark in 1827 as far as from Carpenter’s Point Bridge to the town line.

The date of the change form the old Esopus road on the west side of Neversink to the present Kingston road must be about the time of the Revolutionary War, or soon after. It is said that the road along by "Westfall Hill" to Goolding Spring was changed at the request of the people living at the Westfall place. The road between Elting Cuddeback’s and the village was at first a common wood road to the woods passing up in the mountain about where the colored church is. Marks of this road are still visible above the canal. It was a road to the woods for the farmers and extended to where the Richard Elmendorf place is and thence on the hill back of it. It was much traveled by the neighbors even before it was connected with what is now Main Street by the present road.

These changes were made when our grandfathers were young, some of them, perhaps, before they were born. Probably the location of the road up the Neversink Valley above Huguenot was changed about the same time, but as yet I can get no trace of when this was done.

This, Gentlemen, is only an introduction to this subject. In 1784, there were six road districts in the town. In 1799 there were nineteen districts. The first actual surveys and delineations of roads to be found at the present time date in 1799. Perhaps old deeds which come into the possession of this Society may in future locate these highways more definitely. I think we, as a Society, should designate some one to map out and describe them fully.

### Revolutionary War Pension Application File for 2nd Lt. Martinus Decker

The pension application for Martinus Decker, the builder of the present-day structure known as Fort Decker is the most extensive seen by the editor. It numbers about 75 pages. The following materials are taken from the affidavits that were filed by his son John to collect a pension that was due him. The material was transcribed by member Romayne Bell and Joseph L. Perritte and generously donated to the Society. The final copy is identical to the materials that were submitted in the 19th century and reflect differences in spelling and grammar. In this day when we live in relative security it is interesting to remember what life was like on the frontier in the Minisink region during the American Revolution.

### Pension Application by John Decker for Service by Martinus Decker

On this sixth day of October 1840 personally appeared before the court of common please (sic) being a court of record in and for the County of Sussex and State of New Jersey John Decker a resident of the town of Wantage County of Sussex and state of New Jersey aged Seventy five years who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the provision of the act of Congress passed July the 4th 1836 and the act explanatory of said act passed March the 3d 1837: That he is the son of Martinus Decker who was the husband of Mary Penneton who afterwards was the wife of John Middaugh and who was a widow on the 4 day of July 1836 and who died on the third day of April 1840. He further declares that he is the only heir that he knows of living of Martinus Decker who was a Lieutenant in the militia of the County of Orange and State of New York. That Martinus Decker was chosen by the company of militia under the command of Capt. Moses Kortright and the Regiment commanded by Col. William Allison in the winter of 1776. Benjamin Thurston was Lieut. Colonel and John Decker Major. That as he has been informed and believes his father Martinus Decker was called out under Capt Kortright to Fort Montgomery in the month of May or June 1776 and served one month. This service was under Col. Allison (or?) Clinton.

That he has been informed and believes that the said Martinus Decker after the battle of Long Island was again called out to Fort Montgomery and along the Hudson River and to Ramapoa and Paramus and was out one month in the said service as a Lieutenant under Capt. Kortright and under Col. Allison. This was in August or September 1776. That in December of the said year Col Allison’s Regiment was called out in a body to a place called New City in the county of Orange near the Hudson River. Capt. Kortrights company was out with the rest of the Regiment and Martinus Decker was out as a Lieutenant in the said company and served with the rest of the Regiment at New City and other places along the Hudson River from in December 1776 until about the twenty fourth of January 1777 and was dis(sic) with the rest of the Regiment at the expiration of a service of Six weeks.

That in the spring of 1777 his father Martinus Decker was again called out to Tappan and other places.
Decker died without issue and that this deponent is the son of Martinus Decker and that the said Martinus Decker died on the 22nd day of February 1822 and that the said Mary Middaugh — formerly Mary Penneton — married to Martinus Decker.

That the widow of Martinus Decker was afterwards married on the fifth day of June — Eighteen hundred and sixty-eight by the Rev. W. Van Bunschoten in the town of Wantage & State of New Jersey and that to John Middaugh who died on the 22nd day of February 1822 and that the said Mary Middaugh remained a widow until her death which happened at the time before stated. That the said Mary Middaugh — formerly Mary Decker — died without issue and that this deponent is the son of Martinus Decker by his first wife and that he

along the frontier of New Jersey under he believes Capt. Jones and under Col. Allison or Cooper and served fifteen days. That in August 1777 Col. Allison’s Regiment was called out to Fort Montgomery and Capt. Kortright’s company went with the rest of the Regiment and Martinus Decker went as the second Lieutenant of Capt. Kortright and Capt. Wilhilimus Jones and served as a Lieutenant commandant for at least one week. In June 1778 Col. Seward of New Jersey had command along the Delaware frontier and served two weeks under Col. Pauling or Newkirk. In this service Lieutenant Decker was out two weeks as a Lieutenant. That on the 19th of July 1779 the Indians made a descent upon Minisink and destroyed the property of the Inhabitants by fire, the alarm was given and the militia was called out and followed the Indians to a place called Beaver brook. Capt. Kortright’s company was called out and Lieutenant Decker was out in the said company as a Lieutenant from the time the alarm was given until he was discharged. At least two weeks of this service was under & part of the time under Col. Hathorn and Justin and the rest of the time was in the Fort called Decker Fort.

That the Company of Capt. Kortright with Martinus as one of the Lieutenants went to Murderer’s Creek and joined with the rest of the Regiment at that place and followed the British up the River as far as Ban(sic) Bridge where a part of the men made a stand but he has understood and believes that Lieutenant Decker with a few choice men went as far as Kingston which before they reached it was burnt by the British who had retreated. That the said Lieutenant Decker was present when the spy was hung who was taken when on his way to meet Gen. Burgoyne. After he went to Kingston the company returned to New Windsor and after a service of one month Lieutenant Decker was discharged with the rest of the Regiment. This service was done under Lieut. Col. Thurston and Major John Decker. That in the Spring of 1778 the Indians began to make a formidable appearance on the western frontiers of Orange and Ulster Counties and threatened devastation to the whole frontier and the militia on the west side of the mountain was retained at home to guard along the said frontiers.

That the militia was classed(sic) into detachments - each detachment doing its duty in turn under the different officers of their respective companies. Capt. Kortright’s company was one of those along the frontier and was retained to guard along the Delaware and Neversink Rivers but the declarant is unable to state with accuracy the different times that Lieutenant Decker was out in service except the following upon alarms and after Spies. He has been informed and believes that in June 1778 the(y?) cam(?) down upon the frontiers in considerable force. Capt. Kortright’s company was called out to Martinus Deckers fort and served one week upon alarm and Lieutenant Decker served as a Lieutenant in the said Fort one week. Col. Newkirk or Pauling had command along the frontiers.

That sometime in the summer of 1780 and while Col. Seward of New Jersey had command along the Minisink frontier a report was circulated that their(sic) was Tories in the woods of Pennsylvania who assisted the Indians in committing their depredations upon the whites. Capt. Kuykendalls of the New Jersey Militia was ordered out with a detachment of men a part of which was taken from Capt. Kortright’s Company and Martinus Decker went and served as a Lieutenant in the said company in ferreting out the Tories at least one week. In the Spring of 1781 it was reported that Spies was(sic) in the neighborhood of the Minisink frontier. Lieutenant Decker was ordered out with a detachment of fifteen men to catch them. They Rendezvous(sic) at Levi Van Ettens and went to the Delaware crossed over to Pennsylvania and went through the woods to a place called Pond Eddy and across to the York side of the River and went up the River to a place called ten mile River where they caught two of the Spies named Robert Luscer and Edward Hicks. In this service Martinus Decker served as a Lieutenant commandant for at least one week. In June of the said year Capt. Kortright’s company was called out on alarm along the Delaware frontier and served three days in this alarm. Lieutenant Decker served three days as Lieutenant.

That in August or September 1782 the Indians made a decent upon the western frontier of Ulster County and burnt Warwasink. Capt. Kortright’s Company was again called out and went to Dewitts fort and served two weeks and at the expiration of the said term Martinus Decker went with the said company and served in the said company as a Lieutenant for the term of two weeks under Col. Pauling. He further states that from the nature of the war along the frontier and from personal knowledge of a part of the same he has no doubt but his father Martinus Decker served at least two years as a Lieutenant in the Militia of Orange County. He further declares that he served as the second Lieutenant of Capt. Kortright and Capt. Wilhilimus Westfall’s company during the whole of the war. He further declares that his father Martinus Decker was married to Mary Penneton on the 27th day of August Seventeen hundred and Sixty Eight by the Rev. Mr. Marinus and that the said Martinus Decker died on the 24th day of April Eighteen hundred and two. This deponent further saith that he is the son of Martinus Decker by a former wife.

That the widow of Martinus Decker was afterwards married on the fifth day of June — Eighteen Hundred and Six — by the Rev. W. Van Bunschoten in the town of Wantage & State of New Jersey and that to John Middaugh who died on the 22nd day of February 1822 and that the said Mary Middaugh remained a widow until her death which happened at the time before stated. That the said Mary Middaugh — formerly Mary Decker — died without issue and that this deponent is the son of Martinus Decker by his first wife and that he
is the only heir of Martinus Decker that he knows living. That the accompanying record of the family of Martinus Decker as sworn to by John Decker is a true record of the said family. He hereby relinquishes every claim to a pension or annuity except the present and declares that the name of Martinus Decker or Mary Middaugh is not on the pension roll of the agency of any State in the Union. Sworn and subscribed to the day and year aforesaid. John Decker

Pension Application for Service by Martinus Decker - Affidavit by Peter E. Gumear

On this 10th day of May 1847 personally appeared before the undersigned a Justice of the Peace in and for the aforesaid County, Peter E. Gumear of Deepark in the County of Orange & State of New York in the Eightieth year of his age to me known to be a man of truth and veracity Who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath depose and say that he was born and has always resided near where he now lives in the valley of the Neversink or otherwise known by the name of the valley of Peenpack.

In the Revolutionary war the valley was the frontier settlement of Orange County and part of Ulster which was continually from the spring of 1777 to the end of the war harassed by Tories and Indians. That his fathers house was about midway between where the Bashaws Kill enters into the Neversink and where the latter stream empties into the Delaware. That they lived near where the Indian trail or Road passed through the mountain and entered the valley. That in the year 1777 a Fort was built at his fathers house where soldiers were stationed during the war. That he was well acquainted with Martinus Decker who in the Revolutionary war was a Lieutenant in Captain Moses Kortrights Company of Militia of which John Van Tuyl was first Lieutenant and Epraim Middaugh was Ensign Middaugh and was killed on the 22 of July 1779 at the Battle of Minisink.

He further saith that during the time the fort at Gumears was building Lieutenant Decker was there with a guard doing duty as soldiers for at least two weeks That he during the war saw Lieut Martines Decker doing duty as an officer in the militia at Gumears fort and other places along the frontier and from his personal knowledge of the exposed situation of the settlement and of the services of Lieutenant Martines Decker he is satisfied that the said Decker done at least one years service during the war as a Lieutenant in Captain Moses Kortrights company of Col Allisons Regiment of Militia.

He was a brave active and efficient officer. Vigilance and Perseverance was his motto and he was a sworn enemy to the Tories and Indians - He was an upright man and died a Christian and at the time of his death was an Elder in the Church at Deepark. He died in April 1802 at an advanced age beloved and lamented by those who knew him. Peter E. Gumear

Pension Application for Martinus Decker - Affidavit by Elihu Carey

On this thirtieth day of July One thousand eight hundred and forty seven personally appeared before the undersigned, a Justice of the Peace in and for the aforesaid County, Elihu Carey aged Eighty two years and upwards a resident of Montague in the County of Sussex and State of New Jersey to me known to be a man of truth and veracity and whose statements are entitled to full credit and belief. Who being first duly sworn according to law cloth on his oath depose and say That he with his fathers family were amongst the sufferers at Wyoming in July 1778 and after the battle known as the battle and Massacre of Wyoming his father with his family consisting of himself and wife and three children made their escape from Wyoming through the wilderness to Stroudsburgh nitinany to make their way back to Connecticut from where they had formerly moved to Wyoming after staying at Stroudsburgh for a short time.

They took up their march up the Delaware toward the State of New York in company with a family by the name of Travis from Connecticut and Samuel Finch, his mother and sister who were family from Goshen in Orange County New York. Three of the Finch family were killed on the field at Wyoming After traveling for three days living upon the charity of the Inhabitants of the country through which we passed we arrived at a Fort called Van Aukens fort on the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware River here we found a company of soldiers guarding at the fort and were commanded by a Lieutenant by the name of Martiness Decker They remained at the fort four of five days during which time Martiness Decker had command at the fort and when we left we left him still in command.

The company in which the deponent traveled crossed the Delaware and Journeyed as far as Goshen in Orange County where they put up and where they all afterwards settled and where this deponent lived for many years and then moved into the town of Minisink and from there to Montague in New Jersey where he now resides. That after the war he became well acquainted with Martiness Decker of Deepark and knows that he was the same man who had charge of Van Aukens fort on the Pennsylvania side of the River in July 1778 and who then acted as a Lieutenant. That he is the only person now living who traveled with him from Wyoming to Goshen and further he saith not. Elihu Carey

About some of the places mentioned in the application materials. . .

Hudson River, Ramapo & Paramus

The Hudson River was a major strategic corridor during the war and if the British had been able to control it they would have effectively divided the colonies in half. Instead, after the battles at Forts Clinton
and Montgomery, the Americans erected a chain across the Hudson at West Point and the British never challenged on the Hudson again. In addition, the pass at present day Hillburn and Suffern, known in Decker’s materials as Ramapo and, then, the site of Sidman’s Fort, was critical because here the Americans blocked the British from moving out of the City of New York and into Orange County and further up the Hudson. Paramus, New Jersey was a major staging area for the Americans during the war.

**Fort Montgomery & Fort Clinton**

Forts Montgomery and Clinton were located on the heights about the Hudson River in and near the present day Bear Mountain State Park. Both forts were captured and destroyed in 1777 after the British moved up the Hudson and ultimately burned Kingston, the colonial capital of New York. Three hundred Americans were either killed, captured or wounded during the battle. One hundred forty British troops were either killed or wounded. Decker just missed the taking of both forts and was called back to duty afterwards and followed the British on their way to Kingston.

**Battle at Minisink**

The battle at Minisink Ford, New York which ended in one of the worst disasters for the Americans during the Revolution, took place on July 22, 1779. It is unclear from the records whether Martinus Decker participated in the battle or was simply called out to defend the frontier. His house, known as Martinus Decker’s fort was one of many houses that had been burned by Col. Joseph Brant several days before.

**Van Auken’s fort, Decker’s fort, DeWitt’s fort and Gumaer’s fort**

Like Martinus Decker’s home, Van Auken’s, DeWitt’s and Gumaer’s forts were all located in the present-day Town of Deerpark, New York and were not official forts, but fortified houses. They were probably surrounded by palisade walls and were a gathering place when alarms were sounded.

Research assistance was provided by Charles King, Mead Stapler, Miral Haubner and Arthur Barber

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**EARLY DAYS IN OLD MINISINK**

The following paper was delivered at the 21st Annual Banquet of the Minisink Valley Historical Society that was held at the Fowler House, on the corner of Fowler Street and Jersey Avenue on February 21, 1909. The address was delivered by James Bennet and was entitled:

*Old Families of the Delaware And Neversink Valley’s Customs and Costumes of the Early Settlers - Days Or Trials and Privations*

Mr. President and Gentlemen: I am not here to make a speech nor deliver an oration but since your committee honored me with the invitation I will endeavor to relate a few traditional incidents concerning the people of this valley.

I am one of the somewhat connecting links, elusive as the Darwinian, however, connecting the people of this valley of a century ago with the present. My father, James Bennet, son of James Bennet and Lydia Hornbeck was born in upper Montague, New Jersey, Clove road, three miles from Tri-States, on the Bennet homestead, in 1804, and my mother, born in 1802, was the youngest of the family of eight children of David Westfall and Jemima Cuddeback.

I was born in a pre-revolutionary stone house built by Simon Westfall my great, great grandfather, on the maternal side; on the bank of the Neversink River in the town of Deerpark and I slept in a trundle bed, at evening time pulled from beneath the traditional high-posted bed hidden from view during the day by surroundings curtains and I was lulled to sleep by the hum of my mother’s spinning wheel as she spun the yarn from woolen rolls, working by the mellow light from the back log in the huge fire place. We are homogeneous French and Dutch and our ancestors spoke the same language, Holland Dutch. My father did not speak English until 10 years of age.

My Grandfather Westfall lived on what is known as Christian Hill, Matamoras in the house overlooking his many broad acres, now used for an almshouse by the borough of Matamoras. I was the youngest of a family of eight children. My mother survived my father 26 years and it was my good fortune that she elected to make her home with me. She passed away on February 22nd, 1895, aged 93 years and her mental faculties were active and unimpaired. It will thus be seen, because of associations and my age, I am somewhat a connecting link between the past of 100 or more years ago and the present. My father and mother were married May 17, 1828 at her home, by Rev. Cornelius C. Elting, pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church of Deerpark. The church at that time was near the old Machackemeh burying ground recently reclaimed by the Machackemeh Chapter of the Daughters of the Revolution of Port Jervis.

Let me tell you of their wedding journey. The day following the wedding my father came for his bride and the vehicle was a two horse lumber box wagon with a spring seat, the groom driving, and the body of the wagon piled high with choice feather beds and pieced bed quilts filled in with wool instead of cotton, homespun blankets and blue and white bedspreads linen sheets and pillow cases, table cloths etc., woven...
by the bride, churn, tables, the tops of which turned over to one side revealing a seat. The bride carried on her lap a mirror with quaintly carved frame, Biblical characters painted on the upper portion of the glass and the whole surmounted by cherubim carved in the wood. She carried also a large family Bible, leather bound, for daily use in the new family and for the keeping of family records. Following the wagon were the bride’s father and one of her brothers driving a small dairy of cows and a number of sheep. This was the visible dowry of the bride daughter of a well-to-do-farmer.

There was a gathering of the numerous wedding guests at the home of the groom that night. Numerous guests, from the fact, that naturally they invited their relatives and that included about all the old families in this portion of the Delaware and Neversink valleys. This reception at the groom’s home was called an “infair.”

A Typical Wedding

This was a typical wedding of those days full and jollity for several days and then the young couple settled down to the serious business of life. At the weddings the jokes at times were practical as in the case of the wedding of John D. Carpenter, great grandfather of Dr. C. N. Skinner. Mr. Carpenter was comparatively short in statute but what he lacked in height was made up in physical vigor and grit and when he and the bride took their places before the minister for the wedding ceremony a guest placed a sheet of paper on the floor for the groom to stand on, to equalize the height of the pair, the bride by -the-way, being about half a head taller. The wag made a serious error for the groom insisted on stopping the ceremony until he walloped the man who had insulted him. Friends intervened, the joker apologized and a half hour later the wedding went on.

These people, whose immediate ancestors had suffered so terribly from the Indian raids in the valley and many had fought in the war of the Revolution, were of the “Early to bed and early to rise etc.” class and this wise saying of Poor Richard proved true with them for they were physically strong and active, wealthy considering their wants, and their business judgment was unexcelled.

They were unanimous in opinion for the proprieties and ceremonials. The minister was a most revered gentleman and at his pastoral visits all the members of the household gathered to give grave but most courteous greeting to the dominie, to hear a portion of the Scriptures read and the prayer invoking God’s blessing on that household. A part of the ceremony, not to be overlooked was the offering of cake and wine or whiskey to the Dominie. I am speaking now of the days of 80 to 100 years ago.

Funerals.

When a death occurred in a family two young men were selected to go on horseback through the valley and invite the people to the funeral and only those invited attended the funeral. On the day of the burial these same young men stood in the outer hall and offered every one a drink of whisky, one held the decanter and glasses and then there a was pitcher of water. Friends from a considerable distance, up or down the valley, were expected for dinner. These customs have not been in vogue for fully 70 or more years.

Church Observances

Church observances were equally strict. Every old Dutch family was represented Sundays at the old Machakameck Church and ordinarily the head of the family was there and sat in the front end of the pew. In those early days they had, usually, morning and afternoon services with a long noon spell for the people to eat their lunches and visit The church was not heated and many brought metal foot stoves filled with hot coals and all were welcome at the home of Cornelius Cole, great grand father of Mr. C. F. Van Inwegen, who lived near the church.

For many years Mr. Benjamin Van Inwegen father of the late Mr. Eli Van Inwegen and grandfather of Mr. C. F. Van Inwegen, was an Elder and Precentor. He stood in the front of the congregation and by the aid of a tuning fork pitched the tunes and led in the singing. My mother united with the church in 1828 during the pastorate of Rev. Cornelius C. Elting who was loved and revered by all the residents of the Neversink and Delaware Valleys from Peenpack to Lower Smithfield. Rev. Mr. Elting was grandfather of the esteemed President of this Society, C. E. Cuddeback Esq., and Vice President Dr. W. L. Cuddeback, and great grandfather of Secretary Samuel M. Cuddeback.

How the Worshipers Were Clad.

The worshipers at church were warmly clad, however, for their clothing was of homespun woolen, the men’s clothing made by a tailor who visited annually the homes in the valley, cutting the garments from cloth woven by the women of the household of wool, sheared from their own sheep and dyed in their own dye pots. The women usually made their own dresses of Linsey Woolsey, woven by themselves, but there were silk dresses for state occasions made by a seamstress who visited their homes. The stockings for winter wear for both men and women were knit by the women and the good stout calf skin boots and shoes were made from skins of animals raised on their own farms and sent away to be tanned. A shoemaker made visits and fitted them out for the year. My mother said they were very choice those calf skin shoes and
of the valley. One Sunday after the services or thereabouts was that vigor they had to give vent in some way. A jolly "Marathon" race and Mr. the chance led into the hotel and ferry, they were neck and neck, two-thirds of the way and coming together more stockily built, hence the term "Duck Legs."

James Swartwout was a large man, one of the strongest men in Carpenter's Point, nearly 60 miles at Carpenter's, great, great and you at the finish of breakfast, Mr. James Swartwout addressing County from Mr. Wolverton's West Main Street this road and Cornelius David Swartwout who owned the farm which is now occupied and you

swamps and forests and the raftsman made as many trips possible in one day time when the snow was melting would continue several weeks for the snow water was held back by the swamps and forests and the raftsman made as many trips possible running their own lumber or getting well paid for running for others.

How They Got Their Money

When the fall threshing was done the young men of the family got up the wood pile for the winter and next summer's use and then worked in the woods getting out lumber which they took down the Delaware in rafts to the Philadelphia market for which they usually got their pay following the run on the "June Freshet." In the late fall the father of the family made trips to Newburgh to sell the surplus pork, grain, butter and other products of the farm The coming of the Delaware & Hudson Canal in 1826 making direct connection to New York by packet boats made many changes in the disposition of the farm products.

Men of Great Endurance

Many of these men became famous steersmen of rafts and they followed the river yearly until they were physically disqualified, which conditions did not come however, until they were three score and ten or more. I have said that they were physically strong and their deeds in the one particular of rafting will show that my statement was correct.

The late Charles St. John, father of our townsman Stephen St. John told me at one time when he was eager to get a number of rafts down during a raft freshet that he walked From Easton to Port Jervis 60 miles in one day in order to go down on a raft the next morning. The rafting freshets in those days in the spring time when the snow was melting would continue several weeks for the snow water was held back by the swamps and forests and the raftsman made as many trips possible running their own lumber or getting well paid for running for others.

An Extraordinary Race

On one occasion James D. Swartwout who formerly owned the Laux farm in the Neversink Valley; David Swartwout who owned the farm which is now occupied by the deserted oil station on the Huguenot road and Cornelius Westfall who was the owner of the farm directly across the Delaware over in Pike County from Mr. Wolverton's West Main Street this city had gone down to Easton in the same crew. Westfall being the steersman.

The Messrs. Swartwout who owned the raft made a quick sale and the next morning about 5 o'clock, at the finish of breakfast, Mr. James Swartwout addressing Mr. Westfall said, "Duck Legs, we're going home and you may go with us if you will agree that the last man at Uncle Ben Carpenter's will treat!" Uncle Ben Carpenter, great, great grandfather of Dr. C. N. Skinner, on his grandmother's side, had the hotel and ferry at Carpenter's Point, nearly 60 miles away. They had lunches prepared and the 60 miles race was on. James Swartwout was a large man, one of the strongest men in the valley and had a seven leagues stride.

David Swartwout was also a tall, fine proportioned man and Mr. Westfall was shorter in stature and more stockily built, hence the term "Duck Legs." They made brief rests throughout the day all walking together but from the Brick House eight miles from the finish it was man for himself. They ran fully two-thirds of the way and coming down what is now known as Schneider's hill, at the foot of which a road led into the hotel and ferry, they were neck and neck, and James Swartwout stumbled and fell thereby lost the chance of winning the race and had to stand for the refreshments. They were none the worse for this "Marathon" race and Mr. Westfall, the following afternoon, took another raft from the mouth of the Mongaup.

A Practical Joke.

Some of the practical jokes of the day would seem harsh at the present but every one was so full of vigor they had to give vent in some way. A jolly old gentleman told me, about 20 years ago, of an incident that occurred fully 60 or more years previous, that set the whole valley laughing. A certain lady of 35 years or thereabouts was so eager to get married that she had become offensive to most of the marriageable men of the valley. One Sunday after the services at Macackemecho Church she insisted on riding over to

The Food

Our ancestors did not go hungry for want of substantial food. In the fall of the year "The Killin" was on and those were good days, fresh pork, spare-ribs, pigs feet, head cheese, souse, sausage, rollichies, etc., and for the winter and the following summer use side pork, hams, shoulders, and beef were "laid down" in casks properly cured. The ham, shoulder and beef were smoked with great care in the smoke-house with smouldering hickory wood. There were great bins in the cellars, also, of all kinds of vegetables and apples and cabbage were buried for late winter and early spring eating. There were also barrels of salted silver Neversink and Delaware river eels and sauer kraut. In the spring time Delaware shad were salted down for summer use.

Veal calves furnished the meat in the spring and in the summer lambs and chickens. Neighbors divided with one another their fresh meat. They raised their buckwheat for cakes, rye for bread and corn for Indian meal. In the spring time they made maple syrup and sugar which they swapped at the stores for molasses and cane sugar.
Pennsylvania with a popular young man. He explained to her that his mare was tricky and would not carry double. She insisted however and he helped her up on the saddle cloth extending behind the saddle and they started, she with her arm lovingly about the young man.

All went well until the ford in the Delaware was reached, not far from his home, and he told her to hold fast for the mare was getting nervous. About midway of the river, in the deepest water of the ford, about up to the mare's belly, he quietly touched the animal in the flank with his heel and the mare's heels flew up and the riders landed in the river, fortunately on their feet, and the mare ran away. The woman said many vigorous things about that horse as they waded ashore and he escorted her to his home. When she returned to New York state she went over the river on a ferry.

The Amusements.

I could go on forever like Tennyson's Brook, "To Bicker down a Valley" for I have said nothing of the amusement of those worthy people of long ago, their district schools singing schools, quiltings corn huskings, stone frolics, dances, sweetened pot pie, the dish on every festive occasion etc. Nor have I inflicted on you much genealogy with which I am quite dangerously loaded, and the troubles from the witches' would make a long story.

There are many stories, also, brought across the seas by ancestors, of mythical people called "Westtollagers," who were particularly stupid and I have seen hot wrath provoked by a person addressing another as "Westtollager." There were complicated tricks with twine handed down through families and, personally, I felt it a personal duty to instruct my sons in the making of the most complicated one called a "Double W."

Thanking you for the courteous attention shown me, I will occupy no more of the swiftly passing time.

RAFTING ON THE DELAWARE

The following paper was delivered at the 65th Annual Banquet of the Minisink Valley Historical Society held at the Hotel Minisink, Port Jervis, on Washington's Birthday, in 1954. The address was delivered by Ralph E. Wright who was the General Manager of the Ontario & Western Railroad.

For over one hundred years no one seems to have written a great deal regarding the enterprise - rafting - although this was a flourishing industry for 150 years. In recent years the late Charles Curtis, of Callicoon, and Leslie Wood, who grew up in the rafting country at Livingston Manor, spent a great deal of time and effort obtaining and compiling data regarding the river and it is to them we are all indebted for recording various events in connection with rafting.

The First Raft

The first raft ever to navigate the Delaware was constructed by Daniel Skinner, of Cochecton, N. Y., after he had first endeavored to float long pine timbers loose ahead of a canoe. This method was a failure. He then constructed a raft quite similar to the replica I have here. (Ed. Note: The Society still has the model in its collection.) This was in the year of 1764. It took him several days to reach Philadelphia from Cochecton and he was gone two weeks. The raft was 15 feet wide and 80 feet long. He had a Dutchman as a helper. This first raft was exceptionally fine pine spars and he received 4 pounds per stick. The largest raft ever to be taken down the Delaware was operated by a Mr. Barnes. This raft was 85 feet wide and 215 feet long and was loaded 120,000 feet of lumber.

In the year 1875, 3,140 rafts passed over the Lackawaxen dam by the last of May, according to the records kept by the "Keeper of the Dam." This dam was constructed by the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company, who employed the "Keeper." He guided the rafts from the shore over the dam. If they obeyed his instructions and the raft was broken up, I understand the Canal Company settled with the owner of the raft. However, if they did not follow his orders, and the raft was damaged, the Canal Company maintained they were not responsible for the loss.

Admiral Skinner

I was interested in learning who this man Skinner was. In the book - Stories of the Raftsmen, by Charles T. Curtis, of Callicoon - I find - "Daniel Skinner has long been identified in the history of the upper Delaware Valley as the first man to navigate a raft of logs down the Delaware River, and he has been recognized as the founder of that vast lumbering industry which occupied the time and labor of the people both along the river and far back in the country for well nigh three-quarters of the last century."

"Daniel Skinner was born at Salem, Conn., in 1733 and in 1754 came to the Delaware with his father, Joseph Skinner, and Dr. John Calkin and Bezeleel Tyler, members of the Delaware Land Co., to take possession of the Cochecton Valley under a grant from the Provincial Government of Connecticut. That colony claimed jurisdiction from the Delaware to the Susquehanna."

"Rafting on the Delaware" and James Quinlan's History of Sullivan County written in 1873 have the
"We have seen and conversed with men who assisted him in running lumber down the river before the close of the last century. He was honored in a jocular way by the hardy men who followed his example. By general consent he was constituted Admiral of all the waters of the river in which a raft could be taken to a market, and no one was free to engage in business until he had the Admiral's consent. This was done by presenting Skinner with a bottle of wine, when liberty was granted the applicant to go to Philadelphia as a foreman. To gain the privilege of going as a steersman, another bottle was necessary, on the receipt of which the Admiral gave full permission to navigate all the channels of the river."

**Local Raft Rider**

Our fellow townsman, Ed Hinaman whose ancestors were raftsmen, and he himself made several trips down the river, stated that a rafting crew on a large raft usually consisted of a steersman and five hands. The steersman's commands were 'pull Penn' or 'pull Jersey' and 'holt t'other way.' The rope used was an inch and a quarter in diameter.

Much of the early history of Sullivan County is obtained from the files of "The Monticello Watchman," the oldest paper in Sullivan County - published since 1826 and presently owned and edited by Mr. A. O. Benton. From "Rafting on the Neversink" taken from the files of this paper I quote:

"Otto Wm. VanTuyl settled in Bridgeville in 1811 and built a dwelling and store on the banks of the Neversink. At that time the inhabitants along and many miles back from the Neversink were occupied in clearing their lands and establishing homes and they relied upon lumbering as an important help in securing the necessities of life. Compared with the Delaware River lumbermen they were compelled to cart their lumber over the mountains into Orange County. So VanTuyl conceived the plan of making the Neversink navigable for rafts from the falls in Fallsburgh to its mouth at Port Jervis. He saw in it great wealth in tolls for himself and prosperity for the lumbermen. He obtained a loan of $10,000 from the state, commenced operations, and worked two years in building aprons over falls, removing rocks, etc. Then the state commissioners adjudged the river safe and navigable for rafts! Rates of toll were established about $1.50 per thousand for lumber, 10c. for each log, 2c. per bushel for charcoal; etc. Then the trial came. A raft was launched just above the point where the O. & W. Railroad crosses the river near Fallsburgh in 1831. It passed Bridgeville safely, the river full to its banks, and VanTuyl saw or thought he saw the full fruition of his hopes.

The raft passed safely through the rapids but was wrecked and lost at Denton Falls. Van Tuyl then further improved the river, engaged experienced Delaware River raftsmen, and the following Spring started another raft from Bridgeville. So confident was VanTuyl of success that he let his son, William, age 16, go down on this second raft, which had nearly reached the scene of its predecessor's disaster when it too was broken into fragments. Two of the men on it were drowned. The steersman and young VanTuyl were dashed upon a rock where they were marooned for twelve hours when rescuers came to their aid. As they reached shore a gigantic tree was swept over the rock on which they took refuge, thus their lives were saved by a margin of only a moment. This ended the attempt to navigate the Neversink. VanTuyl was a ruined man."

**Pioneer Settlers**

The men who rocked the cradle of the rafting industry were the pioneer settlers who floated one or two rafts per year on the average. At the time Daniel Skinner ran the first raft down the Delaware there were very few settlements. The timber along the Delaware below Port Jervis was practically all chestnut and scrub oak, being worthless as rafting timber. In later years some chestnut and oak was rafted, for railroad ties. Only the territory above Port Jervis could rightly be called the rafting country.

When rafting was first found to be a worthwhile enterprise the timber was cut right from the falls in Fallsburgh to its mouth at Port Jervis. He obtained a loan of $10,000 from the state, commenced operations, and worked two years in building aprons over falls, removing rocks, etc. Then the state commissioners adjudged the river safe and navigable for rafts! Rates of toll were established about $1.50 per thousand for lumber, 10c. for each log, 2c. per bushel for charcoal; etc. Then the trial came. A raft was launched just above the point where the O. & W. Railroad crosses the river near Fallsburgh in 1831. It passed Bridgeville safely, the river full to its banks, and VanTuyl saw or thought he saw the full fruition of his hopes.

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When rafting was first found to be a worthwhile enterprise the timber was cut right near the river and, when supply became depleted they gradually moved up the river and back from the river.

In the early days the trees were mostly felled, with an ax. Some historians say saws (crosscut) were not yet invented. I checked with Mr. Richard Canfield, of Clemson Bros. Inc., Middletown, N. Y., regarding the introduction of crosscut saws in this country. He tells me the use of crosscut saws in this part of the country occurred as soon as the pioneers had their log cabins up. He further states that the saw is a very old tool and that no doubt many of the early settlers brought handmade saws with them when they came to this country. In fact, he says saws of bronze and stone were used in ancient times. He also states that whenever a pioneer could afford to purchase an iron bar he either hammered it into a saw or had it done by a local blacksmith.

**Small Colts**

The east and west branches of the Delaware join at Hancock. Small rafts known as colts, 20x80, were assembled on the Willowemoc at Livingston Manor, Roscoe and points below Roscoe, and floated to East Branch where four colts were lashed together as one raft. Also colts were floated down the East Branch of the Delaware from as far up stream as Margaretville and made into rafts at East Branch. Rafts were also floated down the West Branch from points as far up as Fitch's Bridge above Delhi.
If the weather was good, rafts usually reached Trenton in 3 days. In the early days of rafting the men walked the whole distance home, carrying their axes and ropes, following the river trails which took about four days in good weather. If there was rain or snow, it sometimes took much longer.

After the Newburgh-Cocheecton Turnpike was built they traveled from Trenton to Philadelphia and boarded boats for New York, where they boarded another boat up the Hudson River to Newburgh, then either walked or went by stage. Many of the most rugged of the men walked the entire distance without resting from Newburgh through to the Beaverkill country, carrying their equipment such as ropes and axes. Old-timers claim that the ones who elected to walk from Newburgh to the Beaverkill country invariably reached home before the ones taking the stage. Some who lived on the upper Delaware or its branches, took the boat to Kingston, then by stage to Delhi and hoofed it from there. After the Erie and NY O & W Railroads were built some of them returned home by rail.

**Raft Wages**

Before the Civil War the raftsmen were paid $10.00 per trip to Easton and $15.00 to Trenton, and the expense of returning home. Steersmen were paid $15.00 to $18.00. to Easton and $25.00 to Trenton, but account of higher pay, were not allowed expenses for returning home. Raft owners often paid from one to ten dollars to some local man along the river who would take them through a difficult rift, such as Foul Rift just below Belvedere, N.J. and other bad rifts and turns on the river.

Many outstanding characters were employed as raftsmen and hands. One of the most outstanding wits seems to have been a man named Boney Quillen whom I met when I was a boy. He was a raw boned, good natured fellow who had the ability of making up a verse readily for most any occasion. His habits were not of the best and he got in a good many scrapes but with his wit managed to get out of them. He insulted a dining room girl at one of the taverns not far from a point on the river known as "Stairway Rift." The following morning the proprietor of the tavern met him at the top of the stairs and promptly threw him down the stairs. When he picked himself up he was heard to remark that it was the first time he ever ran "Stairway Rift" without a steersman.

The same Boney Quillen on a return trip on the NY O & W RR was broke and had no ticket. He raised the window in the coach as the conductor approached and purposely stuck his head out of the window, knocking his hat off. Immediately he put up a terrific fuss requesting the conductor to stop the train! Threatening to pull the cord, etc., claiming that it was a good hat and that his ticket was in the band of the hat and that he had no money for his fare. The conductor agreed that if he would quiet down he would take him to his destination which was East Branch.

I learned just recently from an old timer that Boney Quillen was born in Ellenville, went up into the rafting country as a boy. He later served in the Union Army and was AWOL for four days. He came back with a mule and provisions that were badly needed, and they excused him for being AWOL. He never married. He boarded in several places and spent a good deal of time around Hancock, Fish's Eddy and East Branch, and died in the Soldiers' Home at Bath, N.Y.

There were many taverns located along the river, usually near eddies where rafts were tied up at night. Raftsmen were a hearty bunch who worked hard and said to have played hard too. These taverns were the scene of many a wrestling match and fist fight to determine who was the best man on the raft or fleet of rafts. The strongest men were the Adamses from Lordville and the Hawleys from Downsville. Jugs were usually filled at the taverns before resuming the journey. It is recorded that the hardest drinkers were the most capable steersmen. It was not uncommon during the rafting season for two or three hundred raftsmen to ask for lodging at one time in small villages. One hundred or more would stop for dinner at noon at the Dimmick Inn, Milford, Pa. As the raftman's appetite was enormous, the taverns always kept a good supply of salt pork, pancake flour and liquor on hand.

Usually the men were paid at Trenton and many of them proceeded to enjoy the sights and luxuries of the city before returning home, sometimes having to borrow money for provisions before they could return. There were numerous stories of these fellows walking around the streets of Trenton, sometimes a hundred in a group dressed in their mountain clothes, all extremely large men, any of them a parade in himself, to the delight of boys who followed them about.

**First Tavern**

The first tavern on the Upper Delaware was erected in 1794 just below Callicoon (Bush's Eddy) which was close to the first day's run from the Upper Delaware; however, the oldest tavern, which was probably constructed around 1730, was a two and a half story building with a porch standing on the river bank at Dingmans near an eddy. It was at one time occupied by the descendants of the famous Indian slayer, Tom Quick. Wendell Phillips, who has made many trips down the river in a canoe, advises it is still standing.

Many rafts were broken up and lost. Some men made a living by collecting logs along the shore from rafts that had pulled apart. When an owner lost his raft, therefore could not pay his bills, promissory notes were given, not for thirty or sixty days, as is the custom today, but the time set was the next good freshet on the river.
The men who took millions of feet of lumber and timber down the river brought back to the up country millions of dollars, notwithstanding that as late as 1840 logs sold for only $2.00 a thousand delivered at the logging banks. This money enriched the country and not only built schools and churches and homes, but maintained them as well. The raftsmen not only took products of the country to the city, but they also brought back much of the city to the country.

**Support of Region**

The principal support of the Upper Delaware section ever since it was first settled has been timber and the by-products of timber. First it was the pine and hemlock logs floated down the river: then the many tanneries which used hemlock bark and occasioned the great waste of timber. Millions of hemlock trees, after the bark was removed for the tanneries, were left to decay.

Then came the acid factories manufacturing acetate of lime, wood alcohol and charcoal. At one time there were forty two of these factories along the NY O & W and hundreds in New York State and Pennsylvania. Today only one remains that I know of in New York State - at Hortons.

**Rock Maple**

There is a type of timber on the upper reaches of the Delaware known as Rock Maple, which is particularly adapted to the manufacture of bowling pins. If you bowl in Boston, New York, San Francisco or Port Jervis, it would be a very good wager that the bowling pins were manufactured at Sherwood's Ten-Pin Plant in Livingston Manor, N.Y. They supply the Brunswick Bake Collender people. The finest ash also grows in the Catskills and many baseball bats are manufactured at Hancock and Kingston.

Aside from the logs and timber rafted down the Delaware, there were quantities of stone, hemlock bark and other commodities carried. Hemlock bark was delivered to the tannery at Sparrowbush from points up the river. The largest flagstone ever to be quarried was cut at Pond Eddy, N.Y. floated to Philadelphia, Pa. on a raft, then to New York by boat and placed in front of the City Hall in New York City.

**Elephant Meets Raft**

Some years ago Barnum & Bailey's Circus while at Port Jervis wished to cross to Pennsylvania. One elephant absolutely refused to set foot on the bridge. The elephant started to ford the river and a raft appeared. The raft ran into the elephant and the raftsmen tried to get him out of the way with their poles. The trainer begged them to be careful lest "Jumbo" go on a rampage and break up everything in sight. "Jumbo" forded the rest of the way across without further difficulty, although his ear was nearly severed on account the raft striking him. The raft was owned by Addison Francisco of Cooks Falls.

Rafting lumber and logs to tide water was an interstate business. The streams the rafts traveled were designated as navigable waters. It has always been understood that obstructions such as dams, bridges, dikes, etc., could not be placed in the river and navigable streams without first obtaining permission from the proper authorities.

And so ends an era of the Delaware - the same Delaware that now rolls under the Port Jervis - Matamoras Bridge - leaving its mark upon history; the same Delaware of Washington and his incredible and fabulous crossing above Trenton at Washington's crossing; the same Delaware that in present times is the topic of dams, drinking water, stream control and plans of the Incodel. Who knows who will stand here before such a group again many years hence and unfold a tale of the present Delaware!

The days of rafting and all its color are gone but the Delaware, all that it's been and all that it may ever be rolls on.