THE BEGINNINGS OF NEW YORK

KINGSTON THE FIRST STATE CAPITAL

MARY ISABELLA FORSYTH

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Old Kingston, The First State Capital

By

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WHEN the report of the first exploration of the Hudson reached Holland it immediately called forth action on the part of the enterprising Dutch traders.

It was at the time when Holland "swept the seas," both from a naval and commercial point of view. So, in the year following the ascent of the "North River" by the *Half Moon*, the trade of what is now New York began; continuing from that time, 1610, with ever increasing impetus.

We can imagine how stimulating was the account given by Hudson and his crew,— how they told of fair, fertile lands cultivated by a friendly, intelligent people; of grapes, pumpkins, and Indian corn; of vast forests and broad streams with

abundance of fish, fowl, and animals, whose skins would furnish the " peltries " so valuable for commerce. Some of this crew came back with the vessel that brought the first traders, and tradition tells of the rejoicing on both sides when they again met their Indian friends.

Among the earliest of the Dutch voyagers to explore our shores were Hendrick Christiansen and Adrian Block, who, in 1611, carried back with them to Holland, for a short visit, two sons of an Indian chief as representatives of the inhabitants found on this side of the Atlantic.

Block discovered Block Island which preserves his name.

In 1612 Christiansen and Block were sent over in command of the *Fortune* and the *Tiger*, to seek trade along the Hudson. The *Tiger*, Block's vessel, was accidentally burned to the water's edge while anchored off Manhattan. The crew escaped to the shore and the energetic, undaunted commander immediately made preparation

to winter on the island and rebuild his vessel. That winter of 1613-14 showed four huts built on what is now seen as 39 and 41 Broadway, and the spring found the vessel — named the *Onrust*, or Restless — ready for her voyage to Holland. "This beginning of ship-building," says Scudder, in American Commonwealths, "was dependent upon Indian friendship and supplies."

This was the year when Christiansen built a "strong house" on Castle or Patroon's Island, a little below Albany, and called it Fort Nassau. Its dimensions were thirty-six by twenty-six feet. It had a stockade fifty-eight square with a moat eighteen feet wide, all armed by two large guns and eleven swivels. The garrison numbered ten or twelve men.

In the same year a fort was established at what is now Kingston Point, and DeVries alludes to a settlement there at the mouth of the Rondout, at a very early date.

Block was most energetic in securing to Amsterdam merchants a grant that would enable them to avail themselves of the opportunities of trade in the new lands along the Hudson, or the Mauritius as it was named, after Prince Maurice of Orange. On hearing his statements Barneveld remarked that "in course of time those extensive regions might become of great importance to the Dutch Republic." The States General granted a charter on October 11, 1614, exclusively to visit and navigate the newly discovered land lying in America, "between New France and Virginia, now named New Netherlands."

The Dutch Company to whom this charter was granted made the first treaty with the Indians.

In 1617, Fort Nassau having been nearly washed away by the breaking up of the ice in the upper Hudson, a new trading house was erected and fortified at the mouth of what is now known as

" Norman's Kill, " two miles from Albany. There was held a great council of peace with the Mohawks and their allies and an alliance was formed between the Dutch and the Iroquois. The belt of peace was held by both parties, the calumet was smoked, and the tomahawk was buried at a spot where the Dutch promised to build a church to cover it so that it could not be dug up. This treaty remained unchanged for twenty-eight years; renewed in 1645, it continued in force during the entire period of Dutch possession.

Explorations went on northward to the " Fresh River," subsequently known by its Indian name " Conaghticought," and to the " South River," the Delaware. Up and down the Hudson coursed the Indian canoes, the Dutch shallops, a brisk trade the result. We can see it all in vivid picture,— the few houses on the south end of Manhattan, the canoes and an occasional Dutch yacht plying the glancing

waters of the bay, the arrival from time to time of a high pooped vessel slowly making her way through the capacious harbor, usually a friendly Dutch brig or ship, but occasionally in those dubious times an English war vessel demanding acknowledgment of the claims of the English sovereign, — over all the bright sunshine so noticeable to those familiar with the gray skies often overhanging the North Sea.

The first storehouse and fort was built on New Netherland in 1615. It was a small structure of logs around which were gradually built a few huts.

It is a singular fact that the Plymouth Colony had proposed to come to New Netherland, but the States General declined to welcome them. So it was 1623 when the first organized party of colonists, chiefly Walloons, arrived and found, as their predecessors had done, welcome and ready help on the part of the original possessors of the land.

The first colonists of New York were, as Hollanders, the descendants of those who in the sixteenth century had won what the pilgrims of New England sought there a century later,— "freedom to worship God."

The Walloons had either left their homes in France or the "low countries," to escape persecution, finding refuge in Holland or Germany, or were descendants of those who for such reason had migrated there. Among these was the first Director General, Peter Minuet. In his case, as in many others, it has taken centuries to show how exceptional were his services, how unselfish his aims, how rare his judgment, how noble his record. The memorial tablet in the Collegiate Church on Second Avenue fitly commemorates this first director, the first minister, and the *Krankenbesockers* or *Ziekentroosters*. Both these terms mean "Comforters of the sick," the latter applying especially to the administering of com-

fort to the departing soul. A form was provided for the use of these visitors of the sick, who also read from the Scriptures at the Sunday services in the absence of a minister.

Cornelius Jacobsen May brought over thirty families in 1623. He went up the North River, settling there eighteen families, and during his brief stay of one year was considered in a sense the director of the settlement of New Netherland, as was his successor, William Verhulst. It was not, however, until the arrival of Minuet that civil government actually began. He bought the island of Manhattan and so took permanent possession on May 6, 1626. Small as seems the sum paid for it, equivalent to twenty-four dollars, it met the full approval of the Indians and was accepted on both sides as satisfactory.

In fact one historian suggests that this small sum allowed to accumulate at interest to the present time would realize an amount that might be equal to the value

of Manhattan Island, apart from modern improvements.

Minuet brought with him for his colony seeds, plants, animals, and instruments of husbandry. " He always dealt honorably with the Indians, opened up correspondence with Governor Bradford of Plymouth, and proposed commercial reciprocity." He also sent Bradford a present of sugar and of Dutch cheese.

With the arrival of the first director, religious services were begun in New Amsterdam. They were conducted by the " Comforters of the sick," Sebastian Jansen Krol and Jan Huyck, until the arrival in 1628 of Reverend Jonas Michaelius. He at once organized a church. Many of the first settlers had brought with them their certificates of church membership, others were received upon confession of faith. The director, Peter Minuet, was one of the elders, the other officers being the two comforters of the sick. Fifty communicants took part in the first cele-

bration of the Lord's Supper. Many of them being Walloons, an address was made to them in French. A letter from Mr. Michaelius alludes to the difficulty of acquiring the language of the Indians as an impediment to missionary work among them, and suggests the instruction of their children as the best means for bringing Christian influences to bear upon them.

The first church services were held in a loft of a horse mill, on what is now South William Street, near Pearl. Rough seats were supplied, and a tower at one end held bells brought from Porto Rico.

The second building, the first built exclusively for church services, was on what is now 100 Broad Street. Adjacent to the church was the parsonage of the well-beloved Dominie Evardus Bogardus, who married Anneke Jans.

The first tavern built for the purpose was said to have been at the corner of Coenties Slip and Pearl Street, in 1642,

private hospitality having before this answered all purposes. Governor Keift expressed to Captain DeVries, who was dining with him, his satisfaction with the architecture. DeVries replied that what was still more needed was a substantial church edifice, drawing a contrast between New Amsterdam and New England, by saying that in the latter colony the first thing done by the settlers, after building their own homes, was to erect a fine church, while the one in New Amsterdam looked like a barn.

The wedding of the daughter or the step-daughter of Dominie Bogardus occurring shortly after this, it was used as the occasion for raising the funds for the new church, the governor subscribing a large sum on behalf of the company. DeVries gave generously, and the subscriptions being pledged when all were in the best of spirits, some in a calmer moment would have withdrawn their pledges, but were held to them.

So, in 1642, came the church in the fort so familiar to us all. But we may not all realize that it served for the use of several congregations, the Dutch, the Church of England, and the Roman Catholic.

Great objection was made to placing it in the fort, lest this building should interfere with the use of the windmill by obstructing the sweep of the northeast wind. But the will of the governor prevailed.

In 1643 Reverend Johannis Megapolensis arrived as minister at Rensselaerwyk. He came at the request of the Patroon Van Rensselaer, who agreed to pay the expense of transporting "the Dominie" and his family from Holland and to guarantee his salary for several years. A number of emigrants came with the minister and the following year a church was built. Mr. Megapolensis proved admirably fitted both for pastoral and mission work. Soon after his arrival he was instrumental in saving the life of Father Jogues, a Jesuit missionary in danger of torture and death

at the hands of Mohawk Indians. Dominie Megapolensis concealed him for weeks, " was his constant friend, and saw him safely embarked for New Amsterdam whence he proceeded to Europe."

Similar kindness was shown by the Dutch to Fathers Bressani (1614) and Poncet (1653).

In 1685 a separate church was built for the Huguenot colonists, largely increased in numbers by the revocation of the edict of Nantes. The first pastor was Reverend Pierre Daillé, who besides officiating in New York, where the scattered Huguenots came from a score of miles away to attend the services, also visited New Paltz twice a year. In 1687, Pastor Pierrot became his colleague. In 1688 a church was built in Marketfield Street.

The Dutch settlers were equally faithful, the story having come down through generations, of their leaving their distant homes in time to reach New York at mid-

night on Saturday, and starting homeward at midnight on Sunday.

In 1692 the Dutch built a church at what we now see as 41-51 Exchange Place. It was then called Garden Street,— we can imagine why. The silver-toned bell from the church in the fort was transferred there and the congregation sent silver coins and ornaments to Amsterdam to be beaten into its baptismal bowl, which is now in the possession of the South Dutch Church on Madison Avenue.

About this time, according to Chaplain Miller, " the managers of the affairs of the Church of England applied for permission to collect funds to build a church." This being granted, the amount was raised through solicitations extending among the Dutch, French, and Jews, a number of Jewish families being now among the residents.

The vestry having heard of the character and abilities of Mr. William Vesey, then in Boston, of his being a frequent

communicant there, etc., called him, on November 8, 1696, to be their rector, with the pledge on his part that he would go to London for ordination. The congregation subscribed ninety pounds for his travelling expenses. He was ordained by the Bishop of London, on August 2, 1697.

On Christmas day following he was inducted into office in the Dutch Church in Garden Street, the pastor, Reverend Mr. Selyns, and Reverend Mr. Nucella, of the church of Kingston, taking part in the services. One of the vestrymen was John Crooke, the ancestor of many residents of New York, Kingston, Utica, Denver, etc.

Subsequently Mr. Vesey officiated in the Dutch Church alternately with the Dutch clergyman, until March 13, 1698, when the building of Trinity Church was completed. "This courtesy was returned during the Revolutionary War," says the Manual of the Reformed Church.

The Middle Dutch Church was then

desecrated by British soldiers and the vestry of Trinity Church passed the following resolution in 1779:

"It being represented that the old Dutch Church is now being used as a hospital for his Majesty's troops, the corporation impressed with a grateful remembrance of the former kindness of that ancient church, do offer the use of St. George's to the congregation for celebrating divine worship."

While Presbyterians and Congregationalists were, at an early date, quite numerous on Long Island, it was not until 1717 that a Presbyterian Church was organized in New York City.

A Jewish synagogue was also built there at an early date.

Jean Vigné was the first child born in New Netherland, in 1614.

The first girl baby was Sarah Rapalye, born at Fort Orange in 1625. The Rapalyes moved to Long Island, where one family of their descendants, strong

loyalists, lived when the struggle for freedom began. They moved to England, carrying with them, it is said, the town records of Brooklyn.

Among the Dutch the school always ranked next to the church in importance and a free school system was early instituted, which continued until the Dutch government gave place to the English. The connection between the school and the church was very close, the teachers being communicants of the Dutch Church, many of them teaching the catechism in the school and leading the singing in the church services.

The first school formed the foundation of the present Collegiate School of the Dutch Church in New York City.

The first schoolmaster was Adam Roelandsen, who came over in 1633. For some reason, presumably distrust of his character, he could not make a living by his profession, so in addition took in washing.

"He lived at first," says Mrs. Lamb,

"quite out of town." But there is on record an agreement for building a house for the schoolmaster on Stone Street, so called because the first street paved. The pavement was laid, it is said, at the urgent request of the wife of Herr Van Cortland as a protection against the dust, and was a tribute alike to true Dutch housewifery and to feminine influence.

The agreement prescribed that the house should be thirty-eight feet long, eight feet high, tightly clapboarded, roofed with reeden thatch, have an entry three feet wide, two doors, a pantry, bedstead, staircase, and mantelpiece.

It may seem odd to have the bedstead thus included in the building, but it was customary in Holland dwellings to have a "slaapbanck," or sleeping bench, constructed like a cupboard with doors that could be closed. Like the present folding beds, it was invisible during the day. These bedsteads are still to be found in some of the quaint Dutch houses in Ulster County.

The first Latin school was started by a Jesuit father under the administration of Governor Dongan, the bell of the Dutch Church calling the pupils together. Egidius Luyck conducted a Latin school in 1642. This was followed by others, a demand for a liberal education being soon felt.

The first physician was a Huguenot, De La Montagne, who remained only for a year. Hans Kiersted, who married the daughter of Anneke Jans, was his successor. His wife was a woman of rare character and ability, who frequently rendered great service as interpreter from her familiarity with the Indian language.

The first ferry ran from Peck Slip. The first regular ferryman was Cornelius Dircksen, who in 1642 had an inn and farm near Peck Slip. The travel of passengers and carrying of freight rapidly increased and colonial manuscripts give the following record:

" In consequence of the daily confusion

occurring among the ferrymen on Manhattan Island so that the inhabitants are waiting whole days before they can obtain a passage and then not without danger and at an exorbitant price," the Director and Council found it necessary to enact an ordinance regulating the use of the ferry. Later an attempt was made to start another ferry, but the objection arose that the rental from the ferry was the main source of income left to support the public buildings, bridges, jails, landing places, fire, and candle for their night watches, salaries of their offices, bill men, etc. In the regulations for the first ferry was this: that the hours should be from "5 A.M. to 8 P.M., in summer," "provided that the windmill on the Battery on Manhattan hath not taken in its sail."

The tavern at the ferry (on the Brooklyn side) became quite a fashionable resort.

The first mail route between New York and Boston was established in 1672. The

route was "blazed" through the Connecticut forests. The mails left once a month.

In 1670 the New York Exchange began, the merchants meeting on Friday mornings at a bridge, where now is Exchange Place.

Among the first proclamations of Governor Stuyvesant was one for protecting the sanctity of the Sabbath. Similar laws were scrupulously observed after the English possession of the colony. The inhabitants being in full sympathy with these regulations, attendance upon church services was general, and the day was marked by "entire cessation of worldly labor."

Stuyvesant made strict laws against drunkenness and profanity, also regulating the sale of liquor and forbidding such sale to the Indians.

The significance of the names of a few of the streets must have a passing mention. Wall Street owes its name to a palisade

erected, according to one historian, when an invasion from New England was anticipated, according to others to guard the cows from straying too far.

At the foot of Pearl Street was found a quantity of oyster shells from which the Indians had made their wampum. Hence the name of the street.

Maiden Lane tells its own story as a favorite resort of the young girls.

Broad Street had a narrow canal through its center flanked by a broad thoroughfare on each side, along which were built the finest residences.

The seal of the city of New York, granted in 1686, illustrates the story of its early life. It shows a sailor and an Indian helping each other support a shield that bears across its face the arms of a windmill, two barrels of flour, and two beavers. The windmill and the barrels recall the important grant made to New York in 1678, giving it the exclusive right to bolt flour and pack it for export.

This added immensely to the trade and prosperity of the town, while the beavers indicate its first commerce. The eagle with outstretched wings standing on the upper part of a hemisphere replaces the crown originally there. The seal gives in brief the tale just told, the friendship and help of our Indian brethren, the wide and widening sweep of commerce originally due largely to the fact that here were found friends, not foes.

As certainly as the seal records faithfully these incidents in the early history of New York so certainly the city and the state bear their impress. The fervent faith of the first settlers, their business enterprise, the freedom alike from sectarian or sectional prejudice, readiness to give cordial welcome and hospitality or help to all who come to us,— these are among the characteristics of the true New Yorker. Many things have gone wrong since the days just recalled. There has been — there is now — much in our his-

tory to cause regret; but nothing can obliterate the nobility of this early record, and it calls to every resident of this state to be, and to help others to be, worthy of the " Beginnings of New York."

NEW YORK

When first the *Half Moon* cleft the bay a widening life began.
As Briton stood with Hollander our wooded shores to scan,
As Indians' helpful kindness showed the brotherhood of man
A keynote sounded—through the years a strain of music ran.

Niagara peals in unison with glad, tumultuous roar,
While rushing streams and cataracts repeat it o'er and o'er,
Until the ocean breaks in song upon Long Island's shore.

Where mountains lift their rock-bound peaks, each fragrant, pine-clad crest,
Each rugged glen, each placid lake invites to healing rest.

The forests glow with gorgeous tints when autumn
is the guest.

Again upon the Hudson's breast we see the *Half*
Moon glide,
Where peace and plenty smile and life is full,
serene, and wide.
Three centuries meet and send the strain adown the
swelling tide.

Here Hollander and Huguenot sang hymns of
ardent faith
And heroism that had braved both suffering and
death.
" Be this our land of Liberty! " they shouted with
one breath.

They welcomed later comers here with ready, out-
stretched hands,
As still their children greet to-day the men from
other lands,
Their interests uniting with indissoluble bands.

Whene'er as generations passed she heard the
nation's call,
New York rushed forward in the van. Whatever
may befall

She meets the crisis — men and means and strength — she gives them all.

In rare and generous comradeship she looks the world around,
Wherever suffering and want in human kind is found
Her tender mercies outward flow, her ministries abound.

" For God and country! " Thus she stands with heart and soul elate,
Still strong to do and strong to dare and strong to stand and wait,
A bulwark of the nation's life, a friend to every state.

Through much of discord, tumult, jar, through many a minor strain
That first grand chord of brotherhood still dominant is plain.
God grant that through all time to come unbroken it remain!

OLD KINGSTON
THE FIRST STATE CAPITAL

Old Kingston, The First State Capital

WHEN the *Half Moon* on its memorable voyage of discovery passed up what was later called Hudson's river, it came, we are told by its chronicler, " in view of other mountains which lay from the river's side." There were found " very loving people and very old men," by whom the newcomers were cordially welcomed and supplied with Indian corn, pumpkins, and tobacco. The description of the locality might apply either to Kingston or Catskill. But as the Catskills are first sighted at the mouth of the Rondout, and as it was there that in 1610 a trading post was established, it seems probable that this was the place where the *Half Moon* came to anchor, as stated, and thus brought what is now Kingston to the notice of both Dutch and English

as a location especially fitted for trade with friendly Indians.

In 1652 a permanent settlement was made. A large proportion of the early settlers were Hollanders who stamped indelibly upon the colony the impress of the Dutch. They, as was their custom, bought their lands from the Indians, and lived upon their scattered farms for four years without any serious difficulty with the earlier owners of the soil. Thomas Chambers, the first English settler, had received a large grant of rich land in the valley of the Esopus, still exceptionally fertile.

The whole region was then known as "The Esopus," a name that clung to the village of Kingston for nearly two centuries. It was named Kingston when the colony came under the control of the British government.

It seems clear from official papers as well as from stories and traditions handed down through generations that there

might never have been any serious difficulties there between the whites and the redmen had the former left their "fire-water" on the other side of the Atlantic. An incident that occurred in 1658 emphasizes this. A party of settlers were playing tennis at the "tennis court" in "Esopus," some Indians looking on with interest. An "anchor" of brandy was discovered conveniently placed at the foot of a tree. The Indians enjoyed it, as did the others, but with a different result. They became wildly intoxicated, fired upon a yacht, and killed a man. The settlers, excessively alarmed, besought the aid and protection of Governor Stuyvesant. In their application to the governor they stated, to show the importance of the place, that they had "sixty or seventy people who support a reader at their own expense." The reader thus alluded to was the *vorrleser* or lay-reader, and "comforter of the sick," who at or before this period had conducted

church services. Strange to say, he was an ancestor of the present pastor, and bore the same family name, Van Slyke, or Vander Sluys.

The governor, with an escort of sixty or more arrived at Esopus in May. "The next day being Ascension Day, he notified the people to meet him after service in the afternoon." On the following day he held a council with about fifty braves. One of the chiefs arose and with dignity responded to the charges brought against the Indians, their insolence, cruelty, murders, etc. "The Shawanakins," i.e. Europeans, "sold our children drink, and they were thus the cause of the Indians being made crazy, which was the cause of all the mischief." Indeed, a pathetic appeal was eventually sent to the governor, urging him to compel the traders at Fort Orange to stop selling liquor to the young braves, with a solemn warning of the results inevitable should this request be disregarded,

results from which the nation suffers to-day.

At this conference, however, peace was concluded. The governor advised the settlers to move from their outlying farms and form into a village protected by a stockade, and to purchase from the Indians a site for such village. The Indians asked the privilege of *giving* the land as a token of amity. This offer was accepted, and the governor named the village in recognition of the gift and the givers "Wiltwyck" or "Wild Man's Town." The lines of the stockade are still shown, marked at one point by a house that stood at the hornwork at an angle of the fortification. This house built by Martinus Hoffman was for many generations the home of the family, from which was descended the late Dean Hoffman.

Distrust, once begun, continued, — fomented as we all know by many provocations on the part of the

whites, until in 1663 both Wiltwyck and Hurley, a village three miles distant, then known as the "Nieu Dorp," were burned by the savages.

Another council, held at or near what is now the Academy green, resulted in the burial of the hatchet, and the gift from the Indians of a wampum belt still preserved in the County Clerk's office.

This brought permanent peace, just as the first struggle for supremacy had begun between the Dutch and English.

It is interesting to note the similarities and differences between two settlements of Hollanders at about the same date, 1652, one at Kingston, the other in South Africa. Both received reinforcements of Huguenots who added a certain sparkle and grace to the sturdy make-up of the Dutch. Both colonies were devoted to the creed and mode of worship of the Reformed Dutch Church, to the language and customs of Holland, and to the ideas of civil and religious liberty for

which their forefathers had fought with unexampled tenacity, suffering, and heroism.

On the other hand, great differences of climate, of environment, of opportunity, the extreme remoteness of the one colony, the isolation of its families, are all most marked. But the spirit was the same, and it flashed into flame in old Kingston at the time of the Revolution as later in the Transvaal.

Intermarriages modified noticeably the temperament of the people of Kingston. While Hollanders and Huguenots were the prevailing nationalities represented there, settlers from other countries came from time to time, as the place grew in importance. For instance, the first Bruyn came, as is stated in the Hasbrouck family record, from Norway. He married Gertruyd Esselsteyn, a Hollander. His granddaughter married Abraham Hasbrouck, of French Huguenot ancestry. In the next generation, a Hasbrouck mar-

ried a Wynkoop, of mingled Dutch and German-Moravian descent.

Petrus Edmundus Elmendorf, whose name tells its nationality, married Mary Crooke. The Crookes had brought with them from England their ancestral silver, engraved with the family coat of arms, and their love for the Church of England. The grandfather of the " Mollie " Crooke just alluded to was one of the founders of Trinity Church in New York City. He too had married a Hollander, Gertrude de Haas, and his son John, who settled in Esopus, and was one of the first lawyers there, also county clerk, married Katrina Jans. All these varied strains of blood, Norwegian, Dutch, French, English, and German, with later admixtures, are blended to-day in the veins of one family in old Kingston.

The Dutch Church, true to its history and traditions, united all these varied elements into a harmonious whole. It also received as a communicant the first

Roman Catholic resident of Kingston, and a Baptist whose scruples were set at rest by his being *immersed* in the Esopus creek by the " Dominie " of the old church. It became the center of life for the settlement. Its close affiliations with Holland are shown by the fact that not only was its quaint silver communion beaker sent, in 1683, "as a token of love and friendship" from the church at Amsterdam to the church at Kingston, but the bell, too, came from Amsterdam, and all the early ministers were sent out from the mother country. The use of the Dutch language in the church services continued until 1808. As a result, one of the young members of the congregation whose family did not speak the Holland tongue asked who was that noted woman whose name she so often heard mentioned in the sermons, " Hetty Van Halium." The explanation was, that the words she had thus understood were " Het evangelium," " the gospel."

The Dutch language continued to be in use in many families until the middle of the last century. Even now it is familiar to some of the generation fast passing away.

The beautiful old stone church burned by the British in 1777 had the baptistry in front of the main edifice. The ancient baptismal record gives the name of Jan Roosevelt, an ancestor of Ex-President Roosevelt.

Perhaps it was due to the strong influence of the old church — the only one in Kingston for about a century and a half — that the people of the town maintained friendly personal relations, even while of very different social standing. The owner of the first carriage in Kingston sent it all about the village on Sunday mornings to bring to church the aged and infirm, the result being, sometimes, that she herself would arrive after the appointed hour. But this was of little consequence, as the Dominie awaited her arrival to begin the service!

Another dignified dame who often repeated to her grandchildren the war-cry of her French ancestral house,— the cry that had rung out among the ranks of the crusaders,— would sit patiently entertaining in her handsome parlor some plain, unpretending guest, perhaps an old colored woman formerly a slave in the family, showing to each one unfailing courtesy and kindness.

The old village was linked in many ways to the life of the outside world, especially in the case of those who had the advantages of culture, books, and social position.

There are in private libraries valuable books in English, Dutch, French, and Latin that have come down from generation to generation.

The old secretaries contain interesting letters written to Esopus by friends and kindred at Albany, New York, the headquarters of General Washington, and from beyond seas. As the inns were not thought worthy to provide for the

comfort of distinguished guests, they were usually entertained at the homes of the leading families. Among letters written by such guests to Mrs. Mary Crooke Elmendorf are some from Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, French Consul General, and from Governor Sir Henry More.

One of the daughters of this Mrs. Elmendorf married Rutger Bleeker, of Albany, another Cornelius Ray, of New York, and a third Lieutenant Colonel Bruyn, of Kingston, to whom she had been betrothed all through his heroic career in the Continental Army, which closed by his capture at Fort Montgomery and his imprisonment on the horrible *Jersey*, the prison ship.

Letters from these sisters are exceedingly interesting, with their vivid pictures of colonial life and of the stirring times of the Revolution.

Besides intercourse of this kind with the larger places, prominent men of Kingston took part in public affairs,

coming and going as members of the Colonial assemblies or later of the Provincial Congress, or as officers in the Colonial service and the Continental Army. Colonel Abraham Hasbrouck, besides being colonel of a regiment, was for thirty years member of the Colonial Assembly, subsequently of the State Assembly.

Generals George and James Clinton both lived in Kingston. There too lived Christopher Tappen, the well-known patriot and statesman, whose family, when the town was fired by British troops, sacrificed their own valuable papers to save those of the state.

Near by, at Hurley, were the homes of Col. Cornelius D. Wynkoop and Col. Charles DeWitt, whose services both in the army and as legislator showed him worthy of the ancestor who had suffered martyrdom at the Hague.

Gilbert Livingston, a son of the original patroon, was a resident of Kingston. He

was the first person in the state to manumit his slaves. His name is found on one of the gravestones in the old churchyard.

DeWall, a Hollander, had a large house used for assemblies, which brought together for social intercourse the gentry from many quarters. Full dress was a requisite for these state occasions. This house, like many others of the same period, is still standing, rebuilt on the ruins left when the town was burned by the British in 1777.

The old house built in 1676 by Wessel Tenbroeck, where the first state senate met, is now a museum owned by the state.

Another interesting building is the old academy, founded 1774, one of the first to promote the higher education. Many of the scholars came from other parts of the state — and it sent out to the world a large number of prominent men — Edward Livingston, Stephen Van Rensselaer, Abraham Van Vechten, DeWitt Clinton, Rev. Thomas DeWitt, D.D., long a re-

vered minister of the Collegiate Church of New York City, who was born near Kingston, Vanderlyn, the noted artist, and many others distinguished in various ways.

One cannot walk through the streets of Kingston without feeling the force of its past. The families that have lived there, as many have done, since the founding of what has been called " a town of homes," show a certain simplicity of character and of life that has come down from other generations and makes them distinctive. They are old-fashioned people and do not hesitate to avow it. They belong among the quaint buildings, the antique furniture, the crumbling gravestones, the many memorials of Colonial days. Great as have been the changes that have transformed the quiet village into a rapidly growing city, with modern villas and lines of electric railroad, there is enough of the old spirit remaining to cause the inhabitants to take pride in calling their town " The Colonial City."

When the struggle for independence began it was inevitable that Kingston should be — as it was designated by General Vaughan — "a nest of rebels." An article in the *Philadelphia Evening Post* during the Boer war drew a sharp contrast between the patriotism of the American colonists at that epoch, and that of the Transvaal in their fight for freedom —showing that while we gave only a moderate percentage of our men for the actual conflict the Boers gave all. The statement is probably true of the colonies as a whole, since so many who still claimed England as the mother country felt it impossible to forego allegiance to her. But it was far otherwise at Kingston and its vicinity. There, the descendants of those who had pierced the dykes at Leyden, and left their homes in France to escape the dragonnade and the galley, sprang as one man to support the patriot cause. It is a remarkable thing to read the lists of those who signed the articles of association

pledging themselves to stand by the action of the Continental Congress. They are called, as they well may be, the "Ulster County Roll of Honor." Four signed it as members of the Provincial Congress; these were James Clinton, Christopher Tappen, Jacob Hornbeck, and Egbert DuMond.

The large number of signatures from Kingston and adjacent towns justify the statements handed down from earlier generations that every able-bodied man was in the patriot army.

One house alone, on the outskirts of the town, is known as the residence of a tory, — and he was a New Yorker.

Kingston then — New York being in the possession of the British — was the natural place for the promotion of all that tended to foster the first impulse towards independence. There great statesmen gathered, framed the State Constitution, convened in the first Assembly and Senate of the new state. Thither sped General

Clinton to take the oath of office as the first governor, hastening back immediately to his command.

So it came about, as a sudden and brutal retaliation, that the brave old town was fired by British troops on October 16, 1777. Only one house within the limits of the village was left habitable and its defenceless women and children fled for refuge to Hurley and the surrounding region.

The struggle might well have seemed then hopeless, humanly speaking. But the faith that formed a vital part of the inheritance of these people carried the day, and the feeling of all was

> Not a man will blench nor falter,
> Not a woman's heart will fail,
> Since our God is fighting with us,
> Never can your arms prevail!

It is our privilege to cherish and maintain the noblest principles of the early colonists. To do this effectually we must

also cherish the sublime faith upon which these principles were based. What is the real reason why we as a nation lead the world to-day? Is it solely because of our vast material resources, or the peculiar fitness of our form of government to draw hither and amalgamate into one the enterprising, the restless, the dissatisfied of other lands?

Is it not rather, or chiefly, because we are the custodians of the ideals of the race? While much may perish in the sweep of events, *these* remain and will ever remain because inspired from above. And it is these ideals that those who are Americans by inheritance are to uphold and pass on as an incentive to high endeavor to the men and women of to-day. Listening to the solemn voice of a great past,— the story of our forefathers, we are " to do the work that they laid down. Take up the song where they broke off the strain " and send it ringing as a trumpet call through the new century.

A Ballad of Old Kingston

I sing of arms — of gallant deeds, of one heroic town
Where patriots, for Freedom's sake, defied the British Crown.

Fair *Atkarhactor,* when of old the Indians alone
Its lovely plains, its circling hills, and mountain slopes had known.

Esopus, Wiltwyck, Swannenburg, then Kingston it became
When England ruled the Colony; — and bears to-day this name.

There Hollander and Huguenot their "sacred fire" had brought
That burst in flame when tyranny to quench it vainly sought.

" The County Roll of Honor " still in hearts and homes survives,
Its signers to the Congress pledged their honor, fortunes, lives.

When gathered in the quaint old church all hearts were kindled there
The patriot's duty formed a part of sermon, psalm, and prayer.

" To arms! To arms! " The cry rang out along the peaceful street.
From every farm and hamlet came the sound of hurrying feet.

Before the high-peaked houses stood, on each capacious stoop —
Where erst the burghers calmly smoked — an eager, anxious group.

Too deeply moved for vehemence, too confident for fear,
Whene'er a new recruit appeared they gave a stirring cheer.

Hooghtaling's troop of horse dashed by. The infantry at drill

Their flintlocks handled with a grasp that showed
determined will.

Young Bruyn, of Norseman lineage, brave-
eyed and steadfast faced,
Recruited and equipped his men with eager, gen-
erous haste.

Not even love his heart could turn from duty's
path aside —
Though sore his anguish when he left his lovely,
promised bride.

Then, like a mountain torrent that to seek the sea
leaps forth
Impetuous, the little band sped onward towards
the north.

Exultant, thrilled with eager hope, their ardor
naught could check
Until the human surges beat the ramparts of
Quebec.

E'en there they met like veterans the storm of shot
and shell.
Our youthful captain was beside Montgomery
when he fell.

Before, triumphant was their march; there, stern
disaster came.
Disaster that has twined their brows with death-
less wreaths of fame.

The long, long winter through they bore privations
in the field.
At home, all prayed and suffered; still, not one,
not one would yield!

One day, within the village street afar was heard a
drum.
The sound came nearer,— then the shout, " The
regiment has come! "

All war-worn, many wounded sore, so many miss-
ing! Then,
Before they broke the ranks they cried, " We're
going back again!

" Enlist! " Exhaustion claimed them not until
this work was done —
Old Kingston gave to liberty each able-bodied
son!

And so the youthful lovers met; but only met to
part.

" Go, dearest! " sobbed our heroine, " you take with you my heart."

" God bids us make this sacrifice, 'tis on his altar laid.
" I glory in your leaving me! I *dare not* be afraid! "

When soon the dauntless volunteers with valiant hearts went back.
They seemed along the country road to leave a shining track.

(A century later, it was there ten thousand heroes trod,
The " Boys in Blue" 'neath Stars and Stripes for country and for God.)

The last faint echoing steps gave place to calm that seemed like death.
Within the village, people spoke as if with bated breath.

But soon the trusty Indian scouts brought tidings from afar;
And closer drew the embattled lines that marked the seat of war.

The ancient courthouse scarce could hold the prisoners of state
Marched in, from time to time, who cursed the rebels, God, or fate.

Those Ulster troops fresh laurels won; on one autumnal day
At Fort Montgomery helped to hold o'erwhelming hosts at bay.

Not Balaklava's heroes faced more fearful odds than when
The assault of thousands thus was braved by scarce two hundred men!

When overborne, they spiked their gun and made a brave retreat.
Contesting every step, they moved with slow, unwilling feet.

The first who marched to meet the foe were last the fort to hold.
While many a gallant soldier fled, a remnant, few but bold

Stood 'midst the dead,— as Colonel Bruyn, with sword uplifted high,

Cried, "Strike for old Esopus, boys! Her sons
know how to die!"

When captured thus stern foemen said, "We
gladly yield to you
The highest honors war can give to valor tried and
true."

Scant comfort, when to living death upon the
Jersey sent,
Not knowing they had swelled the ranks that shook
a continent!

The horrors of that prison ship still make the blood
run cold,
Disease and famine, foulest filth, brutality untold.

Meanwhile, in Kingston oft there met, by danger
undismayed,
The leaders of "seditious" thought, who gravest
problems weighed.

Van Courtland, Morris, Livingston, Duane, De-
Witt, and Jay —
Who dared a traitor's doom to face, with others
brave as they,

Took strong, decisive action there,— a Constitution framed.
A state new born 'midst fearful throes was daringly proclaimed.

When Clinton, Ulster's favorite son, admired, beloved, revered,
Who sought no honors he had won, whom all opponents feared,—

When he by urgent voice was called the state's first steps to guide,
Not his to linger nor delay! Men tell to-day with pride.

How Clinton hastened from the camp to take the oath, then fled
From all that might have held him back,— again to conflict sped.

The first assembly, senate, court brought statesmen of renown,
Convened to work the common weal, within the patriot town

The early records of the state were sent for safety there.

The Tappens bore them off in haste, amidst the trumpet's blare,

When Vaughan the " nest of rebels " fired, and left a mark of shame
Forever, long as history lasts, to rest upon his name.

Defenceless was the village when one mid-October day,
Long shadows flecked by sunshine bright upon the greensward lay.

A sorrowing group were gathered round a scout. this tale he told,—
The fall of Fort Montgomery, the fate of heroes bold.

The women wept. The aged men cried, " Would I had been there! "
Their incoherent words and sobs rose piteous on the air.

When suddenly a maiden fair with hurried step drew near,
They touched each other. " Hush," they said, " for his betrothed is here."

She turned in silence when the tale at last — at last — was heard,
And sought her widowed mother's home. The warbling of a bird,

The brilliant foliage, the blue that calmly arched above,—
All seemed to mock the stricken heart that throbbed with pain and love.

Her bright-eyed lover! strong to do,— could he be strong to bear?
Will not the prisoned eagle pine deprived of upper air?

No human help could reach the first extremity of pain.
She prayed, " Sustain him, Saviour — God! O set him free again!"

While still she knelt, a sudden shout caught e'en her listless ear,
" *Lope younge, Lope!** *bei Hurley out*! "* " The British troops are here! "

*" Run, children, run, flee to Hurley."

She had not heard the galloping, the breathless cry without,
" Three thousand troops have landed! They have taken the redoubt! "

Each beardless boy his musket grasped the invader to oppose.
The handful of militia fought like tigers 'gainst the foes.

But on, and on, the British came, hearts hot with frenzied hate,
To punish the devoted town, the birthplace of the state!

They filled the wagons hurriedly with aged and with young ;
A few some treasures buried, while — still in the Holland tongue —

" *Lope younge! Lope! Bei Hurley out!* " The summons passed along.
Till, facing westward, swiftly fled a terror-stricken throng.

The last who turned a backward glance saw through the sunny air

The gleam of British bayonets,— a sudden, awful glare.

The assailants marched with torch in hand. Black smoke in volumes rose
From homes, for generations dear, the prey of ruthless foes.

In one rude cellar — still the house, rebuilt, stands firm to-day —
In sorest pangs of motherhood a youthful matron lay.

Above her, burning beams crashed down, while sounds of trampling feet
Were mingled with tumultuous shouts, the uproar of the street.

That day was kindled such a flame as nothing could assuage!
Upon the town a martyr's crown doth rest from age to age.

This, this the climax — winter snows already chilled the air —
Yet, 'neath accumulated woes none yielded to despair.

The homes in Hurley opened wide, and all the country round
Received the homeless fugitives with sympathy profound.

E'en welcome, succor, human aid were secondary things.
The patriot hearts were calmly stayed beneath Almighty wings!

'Tis said, that when October brings its glowing, gladdening days,
When town and hillside seem aflame, bright hued, 'midst tender haze,

Those watching ere the sad sixteenth, expectant, through the night
Within the churchyard may behold a weird, mysterious sight.

Dim forms of earlier times are there, a shadowy, ghostly throng.
(Too rarely do their names appear in history or song.)

A common impulse brings them all, — the mistress and the slave,

KINGSTON, THE FIRST CAPITAL

The dead from ancient battlefields, fair maidens,
statesmen grave,

Who bore so gallantly their part,— the simple as
the great,
In brave old Kingston. This their plea, "We
helped to make the State!"

(We hear it not with outward ear, it thrills the
silence through)
"Remember this has cost us dear! Its future
rests with you!"

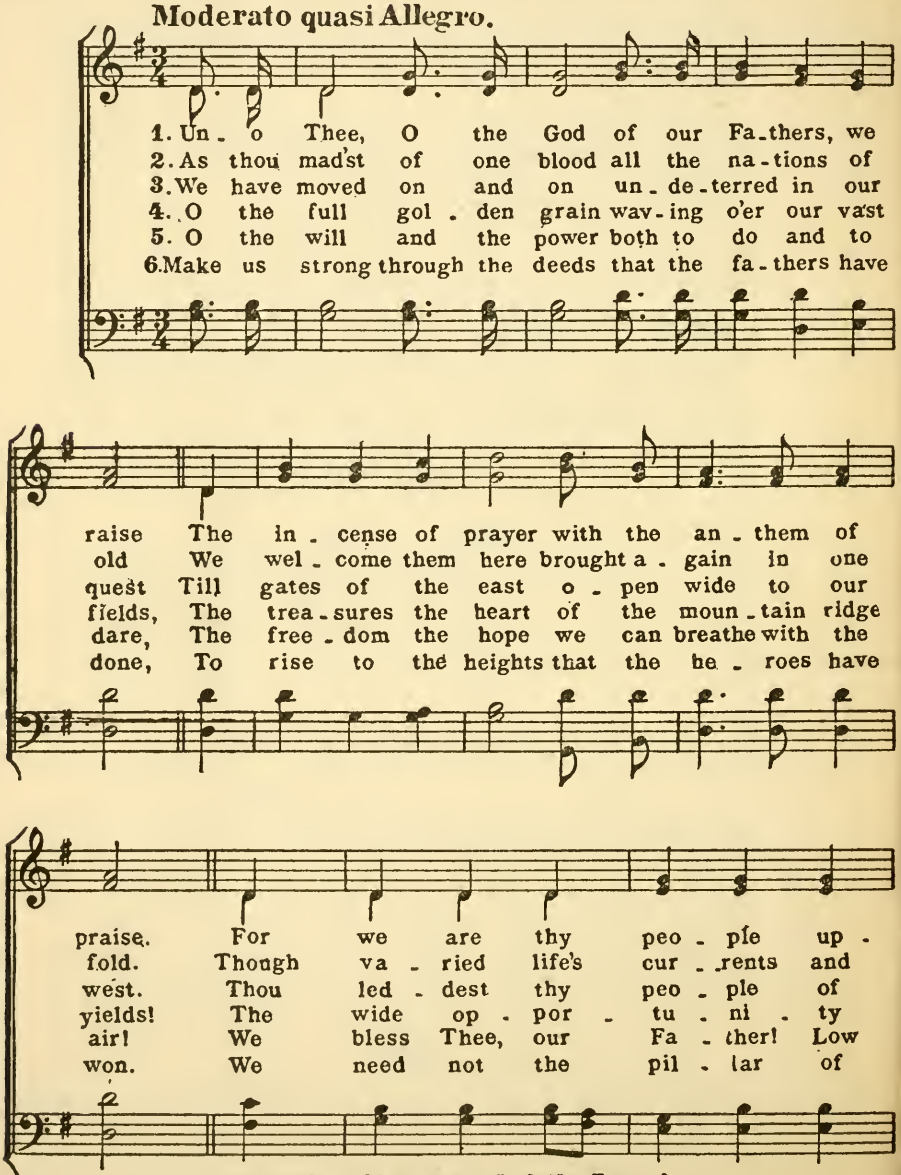
"An American Hymn."

Unto Thee, O The God Of Our Fathers.

Words and Music
by Mary Isabella Forsyth.
arr. by H.C. GRUHNERT.

arr. for Band and Orchestra by F. FANCIULLI.
arr. for Orchestra by Wm H. SANTELMANN.

Moderato quasi Allegro.




held by the hand, That beck - oned us
im - pul - ses run, De - fend - ing the
old through the sea, Thou mak - est a -
thril - ling the soul That up - ward would
bend - ing the knee We so - lemn - ly
cloud nor of flame, Our Guar - dian and
forth to a new prom - ised land.
flag all our hearts beat as one.
way for the march of the free.
move speed - ing on to its goal.
pledge our al le - giance to Thee.
Guide, we will trust in thy name.
CHORUS.
Lead us on ev - er - more grac - ious Fa - ther a - bove,
Brood - ing ov - er our land with thy light and thy love.

P. O. Box 1053
Kingston N. Y.

Mr. Wilberforce Eames.

Dear Sir,

My absence
from home unavoidably de-
layed both my receipt of your


ARTI et VERITATI