

E 280
.A5 A2
Copy 1

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



00005704728



DAVID WILLIAMS
And the Capture of Andre

**A Paper Read before the Tarrytown
Historical Society, by**

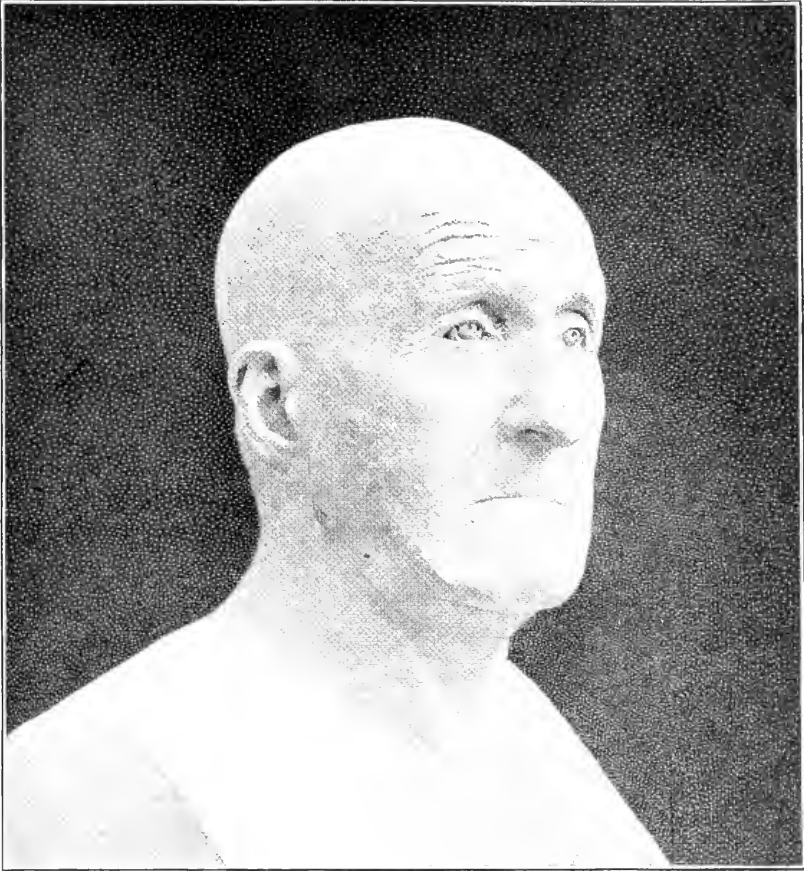
MARCIUS D. RAYMOND,

January 15th, 1903

THE LIBRARY
OF CONGRESS

E 200
A/R

52337
'04



DAVID WILLIAMS.

**Reproduced by permission from the copyright portrait in "Brouwere's
Life Masks of Great Americans" by Charles Henry Hart.**

(The life mask of which this portrait is a copy was taken by Brouwere in 1829.)





Andre Capture Monument.



It is an interesting and significant fact that the lapse of a century and more has not lessened public interest in the capture of Major Andre, and the chief actors concerned in it; but later years have witnessed a remarkable revival of it, extending to the minutest memoranda connected even remotely with the affair, including all the attendant circumstances, the personality of the Captors, the exact site of the capture, and the route by which the noted British Spy approached where he was arrested by the three incorruptible patriots, Paulding, Williams and Van Wart. In fact extensive research has been made, and diffuse newspaper controversy been engaged in, during the recent past, to prove that there were five rather than four of the party who took position on the hill to the eastward, some of whom persistently sought for a portion of the reward given to the Captors. All of which is significant of the great importance which history in its final judgment places upon that act, and the unstinted honor which it awards the chief actors in that drama which has so attracted the attention of the world, and was one of the crises of the Revolution.

Then why "carry coals to New Castle"—why repeat this story in Tarrytown, where every tradition of it is all unconsciously woven into the woof of our every day life? Partly to eliminate some manifest errors, so that the clear gold of truth may be made more clearly to appear. For errors, deep-seated have been industriously disseminated, more or less affecting the virtue of the transaction as well as the reputation of those engaged in it—slanders most outrageous have been uttered by some against the Captors themselves, while weak though virulent efforts have been made by others to unsettle public confidence in even the monumental site of the capture.

A distinguished author has interrogatively exclaimed as to whether there was more of truth or error in recorded history, and it may seem a thankless task to attempt to shoot error as it flies, but the Three Incorruptible Patriots have not lacked and shall not lack valiant defenders. As to the virtue of their act, Washington put the stamp of approval upon it, in his words recorded with pen of steel upon the Monument in their honor

which shall forever herald their fair fame: "Their conduct merits our warmest esteem."

That they hesitated for one moment in their loyalty to duty; that they considered for one instant the alluring bribes offered them by the British Spy is a foul libel upon their unimpeachable character. Yes, he would bribe them. He had just bargained with Gen. Arnold for British gold, and certainly he could buy his way with these three rustic militia-men with a handful of shining guineas. But no; to his utter surprise they scornfully refused even 10,000 pieces of gold and all the treasures that he could pledge for his safety, and so took him at once to Lieut. Col. Jameson, the commanding officer on the lines, from whom they had received their permit to go on a scout. As to particular proof of this authorization, John Yerks, Jr., who was one of the party of seven, in a statement made Nov. 12, 1845, said: "Before starting on the expedition, we had applied to Capt. Baker, and our other commanding officers, and they had full knowledge of and approved of our enterprise."

They have been called boys, but the youngest of the three, John Paulding, was twenty-two, and the oldest, David Williams, was twenty-five. They have been called illiterate, but each of them was able to write his name in a good firm hand. The definite statements of two of the Captors, Williams and Van Wart, as to the historical accuracy of the location of the monument, is a sufficient answer to the monumental blunderers who have in vain essayed to upset it.

And as to the monument itself, it is astonishing what misconceptions have obtained in regard to it, especially in connection with the monument which Cyrus W. Field caused to be set up at Tappan in honor of Andre. The Tarrytown monument in honor of the Captors of Andre, from being called the Andre Capture Monument, came to be known as the Andre Monument, and hence the deduction by the general public that the monument was in honor of Andre, so that when the monument set up by Mr. Field was thrown down by some indignant patriot, it was quite generally supposed that it was the monument at Tarrytown which had been destroyed; in fact, serious inquiry was made of us by one of the officials in the State Capitol at Boston in the summer of 1885, as to the condition of the monument here so supposed to have been dynamited. The flash of

indignation with which it was answered did not lead him to repeat the question. In this connection, it may not be generally known, that our monument came near being destroyed at that time, instead of the one at Tappan, the party who did the work of vandalism having come here for that purpose under the mistaken idea, which so generally prevailed, that this was the Field monument, but on conferring with a fellow countryman here in Tarrytown, he learned of his error and the next morning the Tappan monument was found shattered and thrown from its base. So easy the transposition from a monument to the Captors of Andre, to the Andre Monument, and hence, by induction a monument in his honor.

It is needless if not impossible to refute all of the misleading statements which have been published about Andre's capture, and those engaged in it, some of them ignorantly and others prejudicially made, but when a writer of the reputation of James Parton lends his name to their endorsement, it is well to give answer to them. In a communication published by the *New York Ledger* in 1876, concerning the capture of Andre, speaking of John Paulding, he said: "Neither at this time nor at any former period had he been even a militia-man," and yet the records show that he had already served at least two terms of enlistment, and had twice escaped from prison in New York. Of David Williams he said: "He had served under Montgomery in Canada," and then in close connection with this says that "Neither of these men at the time belonged to the service, but all of them had occasionally joined in predatory warfare; nor need we suppose that in their scouting expeditions they had always kept within the strict letter of the law." What a gratuitous and unmitigated slander of these distinguished Patriots. And then he intimates that the four who were stationed on the hill were there on the lookout "lest the American Light Horse should break up the party, for they were engaged in a business which was not specially authorized." An original conception of a would-be historian who was born on the other side of the water with British prejudices and predelections.

And yet in his closing paragraph, Mr. Parton apparently makes an effort to be fair, though he still clings to his assertion that "they were not militia-men:" But to quote from him again:

Many of their descendants and connections are still living in Westchester County, with two of whom I was once well acquainted, and was familiar also with the names and reputations of many others. They were the last people in the world whom we could believe to be descended from liars and robbers. I give up Pocahontas; I surrender John Smith; but I hold fast to the "three militia-men," even though they were not militia men.

The "American Light Horse" referred to by Mr. Parton was the organization known as Sheldon's Light Dragoons, whose commanding officer at that time was Lt. Col. Jameson, who had given the authorization for this party that captured Major Andre, to go on a scout, and it was to him, at North Castle, that they immediately delivered up the Spy, who as yet had only given the name of John Anderson, and the papers found upon him. And their action was unqualifiedly endorsed by him in a communication to Washington date of Sept. 27, 1780, only four days after the event, in which he said:

"This note will be delivered to you by John Paulding, one of the young men that took Major Andre, and who nobly refused any sum of money that could be offered. The other two young men that were in company with him are not yet found. As soon as they arrive, they shall be sent on."

So they were not running around, as some would have us believe, with their hats in their hands, saying, "We have captured Major Andre, and will Uncle Sam please give us a penny!" but like modest, self-respecting men having done their duty went their several ways, and had to be sent for that they might be taken into the presence of the Commander-in-Chief.

This act of these three immortal Patriots, Paulding, Williams and Van Wart, of supreme and national importance, will ever shine with brightest lustre on the pages of our local Revolutionary history. They belonged to the Militia of this locality, and there was never any doubt at any time of their sturdy loyalty to the American cause. It is our especial pride that they were the sons of the Dutch yeomanry on this Manor born, and near Tarrytown; that they were of the baptised children of the old Dutch Church, and we glory in the fact that they were of our own. Not only unpurchased, but unpurchasable!

This as a fitting prelude to the story of one of the Captors whose later life was spent far removed from these scenes, and hence less known of him here than of the others. David Wil-

Williams was born, according to his own statement, near Tarrytown, probably in the Saw Mill River Valley, the son of Aert (Arthur) Williams (Willems) and Femmetie (Phebe) Waldron his wife, early in 1755; according to the data on his monument, May 25, and was baptised, as recorded in the old Dutch Church records October 27th of that year, David See, after whom he was probably named, and Rachel Gardenier, being the sponsors. The parentage of Aert Williams, the father of David, does not clearly appear, but an Aert of an earlier generation lived in this vicinity, and was presumably his ancestor. Then there was a William Williams who married Hester Waldron, and was brother or kinsman, and there was an Abraham Williams, who married Mary See, who also seems to have been of that family.

Aert Williams certainly had a sister Rachel, who married Martinus Van Wart, the father of Isaac Van Wart, one of the Captors, who was an own cousin to David Williams. Then David Williams had a sister Sarah who married David Mead, and a sister Catharine who married Andrew Green, a son Moses, baptised in 1769, for whom Moses Harris and Sarah Williams were sponsors. Also sisters Rachel and Maritie, and a brother John, who were unmarried. We will only add the genealogical fact that Femmetie (Phebe) Waldron, the mother of David Williams, was the daughter of Jan Waldron and Margarietie Rouw his wife, and baptised at the old Dutch Church, Nov. 20, 1736, Nicklaes Rouw and Annatie Rouw being sponsors. Margarietie Rouw (Rowe) was a member of the old Dutch Church date of 1734.

The Rowe family was of great Nine Partners, Dutchess Co., while the Waldrons were a prominent Dutch family of Harlem, some of whom migrated in this direction. This Willem or Williams family was unquestionably of good Holland descent.

This much for the birth and ancestry of David Williams, who grew up amid these primitive surroundings a sturdy, right-minded youth, inured to toil, with the inherent virtues of Fidelity, Courage and Patriotism implanted in his breast. That he was not a laggard in the Patriot cause is shown by the fact of his enlistment in the 4th Regiment of the Line of Westchester County Volunteers under command of Col. Jas. Holmes, which embarked at Tarrytown in the latter part of May, 1775, and so sailed away on that daring and desperate adventure which had for its aim the conquest of an empire in extent—a most audacious effort at

expansion of the then nascent Republic. A bold scheme, but it had the approval of Washington and there were not wanting brave adventurers who dared to undertake the achievement.

David Williams was of the expedition that under the gallant Montgomery successfully besieged St. Johns, and later captured Montreal, then pushed on to Quebec, where their heroic leader fell in a desperate assault upon the citadel of that stronghold on the fatal night of December 31st, 1775. But though baffled and overborne, those brave American Volunteers, in spite of the cold and storms of winter which surrounded them, like Mar-mion of old lifted the broken fragments of their blades and shouted defiance to the enemy upon the battlements. And our modest hero was one of them. In this connection, of himself he briefly says in a well authenticated interview :

I served out my time which was six months. I then went and listed again in the spring of 1776; and continued in the service by different enlistments, as a New York Militiaman, until 1779.

In 1778, when in Capt. Acker's Company of New York Militia at Tarrytown, I asked his permission to take a walk in company with William Van Wart, a boy sixteen or seventeen years old. We proceeded to the cross-roads on Tompkins' ridge; stood looking a few minutes; saw five men coming; they had arms. We jumped over a stone fence and concealed ourselves in a corner of it; observed that they were armed with two muskets and three pistols. They came so nigh that we recognized two of them, viz: William Underhill and William Mosher, who were Tories, and known to be of De Lancey's Corps.

When they had come within proper distance, I said to my companion, "Billy, neck or no joint!" I then said aloud, as if speaking to a number, with the view of intimidating them, "Men, make ready!" They stopped immediately: I told them to ground their arms, which they did: I then said, "March away;" they did so: I then jumped over the fence, secured their arms, and made them march before us to our quarters.

I continued in the service until a week or ten days before the year 1780.

In December, 1779, Capt. Daniel Williams, who was commander of our company, mounted us on horses and we went to Morrisania, Westchester County. We swept all Morrisania clean; took probably five thousand dollars' worth of property; returned to Tarrytown, and quartered at Youngs' house.

My feet being frozen, my uncle Martinus VanWart, took me to his house. I told Capt. Williams that the enemy would soon be at Young's; and that if he remained there he would be on his

way back to Morrisania before morning. He paid no attention to my remark; he did not believe me; but in the course of the night a woman came to my uncle's, crying "Uncle Martinus! Uncle Martinus!" the truth was, the British had surrounded Young's house, made prisoners of all the company, except two; and burned the barn.

Having got well of my frozen feet, on the third of June, we were all driven from Tarrytown to the town of Salem, in the upper part of Westchester County. We belonged to no organized company at that time; were under no command; and worked for our board or johnny-cake.

Isaac Van Wart, who was a cousin of mine, Nicholas Storms, and myself went to Tarrytown on a visit; we carried muskets with us; and, on our way, took a Quaker who said he was going to New York after salt and other things. The Quaker was taken before the American authority and acquitted.

In July or August a number of persons of whom I was one, went on a visit to our friends in Tarrytown; and, while on the way, took ten head of cattle which some refugees were driving to New York; and on examination before the authority, the cattle were restored to their rightful owners as they pleaded innocence, saying they were stolen from them. I then returned to Salem, and worked with a Mr. Benedict for my board, until the twenty-second of September.

The following is David Williams' well verified account of the Capture of Andre :

It was about one o'clock P. M., of Sept. 22d, as I was standing in the door with Mr. Benedict's daughter, (who was afterwards my wife), when I saw six men coming. She remarked, "They have guns." I jumped over a board fence and met them. "Boys, said I, "where are you going?" They answered, "We are going to Tarrytown." I then said, "If you will wait until I get my gun, I will go with you."

The names of the six persons were Isaac Van Wart, John Paulding, William Williams, John Yerks, and James Romer—the name of the sixth, I have forgotten. We proceeded about fifteen miles that night, and slept in a hay barrack. In the morning we crossed Buttermilk Hill; and John Paulding proposed to go to Isaac Reed's, and get a pack of cards to divert ourselves with. After procuring them we went on to Davis' Hill, where we separated; leaving four to the hill, and three, viz.: Van Wart, Paulding and myself, proceeded on the Tarrytown road, and concealed ourselves in the bushes on the west side of the road, and commenced playing cards, three hand, that is each one for himself.

We had not been playing more than one hour, when we heard a horse galloping across a bridge but a few yards from us.

Which of us spoke I do not remember; but one of us said, "There comes a trader, going to New York." We stepped out from our concealment and stopped him. "My lads," said he, "I hope you belong to our party." We asked him "What party?" He replied, "The lower party." We told him we did. He then said, "I am a British officer; have been up in the country on particular business; and would not wish to be detained a minute;" and as a token to convince us he was a gentleman, he pulled out and showed us his gold watch.

We then told him we were Americans. "God bless my soul," he said, "a man must do anything these times to get along; and then showed Gen. Arnold's pass.

We told him it would not satisfy us without searching him. "My lads," said he, you will bring yourselves into trouble." We answered, "We did not fear it;" and conducted him several rods into the woods. My comrades appointed me to search him. Commencing with his hat, I searched his person effectually, but found nothing until I pulled off his boot, when we discovered that something was concealed in his stocking. Paulding caught hold of his foot and exclaimed with an oath, "here it is." I pulled off his stocking, and inside of it, next to the sole of his foot, found three half-sheets of paper enclosed in another half-sheet which was endorsed, "West Point;" and on pulling off the other boot and stocking, I found three like papers, enclosed and endorsed as the other. On reading them, one of my companions said, "He is a Spy!"

We then asked him where he got those papers. He told us "Of a man at Pine's Bridge, but," he said, "he did not know his name." He offered us his gold watch, his horse, saddle, bridle, and a hundred guineas, if we would let him go. We told him, "No," unless he would "inform us where he got the papers." He answered us as before, but increased his offer to a thousand guineas, his horse, etc. He then said, "Gentlemen! I will give you ten thousand guineas and as much dry-goods as you will ask. Conceal me in any place of safety while you can send to New York with an order to Sir Henry Clinton from me, and the goods and money will be procured so that you can get them unmolested." We replied, "Not if you would give us ten thousand guineas you should not stir a step; we are Americans, and above corruption, and go with us you must." We then took him about twelve miles to Colonel Jameson's quarters "at North Castle."

The high commendation of Washington, the prompt action of Congress in bestowing a reward of £500, a life pension of \$200, and awarding a Medal to each of them, was not only a suitable recognition of the virtue and importance of their action, but

so placed the mark of official approbation and honor upon them. To continue the story of David Williams: It appears from the deed book of the Commissioners of Forfeiture for this County that he selected lands under the award of Congress in the town of Eastchester, as the following copied from said deed book shows, this preamble therein fully appearing:

For and in consideration of the services David Williams hath rendered his country in apprehending and securing the British Deputy Adjutant General, Major Andre, who was returning to New York after having in the character of a Spy concerted measures with the infamous Benedict Arnold, then commanding the posts in the Highlands, for betraying the said posts into the hands of the enemy; and for his virtue in refusing a large sum of money offered by the said Major Andre as a bribe to permit him to escape; and for and in consideration of a further sum named, the said Commissioners granted and sold unto him, a certain tract of land late in the possession of Edmund Ward in the town of Eastchester, being altogether 252½ acres, for which the total price was £1,360, 12s., 6p., less the £500 awarded him by the Government. The date of this conveyance was June 16, 1783, but he re-conveyed a portion of the same to Stephen Ward the same year and he may never have lived there, or only for a short time. His purchase of a part of the farm of his father-in-law, Joseph Benedict, of Lower Salem, 140 acres, for which he paid £640, occurred June 23, 1789; at least he did not take title till that date. In this connection it should be stated, on the authority of Simm's *Frontiersmen of New York*, to which we are indebted for other data, that David Williams' father, Aert Williams, removed early in the war from near Tarrytown to Cross River, Lower Salem, and lived on lands belonging to Joseph Benedict, whose daughter, his son David, afterwards married. And there he, Aert Williams, continued to reside until his decease.

Nancy Benedict, was married to David Williams on the 9th of January, 1782, as we ascertained from document on file in the pension office at Washington, Sarah Mead, a sister of David Williams and the wife of David Mead, having testified to that effect, and that she was present on that occasion; her statement having been made at Bethlehem, Albany County, in January, 1841, in support of the application of Mrs. Williams for the renewal of her late husband's pension, which was granted in 1843.



The David Williams Homestead.



Nancy Benedict was one of the twenty-three children of Joseph Benedict, who was three times married, her mother having been Lydia Doane. It is said of her that she was superior in education to many of those around her, and that she was constantly engaged in teaching those whose advantages had been less than her own. In 1776, when Gen. Howe advanced northward from New York, it is said that she mounted her horse and with other horse-women followed the Patriot army and so witnessed the Battle of White Plains.

Joseph Benedict died July 17, 1793, and by his will gave his daughter Nancy, who was named as one of the Executors, a considerable interest in both his real and personal estate, and her only son, David Williams, Jr., was born there at the old Benedict homestead, while some of the furniture so bequeathed is still kept in the family as treasured heirlooms.

The date of the removal of the family to Schoharie County is given as 1805, and soon after arriving there Mr. Williams became possessed of a farm up on the Mountain, now called Williams Hill, in the town of Broome, and near to the hamlet of Livingstonville, which is at the junction of the two mountain streams which there uniting form the Catskill. A wild and romantic spot indeed he chose for his home, in full view of the lordly Catskills across the narrow valley to the southward, and far removed from other sight or sound than Nature's own. It had been for half a score of years or more the home of Gen. Daniel Shay, noted as the leader of Shay's Rebellion in Massachusetts, after the Revolution, and it may have been because of his participation in that tragedy that he sought such retirement. He afterwards removed to Sparta, in Livingston County, where an effort is now being made to erect a monument at his grave. And yet in no account of him published, except in Simm's *Frontiersmen of New York*, is it noted that for fifteen years after the so-called Shay's Rebellion, which for a time terrorized western Massachusetts, he had resided in retirement at Livingstonville, on the farm which was afterwards so long the home of David Williams.

While by reason of his removal to Schoharie County he had been measurably lost sight of here, on a recent visit there we found abundant evidence of the large and honorable place he came to occupy at that place, and of the high respect that was paid him in all that vicinage.

At the village of Schoharie stands the noble monument that has been erected to him by the aid of the State and the activity of patriotic citizens. And it is well placed near the walls of the old Stone Fort which successfully resisted the assaults of the Tories and Indians during the Revolution. It was a visit to that place during the past summer that incited to a research long since contemplated. A trip, in fact, two journeys, to the Williams home on the Mountain at Livingstonville, followed, and we there gathered up some interesting incidents from the oldest surviving grandson, Mr. Wm. Campbell Williams, who still owns the old homestead, and resides on a farm adjoining. He not only cherishes the family traditions, but is the possessor of the Andre Capture Medal that was presented to his grandfather, and other mementoes of him, among which the powder horn which was carried by David Williams on the day of the Capture, as is well attested by his grandmother who personally gave it to him as a precious relic, and which he generously placed in our hands to be eventually deposited with the Tarrytown Historical Society.

Mr. Williams was present at the Centennial Celebration of the Capture of Andre in 1880, as an honored guest, and from him we obtained information which has aided much in the preparation of this sketch. His photo, and that of his good wife, appear in the picture of the old homestead which he had taken for this special use. Mr. Williams was one of those who crossed the Plains to California in 1858, has been in the West Indies, and is full of interesting incidents of his own life, but nothing personal to himself interested us more than his graphic description of the drubbing which, while yet a stalwart youth, he gave to a man who in his presence made some reflections upon the patriotism of his grandsire. When he got through with him the Coroner and Undertaker might well have been invited in!

The following sketch of David Williams, copied from a paper published at Rensselaerville, an adjoining town, in Albany Co., evidences the esteem in which he was held in that locality:

"One of the pioneers of this region, he early became one of the leading spirits among our ancestors. Looked up to and respected for his integrity of character, and revered by all for the important part he played so well in that great drama which gave to us our independence, it was but natural that his society should be sought far and near, and by no people was he more cordially welcomed than by our village fathers. Here he found those congenial souls who were ever ready to listen to his stories of the Revolution, and when he wanted recreation from his daily labors, it was to "The City," (the early name



DAVID WILLIAMS' MONUMENT.

The monument is of white marble, 23 feet 9 inches in height, and has the following inscriptions upon it:

David Williams died August 2d, 1831, aged 70 years, 6 months and 8 days.

South Side:— "By authority of Congress, 1780, a Silver Medal was voted to them and presented to the Captors by General Washington, at a dinner to which he invited them while the army was encamped near West Point."

North Side: " *Vincit Amor Patriae.*" General Washington's letter to the President of Congress, October, 1780: "The parties that took Maj. Andre, acted in such a manner as does them the highest honor and proves them to be men of great virtue."

West Side:—Nancy Benedict, wife of David Williams, died August 5th, 1844, aged 87 years, 6 months and 8 days.



given to our then flourishing village) that he came. It was here that he always used to join our fathers in celebrating the old fashioned Independence day. Given a conspicuous seat on those memorable occasions it was with gratifying pride that the speakers would turn to the old "Major," as he was familiarly called, and with bursts of spread eagle oratory tender to him the thanks of a grateful country, and then call upon the rising generation to emulate his patriotism.

"He was by habit an early riser, and very industrious. Owing to his great liberality, he accumulated but a small property. In principle he was a warm republican. (Jeffersonian.) His early education was limited, but being fond of reading he acquired a good fund of general information. Not a member of any church, he regularly attended divine worship when opportunity offered, frequently opening his own house for that purpose.

"In the fall of 1830, the Corporation of the City of New York sent him an invitation by special messenger to be present as a guest at the Celebration of the French Revolution. He was with Enoch Crosby, another hero of '76, and two others, drawn in an elegant carriage at the head of the procession, attracting much attention and receiving enthusiastic applause from the assembled multitude. While in the city he visited, with the Mayor and other distinguished citizens, the theatres, public schools, navy yards, etc., at all of which he was a distinguished guest. At one of the schools, a silver cup was presented him, at another, a silver headed cane, the stem of which was made from a part of the *chevaux de frise* used near West Point during the Revolution. He was also presented, while on this visit, with an elegant horse, carriage and harness by the Mayor.

"Mr. Williams returned from New York in December, soon after which he began to fail rapidly. The excitement attending his visit was no doubt too much for one of his age and retired habits. Conscious of his condition he manifested a spirit of resignation to the divine will. He died at sunset, on Tuesday, August 2d, 1831."

The local papers of that date contained the following notice of his death and funeral:

"The venerable David Williams, the last of the Captors of Major Andre, has gone to his rest full of years and full of glory. He died at his residence in Broome, on Tuesday the 2d inst., at the age of 77. His remains were interred on Thursday, with military honors, at Livingstonville, in the presence of a large concourse of citizens who had assembled to pay the last sad tributes of respect to his mortal remains. At 10 o'clock a sermon was preached by Rev. Marcus Smith of Rensselaerville. After the sermon a procession was formed under direction of Col. Joseph Bouck, in the following order: Military; Reverend Clergy; Pall Bearers; Col. John Niles; Col. Lewis M. Dayton; Lt. Helim Dayton, of Rensselaerville; Col. Zaddock Pratt of Prattsville; Relatives and Citizens. At the grave an appropriate eulogy was pronounced by R. McClellan Esq., and the farewell salute of the military closed the exercises."

It appears that by a special dispensation he had been made a Mason while on his visit to the city of New York, but it was not generally known until a body of fellow craftsmen gathered at his bier clothed in their white aprons and full Masonic regalia.

Mrs. Williams lived to be 87, and died in 1844, beloved and respected by all who knew her. Eleven years after the death of Mr. Williams she succeeded in securing the renewal of his pension with back pay up to that date, amounting to \$2,200. David Williams, Jr., continued to reside at the old homestead. The life of this son was a peculiarly pleasant one. Inheriting the virtues

of his parents he early drew around him a host of warm friends. Was a school teacher, Town Assessor, and a prominent citizen. He married the sister of Col. Hess and left a family of three sons and four daughters.

The celebration of the French Revolution which Mr. Williams attended, was held on the 26th of November, 1830, and was pronounced by the cotemporaneous press to have been the most splendid piece of pageantry of the kind ever witnessed in the City of New York, with the single exception of the display on the opening of the Erie Canal. A special messenger, a Mr. Campbell, was sent up to Schoharie County to escort Mr. Williams, and the daily papers in announcing his arrival stated that "he will be a guest at the public dinner in the 9th Ward on the evening of the day of the Celebration." Another paper says: "A ball will be given on Tuesday evening, the 30th inst., at Military Hall, 9th Ward, in honor of Mr. David Williams, the only surviving Captor of Major Andre." And it is in evidence that he led off in the mazy dance with a sprightliness remarkable for one of his years. He was also an honored guest at a dinner given in the 8th Ward, the Mayor and Recorder being present and an address delivered by the late Dr. John F. Gray, (an honored kinsman.)

An account of the 9th Ward Dinner states that among the honored guests present were David Williams, the surviving Captor of Major Andre, Mr. Samuel Youngs, a compatriot in arms with Williams, the Lieut. Gov. elect of the State, U. S. Senator Hill of New Hampshire, the Mayor, Recorder, Secretary of State, and many others distinguished. An address was delivered by Richard Cromwell, Esq., which was listened to with great attention, particularly when he alluded to Williams' services and incorruptible integrity. The venerable old gentleman involuntarily rose from his seat quite overcome with emotion, which was shared by all present.

The 10th toast was "Fidelity and Integrity—David Williams and Enoch Crosby."

A Volunteer Toast by Chas. M. Hay: "Mr. David Williams, the surviving Captor of Major Andre—his hoary locks a sight more beautiful to the eyes of Freemen than the richest crown that ever decked a monarch's brow."

Justus Hagaborn, of Franklinton, near Livingstonville, now

96 years old, said to us recently that he well remembers David Williams. "His standing among his neighbors was good."

The venerable Rev. L. D. Place, now of Hicksville, L. I., also remembers David Williams, having frequently seen him when a student at the Collegiate Institute at Durham, N. Y. "He was called Major by the people there. Was a lovable, genial old gentleman, commanding the respect of the entire community. At the summit of the hill west of the Institute was a hotel kept by a man named Hopkins. One evening in company with one of the Professors and a number of students I visited the hotel and we were all introduced to Mr. Williams. On invitation to give us an account of the Capture of Major Andre, he cordially complied and gave a thrilling account of the affair. The old man's face glowed with pleasure at the thought of trapping a Spy.

"We afterwards met him a number of times at the hotel, and he delighted (this unlettered man that some would have us believe him to have been,) in giving the boys difficult words to spell! On several occasions he loaned me his old flint lock musket that he had at the Capture of Andre." What would we not give for a look at that old musket now, but we fear that with many other precious mementoes, including the pistols given him by Washington, it has hopelessly disappeared.

It is strange to relate that Mr. Williams' remains, after resting peacefully for over forty years in the grave where his friends and neighbor had laid him in the quiet burial place at the foot of the mountain where he had lived, should have been subject to three removals and resurrections before they received their last interment. But that it should have been so is only another proof that fact is often stranger than fiction, and in this case is a sufficient justification for the anathema which Shakspeare pronounced upon those who should ever disturb his bones. And that these series of grewsome events should have been occasioned by the revival of patriotism that swept over the country in the Centennial Anniversaries of 1875-76 is quite as remarkable.

As that time drew near, and the erection of patriotic memorials was in order, in anticipation of a monument to be erected to David Williams, a movement was started in nearby Rensselaerville to have his remains removed to a cemetery at that place, and having secured the endorsement of the scheme by a number of his descendants, a descent was made upon the hamlet of Liv-

ingstonville, the grave opened, and the remains carried off to be re-buried at the former place. That forbidding performance coming to the knowledge of the people of Schoharie aroused public indignation and it was determined if possible to subvert this high handed proceeding. In the meantime a bill had been introduced in the State Legislature by the Albany County representatives appropriating \$2,000 for the erection of a Monument to David Williams at Rensselaerville, which is in Albany County. After a struggle the bill was amended so that the Monument might be erected at either Rensselaerville or Schoharie, as a majority of the direct descendants, of David Williams should formally request. Then came a contest for signatures, and the eldest grandson, Mr. Wm. C. Williams, who had not been in favor of the Rensselaerville removal, with the aid of others undertook the work of securing a reversal in favor of Schoharie, and after travelling several thousand miles in many States, from Iowa to Virginia, righteously succeeded. A formal demand then made for the body was met by refusal and threatened personal violence. The Rensselaerville people even went so far as, "Horrible Dictu!" to dig up the remains (that was the second resurrection) and hide them away in a trench under a tree by the roadside where they could not well be discovered. At last, after some delay, a peaceable arrangement was effected, and Schoharie carried off the poor much abused remains in triumph; and that was the third resurrection! Dr. Daniel Knower, in his Centennial address, in speaking of this final removal, said:

"On the 19th of July, they were removed to the Stone Fort, Schoharie, to which destination they were escorted by a large procession headed by the American flag and amid martial music. All places of business were closed; the bells tolled, and the cannon at the Fort fired a salute, as the coffin wrapped in the American flag, was deposited near its present resting place."

They were deposited in historic ground, near the old Stone Fort, which is bordered by a notable burial place, and there on the 23rd day of September, 1876, the foundations of the monument to the memory of the Incorruptible Patriot, David Williams, were dedicated in the presence of the largest gathering ever assembled in the capitol town of Schoharie County, Hon. Grenville Tremain, delivering a patriotic, and eloquent eulogy. And there covered with immortal honors, we will leave him.

Mr. HART's work, to which reference is made in connection with the portrait of David Williams which appears on the frontis page of this supplement to THE ARGUS, was published in a limited edition of 400 copies containing twenty life masks, introducing the only portraits of the Three Captors of Andre. A few copies remain unsold which may be obtained from the author, CHARLES HENRY HART, 1819 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, on Japan paper with portraits.



TABLET ON THE MONUMENT TO ANDRE AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

ADDENDA.

David Williams, Jr., married Lana Hess. He died Aug. 11, 1862, and she died Jan'y 10, 1887. They left seven children, as follows:

A son William C. Williams, whose picture appears herewith, married Sina Turner of New Haven, Conn., and had daughter Florence, who is married and has two children; lives in Middleburgh; and a son, Wm. C. Williams, Jr., who lives in Schenectady.

A son Daniel D. Williams, born 1830, who is married but has no children; resides at Schenectady, N. Y.

A son, Myron Williams, who lived at Marion, Iowa; died, 1902, and left two sons and a daughter.

A daughter Augusta, who married Edward Lounsberry, and left a daughter Anna E., who lives at Medusa, Albany County, N. Y.

A daughter Delia who married Daniel White-man, and lived at Alta,



Iowa; left two children.

A daughter, Nancy M. Williams, married a Mr. Chapman and lived near Livingstonville, left two children.

A daughter, Amanda A. Williams, married Philip Becker; lived in Virginia; a daughter.

Joseph Benedict, the father of Nancy Benedict who married David Williams, was the son of Joseph, who was son of John, son of Deacon Thomas Benedict, born 1617, who was first of the name in New England.

[From JOHN GEBHARD, Jr., the celebrated Geologist.]

SCHOHARIE, N. Y., Oct. 16, 1876.

TO DR. KNOWER.

DEAR SIR: In compliance with your request, that I would inform you what I know in relation to the character and standing of the late David Williams, one of the captors of Major Andre, I would state that I was well acquainted with Mr. Williams for several years immediately preceding his death, and can bear cheerful testimony to the high standing for truth and integrity in which he was held by his neighbors and acquaintances.

I was present at his funeral, which was large and imposing. After the sermon was preached, the funeral procession proceeded to the cemetery, where an able eulogy was delivered by Robert McClellan, Esq., and before the remains were lowered to their resting place R. W. Murphy, Esq., standing beside the coffin, with a sorrowful heart, overflowing with gratitude and sympathy, stated to the vast assemblage that when he was a young orphan boy, David Williams took him to his home, supported and clothed him, gave him a good education and aided him in starting in business. He also gave a full and minute account of the daily life and habits of the deceased, and concluded by saying that David Williams died as he had lived through a long life, an upright and honest man.

Respectfully your obt. serv't,

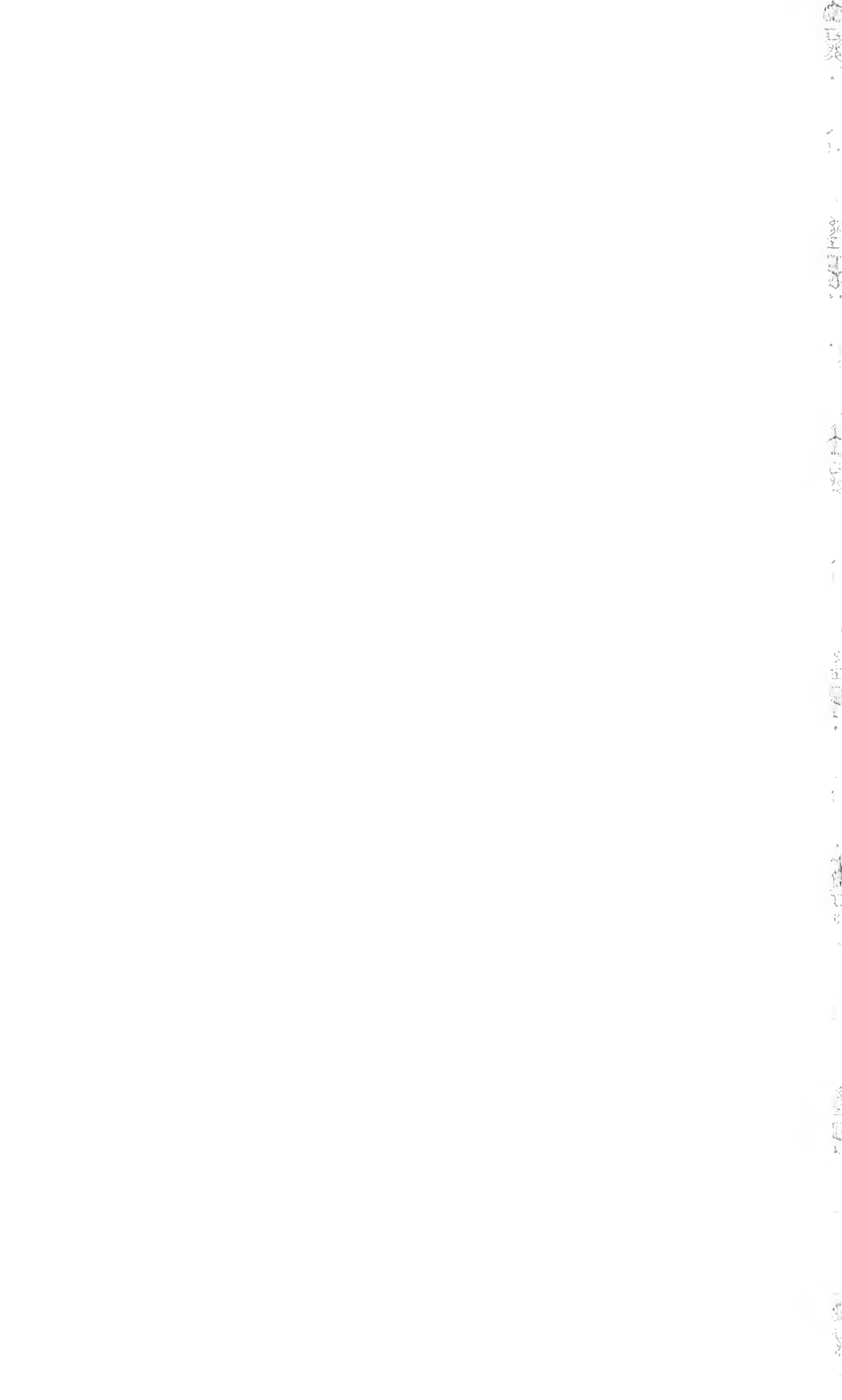
JOHN GEBHARD, JR.

[Extract of a letter from J. R. SIMMS, Historian of Schoharie Co.]

FORT PLAIN, N. Y., Oct. 9, 1876.

Judge Murphy, whom it was our pleasure to know nearly thirty years ago, and who was then a worthy citizen of Livingstonville, Schoharie Co., was brought up from childhood in the family of David Williams as one of his own children. He held the character and virtue of his benefactor in the highest esteem. No one could estimate his character more truthfully, and no man ever knew him better, and the picture he gave of him as a man would compare favorably for candor, integrity and benevolence with that of any man in Schoharie County to-day.





HECKMAN
BINDERY INC.



APR 89

N. MANCHESTER,
INDIANA 46962

