

REPORT
ON THE HISTORICAL SITES AND ANTIQUITIES
OF PLUCKEMIN, NEW JERSEY

November 21, 1935

REPORT FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT
ON THE HISTORICAL SITES AND ANTIQUITIES
OF PLUCKEMIN, NEW JERSEY

BY

JUNIOR HISTORIAN MELVIN J. WEIG

MORRISTOWN NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

NOVEMBER 21, 1935.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Subject:</u>	<u>Page:</u>
Table of Contents	i
Illustrative Photographs and Maps	iv
 Part I:	
The Early History of Pluckemin	1
 Part II:	
Military Movements in and around Pluckemin during the War for Independence:	
Section 1:	
The March from Princeton to Morristown, January 3-6, 1777	2
Section 2:	
British Raids in Pluckemin and Vicinity	4
 Part III:	
Historic Sites, Personages, and Antiquities of Pluckemin in Colonial, Revolutionary, and Early Statehood Times:	
Section 1:	
Jacob Eoff, Sr., and the Eoff Tavern	6
Section 2:	
The Mc Eowen House	8
Section 3:	
The Boylan House	9

Subject:

Page:

Section 4:

The Jacobus Van Derveer House, Military Headquarters of Brigadier-General Henry Knox in 1778-1779	11
---	----

Section 5:

St. Paul's Lutheran Church	12
----------------------------------	----

Section 6:

The Old Lutheran-Presbyterian Cemetery and the Grave of Captain William Leslie	15
---	----

Section 7:

The Military Hospital during the War for Independence	18
--	----

Section 8:

The Grave of Julia Knox	19
-------------------------------	----

Section 9:

The "Revolutionary" Beacon	21
----------------------------------	----

Section 10:

"Jacob's Lodge," the Dr. Henry Van Derveer House	22
---	----

Section 11:

The John Fenner House	23
-----------------------------	----

Section 12:

The Emergency Market at Pluckemin during the War for Independence	27
--	----

Section 13:

The Knox Artillery Park	28
-------------------------------	----

Section 14:

The French Alliance Anniversary Celebration of 1779	32
--	----

Subject:

Page

Part IV:

Reference Notes to Parts I, II, and III	34
---	----

Part V:

Historical Restorative and Reconstructive Value of the Pluckemin Area to the National Park Service	40
--	----

Part VI:

Appendices:

Appendix I:

Report for the Superintendent in Re: The Fenner House, by Assistant Architect D. C. Jensen	43
--	----

Appendix II:

Report for the Superintendent in Re: the Jacobus Van Derveer House, by Assistant Architect D. C. Jensen	45
---	----

Appendix III:

Report for the Superintendent in Re: the Dr. Henry Van Derveer House, by Assistant Architect D. C. Jensen	47
---	----

ILLUSTRATIVE PHOTOGRAPHS AND MAPS

Plates I and II:	
The Mc Ewen House	following p. 8
Plates III and IV:	
The Boylan House	following p. 10
Plates V to XV:	
The Jacobus Van Derveer House	following p. 11
Plate XVI:	
Presbyterian Church	following p. 17
Plate XVII:	
Old Lutheran-Presbyterian Graveyard	following p. 17
Plate XVIII:	
Tombstone of Captain William Leslie	following p. 17
Plate XIX:	
Tombstone and Grave of Julia Knox	following p. 20
Plates XX to XXIV:	
The Dr. Henry Van Derveer House	following p. 22
Plates XXV to XXXII:	
The Fenner House	following p. 26
Plates XXXIII to XXXVI:	
The Knox Artillery Park	following p. 31
Plate XXXVII:	
Map of Pluckemin in 1850	following p. 33
Plate XXXVIII:	
Map of Pluckemin in 1935	following p. 33

PART I
THE EARLY HISTORY
OF PLUCKEMIN

Very little is known concerning the early history of Pluckemin, a quiet little community in north central New Jersey, which is today better associated with the War for Independence. The land on which the village stands is apparently within the tract purchased from the proprietors of East New Jersey by Dr. Lewis Johnston and Mary Johnston his sister (afterwards Mrs. James Alexander), who came from Perth Amboy. There is little likelihood of any settlements having existed on their holding even as late as 1747, although some pioneers seem to have established themselves near it. William McDonald's mill, on Chamber's Brook, at the lower end of Pluckemin, was there before 1749, being mentioned in the boundary of Bridgewater Township at that date. A part of the Johnston tract was eventually bought by Jacob Eoff, who built a tavern thereon, the first in the township it is said, about 1750. This hostelry was probably among the very first buildings to be erected in the village. The first definite settlement can therefore be dated as probably having taken place not long before the middle of the eighteenth century.¹

PART II
MILITARY MOVEMENTS IN AND AROUND
PLUCKEMIN DURING THE
WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE ²

Section 1: The March from Princeton to Morristown,

January 3-6, 1777:

Immediately following its victory over the British at Princeton, January 3, 1777, the American Continental Army, under the command of George Washington, evacuated that place and marched for Pluckemin, en route to a more permanent headquarters at Morristown, New Jersey.³ The troops arrived at Somerset Court House on the evening of that day, remained there for the night, and on the afternoon of January 4, at three o'clock, reached Pluckemin. At that place, wrote Lieutenant James McMichael in his diary for 1776-1778, "we encamped on the north side of a hill very well supplied with large stones, which served us instead of pillows, where we passed two nights."⁴

It was from Pluckemin, on January 5, as noted in another section of the present report, that Washington wrote to Congress a detailed account of the Princeton engagement.⁵ Those of the American troops who had been wounded in that battle are said to have been kindly cared for in the homes of the villagers, while the British prisoners, some 230 of them, were supposedly kept under guard in St. Paul's Lutheran Church.⁶ Captain William Leslie, a brave enemy officer found wounded on the Princeton battlefield, had been taken along on the march in the hope that his life might ultimately be saved, but he died at or near Pluckemin and was buried in the place with military honors on Sunday, January 5.⁷

On the morning of January 6, at nine o'clock, Washington's troops left Pluckemin and marched via Vealtown (now Bernardsville) to Morristown, "where we arrived," writes Lieutenant McMichael, "at 5 P.M. and encamped in the woods, the snow covering the ground."⁸

Section 2: British Raids in Pluckemin and Vicinity:

The following narrative, while probably exaggerated in some respects, contains some important information relative to British raids in Pluckemin and its vicinity during the War for Independence:

"... In December, 1776, a squadron of British cavalry suddenly appeared in Pluckemin, and visited all manner of indignities upon the place and people. Women were grossly insulted, dwellings robbed, and stock driven off. The doors of the Lutheran church were battered down, the pews broken up, and the pulpit hacked and disfigured with sabre strokes. The object of this raid was to secure the person of Captain Isaac Van Arsdale, who had made himself obnoxious in behalf of the colonists. On learning of their approach he escaped to the woods, and, in conjunction with some neighbors, succeeded to some extent in harassing the marauders. At least one man was known to have suffered from their musket balls, as he was brought to Eoff's tavern, where sheets were torn up to make bandages to staunch his wounds. Major McDonald, who owned the mills on Chamber's brook, was probably in sympathy with these cavalrymen, as they treated him with consideration; he, in return, rolled out a barrel of 'apple jack,' and regaled them with bread and cold ham.

"On another occasion a troop of light-horse created great havoc in Bedminster. They seized Elias Van der Veer, the father of the late Doctor Henry Van der Veer, and carried him off to Trenton. The detachment had been especially ordered to make him a prisoner, as he had become well-known to the enemy as an active patriot, and a

spirited co-worker in the American cause with his brothers-in-law, Colonel John Schenk, and Captain Henry Schenk and Frederick Frelinghuysen. He was taken from his mill and placed on a horse between two troopers, and, although the weather was severe, was not given an opportunity of putting on a hat or coat. In passing through Pluckamin a hat was placed on his head by a neighbor, who on seeing him passing ran out for that purpose. The exposure, and the cruelties practised upon Mr. Van der Veer while in prison, caused his death on the twenty-ninth of November, 1778, in the thirty-third year of his age, as his grave-stone in Bedminster churchyard bears witness."⁹

PART III

HISTORIC SITES, PERSONAGES, AND
ANTIQUITIES OF PLUCKEMIN IN
COLONIAL, REVOLUTIONARY, AND
EARLY STATEHOOD TIMES

Section 1: Jacob Eoff, Sr., and the Eoff Tavern:

Jacob Eoff, Sr., who seems to have been one of the German Palatine emigrants who arrived at New York in 1710, when he was thirty-two years old,¹⁰ was unquestionably one of Pluckemin's most influential pioneer residents. He purchased 500 acres of land from Dr. Lewis Johnston and the latter's sister Mary in 1747 and built a tavern thereon, probably about 1750, which remained standing for sixty-four years afterwards.¹¹

That he was a man of some means is clear from his having donated, specifically for that purpose, the land on which St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Pluckemin was built, and it should also be observed, in this connection, that he contributed £20 additional in cash for construction of the same.¹² Eoff's tavern was located on the corner occupied by Joseph D. Nevins' house in 1889, that is, nearly opposite the old McEowen house.¹³ There it was that General Washington is reputed often to have stopped during the War for Independence, that the body of Captain William Leslie was possibly laid out with military honors before its final interment at Pluckemin, and that the Bedminster Committee of Safety held at least one, and probably more, of its meetings in 1775.¹⁴ The boniface of this old hostelry must also have dispensed hospitality to many of the country's leading men when the Continental Army was quartered in Somerset and adjoining counties.

After Jacob's death, the date of which is unknown,¹⁵ the tavern was kept for a time by his maiden sister Sarah, and she in turn was succeeded by the former's son Christian, who abandoned the inn to his brother Cornelius for use as a residence and built a new tavern

on the opposite corner.¹⁶ Christian, being an unusually good mixer, soon waxed famous as a popular host, and his name became synonymous with good living for the best society of New York and Philadelphia. Summer visitors to Schooley's Mountain, a watering place then in its glory, generally arranged that the night necessarily spent on their journey should be passed at his inn, which seems to have been known contemporaneously as "The Barracks." We can cite no evidence to show when this building was demolished, but a village "public house," destroyed by fire in the 1880's, eventually took its place. In the latter building's foundation wall, it is said, was a stone, inscribed with the date 1750, which was taken from the original tavern built by Jacob Eoff, Sr.¹⁷ No pictorial representations or plans of any of these above-described structures are known to be in existence today.

Section 2: The McEowen House:

One of the oldest houses built in Pluckemin is still standing today, albeit much remodeled, on the southeast corner of the crossroad leading to Washington Valley, nearly opposite the site of Jacob Eoff's tavern.¹⁸ Two photographs of this building are included in the present report. Squire William McEowen, a leading merchant of the village, kept a store in this place during the War for Independence, when he was also a commissary for the Continental Army.¹⁹ From his friend Colonel John Mehelm, who then lived in Hunterdon County and whose daughter Martha he married, McEowen purchased flour, conveying it on a large wagon, drawn by four yoke of oxen, to Pluckemin and Morristown.²⁰ The British troops, it is said, when they raided Pluckemin in December, 1776, carried away all the boots, shoes, and clothing in the old gentleman's store. There were some things, however, which the plunderers missed, if latter day accounts are accurate, for Mrs. McEowen reputedly took up her floor, concealed her feather-beds and other valuables under it, and replaced the carpet.²¹ Mr. John A. Powelson, an old resident of Pluckemin, relates that, when a boy, he "slept in a small room over the store where Squire McEowen sixty years before sold snuff and spelling books, and did public business writing bonds for one shilling and six pence."²² McEowen, who died March 10, 1817, aged sixty-one, in the house where he lived and kept store, owned 136 acres of land adjoining in 1787.²³



PLATE
I

REVOLUTIONARY HOUSES—MCEOWEN HOUSE, PLUCKEMIN
(See page 234).

The McEowen house as it looked in 1916 or earlier. Photostatic copy of a photograph of the building, northwest corner, as reproduced in the Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vol. V, facing p. 161.

The McEowen house
as it looks today, north-
west corner. Photograph
taken October 4, 1935.

PLATE
II



1774-10-4-35

Section 3: The Boylan House:

The first Pluckemin store with reference to which any knowledge is obtainable was kept by John Boylan (the name being contemporaneously pronounced, and occasionally spelled in print, as "Bullion"), who came to the village, according to secondary authority, some twenty years before the War for Independence.²⁴ In addition to his Pluckemin establishment, Boylan owned several other stores: one at Liberty Corner, another at Vealtown, and yet a third at Van Derveer's Mills, a fact which shows him to have been a somewhat prosperous entrepreneur in that bygone day.²⁵ He also held title to 150 acres of land north of Pluckemin, although this seems to have been disposed of prior to 1787, since the owner's name appears in the assessment of that year as paying tax on personal property only. We know that he, and likewise his wife Eleanor after his death, made many mortgage investments in Somerset County, additional proof, if such were needed, of his worldly competence.²⁶

A record in the Adjutant-General's office at Trenton refers to Boylan's serving as a private in Captain Gavin McCoy's Company, First Battalion, Somerset County Militia, during the War for Independence. His title of "Captain," therefore, by which he was apparently best known even after his becoming a lay judge of the Somerset County Courts in 1777, was very probably acquired during militia service subsequent to the conflict with Great Britain.²⁷

Several interesting historical incidents are traditionally associated with the old Boylan house. General and Mrs. Washington are said to have been entertained there on several occasions, a matter not improbable, since the Captain must have been a most influential

member of his community. Mrs. Boylan is claimed to have had the honor of dancing with Washington, presumably at the celebrated ball, held near her own house, which was given at Pluckemin on February 18, 1779, to commemorate the first anniversary of the French Alliance. Early in the twentieth century, according to a granddaughter of John Boylan, the white satin slippers and square silver buckles worn by Mrs. Boylan on that occasion were still preserved in the family, while the buff and gold china set, together with the silver service used in the entertainment, was or had been in the home of Mr. Horace Bannard, at Long Branch, New Jersey. Many of Captain Boylan's books, his desk, a mahogany sideboard, and some other of his former possessions, when last heard of in 1917, were owned by Mrs. Noyes B. Thomas, a great-granddaughter, who then lived at 88 South 13th Street, Newark, New Jersey.²⁸ Two photographs of the Boylan house are included in this report.



PLATE
III

REVOLUTIONARY HOUSES—BOYLAN HOUSE, PLUCKEMIN
(See page 234).

The Boylan house as it looked in 1916 or earlier. Photostatic copy of a photograph of the building, southwest corner, as reproduced in the Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vol. V, facing p. 161.



The Boylan house,
southwest corner, as
it looks today. Photo-
graph taken October
4, 1935.

PLATE IV

Section 4: The Jacobus Van Derveer House, Military
Headquarters of Brigadier-General Henry Knox:

During the winter of 1778, and far into the year 1779, the American corps of artillery, commanded by Brigadier-General Henry Knox, was encamped at Pluckemin.²⁹ It is supposedly "well verified" that Knox himself, together with his wife, stayed in the old Jacobus Van Derveer house at this time. The "homestead" part of the Van Derveer farm, which is located somewhat north of midway between Pluckemin and Bedminster, just below the Bedminster Church, was once purchased by Henry Ludlow, of near Peapack, and was sold by him to a Mr. Ballantine, of Bernardsville, who repaired the house, stuccoed the exterior, and added some porches.³⁰ Mr. Grant B. Schley took over the property about 1916,³¹ and it is now owned by his son Kenneth, who has maintained the building in good condition. The old structure is claimed to have been erected before 1760.³²

Eleven photographs of the Jacobus Van Derveer house, both exterior and interior, are included in this report. So also is a memorandum on its architectural features prepared by Assistant Architect Jensen.

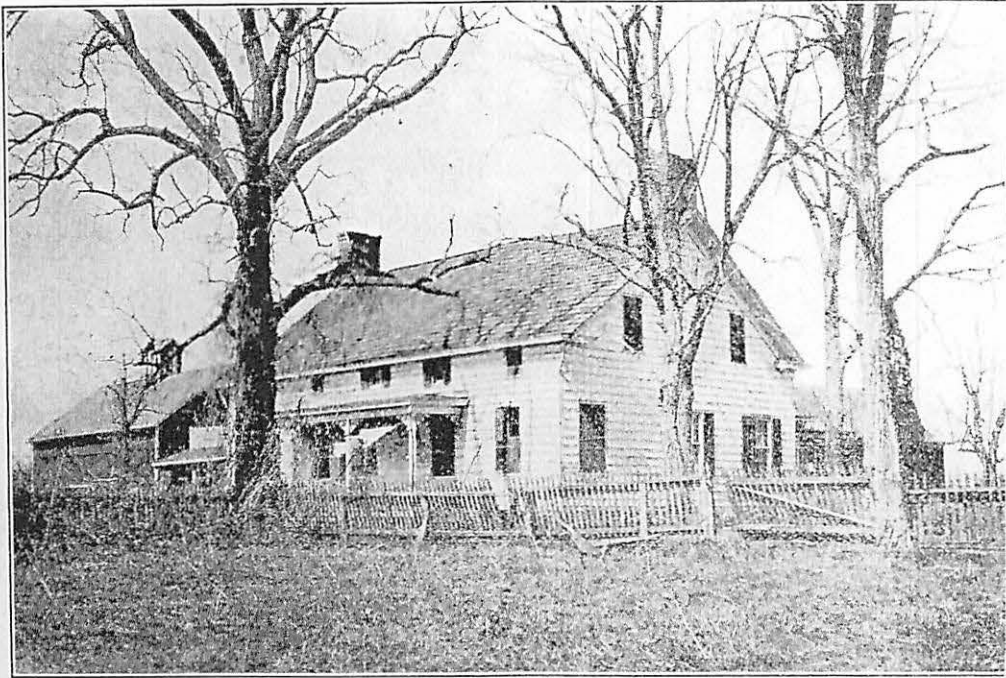


PLATE
V

—From Photo. Lent by Mr. L. V. Ludlow, Far Hills.

GENERAL KNOX'S HEADQUARTERS NEAR PLUCKEMIN,
WINTER OF 1778-'9. (See Page 53)

The Jacobus Van Derveer house (Knox's headquarters), southeast corner, as it looked in 1918 or earlier. Photostatic copy of a photograph, as reproduced in the Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vol. VII, facing p. 1.



The Jacobus Van Derveer house, southeast corner, as it looks today. Photograph taken October 4, 1935.

PLATE
VI



PLATE
VII



PLATE
VIII

The Jacobus Van Derveer house, interior. Details of west wall and ceiling, living room on first floor, November 6, 1935.

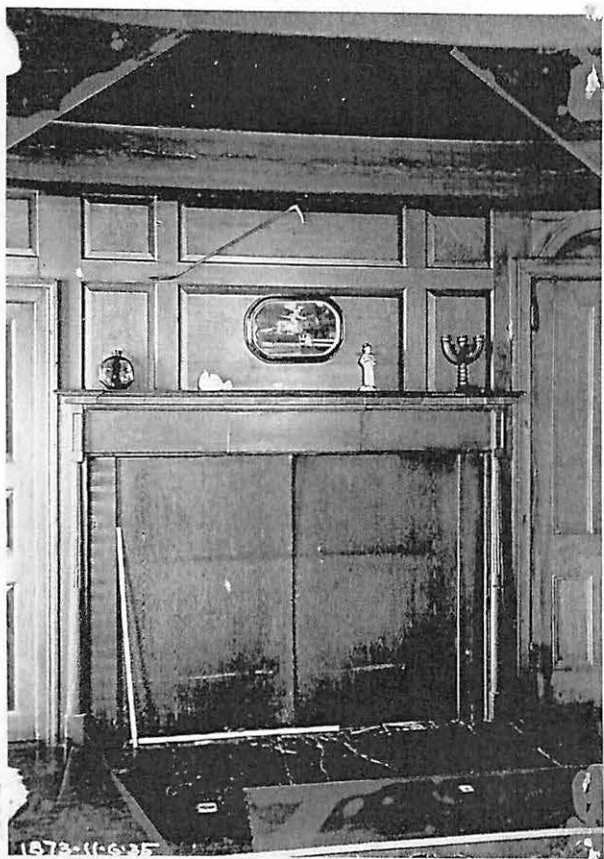


PLATE
IX



PLATE
X

The Jacobus Van Derveer house, interior. Details of west wall and ceiling, living room on first floor, November 6, 1935.

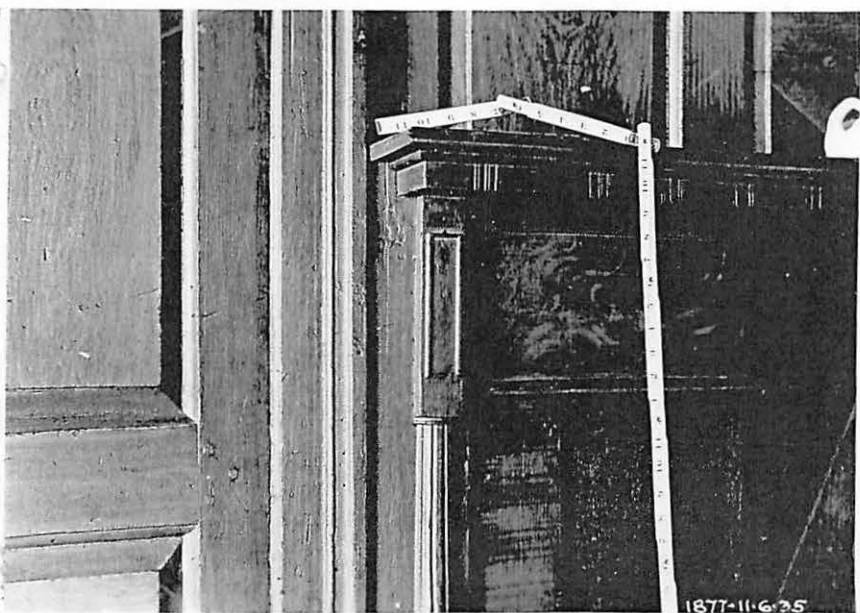


PLATE
XI

The Jacobus Van Derveer house, interior. Detail of mantel, west wall of living room, first floor, November 6, 1935.



The Jacobus Vanderveer house, interior. Detail of fireplace and ceiling in northwest room, first floor, November 6, 1935.

PLATE
XII



PLATE

XIII

The Jacobus Van Derveer house, interior. Fireplace and mantel in northeast room, first floor, November 6, 1935.



PLATE

XIV

The Jacobus Van Derveer house, interior. Fireplace and mantel in southeast room, first floor, November 6, 1935.



The Jacobus Van Derveer house (Knox's headquarters),
interior. Detail of staircase leading from central hall,
first floor, November 6, 1935.

PLATE

XV

Section 5: St. Paul's Lutheran Church:

A short distance south or southeast of the present Presbyterian Church of Pluckemin, so situated as to have been originally surrounded by the old burial ground of that denomination, once stood the edifice of St. Paul's Lutheran Church,³³ now gone the way of many another historic structure. The first Lutheran Synod in America, which took place in August, 1735, was avowedly held at Pluckemin, presumably in "the old log church on the mountain." There was trouble in this old church, so the story runs, for many of the congregation complained that their pastor, one Wolf by name, charged exorbitant fees for funeral sermons, weddings, and so forth, and that his ministerial preaching was also too much cut and dried. A new contract, based on a "price list" furnished by the New York and Hackensack delegates, was drawn up with the grasping minister. This was soon broken, however, and the Lutheran congregation thereupon vacated the old log church and resolved to build a new house of worship.³⁴ A subscription for that purpose was accordingly started at Bedminster, December 7, 1756, and before long 130 persons, many of them members of the Presbyterian congregations of Lamington and Basking Ridge, and of the Dutch Reformed churches on the Raritan and below, had set down their names for a total of £350.³⁵ Jacob Eoff, Sr., donated the land on which St. Paul's was built.³⁶ Construction work seems to have been well under way by the autumn of 1758, when it was thought necessary to run off a \$10,000 lottery, with tickets selling at two dollars each, in order to raise \$1,500 for finishing the church.

Jacob Eoff, Sr., and George Remer (or Reimer), the latter being the builder of St. Paul's, were among the managers of this lottery.³⁷

A royal charter was granted by King George III, in 1767, "to the Rector, Church Wardens and Vestrymen of the united Churches of Zion and St. Paul,"³⁸ and for some decades thereafter the "Old Stone House," as St. Paul's was sometimes called,³⁹ seems to have witnessed the gathering of goodly congregations within its walls.⁴⁰

The comings and goings of American and British forces during the War for Independence, as might have been expected, left their mark on this old church. When the British raided Pluckemin in December, 1776, as previously noted in this report, they are said to have battered down the doors of St. Paul's, broken up the pews, and even hacked and disfigured the pulpit with sabre strokes.⁴¹ About a month later, on the occasion of the Continental Army's stopping at Pluckemin en route to Morristown, also as previously observed in the present paper, some 230 redcoat prisoners are reputed to have been temporarily incarcerated within its walls.⁴² St. Paul's may even have served as a hospital for the Continental Army at some time or other during the war.⁴³

With the turn of the eighteenth century, the Lutherans of Bedminster Township had in numbers become a feeble folk, and by 1806 St. Paul's communion appears to have fallen into a moribund condition. John Appleman's will, dated in that year, states that "our particular Denomination in Pluckamin as Lutheran will soon lose ground on account of the smallness of its Professors."⁴⁴ Twenty or twenty-five years later, old St. Paul's was demolished, possibly because its walls had by that time become dangerously weakened, but no doubt in part because

so few persons chose longer to support it.⁴⁵

A tablet once cemented in the wall of this Lutheran church was lost for many years. It was finally found, however, broken in two pieces: one half was located in the bottom of an old cistern, the other half in a cellar floor. The inscription on this stone is in Latin, which translated reads as follows: "This church, consecrated to the worship of God Most Holy and Most High in the reign of his Majesty, George the Second, King of Great Britain, was planned (projected) on the fourth day of December, 1756, and its corner stone was laid on the fourth day of July 1757, under the supervision of George Reimer." The stone is now in the front wall of the Pluckemin Presbyterian Church.⁴⁶

Section 6: The Old Lutheran-Presbyterian Cemetery and
the Grave of Captain William Leslie:

The plot of ground just north of the present Presbyterian Church in Pluckemin was used as a cemetery from the organization of St. Paul's Lutheran Church.⁴⁷ It was originally, according to one investigator, not nearly so large as now, containing but a single acre. "Two large lots, one at the rear and one on the south side, have been added to it in comparatively recent years," states this authority, "and since it has ceased to be used as a graveyard."⁴⁸ On October 14, 1850, the Reverend Robert J. Blair, of Pluckemin and Bedminster, copied the inscriptions on the then standing tombstones in this cemetery, and this list was in time deposited with the New Jersey Historical Society. Andrew D. Mellick, Jr., on May 1, 1892, deposited with the same Society a new list of inscriptions as then taken from the stones. These two lists agree, except that dates vary in one or two cases, and that Blair's list contains three inscriptions not given by Mellick, unless that of "John Castner, Sr.," really refers to the same stone as appears in Mellick's list as "J.C. 1786."⁴⁹ Twenty years later, in 1912, most of the stones mentioned in both these lists were found still standing, and a new one was also discovered, marked "H.S. 1760," which inscription bears earlier date than any other in the yard.⁵⁰ Many persons buried in this plot were members of old St. Paul's.⁵¹

The tradition long persisted, and still persists with some local people, that a goodly number of the original tombstones in this cemetery were removed early in the nineteenth century, when St. Paul's

was destroyed, for building purposes. There seems to be but slight basis, as recent research on the particular subject proves, further to accredit the fantastic stories which have sprung up in this connection from time to time, though broken tombstones, because of their unsightliness, may well have been removed from the yard and given over to some practical use.⁵²

At least two of the original tombstones in the old cemetery have been replaced by new monuments.⁵³ One of them presumably marks the last resting place of Captain William Leslie, son of the Earl of Leven, in Scotland, who was mortally wounded while fighting on the British side at Princeton.⁵⁴ Lying helpless on the battle-field, young Leslie, a valiant officer, was recognized by his father's friend, Dr. Benjamin Rush, who persuaded Washington to take him along to Pluckemin in order, if possible, to save his life. Leslie died, however, at or near Pluckemin, and there he was accorded a funeral with military honors. His burial was in the Lutheran graveyard. Accounts of this ritual may be found in various publications, notably in Andrew D. Mellick, Jr.'s., Story of An Old Farm, pages 385-387. The tombstone erected to the Captain's memory by Dr. Rush was supplanted, about 1836, by the present one, which was set up by Professor Ogilby, of Rutgers College, to replace the crumbling original. The inscription on the second stone, however, is said to have remained the same as on the first, and it reads as follows: "In Memory of the Hon^{ble} Capt.ⁿ WILL.^M LESLIE of the 17th British Regiment Son of the Earl of Leven in Scotland He fell Jan. 3.^d 1777 Aged 26 Y^{rs} at the Battle of Princeton His friend

Benj. Rush M.D. of Philadelphia hath caused this Stone to be erected
as a mark of his esteem for his WORTH and of his respect for his noble
family." ⁵⁵ Photographs of the Leslie tombstone, the Lutheran-Presbyterian
graveyard, and the present Presbyterian Church of Pluckemin are included
in this report.



1780-9-23-35

PLATE XVI

Present Presbyterian Church of Pluckemin, northwest corner, September 23, 1935. The old Lutheran-Presbyterian graveyard is in the lot just north of this building. One of the tombstones may be seen in the photograph.



1773-10-4-35

Old Lutheran-Presbyterian graveyard at Pluckemin, viewed from the west. On the right is the present Presbyterian Church of Pluckemin. Photograph taken October 4, 1935.

PLATE XVII



Tombstone of Captain William Leslie in old Lutheran-Presbyterian graveyard at Pluckemin. The stone faces west. Photograph taken in summer of 1935.

Section 7: The Military Hospital during The War for Independence:

Two references have been found which certify to the existence of a Continental Army hospital at Pluckemin during the War for Independence. They occur in Washington's Orderly Book, 1779-1780,⁵⁶ and are as follows:

"Head Quarters March 11th, 1780.
... The 2d Penna Brigade will Relieve the Pluckamin Hospital
Fatigue Tomorrow."⁵⁷

"Head Quarters, Morris Town
6th June, 1780.

... A subaltern from Hand's Brigade to relieve the subaltern
from Clinton's now superintending the Hospital at Pluckamin."⁵⁸

It is possible, as noted in another section of this report, that St. Paul's Lutheran Church may have served the purpose of a hospital during the war.⁵⁹ Certainly there was a hospital establishment in Pluckemin at that time.

Section 8: The Grave of Julia Knox:

In the burial ground of the Dutch Reformed Church, near the Jacobus Van Derveer house,⁶⁰ a large tombstone, lying flat on the ground, can still be seen. It bears the following inscription: "Under this stone are deposited the Remains of Julia Knox, an infant who died the second of July, 1779. She was the second daughter of Henry and Lucy Knox, of Boston, in New England."⁶¹

Mrs. Knox was, in all, the mother of ten children, seven of whom died in infancy. Bedminster traditions preserve an unhappy story in connection with little Julia's death. Notwithstanding that Knox was in its township at the time, defending the popular cause, the Dutch Reformed Church refused his child a sepulchre on the reasoning that the father's membership in the Congregational denomination would by association contaminate its graveyard. The general's host, old Jacobus Van Derveer, even though himself one of the Dutch Reformed consistory, had suffered from similar bigotry when the other trustees, a few years before, refused to accord a burial place to a daughter of his who had suffered from insanity, this despite the fact that the church-grounds had been a gift to the congregation from the very same man they treated so harshly. "Van der Veer buried his daughter in a field just beyond the line of the 'God's acre.' He is said to have taken Knox by the hand, and leading him to the lonely grave outside the fence, ejaculated with a choking voice, 'Gen'ral, this is my ground, bury your child here.' The prejudice of the church people seems to have lessened, as a few years later the fence was moved, so that the burial-ground now includes the once excluded graves of the children of honest old Jacobus Van der Veer

and the brave Revolutionary soldier."⁶² A photograph of the Julia Knox
tombstone is included in this report.



Tombstone and grave of Julia Knox in old Dutch Reformed Church graveyard, near the Jacobus Van Derveer house, October 9, 1935.

PLATE XIX

Section 9: The "Revolutionary" Beacon:

When Washington's headquarters were at Middlebrook in the spring of 1779, another portion of his army, under Brigadier-General Knox, as previously noted, was established at Pluckemin. The commander-in-chief, anxious to protect this area against surprise attack, soon ordered the erection of a number of beacons for that purpose. Accordingly, on March 23, 1779, he wrote to Knox:

"For the more speedy assembling of the militia upon an emergency, I have agreed with the field officers in this and the next County to erect beacons upon the most conspicuous hills, the firing of which shall be signals for them to repair to their different alarm posts. You will be pleased to have one erected upon the mountain in the rear of Pluckemin, upon the place that shall seem most visible from the adjacent County. The beacons are proposed to be built of logs in the form of a pyramid, 16 or 18 feet square at the base and about 20 feet in height, the inner part to be filled with brush. Should there be occasion to fire it you shall have proper notice. ..."

The present writer has seen no other reference to this beacon at Pluckemin.

Section 10: "Jacob's Lodge," the Dr. Henry Van Derveer House:

Just north of the Raritan River's north branch, and east of the main road leading into Pluckemin, is a stately old house built by the eccentric Dr. Henry Van Derveer, whose grandfather was Jacobus Van Derveer, the Revolutionary patriot. This house, which was built about 1820, has no relation to the War for Independence but is mentioned here because it constitutes, in an excellently preserved condition, an unusually fine example of early and middle nineteenth century architecture. Its interior, also, is furnished in keeping with that period. A great amount of locust timber, it is said, went into this house, being abundant on the Van Derveer estate years ago.

Neither the doctor, nor his sister Phoebe, who kept house for him, ever married. The story is told that each occupied one-half the mansion house. It is further related that Phoebe, dressed in her best, would once a week cross the hall to visit Henry, and that her brother, a few hours later, garbed in his ruffled shirt and broadcloth, would return the call. This place is now known as "Jacob's Lodge."⁶⁴ Five photographs of it, exteriors and interiors, are included in this report. A memorandum on its architectural features by Assistant Architect Daniel C. Jensen is appended to the same.



PLATE

XX

The Dr. Henry Van Derveer house ("Jacob's Lodge") as it looks today. Front or west elevation, October 9, 1935.



The Dr. Henry Van Derveer house, northeast corner, October 9, 1935.

PLATE XXI



The Dr. Henry Van Derveer
house, interior. Entrance hall,
first floor, October 9, 1935.

PLATE XXII



The Dr. Henry Van Derveer house, interior. Mantel
and fireplace in southwest room, first floor, October
9, 1935.

PLATE XXIII



The Dr. Henry Van Derveer house, interior. Fireplace and mantel in northwest room, first floor, October 9, 1935.

PLATE XXIV

Section 11: The John Fenner House:

Near the center of present-day Pluckemin, on the east side of the road from Bedminster, is an old ramshackle structure known in recent days as the Fenner house. Here it was that General Washington is reputed to have established his headquarters on Saturday and Sunday, January 4 and 5, 1777, during the course of his march to Morristown following the memorable American victory at Princeton.

The commander-in-chief was unquestionably resident in Pluckemin on the above-mentioned dates. From there, also, he wrote to Congress, on January 5, a succinct report of the military engagement at Princeton.⁶⁵ But although it is accredited by several local historians, no documentary evidence has been uncovered to support the tradition that Washington stayed in the Fenner house, either then or at any other time.

By whom, and when, this particular building was erected is not definitely known, though its construction presumably dates from about 1750. Matthew (or Matthias) Lane, whose father Matthias came from Monmouth County about 1745 and purchased three hundred acres of land east of Van Vliet's mills on the Raritan River's north branch, supposedly occupied the house in Revolutionary times. This man, in 1787, was Pluckemin's leading storekeeper, and he apparently conducted his business in that part of the building which now appears as a wing adjoining the original structure. In this attached portion, it would seem also, William Teeple had a tailor shop during the middle nineteenth century, he having purchased the land and buildings, December 9, 1836, from Peter Van Derveer.

Teeple sold, March 31, 1856, to Jacob Dow, who conveyed to Reverend Frederick F. Cornell, March 14, 1857, and the latter owned the property at his death in 1875. In 1884, John Fenner, Jr., acquired the house, and seemingly a farm connected with it, by purchase. Part of this land was conveyed by Mr. Fenner to James Brown, Jr., by him to Nathan Compton, and by him to his son, Andrew Compton, who owned the aforesaid tract in 1916. A Mrs. Sarah Harmer also occupied the house late in the nineteenth century.

Several historical traditions, other than the one already mentioned, are connected with the Fenner house. One is that Washington wrote his account of the Battle of Princeton in the front room of this house, another that he held important councils with his officers in the same room, and a third that he and his wife Martha passed two successive nights in the large room overhead. Still a fourth tradition is that an officer rode on horseback up and down the broad interior staircase of the Fenner house during the War for Independence. None of these various traditions, accepted locally though they are, can now be verified as fact.

All information given in the two preceding paragraphs comes from a brief article written by Mr. John A. Powelson and published in the 1916 volume of the Somerset County Historical Quarterly.⁶⁶ Another volume of the same journal, that for 1913, contains biographical and genealogical data on a certain "Matthias Lane, Jr.," who may be the "Matthew Lane" to whom Mr. Powelson refers in his article, although no mention is made in the data either of his keeping a store or of his having an interest in the Fenner house property.

Matthias Lane, Jr., was born in Bedminster Township, October 7, 1746, a son of Matthias Lane, Sr.⁶⁷ The father emigrated from Monmouth County in 1744 and on May 14 of that year purchased some 568 acres of land on the Allamatunk (Lamington) River. He was an elder in the Bedminster Dutch Church when it was incorporated on September 12, 1791, having been chosen for that office first in 1789, and again in 1793 and 1797. During the War for Independence, Matthias, Sr., was too old for military service at the front, but three of his sons, Matthias, Jr., Guisbert, and Derick, performed that office for the American cause, the latter becoming a captain and serving throughout the war. At the time of a certain British cavalry raid near Pluckemin (probably the raid of December, 1776), writes one local historian, "Peter Lane's father, Matthias, Sr., was appointed to collect up all the pewter plates and dishes, which were much in use those days, and deposit them at certain recognized places, viz: Pluckemin and Larger Cross Roads. They were then melted into bullets to shoot the British. Lead was scarce, and these pewter bullets, run in common moulds, were the substitute."⁶⁸

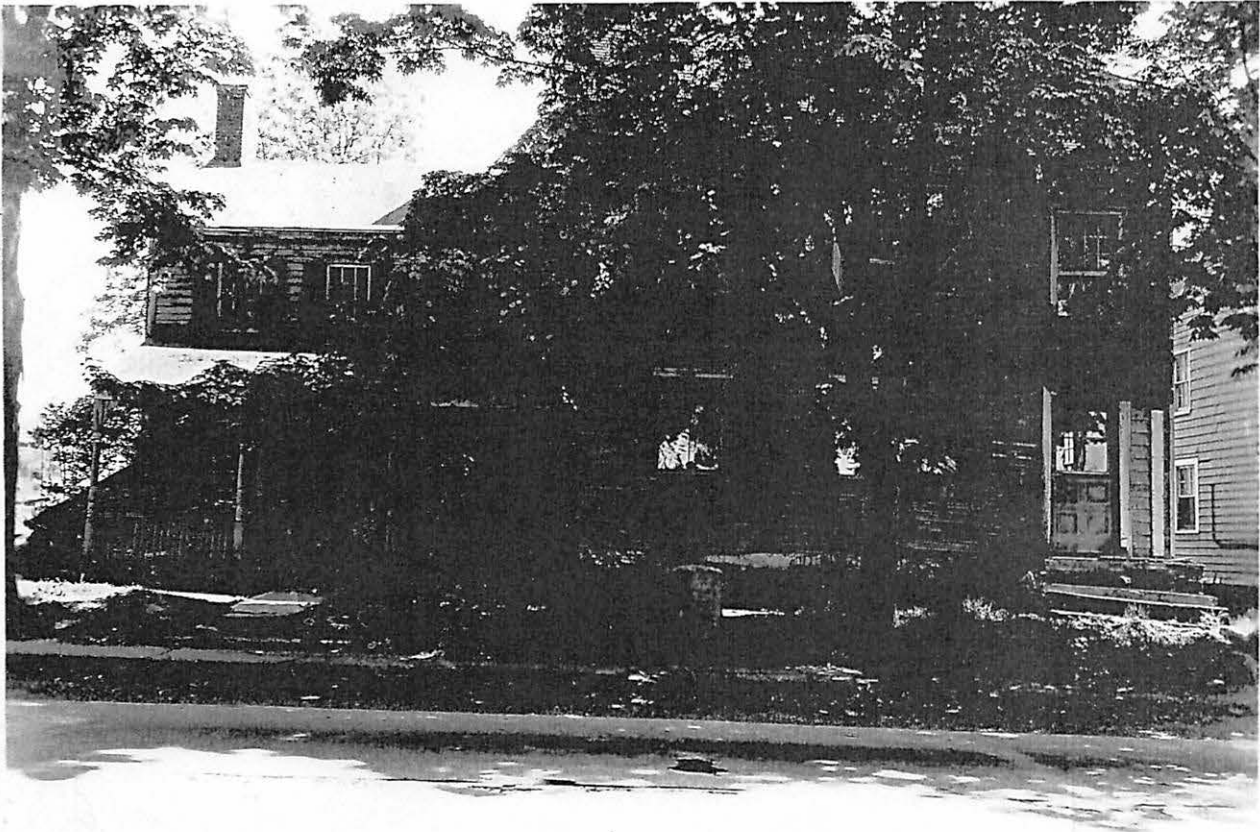
The son of this man, Matthias Lane, Jr., served as a private during the War for Independence (as per Trenton records), but in what regiment and for how long is not stated. After the war, he was probably a captain of militia, since there was a "Captain Matthias" in Bedminster in 1790. He was a deacon in the Bedminster Dutch Church, 1793 and 1797, and an elder in the same, 1808 and 1814. He was a prominent man and was frequently called upon to settle estates."⁶⁹

The interior condition of the Fenner house seems to have changed but little, except for deterioration, since Mr. Powelson described it as follows nineteen years ago: "The wide hall, broad stairs and their clumsy banisters, immense oaken beams of the ceiling and small inner doors (except as stated below), are there as they were in the olden times. So is the old Colonial chimney, with its four separate flues, fireplaces and mantels. Also the windows on the second floor and their 7 x 9 panes of glass, except that two of these panes were removed by Rev. Mr. Cornell during his ownership, because there were scratched on them several names, two supposed to be those of British prisoners temporarily confined there after the Battle of Princeton. On one pane so removed are the names of 'Henry Dawkins, engraver,' and 'George Dickens,' and on the other, under the figures of a man and woman and a dog, or fox, is the name, 'John Phenix, Esq.' We know who the latter was - a justice of the peace of Bedminster and a staunch loyalist. The two former names are certainly of British origin. The Cornell family at Somerville still have these panes. The windows in the first story were replaced with new glass by Mr. Fenner. He also replaced two doors, one taken from the recently destroyed old Somerset courthouse, and another from the ancient Freeman house at Mine Brook, which was pulled down by the present owner of that property, Mr. Richard V. Lindabury."⁷⁰ A memorandum on the present architectural features and condition of the house, as prepared by Assistant Architect Daniel C. Jensen, is appended to this report. Also included therein are eight exterior and interior photographs of the building.



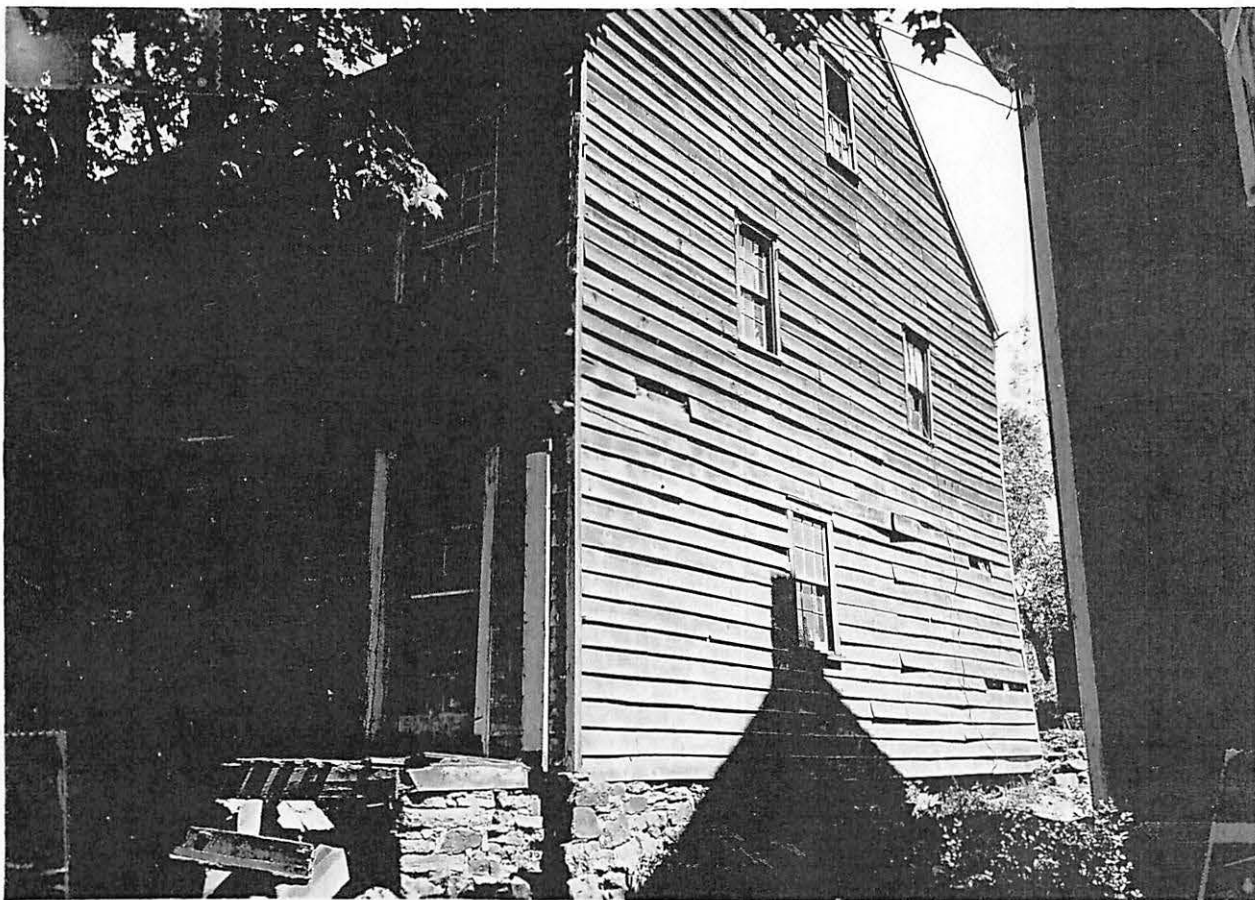
REVOLUTIONARY HOUSES—FENNER HOUSE, PLUCKEMIN
(See page 153)

The John Fenner house as it looked in 1916 or earlier. Photostatic copy of a photograph of the building, west or front elevation, as reproduced in the Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vol. V, facing p. 81.



The John Fenner house, front or west elevation, as it looked
in the summer of 1935.

PLATE XXVI



The John Fenner house, southwest corner, summer of 1935.

PLATE XXVII.



The John Fenner house, rear or east elevation, summer of 1935.

PLATE XXVIII



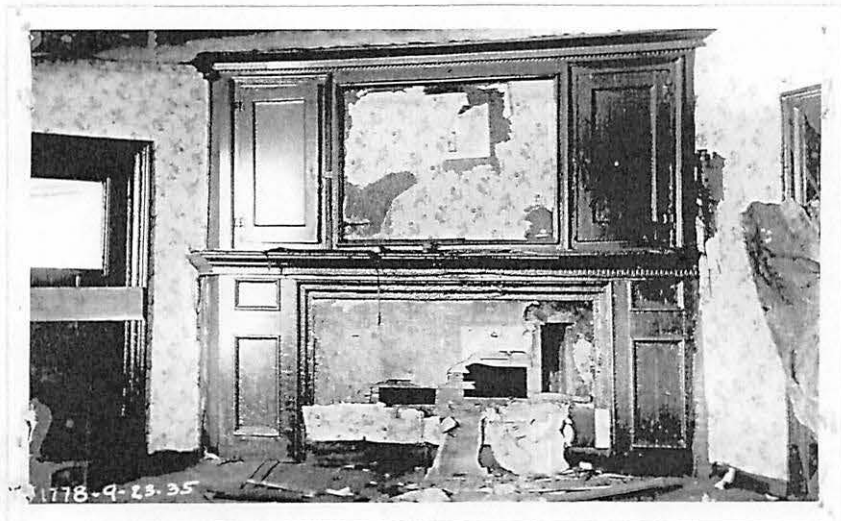
The John Fenner house, northeast corner, summer of 1935.

PLATE XXIX



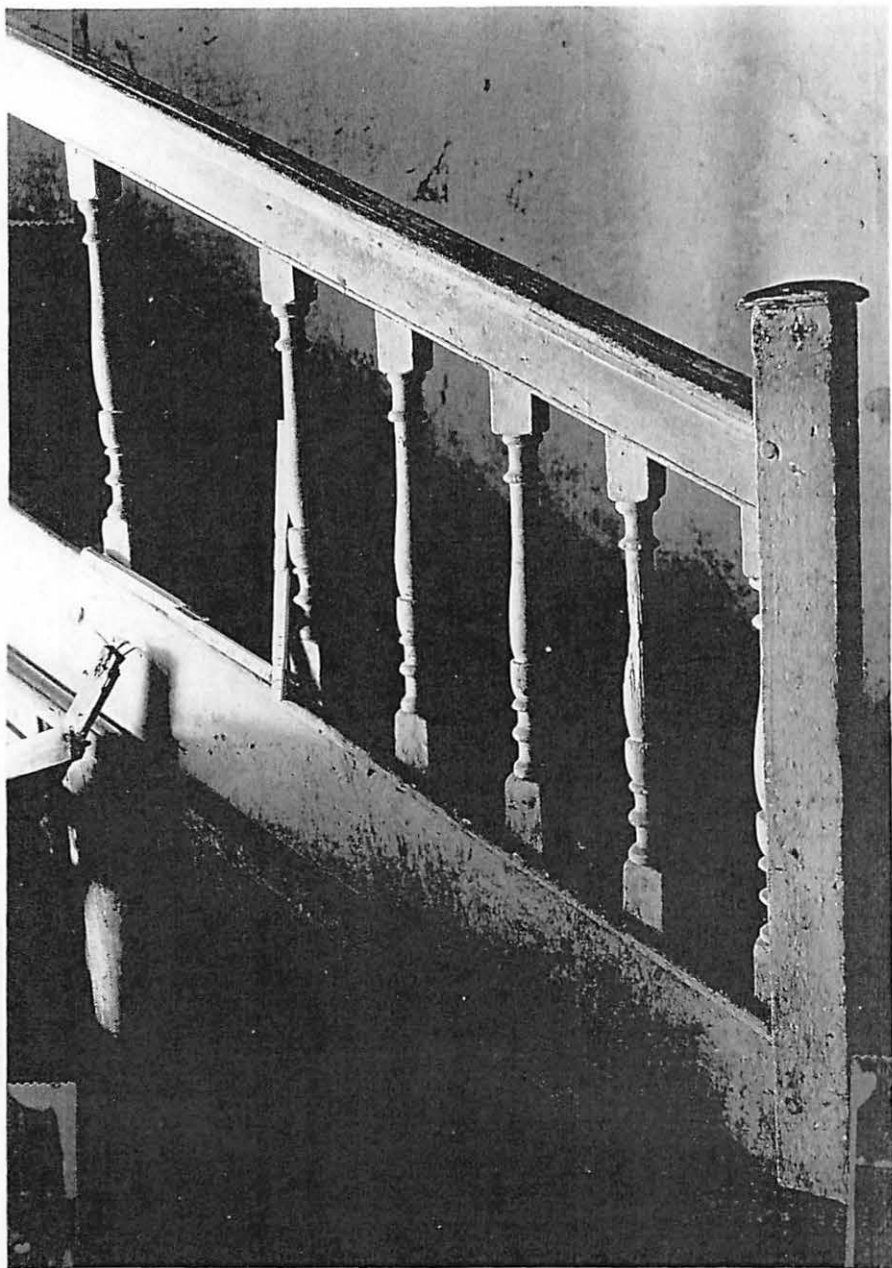
The John Fenner house, northwest corner, summer of 1935.

PLATE XXX



The John Fenner house, interior, mantel and fireplace on first floor, September 23, 1935.

PLATE XXXI



The John Fenner house, detail of stairway, southeast interior, first floor, summer of 1935.

PLATE XXXII

Section 12: The Emergency Market at Pluckemin During
the War for Independence:

On February 14, 1776, the Somerset County Committee of Correspondence, at their meeting in Hillsborough, President John Witherspoon of the College of New Jersey (now Princeton) in the chair, declared that, for the purpose of benefiting the "inland Trade" of the county, "whatever will make it easy for every Person, old or young, rich or poor, to do a little and immediately to turn that little to their own Advantage as well as throw it into the Public Service, must have the most immediate and powerful influence." Accordingly, markets were afterwards established (the Committee's order was dated February 21, 1776) at Pluckemin, Bernardstown, Bound Brook, and Princeton for wool, woolen yarn, cloth, fine and coarse wool cards, rough and dressed flax, linen yarn, green and whitened cloth, and reeds and mounting for looms, wheels, and reels. The Pluckemin market was scheduled for the first Tuesday in each month.⁷¹

Section 13: The Knox Artillery Park:⁷²

Among the more tangible reminders of the War for Independence as it affected Pluckemin is the encampment site of Brigadier-General Henry Knox's artillery corps. This is situated less than a mile north-north-east of the village along the foot of the Second Watchung Mountain, a short distance south of the latter's western extremity, its elevation being about 220 feet above sea level. Barracked here in 1778 and 1779, under the command of Knox, was a force of 1607 men, divided into 49 companies and equipped with 60 field-pieces consisting of mortars, howitzers, and some heavy cannon. "The tract of land chosen was generally level, extending north due south, with the wooded hillside to the east and gently sloping fields to the west of it. At present [1917] much of the Camp is along the edge of the woods; other portions are on the hillside as well as in a strip of woods to the northwest. In the matter of potable water it was well supplied, there being four small streams within easy reach, all of them tributary to the North Branch of the Raritan River."

The major portion of this camp site, in 1917, was on the estate of Mr. Grant B. Schley, but outlying posts were noted at the time as being located on the Woods farm adjoining, and near the Buttermilk Falls, on T. M. James' farm, at a point commanding the entrance to the valley between the two Watchung mountains. There were also detached posts, in the shape of mounds, on the Schley estate, one of them being on the slope bordering a ravine, some 400 yards east of the main encampment, the other located about a mile northeast of it, between the quarry and the Raritan River.

It was at Mr. Schley's invitation, almost twenty years ago, that a New Jersey archaeologist, Max Schrabisch by name, undertook to investigate a part of this site. Eleven weeks were devoted to such work, but only a small portion of the site, that is, a tract about 450 feet long by about 30 to 80 feet wide, and running "north and south along the east slope of the hill," could be examined.

In the area described, Schrabisch observed twenty mounds, thirteen of them arranged in a straight line through the southern portion, the remaining seven being scattered irregularly to the north of these. "Each mound averaged about ten feet in diameter and was two feet high. The southerly ones were usually from six to eight feet apart. The excavation of twelve of them invariably revealed a fireplace built near the centre, about a foot below the top. The soil within was discolored by ashes and charcoal and the rocks were fire-stained, that is, burned to the color of bricks, One of the mounds appeared to contain two hearths at right angles to each other. As a rule there were no remains associated with the mounds save a few bones, nails and pieces of chinaware or earthen jars." Schrabisch restored all the tumuli to their original condition insofar as that was possible.

In a report such as the present one, it is not practicable to relate at length all the details of this archaeologist's subsequent findings, and for the same those interested are referred to his own published narrative. It should be said, however, that Schrabisch uncovered what he believed to be the ruined foundations of numerous camp buildings of the hut or "shack" type. Four refuse pits were also investigated.

Among the relics and debris unearthed were the following interesting items: hundreds of oyster and hard clam shells, beef and pig bones, pieces of sheet iron, broken bottles and chinaware, several thousand hand-wrought nails, an iron ring and staples, a ramrod, a crude saw, hand-made rifle bullets, a broken horseshoe and three oxshoes, a human tooth, a long and thin-pronged fork, a cleaver, several clasp-knives with bone handles, disc-shaped pieces of pewter, fragments of clay pipes, half a dozen gun flints, some broken buckles, grapeshot, more than sixty buttons, three copper coins, and a chunk of dark blue argillite. Most of the buttons referred to were military in character, "about as large as a nickle and variously marked. Thus, a few displayed the initials 'D.R.' and 'U.S.A.:' other exhibited the numbers '4,' '29,' '53' and '66,' and about a score were decorated with a cannon and a flagstaff." Some other buttons, described by Schrabisch as "evidently belonging to vests and trousers," were "ornamented with tiny crosses or concentric rings." One coin referred to above "was in a fair state of preservation, showing on its obverse the head of the English King, George the Second, with the words 'Georgius II. Rex' around the margin; on its reverse, a figure symbolizing Great Britain, with the word 'Britannia' above it, and the date '1739' at the bottom. The second coin was badly worn and could not be identified. The third coin lay near the centre of a shack, about five inches below the surface. It displayed on its obverse a profile view of King George the Second, and above it the words 'Georgius II. Rex;' and on the reverse, the coat of arms of Ireland, i.e., a harp surmounted by a crown, with the date '1760' at the bottom."

On October 31, 1935, Junior Historian McCain and the writer examined what is believed to be the same encampment site worked over by Schrabisch years ago. Photographs were taken of several mounds in the area, and these are appended to this report. One mound was partially dug into by hand, with the result that several bits of bone, bivalve shells, two handwrought nails, a piece of iron, bits of charcoal, and a button marked with concentric circles were found, all of which were later cleaned and photographed.



PLATE XXXIII

Typical tumuli on the Knox artillery encampment site, November, 1935. The second photograph, No. 1857, shows one of the mounds before partial excavation by the writer and Junior Historian McCain (see part III, section 13, of this report). The bottom photograph shows the same mound after this excavation.



PLATE XXXIV



PLATE XXXV

The Knox artillery encampment site. Materials found in partial excavation of one of the tumuli by the writer and Junior Historian McCain (see part III, section 13, of this report), November, 1935.

Section 14: The French Alliance Anniversary Celebration
of 1779:

February 18, 1779, was a day of great pagentry and festivity in Pluckemin, for then "was celebrated in proper style near headquarters" the anniversary of the so-called French Alliance.⁷³ This event should actually have transpired on February 6, but it was postponed for almost two weeks until the arrival of General Washington from Philadelphia.⁷⁴

The commander-in-chief, says local historian Andrew D. Mellick, Jr., "rode on the parade at three o'clock in the afternoon," and was soon followed by Mrs. Washington and former President of the Continental Congress Henry Laurens in a coach drawn by four horses.⁷⁵ About an hour later, the opening of this celebration, sponsored by Brigadier-General Henry Knox and his officers, was formally announced by the discharge of thirteen or more cannon, after which "the gentlemen and ladies for a large circuit around the camp," together with "a vast concourse of spectators from every part of the Jerseys," repaired for refreshment and entertainment to a large building supposedly located near the Boylan house and known in that time as the "Academy."⁷⁶

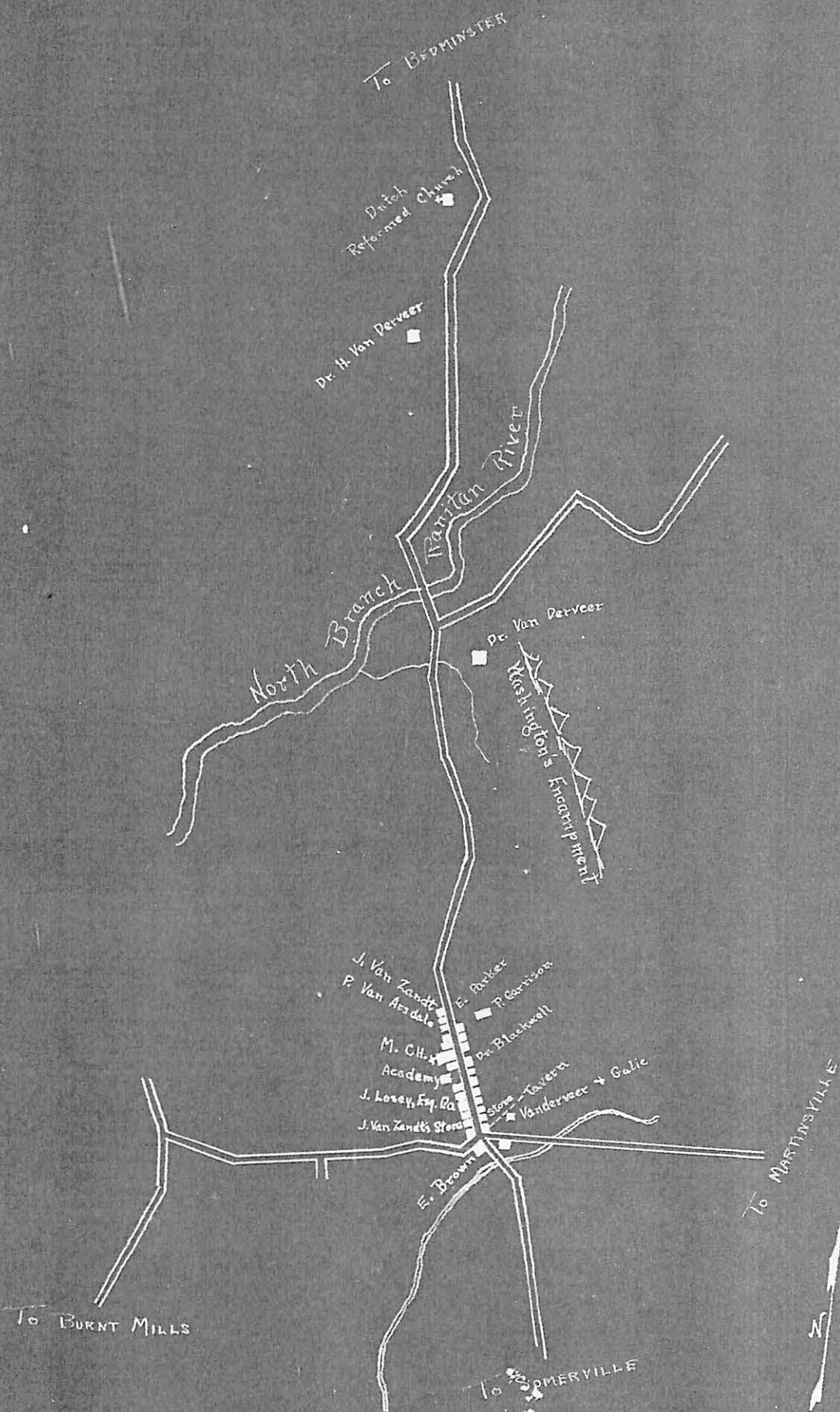
"In the evening," said the New Jersey Gazette of March 3, 1779, "was exhibited a very fine set of fireworks, conducted by Col. Stevens - arranged on the point of a Temple of one hundred feet in length, and proportionally high. The Temple shewed THIRTEEN arches, each displaying an illuminated painting. - The centre arch was ornamented with a pediment, larger than any of the others; - and the whole edifice supported by a colonnade, of the Corinthian order."⁷⁷

In the Academy, meanwhile, a ball was in progress, opened by the dignified Washington himself, and the merrymaking seems to have

gone on into the small hours of the next morning. "At least we had above seventy ladies," wrote Knox with obvious enthusiasm, "all of the first ton in the State. We danced all night; between 300 and 400 gentlemen; an elegant room."⁷⁸

It is probable that Pluckemin never had another such celebration in its history. Nothing remains of the old Academy, however, or of the patriotically constructed "Temple," and the exact location of either remains a moot point today.

PLATE XXXVII



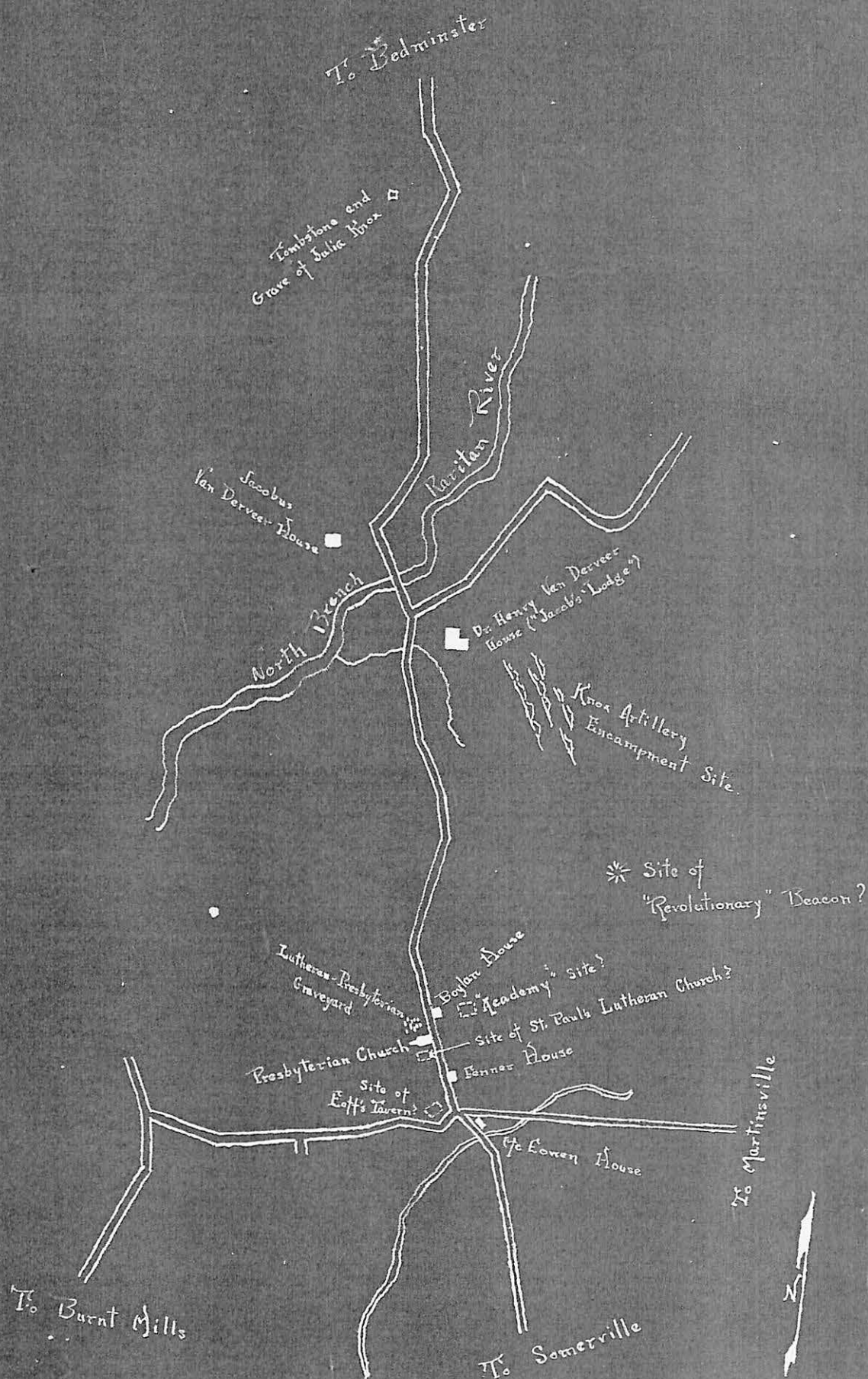
PLUCKEMIN IN 1850

Adapted from "Map of Somerset County, New Jersey, Entirely from Original Surveys, by J. W. Otley & J. Keily, Published by Lloyd Van Derveer, Surveyor, Camden, N. J., 1850." Copy at Morristown Library.

11-1-35

Drawn by: M. J. Weig

PLATE XXXVIII



PLUCKEMIN IN 1935

Approximate locations of historic sites and antiquities in Colonial, Revolution ary, and early Statehood times.

11-17-35

Drawn by M. J. Weig

PART IV

REFERENCE NOTES TO PARTS I, II, AND III

¹James P. Snell, History of Hunterdon and Somerset Counties, New Jersey (Philadelphia: 1881), p. 711; Rev. Samuel Parry, "The Origin of the Name 'Pluckemin,'" Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vol. I (Somerville: 1912), 196-197; Andrew D. Mellick, Jr., The Story of an Old Farm (Somerville: 1889), pp. 140, 163. On the date and extent of Eoff's purchase, of. Archives of the State of New Jersey, 1st ser., Vol. XX (Paterson: 1898), 286, note 2. See also part III of this report, passim.

²See also part III of this report, passim.

³Diary of Lieutenant James McMichael, 1776-1778, as quoted in the Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vol. II (Somerville: 1913), 238; Archives of the State of New Jersey, 2nd ser., Vol. I (Trenton: 1901), 258.

⁴Diary of Lieutenant James McMichael, 1776-1778, loc. cit.

⁵Part III, Section II.

⁶Rev. T. E. Davis, "Movements of the American Army in Somerset during the Revolution," Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vol. V (Somerville: 1916), 163; infra, part III, section 5.

⁷See infra, part III, section 6.

⁸Diary of Lieutenant James McMichael, 1776-1778, loc. cit.

⁹Mellick, op. cit., p. 327.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 162; Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vol. VII (Somerville: 1918), 240. Some mention of the Eoff family appears in Snell, op. cit., p. 702. See also Archives of the State of New Jersey, 1st ser., Vol. XX, 286, note 2.

¹¹Snell, op. cit., p. 711; Mellick, op. cit., pp. 162-163. Jacob Eoff held tavern licenses in 1778, 1779, and from 1782 to 1795 inclusive ("Somerset Innholders," Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vol. VIII Somerville: 1919 , 280). But cf. note 15 of this report.

¹²Mellick, op. cit., pp 92-93; manuscript of Mr. John A. Powelson, of Pluckemin, who has in his possession the original subscription list. A copy of Mr. Powelson's manuscript is in the writer's files. Eoff's money contribution was the largest of the total one hundred and thirty except one: George Remer (or Reimer), builder of the Church, also contributed \$20. See also infra, part III, section 5. Eoff was supposedly a member of the Zion Lutheran Church of New Germantown in 1767 (Archives of the State of New Jersey, 1st ser., Vol. XX, 286, note 2).

13 Mellick, op. cit., p. 163; manuscript of Mr. John A. Powelson.

14 Ibid.; Mellick, op. cit., pp. 163, 385; Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vol. VII, 30, On July 22, 1777, the Provincial Council of Safety of New Jersey ordered that Jacob Eoff and other citizens of Somerset County should be brought before it to take the oath of allegiance to the State (Archives of the State of New Jersey, 1st ser., Vol. XX, 286, note 2), but I have seen no other possible imputation of the former's attachment to the American cause.

15 "Jacob Eoff no doubt lies buried near his wife, Mary Magdalena, in the old Lutheran grave yard in Pluckemin, New Jersey, but no stone marks the last burial place of the famous Inn Keeper of the village." (Manuscript of Mr. John A. Powelson). "His [Jacob Eoff, Sr.'s] will, dated August 12, 1772, was proved Sept. 10, 1780, which would seem to indicate that he was more than 100 years old at the time of his death." (Archives of the State of New Jersey, 1st ser., Vol. XX, 286, note 2). Cf. note 11 of this report.

16 It is definitely known that Christian Eoff held a tavern license in 1788, from 1790 to 1793 inclusive, and from 1795 to 1798 inclusive ("Somerset Innholders," loc. cit.).

17 Mellick, op. cit., p. 163. Cf. manuscript of Mr. John A. Powelson. See also infra, passim.

18 Manuscript of Mr. John A. Powelson. The oldest resident of the village in 1916, Mrs. Ann N. Vanderveer, stated that she lived in the McEowen house when a girl, and that it was then "very old." The nails in the building, she said, were all hand-forged at that time. (Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vol. V, 234).

19 Snell, op. cit., p. 712; manuscript of Mr. John A. Powelson.

20 Snell, op. cit., p. 712; manuscript of Mr. John A. Powelson.

21 Snell, op. cit., p. 712; manuscript of Mr. John A. Powelson, where the following additional statement appears: "When Doctor Holly, who became the owner fifteen years ago, removed the north end of the old house that had been the store, they [sic] discovered a secret box in the floor, - probably the old Squire's safety deposit vault."

22 Ibid.

23 Ibid.; Snell, op. cit., p. 712. Squire Elias Brown purchased this house from the McEowen family in 1824, and from him it passed to one David McCullough, thence, in 1852, to Jacob Vosseller, who sold it, about 1871, to James Brown, Sr. James Brown, Jr., inherited the property and disposed of it to Francis Bacon, of New York City, who in turn sold it to the Doctor Holly referred to in note 21, supra. (Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vol. V, 234).

²⁴Ibid.; A. Van Doren Honeyman, "The Somerset Boylan Family," ibid., Vol. VI (Somerville: 1917), 101; manuscript of Mr. John A. Powellson; Snell, op. cit., p. 712. John Boylan also held a tavern license from 1778 to 1781 inclusive ("Somerset Innholders," loc. cit., p. 279).

²⁵Snell, op. cit., p. 712; Mellick, op. cit., p. 582; Honeyman, loc. cit. "One of the day-books of the Van Derveer mill store is in possession of Samuel W. Davenport, of Somerville, and shows the line of purchase of the people of that time. Some of the prices are here given, the currency being in pounds, shillings, and pence. Rum was the staple in liquors, and sold for 5s. 6d. per gallon; mollasses, 2s. 6d.; sugar, 8d. per lb.; tea, 5s.; coffee, 1s. 9d.; butter, 1s.; nails, 11d.; red broadcloth, £1 7s. per yard; calico, 5s. 3d.; corn, 4s. 6d. per bushel. ... Mr. Boylan was an extensive manufacturer of potash, that being then an important article of commerce." (Snell, op. cit., p. 712).

²⁶Ibid.; Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vol. V, 234. Boylan, in 1773, was numbered among the managers of a lottery for the disposal of certain lands in Bridgewater Township (Honeyman, loc. cit., p. 102).

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid. John Boylan died March 4, 1793, at the age of forty-six. His widow Eleanor, daughter of one Samuel Hodge, survived him fifty-three years. By her will, she left the property to William Boylan, a son, who at his death in 1861 passed it on to his sister, Mrs. Sarah B. Parker. At her death in 1882 it went to Mary Van Dervoort, Mary Parker, and Sarah J. Bolmer, of whom three years later, the property was purchased by Dr. John Beekman, who conveyed it to Nathan Compton, at whose death in 1905 it passed to Andrew Compton, the present owner (Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vol. V, 234). Both Mr. and Mrs. John Boylan are buried in the old cemetery at Basking Ridge (Honeyman, loc. cit., pp. 102-103; Snell, op. cit., p. 712).

²⁹Mellick, op. cit., pp. 461, 471. "New York, December 19. By late accounts from New Jersey, we are informed, that General Washington's Headquarters were at Mrs. Wallaces, ... Brigadier General Knox's, with the Artillery, at Col. M'Donald's, at Pluckamin ..." (New York Gazette and Weekly Mercury, Dec. 21, 1778, as quoted in Archives of the State of New Jersey, 2nd ser., Vol. 11 [Trenton: 1903], 599-600). This news item may or may not conflict with other evidence cited. It may mean that Knox actually stayed for a time at McDonald's, the paper may be in error, or only the artillery may have been temporarily encamped on McDonald's farm.

³⁰Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vol. VII, 16; Mellick, op. cit., pp. 463-464, 470-471.

³¹Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vol. VII, 16.

³²Ibid. Vol. III (Somerville: 1914), 251; Mellick, op. cit., pp. 463-464.

³³Ibid., p. 93; manuscript of Mr. John A. Powelson.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵The original subscription roll, now in possession of Mr. John A. Powelson, is about nine feet in length. It is one of the owner's proudest possessions.

³⁶See supra, part III, section I.

³⁷The New York Mercury, Sept. 25, 1758, as quoted in Archives of the State of New Jersey, 1st ser., Vol. XX, 283-287. See also infra, this section of the report.

³⁸As quoted by Mellick, op. cit., p. 94. St. Paul's was at that time collegiate with Zion's Lutheran Church of New Germantown (now Oldwick), which latter is still standing in an excellent state of preservation (Manuscript of Mr. John A. Powelson). Cf. note 12.

³⁹Mellick, op. cit., p. 93.

⁴⁰See infra, this section of the report.

⁴¹See supra, part II, section 2.

⁴²See supra, part II, section 1.

⁴³Snell, op. cit., p. 712. Cf. infra, part III, section 7.

⁴⁴Mellick, op. cit., pp. 93-94.

⁴⁵This dwindling of membership, according to the manuscript of Mr. John A. Powelson, was "due perhaps to the strength of the Dutch Reformed Church of Bedminster two miles to the north."

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷"The Old Pluckemin Burying-Ground, " Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vol. I, 119.

- 48 "The Old Pluckemin Burying-Ground Stones," ibid.,^{pp.} 312-313.
- 49 "The Old Pluckemin Burying-Ground," ibid., pp. 119-121.
- 50 "Pluckemin Tombstones," ibid., Vol. II, 160.
- 51 Mellick, op. cit., passim.
- 52 "The Old Pluckemin Burying-Ground Stones," loc. cit., pp. 312-314.
- 53 Ibid., p. 313.
- 54 For discussion on this point see ibid., pp. 314-315; and "The Old Pluckemin Burying-Ground," ibid., p. 121.
- 55 Archives of the State of New Jersey, 2d ser., Vol. I, 252; "The Leslie Tombstone at Pluckemin," Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vol. VIII, 230-231. A long, but undocumented and probably somewhat imaginary, account of Captain Leslie's funeral and burial may be found in Mellick, op. cit., pp. 385-387.
- 56 The original of this orderly book is in the Washington's Headquarter's Collection.. Page references below are to the typewritten copy in the Morristown Library.
- 57 "Order Book (Morristown), Feb. 10, 1780-Apr. 28, 1780," p.39. William Shippen's military hospital report, December 31, 1779, shows that there were 10 officers, 75 sick, five horses, and one wagon stationed at the Pluckemin hospital on that date (Greene Papers in the American Philosophical Society's collection at Philadelphia).
- 58 "General Order Book, May 28, 1780-Aug. 2, 1780," p. 6.
- 59 See supra, part III, section 5.
- 60 See supra, part III, section 4.
- 61 Mellick, op. cit., pp. 470-471.
- 62 Ibid.
- 63 Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vol. VIII, 78-79.
- 64 Manuscript of Mr. John A. Powelson.
- 65 J. C. Fitzpatrick, Calendar of Correspondence of George Washington, Vol. I (Washington 1906), 230; Jared Sparks, ed., The Writings of George Washington, Vol. IV (Washington: 1834), 258-264; Paul L. Ford, ed., The Writings of George Washington, Vol. V (New York and London: 1890), 146-153; J. C. Fitzpatrick, ed., The Writings of George Washington, Vol. VI (Washington: 1932), 466-473; Diary of Lieutenant James McMichael, 1776-1778, loc. cit., pp. 237-238.

⁶⁶ "The Fenner House at Pluckemin," Vol. V, 153-155.

⁶⁷ A.V.D. Honeyman, "The Lane Families of Somerset County and Vicinity," ibid., Vol. II, 206.

⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 197-200.

⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 206-207.

⁷⁰ "The Fenner House at Pluckemin," loc. cit.

⁷¹ The Pennsylvania Gazette, Feb. 21, 1776, as quoted in Archives of the State of New Jersey, 2d ser., Vol. I, 45-48; ibid., Vol. II, 74, note 1.

⁷² All information given in this section of the report, except for the last paragraph thereof, is quoted or has been condensed from Max Schrabisch, "General Knox's Artillery Park, Pluckemin," Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vol. VI, 162-168.

⁷³ "Thacher's Military Journal," as quoted in ibid., Vol. II, 15.

⁷⁴ Mellick, op. cit., p. 466.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 467.

⁷⁶ The New Jersey Gazette, Mar. 3, 1779, as quoted in Archives of the State of New Jersey, 2d ser., Vol. III (Trenton: 1906), 104; "Thacher's Military Journal," loc. cit.

⁷⁷ Loc. cit.

⁷⁸ Letter to his brother William, dated at Pluckemin, Feb. 28, 1779, as quoted in Somerset County Historical Quarterly, Vol. VII, 17.

PART V

HISTORICAL RESTORATIVE AND RECONSTRUCTIVE VALUE
OF THE PLUCKEMIN AREA TO THE
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

It is pertinent, in bringing this report to a conclusion, to offer some brief comment on the historical restorative and reconstructive value on the Pluckemin area. Such comment will naturally resolve itself around seven main considerations: (1) association of the area with famous men or events, (2) physical condition of the sites and antiquities, (3) availability for United States Government acquisition of such sites and antiquities, (4) similarity or dissimilarity of the area to other areas already preserved to posterity through the National Park Service, (5) connection or disconnection of the Pluckemin area with the same, (6) character of source material for historical study of the area, and (7) the educational possibilities of preservation.

The foregoing pages of this report amply testify to the association of the Pluckemin area with famous men and events, though this association, except in the case of Brigadier General Knox, was only for very brief periods of time. All such associative significance, however, derives from connection with things military in character, and otherwise Pluckemin has no great importance on the national scene.

Comment on the second point is less obviously arrived at. About one-fourth of the buildings and antiquities described in this report are now destroyed. The McElowen house is in such remodeled condition as to render its restoration of doubtful value. In less degree the same is true of the Boylan house. Very little has been done to change the appearance of the Fenner house, in all probability, and this structure presents many interesting architectural features, but of

late years it has suffered great deterioration due to lack of proper repairs. It could, therefore, possibly be restored with good effect, though at considerable cost. The Jacobus Van Derveer house, or Knox headquarters, really presents fine possibilities where restoration is concerned. So also does the Dr. Henry Van Derveer place. Captain Leslie's tombstone, as has been noted, is not the original, and it may be that the tablet covering the grave of Lucy Knox is not the first marker placed over her last resting place. Part of the Knox artillery encampment site has been worked over, perhaps not so satisfactorily as might have been wished, but there is probably a good deal of worthwhile material in and on the ground.

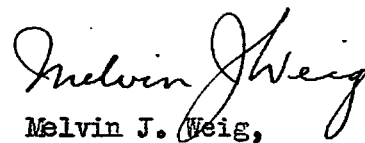
In the present aspect of the subject, no attempt has been made to ascertain the terms on which any or all of these sites and antiquities described could be acquired by the United States Government except in the case of the Fenner house, the present owner of which, Mr. Hugh Gaston, is willing to donate it to any reliable agency for purposes of preservation.

The Pluckemin area is historically similar to that of Morristown from many angles. It boasts a Washington's headquarters in the Fenner house, though the basis for this is traditional only, a Knox headquarters in the Jacobus Van Derveer house, here again a traditional basis only, and a Continental Army encampment site of the barrack hut type. On the other hand, its scale is somewhat dwarfed by that of Morristown, and it does not present the natural features of such a section of Morristown National Historical Park as, for instance, Jockey Hollow.

There is, as we have seen, a connecting link between the Morristown and Pluckemin areas in the fact that Washington, immediately after the Battle of Princeton, marched to the former by way of the latter place. The two communities, the first a town and the second a village, were both on the main line of traffic between New York and Philadelphia.

Source materials on the Pluckemin area are chiefly secondary in character, as witness the note references in this report, and are by no means so plentiful as those relating to the Morristown sector. The writer has not had access to any considerable manuscript collections, however, and it may be that these, when consulted, will reveal something of interest.

The educational possibilities of the Pluckemin area, when and if restored or reconstructed from historical points of view, will be much the same in character, though less in degree, as those at Morristown National Historical Park are today. The locale only will be slightly different. Some good work in the way of early nineteenth century social history in northern New Jersey could probably be done with "Jacob's Lodge," the Dr. Henry Van Derveer place, and that at not too great an expense. The Fenner and Jacobus Van Derveer houses could be used, in addition to their respective associations with Washington and Knox, as eighteenth century exhibits of good character.


Melvin J. Weig,

Junior Historian.

PART VI
APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

REPORT FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT IN RE: THE FENNER HOUSE

AT PLUCKEMIN, NEW JERSEY,

JUNE 8, 1935.

The house consists of two parts built at different periods. It is rectangular in structure, two stories in height, has a gable roof, and is identical in plan with the Guerin House, in that it has a hall at the side of the house from front to rear, with the stairs to the second floor in this hall. The main part of the building was the only one investigated. It seems to date from the middle 18th century.

Flanking the hall which has been mentioned, there are two rooms, front and rear, each having a corner fireplace with what appear to be the original mantels.

The second floor plan is identical with that of the first floor, and the flues of the four fireplaces, two on each floor, go up through the attic in one chimney.

The attic is open with fine old framing in good condition. The old flooring is also in good shape.

Because the flooring on the first and second floors is covered with linoleum, it could not be examined. Probably, however, it is nondescript.

The stairs of this house are quite unusual. The balusters and rail are in good condition and well turned and moulded, though the

rail is very heavy.

The newel post is very plain with a small applied moulded cap and drop.

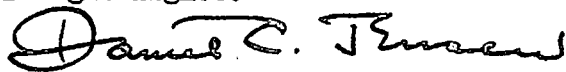
The tread and rise of the stairs is unusually low, being about ten inches and six inches respectively, a very uncomfortable combination.

The closure panel under the stairs is made of vertical boards with a raised panel on every other board and a bead on the others. This is an exact detail, both in shape and size, as is found in the sheathing of the Wick House.

The condition of the house is very bad. It is rapidly going to ruin, but enough of the original structure remains to make possible a satisfactory restoration.

The old front door is gone, but its present owner is known. Many of the old interior doors are in place, some with the original hardware.

Several of the original sash are still in place and are the characteristic type of twelve over eight lights.



Daniel C. Jensen,

Assistant Architect.

APPENDIX II

REPORT FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT IN RE: THE JACOBUS VAN DERVEER

HOUSE AT PLUCKEMIN, NEW JERSEY.

NOVEMBER 8, 1935.

Following the visit of October 4 to the Jacobus Van Derveer house, when the owner was not found to be at home, a return trip was made on November 6.

This building, also known as the headquarters of Brigadier-General Knox in 1779-1780, is a one and one-half story farmhouse, with the exterior being greatly altered. A large porch has been added on the north side, the small kitchen wing appears to be a later addition, dormers have been added to the roof, and the entire exterior has been stuccoed, possibly over the original siding.

An old photograph and one remaining window give evidence that the second floor was originally lighted with belly windows. Places where the stucco has dropped off show the old weatherboards underneath. These are beaded and have a six inch exposure. All the sash are replacements.

The interior of the house presents a number of striking features. The plan is a central hall, the stairs running longitudinally with apparently original turned balusters. The newel could be a replacement, as its character is much heavier than that of the balusters and all the other details in the house. Some of the windows have the original architraves, while others are replacements or alterations.

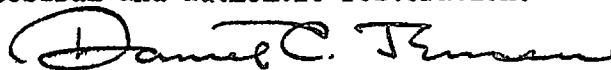
The hall is flanked by two rooms on each side, and the mantels in these rooms are unusually fine, there being one in each room. The detail of each of these mantels is very delicate, and in the southwest room, the entire west side has been paneled, which is something quite out of the ordinary for this section. The aforesaid paneling incorporates a china closet with scalloped shelving, and it appears that there was originally another such closet on the other side of the mantel, where there is at present a door.

The mouldings and arrangement of the panels in the doors of this particular room are identical with those in the Fenner house. This leads one to believe that they might both have been done by the same craftsman. The dividing partition of this room and the adjoining one has been removed, making one large living room.

The ceiling of these two rooms has exposed beams, the old pine flooring above forming the ceiling.

Most of the house has been refloored with modern flooring - no old hardware remains and most of the doors are replacements.

The second floor of the house has been altered somewhat, due to the addition of the dormers and a bathroom, but the house in general would permit a most successful and authentic restoration.



Daniel C. Jensen,

Assistant Architect.

APPENDIX III

REPORT FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT IN RE: THE DR. HENRY VAN DERVEER HOUSE AT PLUCKEMIN, NEW JERSEY.

This report is based on two short visits to this house and is by no means as comprehensive as a thorough study of the building would be.

The Dr. Henry Van Derveer house, contemporaneously known as "Jacob's Lodge," appears to have been built in the early 1800's. The story is that its entire framing is of locust, and this, if true, perhaps accounts somewhat for its remarkably fine condition at the present day.

The house has a very charming front elevation and a simple and graceful entrance with fine leaded sidelights and fan. All the old shutters are intact, together with their hardware.

Three well proportioned dormers are in the roof, two with a pointed pediment and the central one curved. The roof is a gambrel type.

The plan of this house involves a wide central hall, with the stairs at the end making two turns to reach the second floor. Two rooms flank the hall on each side, and each room has a fireplace on the interior or dividing partition. These rooms are large, with extremely high ceilings, and the mantels are well proportioned and graceful. The old hardware is all intact. The strap hinges and iron locks were particularly interesting.

At the rear of the house is a small wing formerly used as a kitchen. This wing has a later addition to it, and its fireplace has been closed up. The present kitchen is in the cellar.

The second floor plan is identical with that of the first, all four mantels being also intact, and the only alteration since the place was built seems to have been the addition of two bathrooms between each set of rooms. This was accomplished by breaking out on each side of the mantels and using one side for the bathroom and the other side for closets. The stairs are simple in detail, with slender, round balusters and plain handrail.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Daniel C. Jensen".

Daniel C. Jensen,

Assistant Architect.