

BERGEN COUNTY, N. J., CANNOT BE REPROACHED FOR OMITTING TO PRESERVE ITS HISTORICAL RELICS AND DATA.

HISTORIC HACKENSACK.

BERGEN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY FORMED THERE BY RESIDENTS.

MANY REVOLUTIONARY RELICS NOW TO BE SEEN—GRAVE OF ONE OF LAFAYETTE'S GENERALS.

At last the people of Bergen County have succeeded in organizing a historical society at Hackensack that is fair to be of enduring benefit to that part of Northern New Jersey, as far as keeping possession of authentic historical data, relics and curios dating back to the Revolutionary period and before is concerned.

This society shall be known as the Bergen County Historical Society. Its objects shall be the collection of natural history, papers incident to the civil, political, military and general history of Bergen County and adjoining counties in New Jersey, and Rockland County, N. Y., through the collection of historical and topographical information, and the diffusion of a sound historical taste and the encouragement of a patriotic sentiment.

The Historical Society has elected the following officers: President, William M. Johnson, First Assistant Postmaster General; vice-presidents, William A. Linn, of Hackensack; J. V. Moore and Cornelius Christie, of Leonia; Miss Elizabeth Vermylye, of Englewood; the Rev. William H. Vroom, of Westwood, and Abram De Beau, of Hackensack.

While the present generation of the old Bergen County families lay particular stress on the Revolutionary history of the county, this new society will pay particular attention to getting all official data back to 1682, when the county of Bergen was established. At that time the county included the territory east of the Hackensack River from the Kill Van Kull to the State line. In 1793 the county of Bergen was enlarged, and from that time on until 1821, when Passaic County was set off, it included the latter, with the exception of the small part southward of the Passaic (taken from Essex) and the county of Hudson, which was set off in 1840.

Bergen County in her undivided state passed through the phases of colonization and civil rule under the Dutch of New-Netherlands; through the transition to an English colony and the government of the Proprietors of East Jersey; through the exciting scenes of the early Indian wars; the period of colonial authority under the queens and kings of England—all matter of much interest and importance to the Bergen County Historical Society, besides the stirring events for the struggle for independence.

The most ancient and interesting part of the old county of Bergen is that portion of it which was set off to form the county of Hudson in 1840, after having borne the name of Bergen for nearly two hundred years. Lying along the west side of New York Bay and the Hudson River, close to the present headquarters on Manhattan, it early attracted attention, and became the subject of the first purchase from the Indians in East Jersey. On July 12, 1680, this portion of territory was purchased from the Indians by the Director General and Council of New-Netherlands for Michael Pauw, Burgomaster of Amsterdam and Lord of Aechtshoven, near Utrecht.

Bergen County residents always point with a degree of pride to the fact that a portion of the county was the scene of much activity in the Revolutionary period, and also to the fact that General Washington made his headquarters for some considerable time in Hackensack. There have been many controversies as to the exact dates, incidents and locations of Revolutionary matters, and the new historical society will find much to interest it in deciding upon the conflicting reports.

Fort Lee stands alone in point of Revolutionary importance, for here it was that Washington's army, under General Lee, encamped for a long time. But the camp was not on the Palisades bluff, and the proposed monument to be erected at Fort Lee will not be on the bluff. The camp was on the west side of the ravine or ferry road, and

SPECIMENS FROM THE HISTORICAL EXHIBITION AT HACKENSACK. Pewter platter and bowl (Fort Lee). Cup from which Washington drank. Knife, fork and spoon (Fort Lee). Revolutionary china teapot and Aaron Burr's candlesticks.



commanded an excellent view of the only inlet from the river, opposite Fort Washington. For a long time it was said that there were two camps at this place, named Fort Constitution and Fort Lee, but the controversy ended when it was proved that Fort Lee was first known as Fort Constitution.

On the property where now is located the Belvidere Hotel can be plainly seen the ruins of the stone oven where the Continental soldiers baked their bread, the ruins of a large stone hut, the one said to have been occupied by General Greene; Washington's well, from which the troops obtained water for the camp, and the "Dead Brook." This brook has its tradition. Some say it obtained its name after a Hessian soldier had been shot while washing his feet in the water.

The moment which the State will erect at Fort Lee, Assemblyman Tillotson's bill calling for an appropriation of \$1,000 for that purpose, will be in the center of what was formerly known as Parker's Pond, near the line of the Hudson River Traction Company. The pond has been dried out and the property fenced in. Exploded shells, rifle balls, cannon balls, Hessian bayonets, English swords, powder flasks, bullet moulds and many other Revolutionary relics have been picked up at Fort Lee, and many are now on exhibition in the Johnson Library Hall at Hackensack.

Washington while in Hackensack made his headquarters in Peter Zabriske's home, now the Mansion House. He was served with his meals across the street at the home of Archibald Campbell, whose descendants, Mrs. Kate Hasbrouck, Mrs. Jane Adams and Adolph W. Campbell, are



Cannon ball and powder flask (Fort Lee). Flintlock pistol, with folding bayonet. Hessian bayonet and rifle bullets (Fort Lee). André prison lock and key (Tappan, N. Y.)

There is no doubt that the historical society will endeavor to get possession of a number of the relics and curiosities seen at the loan exhibit in the Johnson Library Hall, in charge of a number of women of the library association, of which Miss Taplin and Mrs. Cornelius Blauvelt are at the head. Among the choicest of these curios, all of historical interest to the county, is a copper kettle taken from the Brinkerhoff homestead, erected in 1704. There is an ancient pie filler for a Dutch oven, over two hundred years old. There is a deed from Peter Zabriske to William Sanford, dated 1771. In 1788, the money order for \$250 signed by Aaron Burr has its local interest.

those of Albert Silingerland and Heater Brickers, both from Albany. The original church officers at the organization were Hendrick Jorese and Albert Ferense, elders, and Hendrick Epke and Volkert Hansen, deacons. The first dominie of this old church was the Rev. Petrus Taschemaker. He moved to Schenectady and was pastor of the Reformed Dutch Church at that place at the time of the massacre by Indians in 1663. Dominie Taschemaker, his wife and colored servants were among the victims of the Indians. The present site of the church, together with adjoining lands, including a large portion of "the green," or park, was given to the church on April 20, 1664, by Captain John Berry, and the original

He is said to have married a Miss Van Der Linde, and later purchased 1,977 acres from the Indians, called the "New Paramus Patent." The original proprietors of Hackensack were Captain William Sanford and Captain John Berry, who made extensive purchases from the Indians. A subsequent purchaser was Nathaniel Kingsland, and because he had been a sergeant major in the Island of Barbadoes the township, including Hackensack, was named New-Barbadoes, a name still retained. The first Sheriff of Bergen County was Michael Smith, who married a daughter of Captain John Berry. The first recorded murder was that of Nicholas Quers by a negro named Harry, belonging to Hendrick Christian Zabriske, on October 29, 1787. The special evidence against the prisoner, besides the dead man's face being swollen when he touched the dead man's face, blood flowed from the nostrils of the dead man. The coroner's jury immediately concluded the negro was the murderer, and he was executed. The Freeholders' records contain the execution of "Jack," a negro, for burning seven barns in May, 1741.

One of the oldest houses in Bergen County, and one of the most interesting historically, is the "Widow Prevost House," at Hohokus. It was here that Colonel Aaron Burr carried on his courtship at the time of the Revolution of Mrs. Theodosia Prevost, a talented and captivating widow, who occupied this house at that time. The house was occupied and owned by a wealthy English family for some time previous to the Revolution, and for many years was known as "The Little Hermitage." Mrs. Prevost was living with her brother, a French nobleman, who owned the house at the time. She met Colonel Burr while he was in the vicinity, and the friendship ripened into love. One story is to the effect that Colonel Burr was stationed in New-York, that he used to cross the Hudson River near Closter in a flat bottomed boat, with his horse lying down in the boat. The ride through the dangerous Palisades woods and the Paramus Valley, where the British soldiers could be expected at any moment, is regarded as the stirring feature of the courtship. Another story is that Colonel Burr's love making took place while he was stationed at Suffern, in the Ramapo Valley. While the general belief is that Colonel Burr and Mrs. Prevost were married in 1782, in the parlor of "The Little Hermitage," some say the marriage took place in the Paramus Reformed Church, but the church records do not show this. The house is of handsome dressed brownstone from nearby quarries, with oak and chestnut timbers. The original Prevost residence is the northern half of the present structure, the other portion having been built in 1812 for Dr. Elijah Rosencranz, whose family has been in possession since that time. William Rosencranz is the present owner. The house is almost hidden by trees. It seems able to withstand two centuries more of time. On two of the stones in the original house, above the windows, are found Masonic emblems, and it is believed that the house was first built by the Masonic fraternity. Mr. Rosencranz saw a few days ago that he was of

ON THE PACIFIC SLOPE.

ARMY TRANSPORT EXTRAVAGANCE—A STORY OF SHIPWRECK.

San Francisco, April 11.—The relations of extravagance in connection with the army transport service at San Francisco and Manila were fully expected by those who have made any careful study of the subject. No one who knows General Long would dream of accusing him of any share in the fraud and waste that has been laid bare, but he was certainly lax in trusting subordinates who took advantage of his confidence in their watchfulness and honesty. Of course, much of the alleged extravagance in fitting up transports can be explained by the urgent necessity for getting the vessels into commission in the shortest time possible and by the bad condition of the labor market, which at times made it impossible to obtain skilled workmen. But there is no excuse for paying two or three times the open market rate for supplies or for permitting vessels under expensive charters to lie for weeks at dock.

The British remount scandals in the South African service show how easily officers succumb to the great temptation offered by unscrupulous agents of big firms, and the same ugly features of dishonesty and favoritism taint nearly all the details of fitting out the transport service in San Francisco. The United States built up a fine service for transporting troops to and from the Philippines, but it cost at least double what it would had close supervision been given to repairs and supplies.

The escape of the officers and the crew of the British ship Frankistan, which was burned at sea, forms another tale of adventure on the Pacific, which is so prolific of stories of peril and death. For four days the captain and all hands expected every moment that the vessel would be blown up by the imprisoned gases generated by the burning coal. For nearly four months the vessel had been crossing the Pacific, and the long passage under the tropical sun so heated the coal that it finally broke into flames. For four days every yard of canvas was stretched to carry the ship nearer to the California coast, and thus make a journey in open boats less dangerous. On the last day, however, when the pitch was bubbling in the seams of the deck and the hatches were blown off, a schooner hove into sight and rescued the ship's crew.

Another coal laden vessel, long overdue, the French bark Olivier de Clisson, is believed to have been burned at sea, but nothing yet has been heard of her crew.

E. S. Willard has drawn good audiences to the Columbia to witness "The Cardinal." Next week Willard will give a varied bill. At the Tivoli Opera House "The Fortune Teller" is revived, and at Fischer's Weber and Field's New-York success "Fiddle Dee Dee" is having a big run.

The Fair heirs have bought the southeast corner of Sutter and Powell sts., with additional land on Powell-st., thus giving them a corner 162½ feet on Sutter-st. by 77½ feet on Powell-st. They propose to add 40 feet on Powell-st., which will give to them 137½ feet on that street. Their plans are for a big private hotel with stores underneath.

A pretty wedding this week was that of Miss Edith Preston, daughter of Colonel Edgar F. Preston, and Willard N. Drown. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. H. C. Fouts, of Grace Church.

Green B. Morris, the well known horseman, who has had a string of flyers at the Oakland track this winter, has been in the hospital all this week, suffering from a light attack of small-pox. He was in no danger, and will soon be out. Smallpox has been prevalent in Oakland and Berkeley, and several cases at the State University led to a stringent order for the vaccination of all the students.

The Oakland Board of Trade is giving all day excursions to the Oakland suburbs, Berkeley and the State University and Hayward for \$1. The design is to show to tourists and home seekers the beauty of Oakland and its suburbs at blossom time, when all the fruit trees and flowering shrubs are in full bloom.

Santa Clara County has held a blossom festival this week that surpassed any previous exhibition. Every day a different town has been the centre of a show, and trips through miles of blooming cherry, almond, prune, apricot and peach trees have delighted hundreds of strangers. This festival is in imitation of the cherry blossom festivals in Japan, and the wealth of orchards in this garden spot of California makes the series of fête days one of the most beautiful spectacles the world can furnish.

The dedication of the beautiful Stanford Memorial Church has been finally postponed to September 7, as it was found impossible to complete the elaborate frescoes of the interior before commencement day. The Rev. Dr. R. Heber Newton, of New-York, who recently resigned from the pastorate of All Souls' Church, will have charge of the chapel, and will also deliver lectures at the university on ethics.

Nearly two hundred carloads of oranges were shipped East over the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe railroads last week, which broke the record of citrus fruit shipments. The fruit is now ripening so rapidly that railroads have been pushed to provide cars.

SOME OF THE FOUNDERS OF THE BERGEN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.



The Rev. E. T. Sanford.

Caleb Van H. Whitbeck.

W. O. Lehigh.

James A. Romeyn.

W. M. Johnson, First Assistant Postmaster General.

still living in Hackensack. Mrs. Hasbrouck has in her possession a cup which was part of the silver service used by Washington at his meals. This cup is also on exhibition at the library. The body of Brigadier General Enoch Poor, of New-Hampshire, lies in the southwest corner of the First Reformed Church burying ground, where the Sons of the Revolution of New-Hampshire purpose erecting a monument. General Washington attended the funeral of General Poor in September, 1780, and in 1824 Lafayette visited the grave. According to the inscription on the tombstone, "Lafayette, turning away from the grave, exclaimed, 'Ah, that was one of my generals!'"

The First Reformed Church has had a conspicuous part in the history of Bergen County. There is only one church in the State that is older—the Reformed Church at Bergen, built in 1686. The church organization was effected in 1686, but it was ten years later before a place of worship was erected. Where services were held in these ten years is not known, but the present church is on the original site. The church at English Neighborhood, now Ridgedale, bears the date 1788; the church at Paramus was organized in 1725. The first baptism at Hackensack in 1688 was that of Jaemie Simson. The first names on the marriage record, which begins at the date of January 15, 1685, are

dead is now in the archives of the church. The Rev. Theodorick Romeyn was pastor of the "old church on the green" during the Revolutionary period, and to him was given much annoyance by the British soldiers, who on one occasion stole all his household effects. On another occasion two armed loyalists attempted to murder him, but were prevented from doing so by the timely arrival of his armed companions. Dr. Romeyn was an ardent patriot, and because of his position the British gave him the title of "The Rebel Parson." The Bergen County Court House, directly opposite the First Reformed Church, was built in 1810, but the present structure is the result of much adding thereto and remodeling. The first court-house was burned by the British in 1780, and for two years court was held at Wyckoff in consequence. The first meeting of the trustees of Queen's (now Rutgers) College was ordered to be held at or near the County House of New-Barbadoes, or Hackensack, on the second Tuesday of May, 1767.

The civil history of Hackensack, so far as known, dates back only a few years previous to the church organization, to 1641, when the town was a trading post. The town derived its name from the tribe of Hackensackchuckey Indians that dwelt in that region, of which Oratany was chief. The Oratani Field Club is named after this celebrated chief, though the name is changed somewhat in its spelling. The first known settler in Hackensack was Albert Sabrowski, who emigrated from Poland. He crossed the ocean in the Dutch ship Fox in 1662.

"CHARLIE" BENSEL AND HIS BANJO.

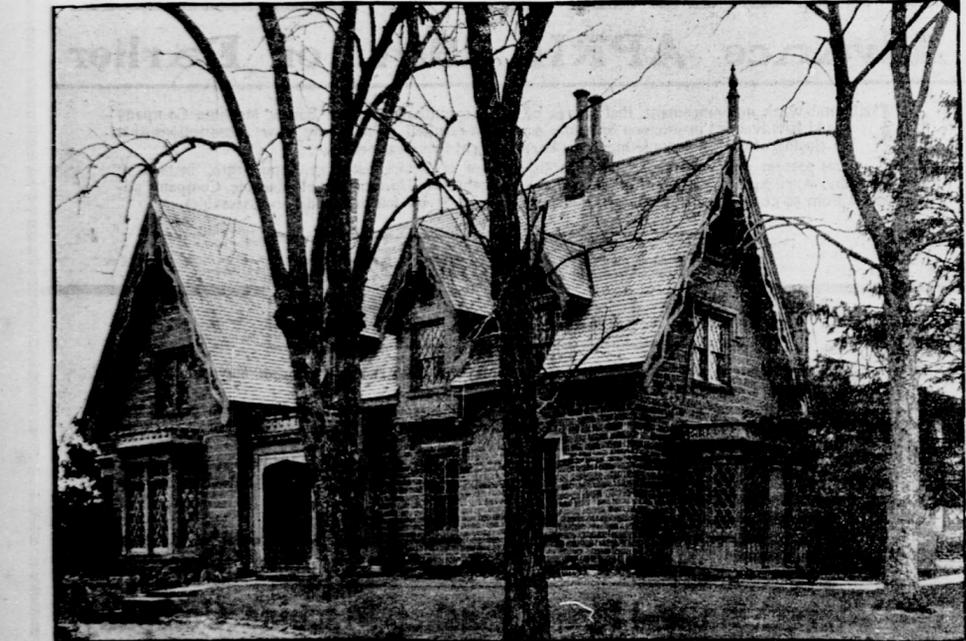
HOW IT BROUGHT HIM LUCK WHEN HE WAS REDUCED TO EXTREMITIES.

The death recently of "Billy" West, the negro minstrel, recalls the luck that a banjo brought to a New-York boy who went to California in 1852 to "get rich" in the gold mines. He was "Charlie" Bensele, of a well known family in this city, and had learned the machinist's trade as well as to play the banjo, and he obtained a position as assistant engineer on a small steamer that went around to the Pacific by way of the Straits of Magellan. While lying in the harbor of Callao, Peru, the vessel took fire and was destroyed, and those on board saved only what they could carry in their hands. Bensele and the others subsequently reached San Francisco by working their passages on other vessels.

When young Bensele reached San Francisco all he had in the world were the clothes he had on and his banjo, and after wandering about two or three days in an unsuccessful search for employment he became so hungry that he concluded to get one good meal at a restaurant and then give a "promise" to pay. After eating a couple of dollars' worth in one of the tent restaurants he went to the proprietor and told his story. The proprietor was so impressed with Bensele's truthfulness that he told him he would trust him until he got enough to pay his bill, but, observing that he had a banjo, asked him to play a tune, which resulted in his being hired to play and to sing negro melodies at the door of the tent to attract custom. Soon afterward he went into the mines at Virginia City, where he succeeded beyond his anticipations, but in a couple of years he organized a minstrel company, which became popular not only on the Pacific Coast, but also in China, where it went on a tour and where Bensele died. He had been associated with Backus, Birch, Wambold, Cotton, Cox and other minstrels, including West, and before he died he owned a large property in Sacramento. His start in life he attributed to the banjo, which he had learned to play when an apprentice boy in New-York.

JUST THE THING.

From The Philadelphia Record. "I always take my dog with me when I make a balloon ascension," said the aeronaut. "A Skye terrier, I suppose," remarked the village wit.



HOUSE NEAR HOHOKUS, N. J., IN WHICH AARON BURR COURTED AND WON THEODOSIA PREVOST.



SITE OF THE PROPOSED MONUMENT AT FORT LEE.