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ANCESTRY AND DESCENDANTS OF
HANNAH MATHEWS TOWAR

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Edgar H. Towar
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1901
Tower

*Fifty Copies of this Book were Printed in
the Month of April, One Thousand
Nine Hundred and Twenty-two*



HANNAH MATHEWS TOWAR
IN HER NINETIETH YEAR

ANCESTRY
AND DESCENDANTS
OF
HANNAH MATHEWS TOWAR

PRIVATELY PRINTED

1922

4.



FOREWORD

THE genealogical connections of Mrs. Hannah Mathews Towar, to whose memory this little book is a tribute, are very large, and may be traced with much collateral detail in several family records, notably those of the Strong and the Sayre families. Through her mother, Elizabeth Sayre, she also claims descent from the Woodhulls, Smiths, and Fordhams of Long Island, and from the Strongs and Holtons of Northampton; on her father's side the Mathews line connects with the colonial settlers of New York and the patroons of Albany. To any one familiar with the story of the settlement of the colonies, the possibilities of family ramification thus suggested are practically limitless; most of the information here presented may be found, if one searches for it, in the carefully collated family records already mentioned. Other genealogical studies have furnished corroborative details; the main sources in each case have been, of

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course, the colonial documents, the many histories of towns and counties, and, for later times, the private papers and personal notes and sometimes the memories of the oldest living members of the family. A great deal that is interesting has not been included here, for the purpose of this compilation has been simply to put into a form that those personally interested can follow without too much distraction, the succession of the generations since the immigrants that have gone to make up one woman's ancestry; perhaps also to preserve a little longer some of the traditions that help make these long-dead forebears seem real to us. When justified by family prepossessions or sufficient historical interest, collateral details have been included, but in general the facts related here belong to Mrs. Towar's ancestors in the direct line from the founders.

In one line the available information seems very scanty. A glance at the chart, which is designed only to make clear the succession of descent, shows a blank where the ancestors of Mrs. Towar's maternal grandmother, Mercy, or, as the old letters have it, Marcy Seely, should be named. If it were possible to trace that line as fully

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as the others have been traced, the present study would be more satisfactory to the earnest genealogist; but incomplete as it is, the chart displays names of such quality and distinction in colonial times that it should be a matter of pride to Mrs. Towar's descendants.

The book has been planned and its printing arranged for by Mrs. Towar's son, Mr. Edgar H. Towar, of Convent, New Jersey. During the latter part of his mother's long life of over one hundred years, her home in Detroit was a Mecca for pilgrims of varying degrees of kindred. There has always been a strong tendency seriously to consider the bonds of relationship as real ties, both in the Mathews connection and among the Sayres; the recurrence of certain christian names in every generation of Colonel Peter Mathews' descendants, though at times unappreciated by the historian, is an evidence of their clannishness, and Elizabeth Sayre, Mrs. Towar's mother, was of the third generation in the old homestead where the seventh generation still lives. In her widowhood she went back to her girlhood home, where her brother Jonas had established his wife as mistress, but where the oldest brother, unmarried and always re-

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spectfully addressed by his youngers as "Brother James," was exercising the rights of primogeniture as head of the family in almost patriarchal fashion. This acknowledgment of relationship as a responsibility that is at the same time a privilege was Mrs. Towar's inheritance, and she made it a pleasure as well. She knew the name of the smallest twig on every branch of the family tree, and if one of the younger relatives from a distance appeared at her threshold, he remained a stranger only so long as it took him to tell her his name; the gracious welcome he received then was so intelligent and so informing that those of us who were fortunate enough to see "Cousin Hannah" under such circumstances have never forgotten it, nor the charming old lady who gave it, so exquisite in dress and manner, so interesting in her knowledge of her kith and kin, past and present, and so cordial in her recognition of the claims of "the family."

It is such a claim that Mr. Towar is satisfying in printing these facts of his mother's ancestry, and those relatives who have helped him to fill out the gaps in his own information have been glad to admit his right to call upon them for aid. Especially

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is this true of the compiler, who has thoroughly enjoyed the privileges of descendant and chronicler.

August, 1921.

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THE MATHEWS FAMILY

PETER MATHEWS, first of his line in America, came in 1692 to New York, presumably from Ireland, where he had served under Benjamin Fletcher, accompanying him as a member of his staff when Fletcher came over to take up his duties as colonial governor; a tradition that the young man was the governor's nephew is strengthened by a mention of him in a report of the Earl of Bellomont, Fletcher's successor but not his well-wisher, as "having been bred up from a child with Governor Fletcher." Although this was apparently no recommendation to Governor Bellomont's favor, Peter Mathews rose in his service and in that of later governors from the rank of lieutenant to that of colonel; at one time he narrowly escaped being exchanged back to England because his annoyed superior officer accused him of frequenting homes of dissatisfied subjects of the king where "cabals" against the government were originated, but upon Mathews' promise to use

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more caution in his visits, the governor withdrew his request for exchange. As officer in command of troops he signed many military reports during the French and Indian and Queen Anne's wars, and his name is often mentioned in colonial documents. In 1702 he sailed for England in the *Advice*, carrying official papers to the king's government from Governor Cornbury. In one laconic despatch he makes deposition that having gone into Connecticut with the governor's warrant for the arrest of two deserters, while returning with them through Stamford, Sunday morning, he was held up at the inn by two zealous advocates of strict Sabbath observance, and was by them restrained until sundown from farther traveling on Sunday. There seems to have been some discrimination in the enforcement of the blue laws, for during Colonel Peter's involuntary sojourn in the inn parlor, one of his prisoners escaped.

But he was not only a man of war. In 1715 he was commissioner of Indian affairs, having been commended for his ability to gain their confidence, and his name appears on individual and community grants of land in Westchester County, in Orange County, and at Albany as that of a

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man in some standing in public opinion. He was also one of the founders of St. Peter's, in Albany, and its first warden, a few years before his death in 1719. By his will his wife, Bridget, of whom nothing else is known but whom he evidently married in England before his emigration, inherits all his rather large property, with no mention of any children. Two years later, however, at her death, her will names "my only son Vincent," a grandson Peter, who inherits his grandfather's silver watch, and two daughters, Catherine and Flora. No further record of the daughters has been found, but the "only son" carried on his father's name worthily.

VINCENT MATHEWS was born in 1698 and died in 1784. He had apparently done military service under his father when still very young, for a Vincent Mathews is mentioned in several of Colonel Peter's despatches, always subordinate to and in close connection with the older officer. Barely twenty-one when his father died, he was apparently already a married man—witness the grandson Peter, who certainly existed very soon afterward—and he was before the Revolu-

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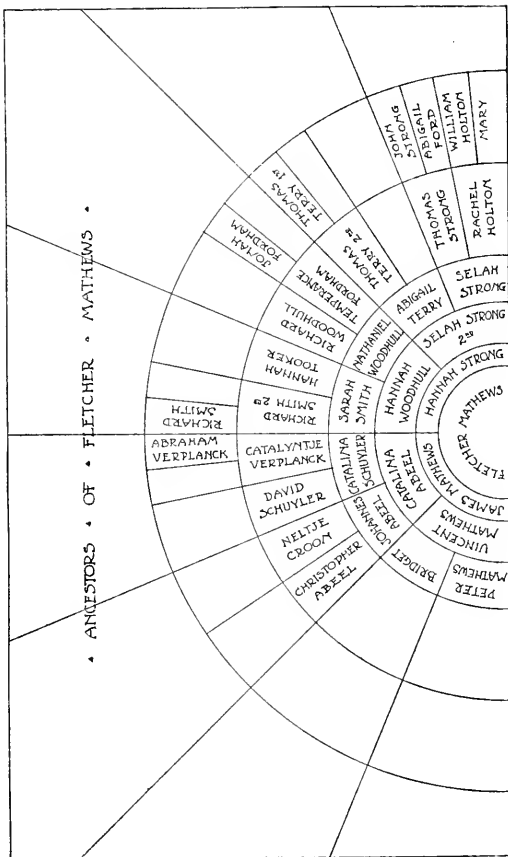
tion a man of means and affairs. Like his father, he was a landed proprietor; there is recorded his purchase of land in Orange County for the sum of £1,000, a goodly amount in those days, where he built his home, calling it Mathewsfield. Until the last generation portions of that property have still been in the possession of his descendants. He held various civil offices, being at different times clerk of Orange County, colonel of the county militia, county judge and assemblyman, and commissioner for settling the boundary between New York and Connecticut. Like his father again, he was an active supporter of the Church of England, being warden of St. David's, at Cornwall, just before the war. No suspicion of his loyalty to the cause of the colonies is ever suggested, although one at least of his sons had a very different record, as will presently appear.

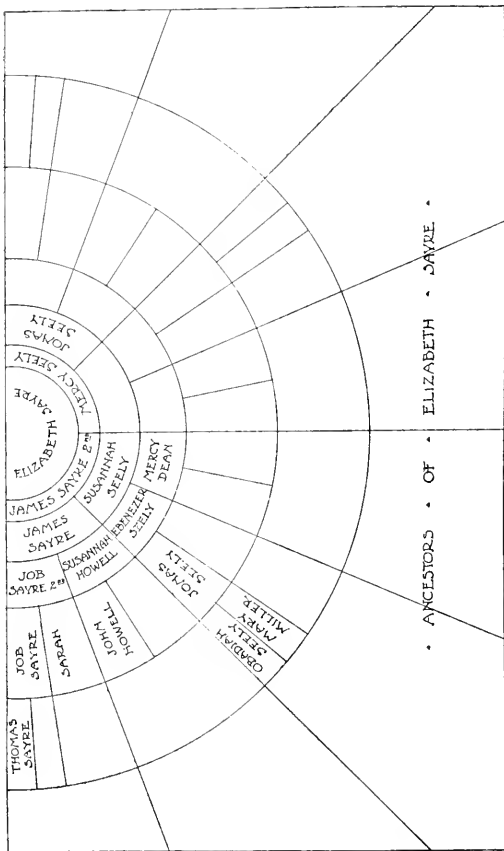
Vincent Mathews' first wife was Catalina Abeel, daughter of Johannes Abeel, leading citizen and at one time Mayor of Albany by commission from Governor Fletcher, and of Catalina Schuyler, daughter of David and Catalynje Ver Planck. Their six children were as follows:

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Peter, who inherited the watch in his
Grandmother Bridget's will;
Catalyna, who was baptized on August
18, 1725;
Fletcher;
David, of whom more anon;
James, born in 1742 and dying in 1816,
the son whose line we are following;
Bridget.

A third daughter, Elizabeth, who married Theophilus Beekman of New York, was the child of a second wife, mentioned in his will only by her christian name of Elizabeth, but who was, previous to her marriage with him, a widow named Wildman, possessed of some wealth, which was carefully secured to her daughter in Vincent Mathews' will. It was at Mrs. Beekman's house that her father died, but during the vicissitudes of the war he seems to have lived at his Mathewsfield home. Of his two oldest children nothing more is known; they are not named in his will, which disposes of his property in careful detail to the others, but family tradition says that Peter "went west." Bridget married Dr. Evan Jones, a surgeon of New York, whose sons, also surgeons, had enviable records during the Revolu-





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tion, and her descendants still live in New York.

Vincent Mathews' sons, Fletcher and David, were loyalists, and were both arrested by the Provincial Congress in 1776 on suspicion of complicity in the plot against the person and papers of Washington, with which Governor Tryon's name is associated. David had been appointed Mayor of New York by Tryon earlier in the year, and was one of the first to be brought before the committee of investigation when the plans of the Tories were betrayed. He protested his innocence, and it is to be said in his behalf that no documentary* proof of his guilt has survived, but he failed to convince his judges, and although he was not put to death, he was first imprisoned and then paroled under surveillance. Later, when the British regained possession of the city, he returned and continued to exercise his authority under royal warrant until the end of the struggle, when he left the country, never to return. His property was confiscated, and he spent the rest of his life in the colony of Cape Breton, where he held office under the king. He had married Sarah Seymour, whose family was apparently not in sympathy with his political

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views, for he was consigned to the care of one of his wife's relatives, an officer in the Revolutionary army, during most of his difficulties with the Provincial Congress. Fletcher Mathews, implicated in his brother's alleged treason, was saved from David's fate by Governor Clinton, his friend from boyhood, and in the status of an exchanged prisoner sent back to his father's home at Mathewsfeld, which very soon afterward became his. His death followed that of his father very closely, and his wife, who was Sarah, daughter of Nathaniel Woodhull and Sarah Smith of Smithtown, Long Island, survived him for only a year. Mathewsfeld became the property of his five daughters, for he left no son to carry on the name.

JAMES MATHEWS, the other brother, was also suspected, but he came promptly forward and made public pledge of his loyalty to the colonial cause; he was fortunate in the fact that he had married the daughter of Selah Strong, of Long Island, Hannah Strong, whose brother, Major Nathaniel, was making a record for himself by his activities against the Tories. With his wife's father and brother as well as his own father offering security for his good faith, he had

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no difficulty in impressing his judges with his innocence of any share in the plot, and he further displayed his devotion to the Revolutionary government by losing all his property in its service. He was acting as sub-contractor for supplies for the troops at West Point, and because of the failure of his principal in the contract was forced to sign away most of his land—and, like all the Mathewses, he was a large landholder—to meet his obligations to the government. Whether this had anything to do with his change of home is not known, but not long after, he moved into the “Far West,” so called then, to a farm near what is now Elmira, New York, in 1816.

A glance at the chart (see pages 8 and 9) will show the sturdy, patriotic Long Island heredity that James Mathews added to his own New York and patroon descent for his children when he married Hannah Strong; there were twelve of these children, six sons and six daughters, and as a matter of mere statistical interest it might be added here that James and Hannah Mathews had seventy-seven grandchildren. Also, there is still quoted in one branch of the family the comment handed down from some spectator at their “coming-out” Sunday,

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their first appearance at church after their marriage, that they were the handsomest couple that ever walked into the Blooming Grove meeting-house. While hardly susceptible of proof at this late day, it is rather a pleasing bit of contemporary criticism.

The names of the numerous family follow; the order is not necessarily that of their birth.

Selah, who married his cousin Mary

Strong, daughter of Major Nathaniel;

Vincent, who married her sister Juliana;

Peter, who went as a pioneer to Michigan, where nobody kept records, apparently;

Fletcher, who married Elizabeth Sayre;

James, who married Hannah Hammond and whose descendants still live near Elmira;

Nathaniel, who died at nineteen;

Catherine, who married General Matthew Carpenter, and who evidently inherited some of her parents' good looks, for she is remembered in the family as a very handsome woman;

Hannah, who married Lebbeus Tubbs;

Elizabeth, who married John Garrison

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Christopher and lived to be ninety-one years old, dying in 1864;
Julianna, who married Lazarus Hammond of Hammondsport;
Sarah, who married General Samuel S. Haight;
Bridget, who married William Lowe.

The names of the six sons are significant of the habit of the Mathewses in the christening of their children. Two of them are called for their mother's father and brother, men who had achieved honor and distinction in the struggle of the colonies for liberty; the remaining four bear names already familiar in the Mathews line. This tribal loyalty is evident all through their history; it does not always make for ease in keeping the succession of the generations clear in the memory of the historian, but it is an illustration of their perhaps unconscious strong family sympathy. The name of David, the loyalist mayor, significantly enough, does not appear with any such frequency. The most prominent of the six was General Vincent Mathews, who was born in 1776 and died in 1849, having carried on the traditions of his fathers as militia officer and as state assemblyman and

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senator, in his case adding the more modern legal honors belonging to a man who was several times district attorney in western New York, and was known as an able lawyer with a conspicuous prejudice against clients whose cases were not entirely above suspicion.

FLETCHER MATHEWS, according to the list given above the fourth son of James and Hannah Mathews, was the father of Hannah Mathews Towar. The date of his birth is not certain, but in 1806 he married Elizabeth, daughter of James Sayre and Marcy Seely Sayre, of Chemung County. He lived at Baileytown, on Seneca Lake, and his daughter Hannah was born there on November 30, 1812, only fourteen months before his death, in February, 1814. Except that he was a merchant, very little has been remembered of him; dying before his father, he apparently lacked his father's personality. A further reason for the faintness of the shadow he has cast may be found in the fact that ten years after his death his widow, born Elizabeth Sayre, married Henry Towar, an old friend and a widower with several children, and in the minds of some of the relatives who were familiar

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with "Aunt Betty's" home in Horseheads, near Elmira, in their early years, the identities of her own children, named Mathews, and her stepchildren, named Towar, are inextricably entangled. When later her daughter Hannah married Mr. Towar's son George, it was usually easier to accept rather than to explain the resulting tangle of relationship. Mr. Towar's home was at Alloway, near Lyons, but "Aunt Betty's" connection with her own old home was always very close.

The children of Fletcher Mathews and Elizabeth Sayre were five in number:

Selah, born in 1807 and married in 1829 to Mary Pitkin Hinsdale;

Susan, born in 1808 and married in 1827 to Alexander Hays;

James, born in 1810 and dying unmarried in 1873;

Hannah, born in 1812 and married, November 6, 1832, to George Washington Towar;

Fletcher, born in 1814 and married in 1836 to Caroline Conkling.

The Mathews name as a surname dies in this branch of the family with this generation, for Selah and Fletcher left each only

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one daughter, and James never married. Susan Mathews Hays left three daughters, the eldest of whom was married to Horace Boardman Smith, of Elmira, congressman and justice of the Supreme Court of New York, and for many years a leader of public opinion in the western part of the State. Perhaps the most prominent representatives in the next generation of the Mathews-Sayre line are the twin sons of Judge Boardman and Ellen Hays Smith, great-grandsons of Fletcher and Elizabeth Sayre Mathews, Walter Lloyd Smith, who was his father's successor as Supreme Court Justice, the youngest man ever so appointed, and Wilton Merle-Smith, for many years until his retirement in 1920 the much admired and beloved pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church in New York City.

The names of Hannah Mathews Towar's children and grandchildren will be found later in their own place.

THE SAYRE FAMILY

THOMAS SAYRE was the founder of the family to which Mrs. Towar's mother, Elizabeth Sayre, belonged; its history in this country is two generations longer, and even more honorable from the point of view of unquestioned patriotism, than that of her father, Fletcher Mathews. The date of Thomas Sayre's baptism may be found in the church records at Leighton Buzzard, in Bedfordshire, England, for the year 1597, and in 1648 he built a house in Southampton, Long Island, where he and his immigrant brothers settled on their arrival in this country, after a brief hesitation at Lynn. This house for some time previous to its destruction, about 1915, had been the oldest English-built house in New York, and except for the last few years of its existence had remained in the possession of the builder's descendants, a familiar sight to Southamptonites. Frequent mention of Thomas Sayre in the early town records shows that he held various positions of

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authority in the village hierarchy; one or two references would seem to imply that he was a person of quick temper, for he is fined for "contemptuous carriage" toward a magistrate, and for "unseemly words concerning the Court," hardly diplomatic behavior on the part of an ex-magistrate. His generosity toward an unfortunate neighbor receives on one occasion favorable official comment, and he appears to have been a favorite candidate for jury duty, despite his habit of contempt of court. His will, with autograph signature, may still be seen in the office of the Surrogate in New York, with its quaint opening bequest, not so uncommon even in later years, of "my Soule unto God that gave it and my Body unto earth from whence it was first taken." The Sayre Book, with its many interesting reprints of early documents, gives no information concerning his wife; his children were four sons:

Francis;

Daniel;

Joseph;

Job, who was the ancestor of Mrs.

Towar; and three daughters:

Damaris;

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Mary;
Hannah.

Of their descendants the compiler of the Sayre Book in 1901 took cognizance of nearly twelve thousand, barely a thousand of them being descended from Job Sayre, the fourth son. The available information about the family is so fully presented in the Sayre Book that it seems unnecessary to include anything here except the merest facts about any one but the individuals who are in Job Sayre's direct line.

Not very much is known of JOB SAYRE himself. He was apparently the first of Thomas Sayre's children born after the migration to America; he was his father's executor; he was at different times constable, commissioner and trustee of Southampton, and for years was its recorder; he gave to the town the highway still called Job's Lane; he married twice, and he died in 1694. His first wife, the mother of his six children, was named Sarah; their oldest son was another Job.

JOB SAYRE, SECOND, was born in 1672 and died in 1755, living his entire life in South-

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ampton, and bequeathing sufficiently large lots of property to his children to prove it a not unsuccessful life, however uneventful it appears to have been. He married Susannah Howell, daughter of John Howell, of another prominent pioneer family of Long Island; she died some time between 1740, when the will of her son Ezekiel is dated, which gives half of his "moveable estate" to his "honored Mother Susannah Sayre," and 1754, the date of her husband's will, where no mention is made of her in a document which is full of references to his family. Ezekiel was a blacksmith, prosperous and unmarried; his brother Joseph seems to have been at that time a cordwainer.

If families are like countries, happiest when they have no history, the Sayres were probably a contented lot during two or three generations. JAMES SAYRE, son of Job, Jr., and Susannah Howell Sayre, was born in 1719, left Southampton for Goshen, a town in Orange County, where he married, and died there before 1790. That is all we know about him; his wife was Susannah, the daughter of Ebenezer Seely and Mercy Dean, of Goshen, and after her husband's

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death she moved with three of her sons and a daughter to Horseheads, near Elmira, New York, settling there upon a farm which is now, in 1921, owned and occupied by her great-great-great-grandson. Her shears, made by the village blacksmith of Goshen, and her blue china tea-pot and sugar-bowl, survivors of the dishes imported for her from England, are in the possession of her great-great-granddaughter.

JAMES SAYRE, SECOND, her oldest son, was born at Goshen in 1750. He was a soldier in an Orange County regiment, and married Mercy, daughter of Jonas Seely, of Goshen, some years before he moved to Horseheads with his mother. His wedding coat, of rough reddish homespun, with its brass buttons and long tails, and his bell-crowned beaver hat were treasured in the family garret for a long time; during the Civil War they were being exhibited at a Sanitary Fair—ancestor of the bazaars of the Great War times, apparently—in Elmira, and were destroyed in a fire that unfortunately broke out one night, a calamity that his great-great-grandchildren, who had often dressed up in them, deplore to this day. He died in Horseheads, in 1826, having been a well-

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to-do farmer, with large dairies and a flock of sheep numerous enough to require the watching of three shepherds; old letters tell of the women hired for the winter to spin and weave the flax and wool into garments and blankets for his family. He had his own sawmills and grist-mills, and at his death he left a considerable estate to be divided among his children. The share of each daughter was three hundred dollars in money, which at first glance does not look bewilderingly generous, but in those days a farmer, even a wealthy one, counted his wealth in possessions rather than in currency.

ELIZABETH was his second daughter. Born in 1778 and dying in 1870, she is well remembered by her grandchildren and her grandnieces and grandnephews, who often speak of the strong resemblance in countenance and character between her and her daughter, Mrs. Towar. Her marriages, to Fletcher Mathews in 1806, and after ten years of widowhood to Henry Towar in 1824, have already been chronicled. She was fourteen when, with her grandmother Susannah, her father James and mother Mercy, her uncles Ebenezer and John and their fam-

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ilies, her aunt Julianna and the latter's husband Jonathan Conkling, and several brothers and sisters of her own, she migrated in carts drawn by oxen half-way across the State of New York, from Orange County to Chemung County. When in their deliberate progress they came to a river, they constructed rafts and ferried themselves and their household belongings to the other side; it must have been a caravan of magnitude, for although the Sayre brothers were at that time in financial difficulties, due in part to post-war depreciation of currency and in part to aid given two unbusinesslike and unfortunate Seely brothers-in-law in Goshen, they had plenty of household furnishing as well as plenty of household. Specimens of Grandmother Susannah's blue china and of Grandmother Mercy's brown still survive; the former's four-post bedstead, wedding furnishing in Goshen before 1750, after a hundred and fifty years in the old house in Chemung County to which she brought it, is at present rather a problem in a New York apartment bedroom. If it is ever possible to stretch the apartment, the old cherry dresser that held Grandmother Susannah's homespun wedding sheets and blankets, and later the

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fruit of her son James' flocks of sheep and his spinning-women's wheels, will be brought to rejoin the bedstead. The Sayre furniture was evidently as strong as the Sayre family feeling; both have outlasted the name as a surname in this branch of the family, for with the marriage of Mrs. Towar's mother, Elizabeth, the name Sayre disappears from the family records.

THE STRONG FAMILY

THE third distinctive line of descent in Mrs. Towar's ancestry is that of the Strongs. Practically all available information about this family, as in the case of the Sayres, has already been put into shape. The story of their doings, from the arrival of the founder in 1630 to the marriage of his great-great-great-granddaughter Hannah to James Mathews in 1742, can be found in the "History of the Strong Family," prepared by Benjamin Dwight and published by Munsell, fifty years ago. Little has been added since to the facts about the earlier generations, except corroborative incidents. It is a bulky book, and to undertake the disentanglement of one thread of family history from the formidable array of similar threads that make up the whole fabric requires patience, although the toil is not without its compensations; but in this brief outline most of the numerous children of the successive ancestors have been ignored for the sake of clearness. Only the direct

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succession has been named, from father to son, and finally to daughter, until it merges into the Mathews line.

With JOHN STRONG, the founder, begins Mrs. Towar's line of New England ancestry. As a young man, with a young wife who died either during or immediately after the long voyage of more than seventy days, he sailed from Plymouth, in 1630, on the good ship *Mary and John*, bound for Boston. The captain's rather unpleasant name was Squeb; other unpleasantnesses resulted in the premature and enforced debarkation of several of the passengers at a spot a little short of their destination, which was the Charles River. Captain Squeb put them ashore at what is now Nantasket; among the pioneers thus summarily landed in the wilderness was young John Strong, barely twenty-five years old, with two small children, very soon if not even then motherless. Nothing daunted, apparently, he was active in the settlement of a town at a spot near by, which, with the almost pathetic habit of the early settlers to remind themselves daily of the comfortable homes they had left in England, they named Dorchester. Here he married Abigail Ford, the daughter of

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Thomas Ford, who had been of the party objected to by Captain Squeb; she seems to have been of more enduring qualities than his short-lived first wife, for she survived a good many other adventures in pioneering in her long life with her enterprising husband, and found time and energy as well to bear and bring up sixteen more children for John Strong.

Theirs was the very essence of the pioneer life; they left the infant settlement of Dorchester to help found Hingham, and later Taunton; still later they were among the settlers of New Windsor, and finally John Strong's restless spirit found enough to keep it occupied in Northampton. There he owned land, and was a prosperous tanner by trade, but he is best known by his connection with the old First Church there, which he helped to start and of which he was for the rest of his life ruling elder, a position of great honor in the deeply religious little town. Although Northampton did not undergo the horrors of Indian warfare as her neighbors Hadley and Deerfield did, there was no lack of excitement of that kind; a good deal later than this the inhabitants found it convenient to protect town and meeting house by palisades, and indi-

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vidual kidnappings and outrages were reported. Until after John Strong's death, in 1699, the journey to Boston was a matter of a week's traveling through the forest over a path distinguishable only by the blazed trees, but the adventurous Englishmen were never discouraged, and during the last half of the century Northampton in her turn sent out colonies of her own into the country around, infested with hostile Indians and wolves and other wild beasts as it was; Southampton, Easthampton, and Westhampton, all loyally named for their mother-town, offered John Strong further opportunities for founding and settling, which, contrary to his habit, he seems not to have improved.

THOMAS STRONG, oldest of Abigail Ford's many children, was born in Dorchester about 1631, before the westward peregrinations of his parents began. In 1671, he was about forty years old; he was farming in Northampton, probably plowing with his musket slung across his shoulder, and he was married to Rachel Holton. Her father, William Holton, must have been a man after Elder John's own heart; after helping to found Hartford he had journeyed along

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the valley of the Connecticut, lending an assisting hand toward the building of various little settlements on the way, until he joined the band of Northamptonites, where he had been associated with the Strongs in the growth of that town and its center of activity, the church. He is always referred to as Deacon, just as John Strong is called Elder, with the prideful insistence on religious hierarchical rank characteristic of New England, which was settled by men who had for reasons of conscience renounced bishops and deans.

Their common grandchildren were many. The eleventh child of Thomas and Rachel was a son, SELAH, who reverted to the type of his grandfathers and moved on. In his case, however, "on" meant back, and not forward. We find him in Long Island, owning a farm at Setauket, near Brookhaven; he is usually called Selah Strong of Setauket in the records, to distinguish him perhaps from his son, Selah Strong, Jr. He married Abigail Terry, daughter of Thomas Terry, of Southold, and identified himself as thoroughly with Long Island interests as the Sayres were doing at the same time.

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SELAH STRONG, SECOND, also married into a Long Island family; his wife was Hannah Woodhull, daughter of Nathaniel Woodhull and Sarah Smith. The latter's father was Richard Smith, Jr., of Smithtown, and her mother Temperance Fordham, daughter of the Reverend Jonah of that name. An interesting example of the bewildering intermarriages among these colonial families is furnished here. The wife of Selah Strong, Jr., was the sister of Sarah Woodhull, wife of Fletcher Mathews, who was sent back by Governor Clinton to the Mathewsfield estate when his loyalty to the colonial cause was in question. Apparently James Mathews, Fletcher's brother, in marrying Selah Strong's daughter Hannah, married the niece of his brother's wife. The Woodhull family was a good one to marry into, however, and Richard Smith was not a bad choice for a grandfather, considering his position as a wealthy proprietor, while the Reverend Jonah Fordham was one of those who immigrated into this land of liberty for freedom of conscience.

It was Selah Strong, Jr., and his son, Major Nathaniel, who by the way had married Amy Brewster, of the *Mayflower* Brewsters, who helped James Mathews in the time of

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the Tryon plot, already referred to. No one for whose loyalty these two vouched could continue to be suspected; the father, sturdy and solid and practical in his patriotism, and the son, fiery and aggressive in his attacks on his Tory neighbors, gave a very satisfactory backing to James Mathews' less spectacular kind of loyalty. The difference in the family histories explains this difference; the Mathewses, until the necessity arose to make a choice of allegiance, had been king's officers, holders of royal grants; the Strongs had made their ways from the beginning through the New England wildernesses, geographically much farther from St. James' than the Albany patroons, and in spirit even more remote.

Selah Strong's daughter, HANNAH, the wife of James and mother of Fletcher Mathews, was Mrs. Towar's grandmother; the connection and whatever knowledge her descendants have of her have already been stated in the story of the Mathews line.



HANNAH MATHEWS
AND
GEORGE WASHINGTON TOWAR

TAKEN IN 1852

MRS. TOWAR'S FAMILY

ON November 6, 1832, Hannah Mathews was married to George Washington Towar, the son of her stepfather, Henry Towar. Her own father, Fletcher Mathews, had died in her infancy, and she had spent her little girlhood at her mother's old home in Horseheads; when Elizabeth Sayre married again, the combined families, consisting of her own five children and the even more numerous offspring of Captain Towar, set up a joint establishment on the Captain's farm at Alloway, in Wayne County, New York, a settlement that owed its name to the little Scotch village near Edinburgh where the Captain had been born. He was a prosperous man and Hannah had the education considered fitting for a girl at that time, "finishing" at Mrs. Ricard's select Seminary for Young Ladies at Geneva. She was twenty and George was twenty-two at the time of their marriage, and within a year or two their father retired to his farm, giving over the manage-

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ment of his grist-mills and other interests to his three sons. Business flourished until the panic of 1837 brought disaster; but George Towar was undaunted by bankruptcy, and after a few lean years became interested in timber, and moved his family west, first to Canada and then to Michigan, into the lumber regions, where his sagacity and ingenuity in meeting the problems of transporting the manufactured lumber from mills to market brought him success and reputation.

About 1860 the family was established in Detroit, where Mrs. Towar spent most of the rest of her long life. At one time, her husband leased a farm not far away, and retired to spend the rest of his days in less strenuous business than that of rafting logs across the Great Lakes, but gradually his herd of cows and consequent supply of milk so increased that he found himself involved in a new enterprise, and moving back into the city, built up a creamery business which is a successful concern to-day, twenty-five years after his death. He was eighty-five when he died, in 1895; his wife survived him for twenty years, dying in 1916, a few weeks after she had completed her one hundred and third year.

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Five of their nine sons also survived him; the brief record that follows gives the salient facts of their lives and families.

GEORGE WASHINGTON TOWAR, JR., was born in 1835. He held the degree of M.D. from Harvard, and served as surgeon in the Army of the Potomac and later in army posts. After retiring from the army he went into his father's business in Detroit and became its head after his father's death; he patented the rapid process of testing milk for butterfat that is known as the Babcock test. He died in 1913. His wife was Maria Webb Cook, granddaughter of the first governor of Ohio, Edward Tiffin, and their six children were as follows:

Eleanor Withington, born in 1879, was married in 1909 to Robert J. McCollum, and is living in Detroit. Their children:

Maria Webb and Eleanor Tiffin,
born in 1913;

Gertrude Lyon, born in 1915.

Henry Mathews, born in 1881, married in 1906 Myrtle Ballance at Peoria, Illinois, and lives now at Niles, Michigan, the vice-president of the

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Towar Cotton Mills, Inc. Their children:

Henry Mathews, Jr., born in 1907;

Shirley Jane, born in 1915;

Julia Ballance, born in 1917.

Scott Cook, born in 1882, married in 1911 Jeannette Driscoll, and is now living at Toledo, president of the Towar Cotton Mills, Inc.

George Seely, born in 1885, married in 1916 Frances Swift in Middlebury, Vermont; he also lives at Toledo and is connected with the Towar Cotton Mills, Inc. Their child:

Louise May, born in 1920.

Mary Porter, born in 1892, was married in 1917 to Robert Lee Ballard, Jr., in Detroit, where they now live.

Mathew Sayre, born in 1896. He served in the naval aviation during the war, and lives in Niles, like his brothers connected with the Towar Mills.

EDGAR HENRY, born in 1840 and admitted to the bar in Michigan in 1862, was in the paymaster's department during the Civil War. He became a banker, first in Hancock and then in Marquette, and is now living in Convent, New Jersey. In 1866 he married

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Isabel Cardell, at Houghton, Michigan; their two daughters:

Isabel Cardell, born in 1868;

Margaret Coulter, born in 1870.

FLETCHER MATHEWS, born in 1842, was also connected with the army, being a civil engineer in service of the U. S. A. Engineer Corps, and died in camp in 1899. He married Kate Warren Wartz at Ypsilanti in 1880, and had one daughter:

Ethel, born in 1880.

ALBERT SELAH, born in 1845, was a paymaster in the army, retiring after thirty-two years of service, with the rank of Colonel. In 1873 he married Katie Gambell in Adrian, Michigan, and they now live in Detroit. Their children:

Charles Gambell, born in 1874, practiced medicine in Detroit and later in New York, where he died in 1906. He married in 1901 Florence Sinclair of New York; their daughter:

Katharine, born in 1902.

Lila, born in 1880, was married in 1904 to William Taylor Irons, and has one daughter:

Virginia, born in 1905.

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Three daughters, Laura, Helen, and
Grace, who died in infancy;
Benjamin Alvord, born in 1888.

FRANK JONAS, born in 1852, married Elizabeth Sherwood in 1882. He lived in Detroit, and at the time of his death in 1921 was president of Towar's Wayne County Creamery Company. His children:

Edgar Ten Eyck, born in 1883, married Jane Elizabeth Sandburg of Jamestown, New York, in 1911, and has one daughter:

Elizabeth Sherwood, born in 1918.
Edith Vanderhoef, born in 1884, was married in 1910 to Walter L. Hill of Tennessee, and died in 1912;
Margaret Grace, born in 1887;
Albert Jelly, born in 1889;
Frank Jonas, Jr., born in 1891;
Marion Hayes, born in 1895.

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