

Historical Papers

No. XI.



"We turned down to the edge of the mountains, or the northernmost of the mountains, and anchored."—Entry in Hudson's Journal, Sept. 29, 1609.

1. Annual Meeting.
2. Wawayanda and Cheesek-ook, - - - - Chas. H. Weygant
3. Historic Homes in Orange County, - - - - E. M. Ruttenber
4. Tom Quick and Claudius Smith, - - - - Theo. D. Schoonmaker
5. Genl. John Hathorn, - - - - Ferdinand V. Sanford
6. Obituary Record.

NEWBURGH, N. Y., 1904

ED

Gen. John Hathorn,

A Revolutionary Soldier, Patriot and Statesman.

BY FERDINAND V. SANFORD.

*Read before the Historical Society of Newburgh Bay and the Highlands,
on March 28, 1904.*

John Hathorn, the distinguished Revolutionary soldier, patriot and statesman, was born at Wilmington, Delaware, on January 9, 1749.* His early education was received there and at Philadelphia, to which he removed while he was a young man. He was a surveyor by profession, and a school teacher. It was with a party of engineers who came to make the surveys for establishing the boundary line between the States of New York and New Jersey, that he made his first visit to Warwick, sometime prior to 1770.

He was of distinguished ancestry, and his progenitors from the first Capt. William Hathorne, the pioneer, were all distinguished, many as military men and officials, and one, it is said, became Governor of Rhode Island. Hathorn

* Since writing the last statement, a letter from Mr. Frank H. Hathorn, the owner of the Hathorn Spring, at Saratoga, N. Y., has been received, which says:

"Gen. John Hathorn is a descendant of John Hathorn, who came from England, landing in the United States in 1635. William Hathorn, elder brother of John, was born in Binfield, Berkshire County, England, came to Dorchester, Mass., in 1630, but settled in Salem; was speaker of the House of Deputies, Mass. John Hathorn, who came in 1635, was distinguished in civil and military affairs. It is believed that Gen. John Hathorn came to Warwick from Wilmington, Mass., and not from Wilmington, Del. The Massachusetts State records of Massachusetts soldiers in the Revolution, include John, of Wilmington, and a brother Nathaniel, somewhat younger, who is credited to the town of Wilmington, Mass., but who was mustered into the Continental Army at Warwick, N. Y. Of John's descendants, Ebenezer and Collins, of Jaffrey, were in the Revolutionary Army, and the former was also in the French War. The Wilmington, Mass., records give the birth of a John Hathorn, January 19, 1744, this is, undoubtedly, your Gen. John Hathorn.

"The William Hathorn who came over with Gov. Winthrop and his company in 1630, was Captain, Magistrate, and whipped the Quakers. His son John was a soldier, magistrate and persecutor of witches; among his descendants were Nathaniel Hawthorne, the author and poet. About the year 1650, John, the younger brother, moved to Lynn, Mass. Gen. John is a descendant of the younger brother, who came over in 1635.

"You may read in Nathaniel Hawthorne's works an account of or allusions to the ancestry in England."

was the common ancient spelling of the name. Some of kindred descent dropped the first syllable and made it simply Thorn. Nathaniel Hawthorne, the poet, belonged to the same clan and changed the name of the sea captain of the family by inserting the letter "w" and adding the letter "e."

While surveying the line between the two states, the party stayed over Sunday with Thomas Welling (the first), and at that time he became acquainted with Welling's daughter, Elizabeth, whom he afterwards married.

He was said to have been of a Quaker family, and there are those living around Warwick to-day who remember that Quaker meetings were held at his stone house, in his later life, and who relate that at one such meeting, not a word was spoken for a long time, and the silence was then broken by a woman, who made an address.

In his early life, he evidently did not hold the principle of non-resistance, for he was early identified with the military, and was a captain in the colonial period. He was, at an early age, a man of affairs and conducted a large farm in the town of Warwick; ran a store at his residence, and operated a forge for making bar iron on the farm now owned by the Davis sisters, near New Milford. He worked his farm with slave labor, and Mr. Samuel Pelton, now in his eighty-sixth year, a resident of this town, says that he well remembers David Bays (or Baise), a colored man, who lived just above C. I. McBurney's place—the house still standing—who was a former slave of General Hathorn, and who accompanied him to Warwick, when he came here to settle.

Gen. Hathorn took an active and prominent part in the stirring days of the Revolution. He was a confidential friend of Gov. Clinton, with whom he carried on considerable correspondence. Several of the letters between them have been found and are appended to this sketch. He held many offices of prominence and importance. He was elected to the State Assembly eight times; was a State Senator for eight sessions; was Speaker of the Assembly, and a member of Congress for two terms, and occupied other civil offices that will be taken up more in detail later. He also held a commission as Captain, Colonel, Brigadier and Major General, successively. His military life covers a period of nearly forty years.

Doubtless a man holding so many public positions was on intimate and friendly terms with all the prominent men of his day, and his correspondence with them must have been large, and would afford us the best biography of the subject of our sketch, if obtainable.

It is said that he carefully preserved his papers and correspondence. After his death these papers found their way, in the course of time, to the attic, and then into a couple of barrels. The females of the household, in cleaning up took what they thought was worthless rubbish, and consigned them to the flames. The letters and documents appended have been gathered from various sources—from Gov. Clinton's Public Papers; from the Wisconsin State Historical Society, The Lenox Library, the New York State Historical Society, the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, Harvard University, Library of Congress, and others.

Rev. A. A. Haines, in his sketch of Hathorn's life, says: "He (Hathorn) was a confidential correspondent of Washington, was on intimate terms with many distinguished men of his day. * * He was frequently called upon for

details of men for military service and guard duty. In his report on the Battle of Minisink, made to Gov. George Clinton, July 25, 1779, he says: 'On the evening of the 21st of this instant, I received an order from his Excellency, George Washington, together with a requisition of the Commissary of prisoners to furnish 100 men to guard the British prisoners on their way to Easton. I ordered three companies of my regiment, including the exempt company, to parade for this purpose.' The making of this detail accounts for the small number of men he took to the Minisink conflict. When Burgoyne surrendered there were questions raised by General Howe as to the terms of their parole and Congress ordered that until these were settled the prisoners should be retained and sent to the interior of the country."

What would we not give to see and read this "Order" from the Commander-in-Chief of the American Army to Hathorn.

Mr. William W. Pelton, a resident of this town, has written a short sketch of Gen. Hathorn's life, which he has shown to the writer and permitted some interesting facts to be taken, among others as follows:

"Gen. Hathorn went with his regiment to the Ramapo pass several times to prevent the British from coming up the valley and destroying the valuable iron works at Stirling and along the Ramapo river, from which the patriot army drew a large supply of ammunition."

After describing the Battle of Minisink, Mr. Pelton, says: "After this the Indians broke in upon them and the patriots fled for their lives, taking care of themselves the best they could. General Hathorn started for home followed by two Indians; after running a long way, he stopped for a moment and discovered the Indians were upon him. He let them come within good firing distance and then aimed at the most forward one and fired. He jumped and yelled, then fell dead, and his companion wheeled and ran. The General feeling the need of rest lay down between two logs. He had lain but a few minutes, when the Indian dogs came along, but did not happen to scent him and went off. The Indians by some means got the trail of the General, and some four or five followed him home and secreted themselves in an old straw stack for a few days. They were unable to get a shot at Hathorn, who remained in the stone house, between the two front windows until the Indians went away. They then made severe threats and said they would have revenge by coming here in large forces to murder. To be prepared for such an event, Gen. Hathorn and his neighbors built a block house on Benjamin Burt's farm, for the settlers to flee to in case of an invasion."

Again. "After the war was closed, Gen. Hathorn was elected a member of the State Legislature, and while at Albany had several interviews with Joseph Brant, who resided in Albany. Hathorn said Brant was a full-blooded Indian and not a half-breed, as some histories accredit him. Brant was a trader among the Indians, over whom he had a great influence, and used to accompany them on their marauding expeditions, and he admitted to Hathorn that he commanded the Indians both at Wyoming and Minisink."

Hathorn at an early age (26) was elected, or appointed to the office of Assessor. The assessment roll of the town of Goshen for 1775, shows that he was Assessor for District No. 2, which included a section of the present town of Warwick. This was the last assessment roll made out under the author-

ity of the crown, and an examination of it discloses a large number of names of residents, whose descendants are still living in this town. (Ruttenber's History of Orange County, pp. 565-6.)

He was foreman of the first Grand Jury, whose proceedings are on record at a Court of Oyer and Terminer and General Gaol Delivery, held at Goshen, on June 19, 1787. Hon. John Sloss Hobart was the Justice who presided at said Court, and Elihu Marvin and John Suffern were the Commissioners of Oyer and Terminer and General Gaol Delivery, as they were then called.

Hathorn was again foreman of the grand jury of the same Court, held at Goshen on the first Tuesday of June, 1800. The Court opened at nine o'clock and was held on Saturdays.

He was elected Supervisor of the town of Warwick on April 3, 1804, and served one year. At a meeting of the Town Board, held in that year, it is recorded: "That a committee of three were elected, namely, John Hathorn, John Wheeler and Robert Farrier, to meet with the committee that may be elected in the town of Goshen, for the purpose of consulting the expediency of erecting a house for the accommodation of the poor, but to enter into no engagement in behalf of this town, and report at our next town meeting, against which time, this matter is to be further considered. At present it appeared to be the minds of the major part to erect a house in our own town." (From Town Clerk Records, Warwick.)

The County of Orange, then included Rockland County, and consisted of eight towns, four of which are in what is now Rockland County, and the said Town Records of Warwick contain the following entry for the year 1797: "The apportionment of school moneys by the Supervisors of the County of Orange for the year 1797, to the several towns in the county, as follows:

Cornwall	140 pounds 13 shillings.
Goshen	82 pounds 10 shillings.
Warwick	101 pounds 9 shillings.
Minisink	76 pounds 14 shillings.
Hamestead	70 pounds 4 shillings.
Clarkstown	75 pounds 10 shillings.
Orangetown	45 pounds 8 shillings.
Haverstraw	48 pounds 10 shillings.

640 pounds 18 shillings.

Prior to 1773, Col. Hathorn became the owner of a large farm of nearly 300 acres, in the town of Warwick, about one mile south of the village. The records at Goshen do not disclose the source of his title, nor has the writer been able to find any deeds in the possession of the present owner, Mr. Pier-son E. Sanford, showing from whom Hathorn acquired the title. He evidently conveyed the farm to his son sometime prior to April 29, 1822, for on said date the son, George C. Hathorn and Sally, his wife, executed a mortgage for \$1,000 to Abraham Bloodgood of New York, conveying 51 acres of the tract, upon which were the house and farm buildings. This mortgage is recorded in Book R, of Mortgages, at page 503, in the County Clerk's office at Goshen. There is a recital in this record that the premises conveyed by the mortgage

are "part of a tract of 100 acres of land conveyed to William Campbell, by Henry Wisner, Esq., Doctor John Baird and John Morrin Scott, by deed dated November 10, 1761."

George C. Hathorn afterwards, on May 19, 1823, mortgaged the residue of said farm, containing something over 200 acres, to William Henderson and William Deming, as executors, &c., of William Deming, deceased, for \$4,720.94, recorded Book T of Mortgages, at page 273. A suit in Chancery was afterwards brought by Abraham Bloodgood to foreclose the first mortgage mentioned, on or about August 17, 1833, by J. L. Riker, Solicitor, and the premises were sold at the Hathorn dwelling house on April 30, 1834, at public auction by Thomas Addis Emmet, Master in Chancery, to Ezra Sanford, the father of the present owner, and Master's Deed, executed June 2, 1834, and recorded in Orange County Records on August 11, 1834 (Book 50, page 368). The consideration mentioned is \$1,810.00. The said Ezra Sanford also acquired by Quit Claim deed, dated July 22, 1834, from John W. Smith and wife all of their right, title and interest in and to the 51 acre tract, which deed recites, that the said premises "were formerly owned by George C. Hathorn and were conveyed by Stacy Beakes, as Sheriff of Orange County, to the said John W. Smith." The consideration mentioned in Smith's deed to Sanford was \$875.00. Ezra Sanford also acquired title to the 200 acre tract by deed.

The only recorded deeds from John Hathorn that have been found are five, all dated the same day, October 31, 1781, and recorded on June 24, 1799, Book G, pages 51, 53, 58, 56 and 402, in which Daniel Graham and John Hathorn, as Commissioners of Forfeitures for the Middle District, appointed in pursuance of an act of the Legislature, entitled, "An Act for the Forfeiture of the estates of persons who have adhered to the enemies of this State, and for declaring the sovereignty of the People of this State in respect to all property within the same," conveyed to Evans Whorry and James Monnal, of Wallkill, County of Ulster, 500 acres in Wallkill, County of Ulster, known as lot No. 5, on a map made by Thomas Moffat, Esq.

Also, 500 acres in Wallkill Precinct, Ulster County, known as lot No. 1.

Also, 500 acres in Ulster County, known as lot No. 4.

Also, 500 acres in Wallkill Precinct, known as lot No. 3 (Thomas Moffat's survey).

Also, 500 acres in Wallkill Precinct, known as lot No. 2 (Thomas Moffat's survey).

There are two deeds to John Hathorn, recorded Book U, page 265, dated May 1, 1820, and Book I, page 440, dated Oct. 11, 1800. The first mentioned recites that the grantee is late of New York, and now of New Windsor, who is undoubtedly another person. Neither deed conveys any part of the Hathorn homestead in Warwick.

In the year 1773, Col. Hathorn built the stone house which is still standing in excellent preservation, and is one of the land-marks of the town. It is believed that there are only two other houses of earlier construction. This house was built of limestone, with gambrel roof, covered with hand-made split shingles—a story and a half in height and about 30 x 38 feet, with a

kitchen on the east end one story in height. In the south gable of this house, near the peak are inlaid in red brick the letters:

H.
I. & E.
1773.

standing for "John and Elizabeth Hathorn, 1773." It is said that these brick were imported from Holland. (See frontispiece.) All the nails were wrought iron hammered out by the blacksmith. The flooring in the old house was split and hewed planks of oak timber; some of the floor boards were 30 inches wide, and were worn in grooves between paths, which is extraordinary in a private house. These same floors were used 105 years. The timbers used in construction were immense in size. All hardware, locks, hinges and casings were hand made, and the hinges were blocked in place by leather under them. The roof had four dormer windows in front and sloped down from the house proper to cover the porch. The interior of the house contained one big room in front, two bed-rooms in the rear and hall in the south end, on the first floor, and four rooms on the second floor, with a nice old stairway. There were four fire-places—three down stairs and one in the second story. The chimneys were also built of stone extending up from the cellar. One of them was 6 feet deep and 16 feet long. The front door was an old fashioned Dutch door, divided in the middle. There was also a store house, built of wood, on the south end of the main house, size 30 x 40 feet, two stories. There was also an old barn on the north side of the door yard. The highway running in front of this house was the main road to New Jersey, called the King's Highway, and owing to the addition of a "0" after the "4" rods wide, reads in the records, that it is a highway "40" rods wide. A fine boulevard for that early day! This record is erroneous, tradition says, and that the error was caused either by the recording officer or by the Commissioners who laid out the highway from having "indulged too freely" at the time.

In this house Col. Hathorn lived for over fifty years, and until the time of his death. In the same bedroom on the first floor nine children were born to Col. Hathorn and the same number to his son, George Hathorn. At one time during the Revolution the Colonel was a prisoner in this house, for two weeks at a time, sitting between two windows, with his back to the stone wall, during which time an Indian and a Tory kept him under watch, trying to get a shot at him. His food was carried to him.

It is said that Washington and Lady Washington were guests of Hathorn in this house on more than one occasion, when the General made his trips from Newburgh to Morristown. An old slave of the Hathorn family, named Serena Baise, who used to visit her old home, after it was owned by the Sanfords, loved to tell of Lady Washington's visit at her master's house, and of the number and beauty of her jewels and toilet belongings.

When Washington's army was on the march from Newburgh to Morristown it passed through Warwick, and it is said encamped in the meadow in the rear of the Hathorn house, and at this time Gen. Washington was a guest of the Colonel for several days. An old resident tells that the Colonel was hospitable to a fault, and that at this time he carried whiskey to the soldiers by

the painful; Mrs. Hathorn assisting in these liberal distributions was herself overcome by the fumes.

Mr. Samuel Pelton, an old resident of this town, now in his 86th year, remembers Col. Hathorn, having frequently seen him when he was a boy. He describes him as a short, gray-haired man of fair size, and smooth face. He also remembers attending a Quaker meeting in the Hathorn homestead, at which the only speaker was a woman. Mr. Pelton says that his father, the late Henry Pelton, used to go to the Hathorn house to borrow books to read.

Rev. A. A. Haines, a descendant of Hathorn, in a sketch of his life, read before the Minisink Historical Society in 1889, says: "This house was licensed as an Inn." * * * * "General Hathorn had potash works, a blacksmith shop, wood shops, a store and I think a tannery, with numerous small dwellings for his workmen, all in the vicinity of his house. One of his descendants said he had a small town of his own. For some years he was in business with the Sharps in the iron manufacture, and was clerk or superintendent of the Sharpboro forge in upper Hamburg. This was subsequent to the Revolutionary War."

The writer has been unable to find any portrait or likeness of General Hathorn, although having written to some of his descendants and to the custodians of different Historical Societies and Libraries. Rev. Mr. Haines describes him "as very erect and preserved a military bearing, becoming stout by advanced age. He wore breeches and silver knee buckles, and when in full dress top boots."

A lineal descendant of the late Senator James Burt who was a personal friend of the General, has heard her ancestor describe him as a man of about 5 feet 9 inches in height, full, round face, light complexion, grey hair, very neat in his dress and general appearance and that he wore a Quaker hat. He was a man of great physical endurance and strength.

The stone house of such historic note has been enlarged with modern additions by its present owner, and is one of the most attractive farm houses in our town. The owner's fine herd of Holstein cattle is called "The Hathorn Herd" and his farm "The Hathorn farm." The honored name of its former owner is thus sought to be perpetuated.

There was an Indian village in the upper fields of this farm, or adjoining them, called "Mistucky" ("Miskotucky") and a brook of the same name. The reservoirs supplying the village of Warwick with water are fed by this brook, and are situated partly upon the old Hathorn farm. There was also an Indian orchard on the Welling farm, adjoining Hathorn's. Hathorn's orchard was probably the first grafted orchard in the town and there is one tree of this orchard still standing.

Ruttenber's History of Orange County gives an interesting fact about the Indian village and Chouckhass Hill, situated near the Ball farm, in connection with General Hathorn: Quoting from an article written by the late Grinnell Burt, who says: "My great-grandfather, Daniel Burt, purchased some six hundred acres, extending from the Beardsley purchase up to and including Mistucky, then an Indian village. Chouckhass, the ruling chief, was one of the twelve grantors who signed the deed for the Wawayanda Patent, there lived and died and was buried. Years after, when no trace was left of the In-

dian village, the bones of the old chief were plowed up, and that old patriot, Gen. Hathorn, gave to them a decent sepulture."

The Hathorn burying ground is situated in the rear of the old home on the farm in an orchard. It was here that General Hathorn, his wife and several of his children and servants were buried. The bodies of the General and his wife were removed several years ago to the Belden Burt lot in the Warwick Cemetery, by John M. Burt, and the original grave stones now mark their resting places there. They are inscribed as follows:

Gen. John Hathorn,
born Jan. 9, 1749,
died Feb. 19, 1825.

Elizabeth Hathorn, wife of John Hathorn,
died Aug. 29, 1810, Ae. 60 yrs., 2 m. & 15 ds.

NOTE.—Mr. Sanford's paper is accompanied by an exhaustive collection of documentary records relating to the military, civil and legislative service of General Hathorn, which is necessarily omitted in this number of the Society's publications.