

## CHAPTER LXXIV.

### TOWAMENCIN TOWNSHIP.<sup>1</sup>

TOWAMENCIN<sup>2</sup> township is one of the central townships of the county, bounded on the northeast by Hatfield, south by Worcester, southeast by Gwynedd, southwest by Perkiomen and west by Lower Salford. Its greatest length is four and a half miles, breadth nearly three, with an area of about six thousand acres. The surface is slightly rolling, and the soil a red shale. It is watered by the Skippack and Towamencin Creeks. The former has a course of nearly three miles, but furnishes no valuable water-power. The latter is a branch of the Skippack, and lies almost wholly within the township, and in a course of six miles propels two grist-mills. These streams also receive several tributaries within this territory, all of which go to help the volume of the Skippack, a con-fluent of the Perkiomen.

The only material public improvement is the Spring House and Sumneytown turnpike, finished in 1848, which crosses the township for a distance of three miles near its centre. According to the census of 1800, it contained 473 inhabitants; in 1840, 763; and in 1880, 1282. Although its progress has not been rapid, yet every decade has shown an increase. The real estate in 1882 for taxable purposes was valued at \$847,735, and including the personal, \$929,235. The taxables were 313, and the aggregate per head is \$2968, making it in point of wealth the tenth township in the county, and almost the equal of Gwynedd. In 1883 we find here two hotels, one hardware, one boot and shoe, one general store and three dealers in flour and feed. It contains six public schools, open six months, with an average attendance of 233 scholars; in 1856 five schools were open four months, with an average of 142 pupils. The census of 1830 gives 144 houses, 175 families and 132 farms. It contains five churches, belonging, respectively, to the Mennonites, Dunkards, Lutheran, Reformed, Schwenkfelders and Methodists.

Towamencin is a name of Indian origin, and no doubt was taken from the stream bearing it. In March, 1728, the territory was formed into a town-ship, and at the request of the petitioners called Towamencin. A draft thereof in the records states its area to be "about five thousand five hundred acres." Although its boundaries have not since been changed, yet, like all other early surveys, its area is now made somewhat more, no doubt in part brought about by a closer or more exact measurement through the increased value of lands. A list of the land-holders and tenants of this township was prepared in 1734, which we now propose to give here in full, being thirty-two in number, which necessarily must contain some of its earliest settlers, of whom, to a limited extent, a further account will be given: Joseph Morgan, 200 acres; James Wall, 100; John Morgan, 200; Daniel Morgan, 200; Daniel Williams, 200; John Edwards, 250; Joseph Lukens, 200; Jacob Hill, 100; Hugh Evans, 180; Cadwallader Evans, 100; Christian Weber, 50; Nicholas Leshner, 150; Paul Hendricks, 100; Jacob Fry, 200; Peter Weber, 150; Peter Tyson, 100; Christian Brinaman, 150; Lawrence Hendricks, 150; Garret Schrager, 100; Leonard Hendricks, 150; Henry Hendricks, 123; Herman Gotschalk, 100; John Gotschalk, 120; Gotschalk Gotschalk, 120; Abraham Lukens, 200; Francis Grif-fith, 100; William Nash, 50; Henry Fry, 50; Felty Consenhiser, 23; Peter Wentz; William Tennis, 25; Jellis Jellis, 22 acres.

It is apparent, in examining the above list, that many of the early settlers came hither after a brief residence in or around Germantown. As their children grew up and the country became more improved they moved to where cheaper lands abounded, though at the expense of greater toil.

The first land probably taken up in Towamencin was a grant of one thousand acres from Penn's com-missioners of property to Benjamin Furley, June 8, 1703. This was purchased nine days later from Fur-ley's attorneys by Abraham Tennis and Jan Lucken, who, in 1709, divided it, each taking five hundred acres. This tract embraced the northern part of the township and extended to the present Skippack road, and perhaps as far down as Kulpsville. Here they settled and made the first improvements, and even to this day the descendants of John Lucken or Lukens retain a portion of the ancestral tract. Henry Fry purchased twelve hundred and fifty acres on the Towamencin Creek from Benjamin Fairman, Decem-ber 10, 1724, on which he also was the first settler. The Tennis family, it appears, for awhile flourished here. On the list of 1734 we find only the name of William Tennis with 25 acres, but in 1776, Samuel Tennis with 192 acres, and William and Israel Tennis. They possessed an old burial-place in the northeast part of the township, though the name has now be-come extinct in this section. Christian Weber made his purchase in 1728, and very likely then made his residence here. Wilhelm, Heinrich, Lorentz and Gerhart Hendricks resided at Germantown before 1700. William Hendricks and his sons, Henry and Lawrence, were naturalized in 1709, to hold and en-joy lands. Among the descendants of those in the list of 1734, the Hendricks and the Gotschalks are still numerous, and the names of Lukens, Wentz, Fry and Edwards are still here. The last is the only surviving one of those of English or Welsh origin, who then constituted over one-third of the total number. William Nash, in May, 1747, was a collector of taxes in Towamencin.

Jan Lucken came from Holland in the fall of 1688 and shortly afterwards settled at Germantown. Ac-cording to his Bible record, he had seven sons and four daughters. Elias was born in 1686; William, 1687; John, 1691; Peter, 1696; Mathias, 1700; Abraham, 1703; and Joseph, in 1705. Jan Lucken made his will October 9, 1741, leaving to his son Abraham three hundred acres, to be taken off the southeast side of his tract, and the balance he di-rected to be sold. Abraham made his will March 31, 1776, by which it appears he had nine children,— John, Mathias, William, Abraham, Joseph, Job, Margaret, Jonathan and Enos. His executors were Elizabeth, his second wife, and sons John and Mathias. The homestead, of two hundred acres, situated near the present Union or Brick Church, was sold out of the family. In the assessment of Towamencin for 1776 we find Abraham Lukens taxed for 215 acres; Joseph Lukens, 98; John Lukens, son of Abraham, 115 acres; Peter Lukens, 87 acres; and John Lukens, 109 acres. John Lukens, son of Abraham, continued to reside on his homestead until his death, and his son George became its owner in 1805, and retained possession for about forty-four

years. The Lukens family here, like their kindred in Horsham, appear to have been noted for longevity, as well as for being substantial land-holders.

Heinrich Frey or Fry, a native of Altheim, in Alsace, it is stated, came to Pennsylvania before the arrival of William Penn and settled near Roxborough. In 1692 he was married, at Germantown, to Catharine, daughter of Wigart Levering. They had nine children, of whom six were sons. He purchased, as has been mentioned, twelve hundred and fifty acres on Towamencin Creek in 1724. It is a family tradition that two of his sons walked up from the Wissahickon, a distance of eighteen or twenty miles, on Monday mornings, bringing their provisions along with them for the week, for the purpose of making a clearing and erecting a house, which they completed by the following spring. A few Indians, who appeared friendly, were still lingering here, having a couple of wigwams on the banks of the stream. The chief, who visited the scene of their labors, observed them eating bread, when they gave him a piece, which he ate and pronounced good. On the following week they brought him an extra loaf, at which he was greatly delighted, and in return the following day brought them a saddle of venison. The eldest of these brothers was Jacob, who had two sons and two daughters, whereof Daniel Fry is still living on the homestead at the good old age of ninety-four years, and yet very active. The family possess an ancient burial-ground in the township, which is now in a dilapidated condition. In the assessment of 1776 we find, as in 1734, the name of Jacob Fry with two hundred acres. The late Jacob Fry, of the Trappe, member of Congress and auditor-general of Pennsylvania, is represented as a descendant of this family.

Christian Weber and wife, Appolonia, arrived in Philadelphia in 1727, and the following year purchased a farm on the west side of the present turnpike, adjoining Gwynedd line. He built a stone house here in 1737, which is still standing. His death occurred in 1778, at the age of eighty-two years. He had sons,—Jacob, Benjamin, Nicholas and Christian. Jacob Weber had three sons,—Abraham, Benjamin and Isaac. Christian Weber, Jr., was born in 1743 and married Elizabeth Wiedner in 1765, and kept an inn half a mile below Kulpsville, on the west side of the turnpike, now the residence of William H. Anders. His wife died in 1805, after which he married the widow of the Rev. Jacob Van Buskirk. He was a captain in the Revolution, and, it is said, recruited one hundred men for the service. Governor Mifflin appointed him a justice of the peace, and he also served in the beginning of this century as one of the county commissioners. He had two sons,—John and Jesse,—who both became prominent men. The former was born in 1768, became a miller, and in 1807 was elected to the Assembly, of which he served twice as Speaker. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Jacob and Catharine Reiff, and had five

children. His death and also his father's occurred in 1815. Jesse Weber was captain of the Montgomery Union Troop of Horse, to which post he was elected September 28, 1807, and afterwards, with his company, went into the service at Camp Dupont during the late war with England. He was also elected from this county to the Assembly in 1844 and the following year. We find rated in Towamencin for 1776, Christian Weber, Sr., for fifty-two acres; Christian Weber, Jr., one hundred; and Benjamin Weber, sixty-four acres.

Caspar Kriebel and his wife, Susanna, arrived in Pennsylvania in 1734, and settled in the southern corner of the township, on the place now owned by his descendant, Abraham H. Kriebel. His children were George, Abraham and Susanna. He died February 16, 1771. His son, Abraham Kriebel, was born in 1736, and married, in 1762, a daughter of George Shultz. He died in 1801 and his widow in 1820. The farm on which he lived and died, at the Schwenkfelder Meeting-house, he inherited. Melchior Kriebel and his wife, Anna, the daughter of George Drescher, also came in 1734. He died February 14, 1790, aged eighty years. His children were David, Susanna, Melchior and Rosina. In 1776 we find Abraham Kriebel rated one hundred and eighty-nine acres.

Susanna Weigner, widow, whose maiden-name was Seipt, arrived at the same time with her children,—Abraham, George and Rosina. Abraham Weigner married Susan, daughter of Abraham Yeakel, May 31, 1750. Their children were Maria, Sarah, Rosina, Susanna, Abraham and John. He died March 13, 1781, aged sixty-two years.

Abraham Yeakle and wife, Maria, arrived in 1734 and died January 12, 1762. His children were Balthasar (born in 1736), Hans, Susanna, Rosina and Elizabeth. Balthasar Yeakle married Rosina, widow of Christopher Reinwalt and daughter of David Heebner, October 7, 1760. His children were Esther, Maria, Catharine and Abraham. He had in 1776 one hundred and fifty acres of land. He died April 18, 1789. Hans or John Yeakle, who resided in Towamencin, was also the son of Abraham; married Anna, daughter of Christopher Weigner, in 1762. Their children were Maria, Regina, Christopher, Joseph, Magdalena, Jacob, Christian, Anna, Abraham and John. He died in 1801, aged sixty-two years, and his widow in 1822, nearly eighty. He was rated in 1776 with one hundred and fifteen acres. Balthasar Anders and his wife, Anna Hoffrichter, came in 1734 with the others. He had three children,—George, Anna and Abraham. He was a shoemaker by occupation and died in 1754, aged fifty-six years. His widow survived until 1784, having attained nearly eighty-four years. George Anders was rated in 1776 for one hundred and fifty acres and as having a family of seven children.

Yellis Cassel, who, in the list of 1776, is rated for eighty-two acres, was the great-grandfather of Abra-

ham H. Cassel, the noted antiquarian of Lower Salford, who was born in this township September 21, 1820, as was also his father, Yellis, and grandfather, Hupert Cassel. Yellis and Hupert Cassel were landholders in Perkiomen township in 1734. The former arrived about 1715, and the latter in 1727. Johannes Cassel, who settled in Germantown in 1686, it is supposed was uncle of the first Hupert. Frederick Wampole came from Germany in 1744, and purchased from Abraham Lukens one hundred and fifty acres, on which he resided, and was witness thereon to interesting scenes connected with the Revolution. Among the township officers of the past, we find Joseph Smith constable, in 1767; Frederick Wampole, supervisor, 1773; John Luken, constable, 1774; and Garret Gotshalk, assessor, and Owen Hughes, collector, in 1776.

The road from the present Spring House to Marlborough township was laid out and confirmed in June, 1735, and, in consequence, was for a long time afterwards called the North Wales road, and as it became extended further northwards, became known also as the Maxatawny road. In 1829 a charter was granted to turnpike this road up to Sumneytown, and though great efforts were used to secure sufficient stock along its route to complete it, they failed until 1848. This was a great improvement over the old route, not only in being much straighter, but in the reduction of grade. The Forty-Foot road, which extends through the whole length of the township was laid out several years before the Revolution. It was over this highway that the army marched from Skippack to their encampment.

Through the success of continued researches, the writer has ascertained that the occurrences that transpired in this small township during the Revolution are unusually interesting, and for which here but a very brief space can be given. The battle of Germantown was fought on the morning of October 4, 1777, and resulted disastrously to the American cause, when Washington immediately returned with the main body of the army up the Skippack road, beyond the Perkiomen, in the vicinity of the present Schwenksville, where they remained until the afternoon of the 8th, when he arrived and established his camp nearly a mile northwest of Kulpsville, near the Lower Salford line. The officers wounded in the battle were brought to a farm-house on the Forty-Foot road, about a mile and a quarter southwest of the Mennonite Meeting-house. General Nash, who had been wounded in the thigh by a cannon-ball which had killed his horse, we know from an eye-witness, was carried up hither on a litter made of poles. Washington may have come here on purpose to attend the funeral on the following day, for which he issued his orders that he should be interred at ten o'clock, and that "all officers whose circumstances will admit of it will attend and pay this respect to a brave man, who died in defense of his country."

Washington made his headquarters at the house of

Frederick Wampole, whom we have mentioned as being supervisor, and who in 1773 was rated for two hundred and twenty acres of land, one servant and four horses. The house was about half a mile north of the meeting-house. It belonged to J. W. Wampole, Esq., as late as 1856 or the following year. The present owner is Jacob Detweiler, who took down the old house in 1881 and built a new one in its place. In his letter to Congress, dated at Peter Wentz's, in Worcester township, four miles distant on the Skippack road, Washington says: "We moved this morning from the encampment at which we had been for six or seven days past, and are just arrived at the grounds we occupied before the action of the 4th. Our motive in coming here is to direct the enemy's attention from the fort." The Rev. Jacob Duché, of Philadelphia, through the defeat at Germantown, was induced to write a letter, on the 8th, to Washington, desiring him now to abandon the cause and stop the further effusion of blood, and at the head of the army demand from Congress that they make peace. This letter was delivered to him here on the 15th by a female whom he had induced to deliver it, an undertaking which certainly no sane man of his own free will would have risked.

While the camp was here a court of inquiry was ordered and held respecting the conduct of General Wayne at Paoli, of which Lord Stirling was president. John Farndon, a private of Colonel Hartley's regiment, was sentenced, September 25th, to suffer death for desertion to the enemy, and was executed here at noon of the 9th, immediately after the funeral, thus adding additional solemnity to the day, traditions respecting which are still extant in the old families of the neighborhood. The place of execution, it is said, was on the Lower Salford line, about a quarter of a mile northeast of where the turnpike crosses the Skippack Creek, the premises being now owned by J. Wampole. Major John White, a resident of Philadelphia and an aid of General Sullivan, was shot dead by a British soldier from a cellar-window in the attempt to fire Chew's house. Lieutenant Mathew Smith, a native of Middlesex County, Va., in the hazardous effort to carry a flag to demand a formal and immediate surrender was killed by a ball within musket-shot of the building. Concerning Colonel Boyd, we have so far failed to secure any other information than that he and the officers were buried beside each other in the Mennonite graveyard, opposite the camp, and their names even John F. Watson, the annalist, could not give, though on the monument committee. The chief authority that Washington made his headquarters at the house of Frederick Wampole rests in the letter of Colonel Henry Laurens to his father, president of Congress, dated at "Headquarters, Wampole's, October 15, 1777," who was aide-camp and private secretary to the commander-in-chief during the whole of this period.

Kulpsville is the only village of this agricultural

condition, but were still without a parsonage, steps were taken for the purchase of a lot on which to erect one. The contract for building the house was given to Mr. Naille himself, who handed it over completed to the trustees of the congregation on the 21st of October, 1849. The congregation continued to grow still stronger, so that in 1851 the pastor began to remind them of the necessity for a larger house of worship. The church was, it is true, in a good condition, but it was not by any means convenient, and was, besides, too small for the congregation, and as it also did not meet the taste of the people any longer, the congregation soon gave its consent to the erection of a new church. Within the same year a resolution to that end was unanimously adopted, and preparations being made immediately for the erection of a new church, the corner-stone was laid on the 21st of August, on which occasion the Rev. Dr. Samuel Helfenstein preached in the German and the Rev. Jacob Keller in the English language. The new building was ready for dedication on the 29th of January, 1852, when the same brethren officiated who had participated in the services at the laying of the corner-stone, and were assisted by the Rev. Mr. Medtard, of the Lutheran, and Rev. Reuben Kriebel, of the Schwenkfeldian Church. The new church was a plain one-story building, with a gallery at the end, and with difficulty would seat only three hundred persons. It was soon felt that the house was too small to comfortably accommodate the continually increasing congregation. After Rev. Mr. Naille had served the church eleven years, he resigned charge of it in February, 1857. Notwithstanding his advanced age, Rev. John Naille is still laboring in the vineyard of the Lord, as a minister in the Reformed Church. A vacancy of eleven months followed, at the close of which a call was extended to Rev. William G. Hackman, which he accepted, and commenced his labors in January, 1858. His efforts in the interests of the congregation were from the very first crowned with success. The Sunday-school largely increased, and as there was not room for its accommodation in the old school-house, it was resolved, in the fall of 1858, to build a school-house for its special use. This was erected during the following year and dedicated on the 4th of August. General satisfaction prevailed at this time, and the congregation continued to prosper for some years to come. After a pastorate of eight years Rev. Mr. Hackman resigned and accepted a call in St. Joseph's County, Mich., in which he has continued to labor up to the present time. The people were extremely sorry to see their pastor removed from their midst, and hearty prayers for his welfare accompanied him to his new field of labor. He had succeeded in getting a fast hold upon the affections of the people, and was highly esteemed by the community generally outside of the congregation. After the resignation of the Rev. William G. Hackman, the church succeeded in securing the services of the present pastor, Rev. S.

M. K. Huber, who was at that time serving the Keely's congregation, now a part of the Wentz's charge. He was chosen on the 1st of January, 1867. At this time the membership numbered one hundred and ninety, of whom only one hundred and twenty-seven partook of the Lord's Supper at the first communion held by the new pastor. Success attended his unintermitted labors, and during the first year fifty-two persons were added to the church by confirmation, which number, through his activity, has been increased from year to year until it has reached two hundred and fifty, more than half of its present membership. During the first year of his labors, the great disadvantages resulting from the remoteness of the parsonage from the principal congregation became sensibly manifest both to pastor and people. After considerable deliberation the old parsonage property was sold on the 4th of September, 1869, and active efforts were immediately entered upon to erect a new parsonage upon a lot of ground, containing an acre and a quarter, adjoining the Wentz's church property, which had been purchased from Samuel Schultze. The work was carried forward to a successful completion, so that the pastor took possession of it on the 21st of March, 1870. The good results from the change of the location of the parsonage soon became manifest. The contiguity of the parsonage to the church enabled the pastor to look more carefully after the spiritual interests of his flock, and especially to give his personal attention to the Sunday-school work in his church. So great were the additions to the number of scholars and general prosperity of the school that the room in the school-house soon became inadequate to the wants of the school.

The subject of providing better and more suitable accommodations for the Sunday-school was agitated, and as the church itself was too small for the comfortable accommodation of the membership, and also needed extensive repairs, the Consistory resolved to lay the entire subject before the congregation for its decision. Accordingly, it was almost unanimously resolved that the new church should be built during the summer of 1878. On the 17th of March, 1878, the last communion season in the old church was held. It was a specially interesting and solemn occasion. The demolition of the building was commenced the following Monday, and by the close of the week the third church on this spot was a thing of the past. The corner-stone of the new building was laid on Easter Monday, the 22d of April, and was the same that had been used in the first building erected on this spot, in 1762. The following articles were placed in the box: the Minutes for 1878 of the Synod of the United States, the Synod of the Potomac and of the Pittsburg Synod; German and English almanacs for 1878, monthly *Guardian*, *Reformirte Hausfreund*, constitution of the Reformed Church, English and German hymn-books and catechisms, English Bible, large issue of *The Messenger*, *Christian World*, United States coin to the amount of

\$3.14 of the coinage of 1878, a silver quarter of a dollar found in the old corner-stone, and a half-cent piece found in tearing down the old church. In a temporal point of view the congregation has made remarkable progress during the pastorate of the present pastor, and if the outward may serve as a basis for conclusions in regard to the inward, the necessary inference must be that a corresponding progress has also taken place in the spiritual condition of the membership. The congregation has been remarkably active during late years as regards its property. The greater part of the extensive sheds, for sheltering horses and vehicles, has been built, the dwelling for the sexton of the church has been enlarged and improved, the new parsonage has been built and the church provided with a new organ. At the time the erection of the new church building was entered upon the following were the officers of the congregation: Pastor, Rev. S. M. K. Huber; Elders, James W. Slough, Tobias G. Hange and John Custer; Deacons, William G. Markley, Samuel G. Fenstermaker, Hillary M. Snyder, Henry Slough, Daniel Beyer and George F. Strong; Trustees, Peter S. Fry, S. K. Kriebel and John Deckert; Building Committee, Peter Fry, S. K. Kriebel, John Deckert, Reuben Scheffy, Eli Frick and Henry Slough.

The basement of the new church was dedicated on the first Sunday in September the same year, and the pastor was assisted by the Rev. S. R. Fisher, of Philadelphia, who preached a very impressive sermon on Sunday morning, and in the afternoon addressed the Sunday-school, which was for the first time assembled in its new home. The work on the auditorium was resumed immediately after the basement dedication, and by the 1st of November the new church was completed, and dedicated on the 9th and 10th of November, 1878. The following clergymen took part in the dedicatory services: Rev. Moses Godshalk, of Schwenksville (Mennonite); Rev. Frank J. Mohr, of Quakertown; Rev. C. Z. Weiser, D.D., of Pennsylvania; Rev. J. A. Schultz, of Worcester; Rev. J. H. A. Bomberger, of Collegeville (these last-named Reformed); Rev. S. Coleman, of Centre Square (Lutheran); Rev. H. Rodenbough, of Eagleville; and Rev. C. Collins, pastor of Centennial Church, Jefferson (Presbyterian).

The burial-grounds are large and well attended to; there are so many families interred here that it would seem invidious to mention but a few, and space forbids to name the many. The Hon. John Weber and wife are buried in these grounds.

The **Bethel Methodist Meeting-House** is situated on the Skipack road, a little over half a mile above the Whippain line. The first house of worship was built in 1770 by Johannes Supplee, but for no particular denomination. In 1784 a congregation was regularly organized by the Methodist Episcopal Church, under whose control it has since remained. This was the first congregation organized by this de-

nomination in the county. Joseph Pillmore, a minister from England, had the first charge. The present church was erected in 1845, and the old one torn down a few years afterward. The oldest stone in the graveyard containing an inscription is that of Johannes Supplee, who died in 1770, a short time before the first meeting-house was finished. The most numerous names on tombstones are the Supplees, Zimmermans and Bissons. For further information in regard to this meeting, the reader is referred to the chapter on Methodism in Montgomery County.

A **German Baptist, or Dunker, Meeting-House** is located at the corner of the township, where it adjoins Lower Providence and Norriton. It is a small one-story building. The principal names on the tombstones are Harley, Cassel, Detweiler, Balsler, Goshow, Rittenhouse, Damuth, Tyson, Dettra, Yost, Bauer, Baker, Garner, Stem, Coulston and Stauffer. The earliest stone observed bearing a date was that of 1809.

**Worcester Schwenkfelder Meeting-House** is situated on the Township Line road, dividing Norriton from Worcester township, about two miles north of Norritonville. It is a plain stone building, with a seating capacity of from three to four hundred persons. Quite a large congregation worships here. The one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the arrival of the Schwenkfelders in America was celebrated in this church September 24, 1884.

Among the notable persons present at the anniversary were General John F. Hartranft; Rev. Chester D. Hartranft, D.D., of Hartford, Conn.; Revs. Dr. Rice, of the Moravian Church, Philadelphia; Moses Godshall, of Schwenksville; J. H. Hendricks, of Collegeville; Eli Keller, of Zionville; Charles Wierand, of Pottstown; Charles Collins, of the Centennial Presbyterian Church; J. H. A. Bomberger, of Ursinus College; and others.

The morning services were mostly in German. Rev. William S. Anders, the pastor, opened the exercises by announcing the hymn, commencing,—

"Great God of Nations! now to thee  
Our hymn of gratitude we raise."

Rev. Howard W. Kriebel, of Clayton, Berks Co., in the Upper District, delivered a sermon in English, partly historical in its character.

Rev. Jacob Meschter, of Palm Station, also in the Upper District, delivered an able sermon from the text: "Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

Rev. Joshua Schultz, of Hereford, Berks Co., also in the Upper District, read a "Sketch of the Development of the Church in this Country."

The singing of a hymn closed the morning exercises.

A recess was taken for dinner, which was served in the basement of the church, being furnished by the members resident in the neighborhood. Nine hundred persons in all were fed. The dinner consisted of



elected. All the aforesaid were also pastors of the Trappe congregation. The Rev. Mr. Baker, of Sellersville, is the present pastor.

For the German Reformed the Rev. H. S. Bassler was the first pastor, who served until May, 1839. After a vacancy the charge was filled by the Rev. I. W. Hanger, who remained about two years, when the congregation was supplied by Rev. Henry Gerhart. In March, 1843, the Rev. A. Bentz was elected, who served nearly three years. He was succeeded, in the spring of 1846, by the Rev. T. W. Naille, who remained until 1857. The Rev. W. G. Hackman assumed the duties near the beginning of 1858, and remained for some time. The present pastor is the Rev. S. M. K. Huber. The late venerable Benjamin Reiff, of this denomination, it is said, was one of the most active and successful in obtaining funds for the erection of the church, to which he was also a liberal contributor.

The church is well shaded, among the trees being some handsome evergreens, which should be more common at such places. The graveyard contains about three-fourths of an acre, and in the half-century of its existence a goodly number have been interred. In the southwest portion of the ground we find a stone with an inscription, "Sacred to the memory of Jacob Sower, who departed this life November 24, 1843, aged ninety years and five months. He was one of that patriotic band which achieved the independence of his country." The following surnames were copied from the tombstones: Smith, Krupp, Godshalk, Wile, Johnson, Snyder, Reiff, Baker, Kreamer, Wampole, Boorse, Yocum, Titus, Schneider, Oberholtzer, Schell, Brown, Delp, Garges, Macknet, Fry, Brey, Huth, Wagener, Wilson, Rush, Hechler, Cassel, Weber, Emery, Zepp, Kinsey, Gaul, Hoot, Clemmer, Mace, Hendricks, Bower, Hagey, Master, Henning, Drake, Feable, Will, Schmidt, Berger, Geiger, Reifinger, Metzger, Rudy, Steyer, Barnes, Shoemaker, Sult, Kulp, Detra, Delp, Fox, Reese, Belzer, Rosenberger, Underkoffler, Stillwagon, Koch, Groth, Alderfer, Hofer, Lutz, Shupp, Hartzel, Miller, Moyer, Funk, Richard, Becker and Sorver.

#### ASSESSMENT OF TOWAMENCIN, 1776.

Garret Godshalk, assessor, and Owen Hughes, collector.

John Yellis, 108 acres, 2 horses, 3 cattle; Henry Yellis, 130 a., 2 h., 2 c.; Samuel Tennis, 192 a., 2 h., 3 c.; William Hendricks, 60 a., 2 h., 3 c.; Humphrey Hughes, 1 h., 1 c.; Baltzer Yeakle, 150 a., 2 h., 5 c.; Michael Moyer, 2 h., 3 c.; Abraham Lukens, 215 a., 2 h., 3 c.; Frederick Wampole, 220 a., 1 servant, 4 h., 4 c.; John Lukens, son of Abraham 115 a., 2 servants, 3 h., 4 c.; Henry Smith, weaver, 87 a., 2 h., 3 c.; Evan Edwards, 91 a., 2 h., 2 c.; Nicholas Gotshalk, 1 h., 1 c.; John Yeakle, 115 a., 1 servant, 4 h., 5 c.; Owen Hughes, 143 a., 3 h., 5 c.; Christian Weber, Sr., 52 a.; Christian Weber, Jr., 100 a., 2 h., 4 c.; Joseph Ludens, 98 a., 4 h., 4 c.; Peter Lukens, 87 a., 4 h., 6 c.; George Anders, 150 a., 250 a., in Gwynedd, 7 children, 3 h., 7 c.; Abraham Kreable, 189 a., 4 h., 10 c.; Abraham Weiguer, 2 c.; George Meister, 34 a., 1 h., 2 c.; Rosanna Seifert, 135 a., 3 h., 5 c.; Paul Hendricks, 99 a., 2 h., 2 c.; Samuel Hendricks, 100 a., 2 h., 2 c.; John Springer, 60 a., 2 h., 3 c.; saw-mill; Leonard Hendricks, 125 a., 1 h., 2 c., aged; Adam Gotwaltz, 270 a., 3 h., 7 c.; Jacob Fry, 260 a., 1 h., 3 c.; Henry Lesh, 2 h., 3 c.; William Godshalk, 160 a., 3 h., 4 c.; Peter Hendricks, 88 a., 2 h., 3 c.;

Benjamin Hendricks, 88 a., 2 h., 3 c.; Garret Godshalk, 60 a., 2 h., 2 c.; Christopher Reinwalt, 58 a., 2 h., 3 c., grist-mill; Jacob Kolb, 106 a., 2 h., 4 c.; Harman Boorse, 20 a., 2 c., 1 servant; John Lukens, 109 a., 90 a. in Gwynedd, 4 h., 4 c.; Baltus Reinwalt, 89 a., 2 h., 2 c.; Elizabeth Evans, 190 a., 3 h., 5 c.; John Boorse, 44 a., 1 h., 1 c.; Daniel Springer 1 h., 3 c.; Catharine Godshalk, 13 a., 1 c.; Peter Godshalk, 113 a., 1 servant, 2 h., 3 c.; Baltus Miller, 1 c.; William Evans; Arnold Boorse, 46 a., 1 h., 3 c.; Leonard Heudricks, Jr., 89 a., 1 h., 2 c.; John Shott, 1 h., 2 c.; Christopher Meister, 100 a., 2 h., 4 c.; Jacob Updegrave, 200 a., 2 h., 5 c.; Jacob Pennebaker, 82 a., 2 h., 3 c.; William Tennis, 2 h., 2 c., 56 a. in Lower Salford; Joseph Eaton, 1 h.; Israel Tennis, 1 h., 3 c.; John Edwards, 48 a.; Abraham Dresher, 129 a., 3 h., 5 c.; William Hendricks, 1 c.; Rowland Evans, 1 h., 1 c.; Andrew Label, 2 c.; Jacob Grub, 113 a., 2 h., 5 c.; Yellis Cassel, 82 a., 2 h., 4 c.; Daniel Miller, 2 c.; Benjamin Weber, 64 a., 2 h., 1 c.; George Lutz, 1 h., 2 c. *Single Men.*—Frederick Wampole, Abraham Wampole, Peter Boorse, Garret Godshalk, Godshalk Godshalk, Evan Evans, Jehu Evans, John Edwards, David Spice, George Pluck, Frederick Fisher.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

JOHN C. BOORSE, ESQ.

The progenitor of the Boorse family in Montgomery County was Harman Boors, a native of Holland, who came to this country at an early period, probably about the middle of the last century, and settled in what is now Towamensing township, Montgomery Co., Pa., near what is now the village of Kulpville. He was, no doubt, a man of considerable wealth and enterprise, and possessed also a liberal education. In his business transactions it became necessary for him to cross the ocean several times, and on his last voyage to America he died at sea. He was the father of five sons—viz., John and Henry, died without issue; Peter, married, and died May 1, 1797; Arnold and Harman, Jr.

Harman, Jr., was the father of the following children: viz., John; Margaret, born September 8, 1765, no issue; Peter, born August 28, 1767, was married and left four children; Henry, born December 25, 1769, died November 27, 1777; Anna, born September 22, 1772, married Abraham Hendricks October 22, 1793; Catharine, born March 28, 1775, married Samuel Metz November 10, 1796; Sybilla, born April 2, 1777, married Jacob Hendricks; Susanna, born February 25, 1779, married Jesse Lewis February 19, 1799; and Elizabeth, born February 17, 1782, married Samuel Kriebel.

John Boorse, grandfather of John C. Boorse, was born October 17, 1763, married Elizabeth Cassel June 8, 1797, and died January 26, 1847. His wife died July 26, 1830. They were the parents of Abraham, Henry C., Magdalena, Peter, Daniel, Joseph, Harman, Jacob, Catharine, Mary and Hubert Boorse. Magdalena married Jacob Boyer, Catharine married James Lloyd and Mary married Elias Cassel. Only four of these children are now living—viz., Jacob, Joseph, Mary and Hubert.

Henry C. Boorse, father of John C. Boorse, was born October 14, 1799, in Towamensing township, on

the farm now owned by Hubert Boorse. This farm has been in the Boorse family for over one hundred and thirty years. Henry C. was married, March 5, 1822, to Susanna Cassel, and died April 26, 1869. She died April 6, 1856. They were the parents of children, as follows:

I. Barbara, born December 8, 1822, married Henry K. Zeigler, of Skippack, and died in March, 1866.

II. Ephraim, born January 24, 1825, married Miss Elizabeth Zeigler, of Skippack.

III. John C., born June 27, 1831, married, January 21, 1855, to Miss Mary Rittenhouse, daughter of Samuel

William Bechtel, of Collegeville, Pa. She died May 7, 1877.

V. Susan, born September 9, 1839, died December 18, 1856.

John C. Boorse, Esq., commenced his business career as a farmer, and in 1855 purchased of his father the old homestead, and conducted the business pertaining to a large farm until 1866, when he retired from the dull routine of the farm and engaged in the more active duties of surveyor, conveyancer and justice of the peace, the duties of which he still performs to the entire satisfaction of all parties concerned. He has



*John C. Boorse*

and Mary Rittenhouse, of Towamensing, and a lineal descendant of the celebrated David Rittenhouse. Their children are Alinda R., born May 29, 1856, died January 31, 1857; Mary Ann, born December 18, 1857, married Humphrey W. Edwards of Kulpsville; Melinda, born January 3, 1860, died August 31, 1860; Ella, born March 21, 1862; Lizzie, born March 25, 1864; Henry R., born September 21, 1866, editor and publisher of the *Towamensing Item*, established January, 1885; Alma, born December 9, 1868; Nora, born June 7, 1871; Edith R., born October 21, 1879.

IV. Catharine, born December 6, 1836, married

made five hundred and fifty-four surveys of different tracts of land, and has written seventeen hundred and sixty-four deeds and mortgages and taken acknowledgments of the same. He entered the political field in the early part of 1855, when he was elected township assessor, which position he filled for eight years. He was elected a justice of the peace at the spring election in 1862, and has held that office continuously until the present time. He has been one of the school directors of the township for six years, judge of election for two terms, member of the election board for twenty-seven years, a member of the Republican County Committee

(of which organization he is an enthusiastic member) for at least twelve years, and since the organization of the Republican party has been honored many times with a seat in the councils of its leaders, in the State and county, and has received the most flattering testimonials from the press of the county.

In his official capacity he formulated the charter and made the original survey for the borough of Lansdale. He was one of the original directors of the Lansdale Water-Works Company, and is the present secretary of the same; a director and secretary of the Lansdale Cemetery Association; one of the original members and secretary of the Towamensing Creamery Association; one of the originators of the Kulpville Literary and Library Association, and one of its active members; a director in the Perkiomen Fire and Storm Insurance Company of Montgomery County. He was the official surveyor of the borough of Lansdale from 1872 to 1881.

He was the originator and prime mover in getting the first telephone line from Norristown to Kulpville via North Wales and Lansdale, with station at his office.

He held the office of justice of the peace for twenty-three years, during which time only nineteen cases were returned to court; he always endeavored to settle cases before going to court. As the Hon. Judge Ross at one time remarked before court: "If all justices of the peace in the county would act like John C. Boorse, of Kulpville, thousands of dollars would be annually saved to the county in costs."

In 1870 he received the appointment to take the census of Towamensing and Lower Salford townships, which he filled with credit to himself and to the entire satisfaction of the department.

In 1865 he received the unanimous nomination for county commissioner, and ran far ahead of the regular ticket; the Democratic party being then in large majority, he was defeated.

He was also several times strongly urged by the leaders and many others of the party to become a candidate for the Legislature, which honor he positively refused, saying "he was not competent."

He was one of the delegates to the State convention held in 1875, in Lancaster, and voted for John F. Hartranft for Governor and William Rawle for treasurer. He was an active committeeman in the county's centennial, and is also a member of the Montgomery County Historical Society.

He has been a member of Providence Lodge, No. 345, I. O. O. F., since 1867, trustee, treasurer and representative to Grand Lodge of the same for several years, and one of the directors of the Odd-Fellows' Endowment Association of Pennsylvania. He became a member of Charity Lodge, No. 190, F. A. M., Norristown, October 10, 1872; is also a member of Norristown Chapter, No. 190, R. A. M., and was knighted in Hutchinson Commandery, No. 32, K. T., stationed at Norristown, January 25, 1875.

Mr. Boorse has always been active in all progressive movements of the age in which his business life has thus far been spent, especially anything tending to improve the morals and intellect of the young and rising generation by whom he is surrounded.

## CHAPTER LXXV.

### UPPER DUBLIN TOWNSHIP.<sup>1</sup>

THIS township is regular in form, approaching a square, and is bounded northeast by Horsham, south by Springfield, southwest by Whitmarsh, west by Whitpain, east by Moreland and southeast by Abington. It is four and one-half miles long, three and one-fourth wide, and contains an area of eight thousand eight hundred and forty acres. Its surface is rolling and the soil fertile, composed of limestone and loam. Camp Hill is an elevation of Revolutionary memory that commences in Whitmarsh and extends eastwardly across the township on the north side of Sandy Run. The Wissahickon passes through the west corner over a mile, propelling two grist-mills, and receiving as tributaries Rose Valley, Pine and Sandy Runs, which also furnish water-power. The limestone and iron-ore belts extend across the southern angle, following the valley of Sandy Run nearly two miles.

The township is crossed by the Spring House turnpike two miles, the Lewisville and Prospectville pike two miles, Upper Dublin and Horsham pike one mile, Linekiln pike three and one-half miles and the Plymouth and Upper Dublin pike over one mile. The latter two roads were constructed in 1851 and 1855. The North Pennsylvania Railroad passes nearly a mile and a quarter through its western angle, and has a station at Ambler, fourteen and one-half miles from Philadelphia. The villages are Ambler, Fitzwater-town, Jarrettown, Three Tons and Dreshertown; with a post-office at each, excepting the last-mentioned place. The population in 1800 was 744; in 1840, 1322; and in 1880, 1856. The taxable real estate in the year 1882 was valued at \$1,652,492, and including the personal, \$1,758,452, the average per taxable being \$3094. Upper Dublin contains fourteen square miles, and, according to the census of 1880, had then 132 inhabitants to the square mile. In May, 1883, licenses were issued to four hotels, nine general stores, one stove-store, six dealers in flour and feed, one coal-yard, one lumber and fertilizers, one tobacco-store and one restaurant. Without Ambler, it contains five public schools, open ten months, with an average attendance of 148 for the school year ending June 1, 1881. The census of 1850 returned 243 houses, 245 families and 129 farms. Every census taken since

<sup>1</sup> By Wm. J. Buck.