

Col. Michael Kováts

Report of the Commission to locate
the site of the frontier forts of
Pennsylvania, 2 vols. 1895.

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tion with both Fort Hamilton and Fort Hyndshaw are applicable to a certain extent also to Dupui's Fort. As in the case of these other Forts, when peace was finally declared not long after it gradually cast off its warlike garb and became once more the quiet domicile of a prosperous farmer and trader.

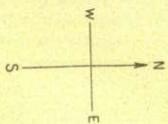
Certainly the history of the three forts just concluded, and the part played by each of them in the dark Indian tragedy, is of sufficient interest and importance to entitle each of them to a tablet, perpetuating their memory, to be placed as may be most advantageous for the purpose intended.

FORT PENN.

Dupui's Fort closes the list of defences erected and used from the Susquehanna to the Delaware River during the Indian War of 1755-63, the history of which has made a more or less connected narrative of events. There remains one more, however, in this territory, which played a part, although not a very important one, in the later events of the Revolutionary War. This was Fort Penn, located in the eastern section of Stroudsburg.

When built and by whom I have not been able to ascertain definitely. It seems to have been erected during the early part of the war, by the authorities of Northampton county, doubtless under direction of the Executive Council. I am even inclined to believe that it was under the direct supervision of Colonel Jacob Stroud, commanding the Sixth Battalion of Northampton county militia, who remained in charge of it during its entire history. Colonel Stroud owned some 4,000 acres of land in its vicinity, and it was after him and his family that Stroudsburg was named. The Colonel himself, however, was not inclined to sell any of his property as building lots, and it was not until after his death in 1806 that the town was really laid out, in an admirable manner, by his son Daniel, who had traveled through various towns and villages in New Jersey and New England, and, copying after them, im-





TO E. STROUDSBURG.
WALNUT ST. →

BRIDGE

CHESTNUT ST.

HICKSITE FRIENDS GEMETERY.

FORT PENN

SLIGHT INCLINE FROM M. E. CHURCH TO CURVE.

M. E. CHURCH.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

ALLEY

CENTRE

MONROE ST.

COURT HOUSE

JAIL

FRANKLIN

MAIN (OR ELIZABETH) ST.

ST.

ANN ST.

MC MICHAEL CREEK POND

WILKESBARE "E" EASTERN R. P.

STROUDSBURG (SECTION TOWARDS EAST.)

SITE OF FORT PENN AT STROUDSBURG.

upon the hapless women, children and old men left in the Valley. It has been assigned to another to tell the sad story of brave but ineffectual defence which was made, and of the terrible scenes of massacre which followed. Families were broken up and dispersed, men and wives separated, mothers torn from their children and some carried into captivity, while those who escaped fled through the wilderness of the Pocono mountains toward the Delaware river. Of these some died of their wounds, others were lost and never heard of more, others again perished in the great swamp of this neighborhood which from that circumstance gained its present name, "The Shades of Death," and the miserable remnant at last found refuge in Fort Penn.

Just prior to this time Col. Spalding had been at Stroudsburg with a detachment, and, upon learning of the danger threatening the people of Wyoming, immediately left to succor them, but was too late, and passed on to the West Branch, and afterwards went up to Sheshequin.

This brings us to the first official record I have been able to find which has any bearing on our subject, a letter to Vice President Bryan signed by Colonel John Weitzel, Lieut. of the County, and John Chambers, a Sub. Lieut. It is as follows:

Northampton, July 8, 1778.

Sir;

Just now we Received A Letter from Col. Stroud of the 6th Batt'n of Northampton County Militia informing us that a body of Indians and Whitemen are upon their march to the Settlements upon Delaware, they being Discovered at the mouth of Lahawaxin and moving towards Shaholy. By the best Information we Received we Learn that Wyoming is Finally Destroyed, upon which we have Ordered out half of the Batt'n of the County; but by all the Accounts it is not a Sufficient number to withstand their Force, as we suppose this to be a Different Number from those at Wyoming, which by those that made their Escape their number is supposed to be between Seven and Eight Hundred.

Sir, we Humbly beg your Interposition on the Premises & am with Due Submission your Humble Servants,

JOHN WEITZEL, Lieut.

JOHN CHAMBERS, Sub. Lieut.

To His Honour George Bryan, Esq'r., Vice President in and for the State of Pennsylvania, at Philadelphia. (Penn. Arch., vi, p. 629.)

The enemy continued their ravages and advance towards the Minisinks, where the people were but poorly prepared to receive them. Col. Stroud begs for aid in a letter of the 17th, to Col. Weitzel:

Fort Penn, July 17th, 1778.

Dear Sir:

I just now, by express, received a letter from Judge Symens, informing me that Coshishton was entirely cut off yesterday morning by a parcell of torys & Indians, masacreing all Men, Woemen & Children, Even those that have been Captivated by them before and dismissed by them with certain badges of Distinction, and their reputed friends they threatnd to cut off, & destroy Peanpeek this morning, which we expect, if they should incline to come on to Minisinks and this place; we shall be unable to prevent it, as we are but about 60 men Strong now assembled, therefore I must beg a line from you directing me what to do, whether to retreat with the inhabitants or stand with a handful of men to be destroyed, or whether I can depend on relief, as we cannot hear anything of relief coming; if you, in your wisdom, should think it Best for me to make as good a Stand as I can, I beg you will in all haste send me more ammunition, and you may depend on my taking all the care I can.

I am, Sir,

your humble Serv't,
JACOB STROUD, Col'n.

P. S.—I cannot moderate the Inhabitants to continue much longer without more assistance, and I beg your instructions as I have had none yet from you; and I assure you I think more danger than I apprehend you think of, and I assure you I cannot Stand nor keep my men here without more assistance. (Penn. Arch., vi, p. 651.)

J. S.

It is the letter of a brave man who was willing to remain at his post of duty in the face of almost certain death if attacked. It is therefore a source of comfort to know that, for the present at least, the danger passed by.

The Indians, however, were a constant menace to the inhabitants, and in September, of the same year, we have this appeal for assistance to Vice President George Bryan, of the Executive Council:

Lower Smithfield, Northampton Co.,
September 27th, 1778.

Sir;

We think proper to give your Honour Intelligence of the present Circumstances of this part of the State, relative to the fears of the good people of these Townships labour under for fear of the Indians. It is some time past since the Militia's times were up & they discharged; we for some time after were in hopes that others would be sent to take their place. Above us in Delaware & upper Smithfield, a fine Contry near thirty miles in length, is almost Evacuated, the people moved over to new Jersey for safety; & in this Township there is only a Guard left at Cornl Stroud, whose times is almost expired & will soon return home, & unless they are replaced with others we shall lay expos'd to the Ravages of the Savages. There is a Verbal report here that Men is sent towards their Towns; as for the certainty we do not know, & if so the success is uncertain, & if the attempt should prove unsuccessful we may soon expect to shere the fate of the later; and as there is no Men to scout to make any discovery, the first notice we may expect is a Stroke, we therefore Submit our case to the wisdom of your Honour & the board of War to grant us such assistance as you in your wisdom shall think Proper.

We are with due respects,
your humble Sarv'ts,
JOHN CHAMBERS, Sub. Lieut.,
BENJAMIN VAN CAMPEN, Sub. Lieut.,
NICHOLAS DUPUI,
JACOB STROUD, Corl,
JOHN VAN CAMPEN.

(Penn. Arch., vi, p. 767.)

Efforts seem to have been made to collect the militia together, but apparently with only partial result, not sufficient to guard against the danger which still threatened. On October 25th, Col. Stroud, himself, writes another letter to the Council direct, laying before them the state of affairs and again asking aid:

Fort Penn, October the 25th, 1778.

Dear Sir;

I heare send with the Bearer the Copy of Two Mens Oathes, and by other circumstances as wee can fully Learn, That the Indeons and Toreys are gon up to Coshishton with their Plunder, and Expect there to get more Reinforcements, and to be Down Immediately on us; perhaps when you see the oathes of these people that was sworn at Minesink, you may not fully persieve why These Toreys that is there spoke of stays in them woods, but I will Relate a little fuller: a great part of these Toreys that has been seen there is persons that has there wives and fameleys and Relations, and indeed Correspondance in the Settlement, and I am apprehensive That the Council and your Honour Dos not persieve how this settlement and Wyoming Lyes, as Wyoming can be of no service to us as a frunteer from the Indeons and Toreys from Coshishton and Cook house, and That Quarter, if you will please to Take the map and Look in that there, you may see that Wyoming with a small party, hardly able to keep That fort can be of any Safety to us from up Delawar, as these Indeons That we feare will fall on us will come down Delawar River with Cnowes (canoes) down to the mouth of Mahaughkamaek Crick, which is just above Our Settlement, as they did Last; or perhaps they may Come a little Lower, as they may find Convenient, as I know of nothing to prevent them; for I assure you there is very few people Left above Manuel Gonsaleses mill, which is 12 miles from My house, and Back of me, between me and the great swamp There is no settlement, but the bare woods, now if it Can be thought Best not to have the frunteer heare, I could wish the Council in their wisdom would point out the place. Indeons is not like our other Ennemys, that we can live with them and about them, but whare they have there Camp for they Distroy

all; and as for the other acc't that wee sent with Esq'r Van-camp, the oath of that woman, the Indians came near the time she spoke of, and had it not been for the high weatther they would have done much more Mischief, for there was nothing to hinder them, for it was Two Days after they was gon before the Malitia could be collected all; so I must Leave the Matter with you and the Council. Hoping you will do at this Distressing time something for us, and to give us Relief, as wee Have our Eyes on you, as wee have no other place to apply to for Relief.

I am, Sir, your very umble serv't,

(Penn. Arch., vii, p. 63.)

JACOB STROUD.

In the beginning of his letter Col Stroud mentions that he sends with the bearer the testimony of two men. This he had just received from his Major, Sam'l Westbrook, with the following letter:

Dear Sir,

I send you the affidavits of Two persons which has had the oportunity of Conversing with some of the Party that was with Brant in Doing the Mischief att Peanpack, and to my sorrow I acquaint you it has struck the People in General with such fear that they are a moving away from the upper End of the Minisink very fast. If there is Not some means Taken to Stop the Enemy the whde of the Inhabitance will move from this Place, and, if so, pray what will be Consiquence? Rain an distruction will Emediatly follow.

I am Sir,

Your Hu'ble Serv't,

SAM'L WESTBROOK, Major.

Sandiston, Oct. 24, 1778.

(Penn. Arch., vii, p. 63.)

Living, as this generation does, in the midst of peace and surrounded by plenty, we can hardly appreciate the sufferings and ordeals through which our fathers were obliged to pass during the long, weary years from 1755 until 1783 during which they were so constantly subject to the murderous assault of the savage Indian. Indeed, more than that, I am deeply impressed with the great lack of general knowledge existing on the subject. Otherwise bright pupils in our pub-

lic schools can give minute details of Indian depredations in Massachusetts and Virginia, and are not aware that their own State was ever called upon to undergo a like trial, and possibly one of even more terrible character. And for this they are not entirely to blame, especially when we consider how little has been written on the subject, and how much less is contained in the histories furnished them for text books.

Unlike the Provincial Government, who, however, were probably not in a position to do so, the Congress, into whose hands the whole matter finally came, determined to strike a severe blow at the savages. Instead of contenting themselves with garrisoning a number of forts and awaiting the approach of the enemy, active preparations were made in the beginning of 1779 to march into their own country and lay it waste. Two armies were placed in the field, one under General Sullivan who started from Easton as his headquarters marched through the Wind Gap and ascended the Susquehanna, and the other under, General James Clinton who descended the same river from the north. This expedition was entirely successful. The savages were completely routed and all their villages totally destroyed, in the summer of that year.

After this terrible lesson it was supposed the Indians would be too much disheartened to undertake further expeditions. Unfortunately such was the case only in part. Small parties of them still continued on the war path, and depredations were still committed although in a more or less desultory manner.

Early in June, 1779, prior to the destruction wrought by Gen'l Sullivan, Captain Brant, the half-bred Indian Chief, left the Susquehanna with some four hundred warriors to make an incursion into the Delaware valley. The settlers received due notice of this movement and threw out scouts to watch him. The wily Indians, however, turned a short corner, struck for the upper Delaware, crossed near Mast Hope, at a place known as Grassy Brook, clambered over the mountains, and by forced marches reached the little town of Minisink, where the town of Port Jervis now stands. The inhabitants fled, and the place was sacked and destroyed. Flushed with success the invaders moved slowly up the Delaware with their

plunder, on the York State side. In the meantime the people of Orange county raised about one hundred and fifty men who started on the trail of the savages. On the night of the 21st the Indians encamped at the mouth of Beaver brook, whilst their pursuers lay four or five miles further down. On the fatal morning of the 22nd both parties were early in motion. Brant had reached the ford at the mouth of the Lackawaxen and a good part of the plunder was safe in Pike county. The whites held a short consultation at the Indian encampment, where the more prudent urged a return. All further deliberation, however, was cut short by a Captain Meeker, who boldly stepped to the front exclaiming, "Let brave men follow me," whereupon nearly the whole party once more started in pursuit. Two short miles brought them to the ford, where a large body of the enemy could be seen on the opposite shore. A few shots were fired and one Indian was seen to roll down the bank towards the river. About this time a heavy volley was fired into the whites from the high hills in the rear, which immediately awoke them to a sense of their danger and the mistake they had made in leaving their only avenue of escape in the hands of the enemy. The officers in command ordered a rush to be made for the high ground. The Indians fell back, and chose their position; the pursued recrossed the river, and the brave but doomed band of patriotic whites were cut off from the water and surrounded by their merciless foes. During the whole of that day the battle raged. As night was closing in, some twenty or thirty, who survived, made a dash for the river, headed by Major Wood, who, through mistake, made the grand masonic hailing sign of distress as he approached the spot where Brant was standing. The Indian, true to his obligation, allowed the party to pass. They swam the river and made their escape into the wilds of Pike county. A few more escaped under cover of darkness, and the rest slept the sleep that knows no waking on this earth. In the year 1822 the bones of friend and foe alike were gathered together, transported to Goshen, in Orange county, where they were decently interred and a beautiful monument erected over them by a public spirited citizen of the place. (History of Penn'a—Dr. W. H. Egle—Vol. ii, p. 1050.)

It was this invasion which caused Col. Stroud to write to Col. Weitzel, the Lieut. of the County, warning him of approaching danger, whereupon Col. Weitzel notified Pres. Reed, and the Council:

Gentlemen,

I this moment Rec'd an express from Col. Strouds, informing me that he hourly expected an attack from the Indians (their being a Large Bodey of them the numbers not known) at the Minisinks, and are Got Down as farr as Aaron Fraudenburgs, in ye Jerseys, and thay have burnt his house and Barr and have taken sum prisseners their. Gent'n Col'n Stroud in his Letter to me Greatly Complains for the whant of Aminition and whee have know Aminition hear to send him, I humbly beg your Excellence will give Orders to the Comiss'y of M. Stores for sum Aminition I haveing Ordered a number of men up to Col. Strouds Assistance as fast as possibly.

JOHN WEITZEL, Lient.

Northampton, y'e 22nd of July, 1779.

(Penn. Arch., vii, p. 572.)

In accordance with this request the Council ordered on July 23d that two hundred pounds of powder, and eight hundred pounds of lead be forwarded as soon as possible, and that the Commissary of Military Stores provide the same, applying to the Honorable Board of War for lead, if the State store cannot supply it, and that the same be delivered to Henry Houghenbuck. (Col. Rec., xii, p. 57.)

The emergency was great and the advance of the enemy such that there seemed but little doubt of his reaching the vicinity of Fort Penn very soon. We are not surprised therefore, in addition to the letter written by Col. Weitzel, to find several from John Van Campen, one of the Sub-Lieutenants of the county, to Pres. Reed, on the same subject. The first is from Lower Smithfield, July 22d, 1779, and reads as follows: Honr'd Sir,

"This morning I Returned home from Minnysink at which place I left last Evening where I was the spectator of great Distress's of many Families, left bare and destitute of all Necessaries of life who lived formerly in the midst of Plenty,

the Depredations of the Enemy your Honour will Observe by the Inclos'd Deposition of the People in general are all fled in Forts Both sides of the River the Distress's is very great in our parts & adjicent Neighbours, after Informing your Hon'r of all the Distress's, I am much pleas'd to see the People animated with such spirit, one Hundr'd & five under the Command of Major Meecker of the State of New York; by the last Accounts Last Evening was in pursuit of the Enemy within four or five miles Distance of their Rear [this was the party which met the terrible defeat just related], this morning one Clock P. M. Capt. Shymer march't across the River Delaware with one hundred and seventy men with an intent to head them off at the mouth of Lakeroack, taken with him 5 Days Provision. I Flatter myself in a few Days to give y'r Honour an agreeable account of those brave men who are always Ready to Step Forth in the Defence of their Country,

I am Sir,

your Hon's most Obd't

Hum'e Serv't,

JOHN VAN CAMPEN.

P. S.—We have apply'd to our Lien's sundry times for Relief but none yet Came.

Coll. Jacob Stroud acts the part of a Brave Officer with a few of his Neighbours who Scouts in the woods with him. (Penn. Arch., vii, p. 573.)

The other letter, written the next day, is as follows:

Honor'd S'r,

It is with Distress of mind I Repeat writing to your Excellency in Confirmation of what I mentioned to your Exlency yesterday by Capt. Shrawder, it is Now an Undoubted case with me that this Operation will be as it seems to appear by Butlers Orders to Capt. Caldwell.

By Express this morning we are informed The Enemy are Legally Encamped at Willes mill and Grinding all the grain that was in the Mill and What they can collect in Defiance of all the Forces that can be collected at present. They have yesterday taking three Prisoners in Jersey and killed 20 head of Horned Cattle and all The Horses of Morgan Desheay in

Pennsylvania, The Entelligence by Express will Accompanie This my letter to your Excellency, I have no Further Doubt unless Speedy Relief by Additions to all the Small Forces we can Collect we will not be able to Relieve the poor people that are Fled into Forts For the Preservation of their Lives.

There seems at Present no Prospect but Distress and Dis- the object of the Enemy is as much Designed against Jersey traction in this part of this Country, it Seems to appear that as Pennsylvania. I could wish to have the State of the Operation of the Enemy sent to me Qualified to, Capt. Hover our Informer is a man of undoubted Carreter.

I Entend this afternoon to Set of to See and learn the move- ment of Enemy, if any Farther Intelligence Properly Asserted by Qualification,

I have the Honor

S'r, to be your

Excellencys most

obb't Hum'e Serv't,

JOHN VAN CAMPEN.

(Penn. Arch., vii, p. 575.)

Mr. Van Campen was doomed to bitter disappointment with regard to the success which he hoped would attend the advance of the parties hastily gathered together. One of them, as we know, was almost totally annihilated, and the other seems to have met with reverses, or at least to have accomplished nothing, if we may judge from the next letter which he wrote Pres't Reed:

Smithfield, July the 31st, 1779.

Hon'd Sir,

The Bearer Coll. Chambers is an ondoubted friend to his Country, Sub. Lien't of our Connty, and an intelligible man, our Country is in a Distress'd situation, in my last to y'r Honour I mention'd of the Distress's of that Rich settlement call'd Mahakemack, I flatter'd myself of success of our men that Step'd forth in Pursuit of the Enemy but my Expectations turned out to the Contrary I came from that place yesterday, where I went to get the Particulars of the present Situation of that Conuntry, I feare, without a speedy Relief this Cuntry will be Vacuated we have as yet no hopes of any Relief

from the Interior parts of this County, your Militia seems to be in Confusion at present, S'r I would Refer you to the Bearer Coll. Chambers for the particulars of our present Situation.

With Due Respect
I am S'r your Honours
Most Obedt Huble Sert,
JOHN VAN CAMPEN.

N. B. By the Bearer I send y'r Honour an account of the men Missing that pursued the Enemy.

The outlook was of a very gloomy character to the good people of the locality about which we are writing, and would have been still more gloomy in reality had it not been for the providential care of Him who watches over all his creatures and so often averts the danger which is about overwhelming them. Just as the Indian Chief, Brant, was about extending his operations and would shortly have fallen upon a rich and populous region, practically without means of defence, he was obliged to abruptly retrace his footsteps and hasten to the protection of his own home now seriously threatened by the advance of General Sullivan. He barely got back in time to prepare for the battle fought near Newtown, the present site of Elmira, N. Y., on August 29th, 1779, which resulted in his total defeat, and was followed by the complete destruction of all the Indian towns, supplies and property in general. The power of the savages was broken, and, whilst small parties still harassed the inhabitants for a long time, they were prevented thereafter, from accomplishing an invasion on a large scale.

The reader has doubtless noticed, from the correspondence given, that there seemed to have been some difficulty in getting the militia under arms when most needed, and some intimation was given of a clash of authority. Such, unfortunately, was the case and we are obliged, reluctantly, to close our record of Fort Penn with an account of the disagreement which arose between Col. Stroud and the county officials.

On the official minutes of the Executive Council for August 4th, 1779, appears this entry:

"Complaint having been made against Jacob Stroud, Colonel of the Sixth Battalion of Northampton County Militia, that He incites the People to oppose the authority of the Lieutenants of the County, and in other respects obstructs the Execution of the Law: Whereupon it was resolved, that Colonel Stroud do attend this Board on the Tenth of September next, to answer the said complaint and that a Copy of this resolution be served upon Him, at least Ten days before, and that Colonel Wetzel do give Notice to the Sub-Lieutenants of this resolve, that they may be ready to Support the said complaint." (Col. Rec., xii, p. 65.)

Notices of this action of the Council were sent by Mr. T. Maylack, Secy, to John Orndt, who was directed to see that they were duly delivered to Colonels Stroud and Weitzel. (Penn. Arch., vii, p. 625.)

What the trouble was we are not told definitely, but can surmise. Col. Stroud was expected to defend his neighborhood from the assaults of the enemy. To do this required troops and these came very slowly indeed, too much so in the opinion of the man who saw the foe drawing nearer every day, knew that all were looking to him for protection, and could see no possibility of obtaining the aid which was needed to enable him to perform his duty. Naturally he blamed the County officers for neglect of duty and doubtless took steps of his own to gather soldiers together, and then came the clash. All were faithful officers, and whilst all were wrong and to blame, yet it was a wrong which might easily be committed under like circumstances, and, which might readily be condoned. Still a disagreement between those who had the care and protection of their fellow citizens in their keeping could only result in public harm, and called for censure. It is a matter of no surprise therefore to find that President Reed felt called upon to address communications to each of the parties in fault, which are herewith given:

In Council,
Philada., August 3d, 1779.

Sir,

The Distresses of your County by the late Incursions of the Indians has given us very great Concern, and the more so as

we understand the Militia having got into some Confusion do not render the Services that might be expected. We are sorry to find that some mistaken Opinions you have formed on the Mode of their being called out & of the appointments of the Lieutenants have had a great share in this Evil. As you are now most probably experiencing the sad Effects of such Mistakes we shall not add to your Pain by dwelling upon them. But desire you to consider the Effects & Consequences which cannot be other than the Ruin of your outer Settlements & Impoverishment of the County itself.

A well regulated Militia is the only proper & effectual Force against Such an Enemy & the Enemy would stand more in Awe of them than three Times the Number of standing Troops. To raise Companies for a few Months is not only dreadfully expensive & in most Cases ineffectual, but it seems to un hinge the System & leave you in fact much weaker than before. As you therefore possess a good share of the Esteem & Confidence of the People, I shall hope & do recommend it to you as the best Service you can perform to your bleeding Country to do away as far as possible the Effects of former Opinions & strive by a general Concurrence with the other Gentlemen in the Militia to give them Vigour & Efficacy, encouraging and promoting a Spirit of Fidelity & Obedience to the Laws calculated to afford the best Relief & Security against this dreadful Calamity.

Wishing you Health & Safety

I remain Sir, your most

obed & very H^{ble} Serv^t.

JOS. REED,

President.

To Colonel Jacob Stroud, of N'n County.

(Penn. Arch., vii, p. 613)

Of the same date follows another to the colonels and other field officers of the militia in Northampton county:

Philada., Aug. 3, 1779.

Gentlemen:

It has given us great Concern to hear that when your County is in the utmost Danger & Apprehension, when so many of

your friends & Countrymen are suffering so much from a cruel & barbarous Enemy, the Militia which is well regulated would be your best Defence is in such a state of Confusion as to give little or no Aid. We entreat you Gentlemen to bestir yourselves, support your Lieutenants with your utmost Weight & Influence, remove from the Minds of your Neighbours every unkind & uncharitable Sentiment & urge them to obey the Laws, to perform the Offices & Duties of Humanity which require us on all Occasions to endeavor to relieve the Distresses & remove the Dangers of our Friends & Fellow Subjects. It is probably from this Beginning that the Indians finding you so unprepared will be induced to continue their Ravages & endeavor to evade the Expedition set on Foot against them by distressing & destroying the Frontiers.—I therefore take this Opp'y to request you would at some convenient Day call out your Battalions, convince them of the Necessity & Duty they are under to turn out with Alacrity & Zeal when such Havock is made among their Friends & Countrymen. If they are Lovers of this Government & Constitution they will shew it by their Submission to its Laws & a cheerful Discharge of their Duty,—for nothing can so effectually disgrace & injure any government as having its Laws neglected, its Frontiers destroyed & a mere handful of an Enemy committing Ravages which the spirited Exertions of a few men will soon suppress if animated by a proper Sense of Duty to themselves & their Country.

Extinguish the Disputes which subsist among you as fatal to your Peace, Safety & Happiness & hereafter let there be but one Dispute who shall serve his Country best. If there are any Differences between you & any of the Lieutenants in Matter of Opinion avoid Disputes & Heartburnings as much as possible, support each other, & be assured that we will support you with every Necessary. If I could flatter myself this happy Spirit would prevail I should have Pleasure in visiting the Country & examining the State of the Militia. This I shall endeavor to do this Fall if other publick Bsnsess will

admit, in the mean Time recommending these Things to your most serious Consideration.

I remain Gentlemen
Your Sincere Friend
& Obed Hbble Serv't,

(Penn. Arch., vii, p. 616.) JOS. REED, President.

The third letter, also of the same date, is to Col. John Weitzel, Lieutenant of Northampton county:

Philada., August 3, 1779.

Sir,

The Depredations which have lately been committed in & near the County of Northampton have given us the most sensible Concern. We have flattered ourselves that the Expedition under Gen'l Sullivan would have given perfect Peace to that & every other Part of our Western Frontiers. It must now be clearly evident that nothing can afford effectual Relief against this Calamity but a well regulated Militia, which being always at Hand might before This Time, if duly attended to, have given a Check to their barbarous Incursions. It was to this Force & not to standing Troops or Volunteer Companies, raised for a few months & stationed in Forts, that N. England delivered herself from the most horrible Indian Wars. And we must recommend it to you in the most earnest & serious Manner to give this important Service your utmost Attention. If your other offices, as we fear is the Case, interfere with your Duties as Lieutenant of the County we would wish you to Consider in which you can be most useful, and not suffer one Duty to clash with another by attempting to perform too much or too many.

If the Colonels or other Officers fail in their respective Duties & do not give you the Support they ought we request you would candidly and fairly communicate such Transactions that Measures may be taken to enforce a different Line of Conduct. If the Frontiers are broke up those who now think themselves safe will be a Frontier & shortly experience that wretchedness from which they now refuse to rescue their Neighbours. We doubt not from the Influence & Weight you must possess that your Representations on this Head will be

much regarded & we do entreat you to leave no Means untried to effect this desirable Purpose.

We immediately complied with your Request the other Day, we shall do the same on all other Occasions being resolved that nothing in our Power shall be wanting to give the good People of the County all possible Relief and Assistance.

I am Sir,

Your most Obed. & very
Hbble Serv't,

(Penn. Arch., vii, p. 617.) JOS. REED, President.

In due course of time the tenth day of September arrived when Col. Stroud was to appear before the Council at Philad'a to answer for his actions. In justice to a faithful officer, the reader of this record will be equally gratified with him who writes it to see the following happy conclusion of a most unfortunate state of affairs, as taken from the minutes of Council on that day:

"This being the day appointed for hearing the complaint against Colonel Stroud, and the parties attending, and producing sundry papers, which were also read, the Council took the same into consideration; whereupon,

Resolved, That the conduct of Colonel Stroud, in arraignment the authority of the Lieutenants, and the legality of their appointments, is Highly disapproved by this Board, it being their clear opinion, confirmed by the sentiments of all parts of the State, that the Assembly have a legal constitutional power to appoint Lieutenants, and that they ought to be respected accordingly.

Resolved, That disputes between officers appointed to promote the same service, and Especially one on which the safety and security of the People so much depend, is highly prejudicial to the Public Welfare; that, therefore, it be recommended to the parties now before the Board, to lay aside all animosities, and, in future, treat each other with kindness, and conduct the Publick business with Harmony.

Resolved, That in consideration of Colonel Stroud's good Character as an officer, his activity and zeal in the Publick Service, the Board think it proper to pass over any farther proceedings herein." (Col. Rec., xii, p. 100.)

Thus happily ends our account of the more important transactions about Fort Penn.

Thus also ends our record of the Indian Forts along the Blue range, a record which leaves behind it a trail of blood such as, we trust, the fair fields of our beloved State may never again be called upon to witness. The old forts have crumbled away, never more to be rebuilt, and the peaceful plow has long since leveled to the ground the little mounds which marked the line of their stockades. Even their existence was fast passing out of the memory of man, and in a few brief years the location of the spots on which most of them stood would have been buried in utter oblivion had it not been for the wisdom of our Legislature in the appointment of the Commission whose labors have just been completed.

As my investigation into the task assigned me progressed, I was very greatly impressed with its importance, and still more greatly impressed with the neglect which has heretofore been generally accorded it. It is painful to realize how few are familiar with the events of momentous historical importance which transpired at this period in the life of our Commonwealth, and on the other hand gratifying to see how many are desirous of acquiring this information which has hitherto been denied them because not published in a suitable form.

My work is necessarily one of compilation, as is all history, and yet it contains much that is original especially that with regard to the location of the several forts. These were, in nearly every instance, obtained after most thorough personal visitation and investigation. Indeed I have aimed to insert nothing in this record which is not actual and true history, and, to that end, have written nothing until, after most careful scrutiny and comparison with the statements of reliable authors on the same subject, I have felt assured of its authenticity. And yet, withal, I am painfully aware of how imperfect my efforts have been, and am only constrained to offer them, in obedience to my appointment by his Excellency the Governor, and the hope that they may be an incentive to further research, which in the near future may result in more

valuable publications and writings on a most important subject heretofore too much neglected.

In the prosecution of this work my correspondence has necessarily been very large. In addition it has been my privilege to pay personal visits to many homesteads, and to interview many persons. It is with great pleasure I here testify to the universal courtesy and kindness shown me, and the universal desire to aid me in my work, in which every one became at once greatly interested. With the best of intention, however, I found that an actual knowledge of affairs, in many instances, no longer existed, and would have failed in my work had it not been for the presence in the community of one or more very aged gentlemen, in several instances almost centenarians who may, even now, have ceased to exist.

In all cases where information of a more important character was furnished me, I have endeavored to give the name of my informant and fair credit for the same. It only remains for me to mention the name of one more gentleman, not hitherto given, Mr. Samuel J. Weiler, of Reading, Penn'a, who, above all others, has rendered me most valuable aid. Thoroughly acquainted with every road and part of the country in my district, between the Susquehanna and Lehigh rivers, as well as with all the principal inhabitants, he has most cheerfully and unselfishly placed his knowledge at my disposal, besides much of his time, and has been the means of my quickly accomplishing results which could only have been brought about otherwise with the expenditure of much time and labor.

To him and all my kind friends I return sincere thanks.

Respectfully submitted,

H. M. M. RICHARDS.

Reading, Penna., May, 1894.