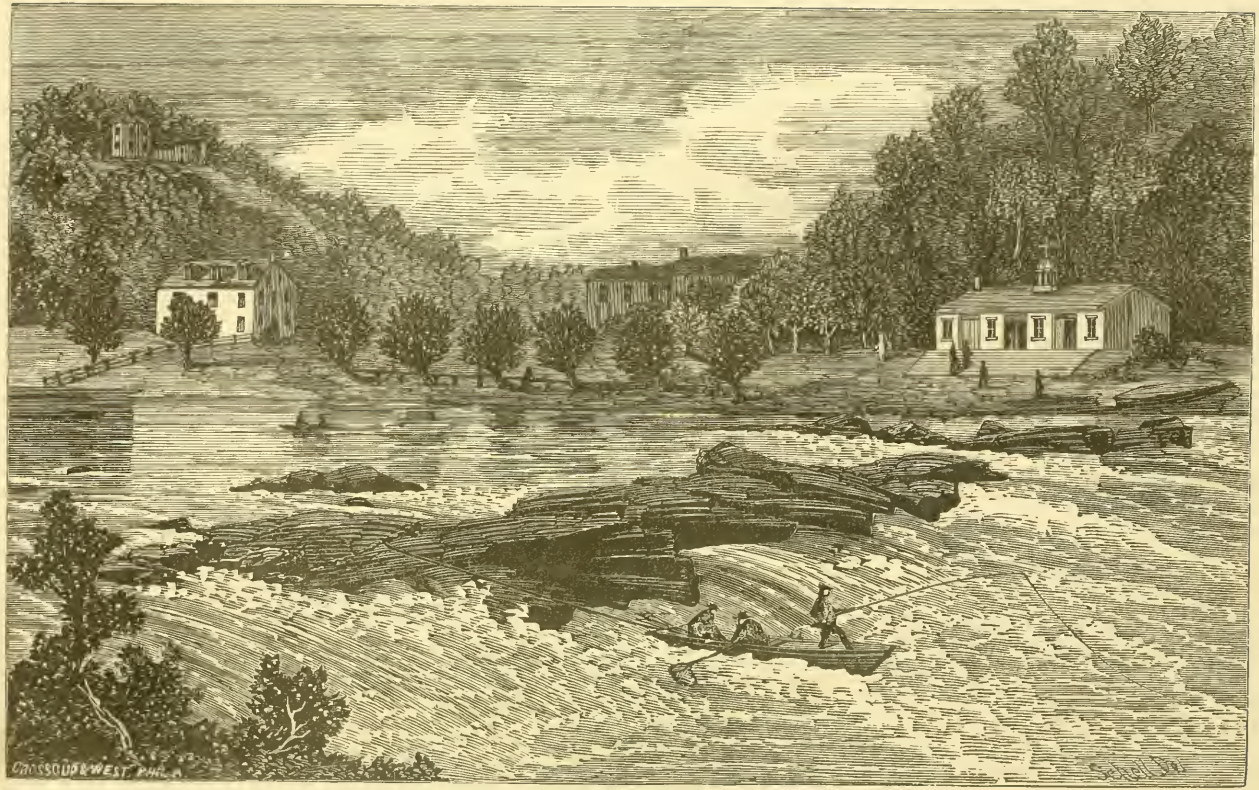


FORT ST. DAVIDS. 1794.

EARLY HISTORY

OF THE

FALLS OF SCHUYLKILL,

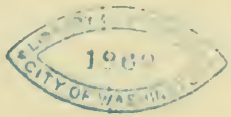
MANAYUNK,

SCHUYLKILL AND LEHIGH NAVIGATION COMPANIES,

FAIRMOUNT WATERWORKS, ETC.

BY

CHARLES V. HAGNER.



PHILADELPHIA:
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1869.

COLLINS, PRINTER,
705 JAYNE ST.

To my

Venerable Old Friend

JOHN McALLISTER, ESQ.,

Who, on various occasions, has so kindly extended

to me the use

of his extensive and valuable library,

This Humble Contribution

to the Local History of Philadelphia, etc.,

is respectfully dedicated

by his sincere and much obliged friend,

THE AUTHOR.

INTRODUCTION.

In the year 1856, I was called on by an old friend with a request to give one of a course of Lectures then being delivered under the auspices of the Rev. B. Wister Morris, at the School-room of St. Davids Church, Manayunk. I consented, and took for my subject "Manayunk:" Its early history, rise, and progress. To do justice to the subject, I found it necessary to begin with the village two miles below Manayunk, the Falls of Schuylkill, where originated the Schuylkill Navigation Company, which, by creating the water-power or mill seats at Manayunk, was the primary cause of its origin. As I progressed there came up fresh on my mind so many interesting facts and circumstances, that I soon discovered I could not do justice to the subject in a single lecture. I therefore gave two, one on the Falls of Schuylkill, the other on Manayunk. What is contained in the following pages is the substance of those two lectures, which, at the repeated request of many persons, I have concluded to publish.

C. V. H.

CONTENTS.

EARLY HISTORY

OF THE

FALLS OF SCHUYLKILL, ETC.

FORT ST. DAVIDS.

The village now called the "Falls of Schuylkill" was one day a place of much notoriety, and there are many interesting facts of an historical nature connected with it, which few persons of this age are aware of; even its ancient name, "Fort St. Davids," which it bore for many years (about one hundred), seems to be entirely lost and forgotten. This name was given to the village and adopted by the inhabitants, near the commencement of the last century, by a number of gentlemen who built a fishing house there, and formed themselves into a society under the name and title of "Fort St. Davids." Their house, previous to the Revolution, was built of hewn logs, situated at the foot of the hill immediately opposite the long rock, as it was called, upon which the abutment of the Falls Bridge

was subsequently and partly built. This long rock I well remember, and have often, when a boy, fished from it. It extended from the foot of the hill to about two-thirds the distance across the river, forming a complete natural dam, a part of it overhanging on the lower side. In high freshets the water flowed over it and made a beautiful cascade; at other times it forced the river into a narrow channel on the western side, through which it ran with great rapidity and much noise, falling some five or six feet in a distance of about one hundred and fifty yards, and could be heard at a distance of from one to five miles, according to the state of the river and the winds. There was a very singular and curious impression or indentation on a part of this rock that attracted many persons there to view it. It was apparently an impression of an immense human foot, over two feet long, and sunk some six inches in the rock. It showed the heel, hollow of the instep, ball of the foot and toes. It was called by the people in the neighborhood "The Devil's Foot," and there were some superstitions in reference to it. Professor Wagner, who when a lad resided near the Falls, and had often seen it, asked me lately if I remembered it; he has some theory on the subject. There were many other holes, or pots, as they were called, in the rocks, caused by ages of attrition

from stones and gravel, which the water, when flowing over them, kept in agitation. Some of these pots are still to be seen on a part of the long rock remaining, and not covered by the water. There was a tradition that they were used by the Indians for pounding corn in; certainly they were well adapted for such a purpose.

The fishing company of Fort St. Davids was originally established by a number of prominent and wealthy gentlemen of Philadelphia, among whom were many Welchmen, who gave the Society its name, St. David being their patron saint. It was organized and governed in the manner of a garrison or fortification; it had its commander-in-chief, governor, captains, lieutenants, &c. The commander issued his orders, proclamations, &c., in regular military style. The members and invited guests resorting there for recreation and amusement, the fishing being excellent, which it continued to be, until the improvements on the river began. For beautiful scenery, romantic beauty, and fine fishing, there was no place in the vicinity of Philadelphia could in the least compare with "Fort St. Davids," or, as it is now called, the "Falls of Schuylkill."

The company continued its operations happily and successfully down to the breaking out

of the Revolutionary War, at which time it numbered among its members some of the best and most patriotic citizens of the day; but that period being no time for frivolous sports and amusements, it was in a great measure abandoned, and most of its members rushed, in some way or other, to the assistance, support, and defence of their country; and when the British army subsequently took possession of Philadelphia, their building was destroyed by a portion of it encamped in the neighborhood. From information derived from my father, who resided at the Falls (in the summer seasons) from a period shortly after the Revolution until his death in 1830, and who, together with his neighbor and revolutionary commander and campmate—Governor Mifflin—was often a guest at Fort St. Davids, I gather that the motive for the destruction of the company's house was the proclivities of its members, who had often *hatched treason in it*. Governor Mifflin resided in the house on the upper side of the Ridge Road, above the Indian Queen Lane. It was formerly a beautiful country-seat, having fountains in front. It was subsequently owned and occupied by Jacob G. Koch, an extensive merchant of Philadelphia.

JOHN DICKINSON.

Some seven years previous to the Revolution, there lived in Philadelphia a highly talented and patriotic gentleman, a member of the Philadelphia bar, John Dickinson, subsequently elected President of Pennsylvania. He wrote a series of letters addressed to the inhabitants of the British Colonies, which were published in Philadelphia and in London, and produced a powerful effect, both here and in England. Here, in convincing the people of the palpable injustice practised towards them, and in England, raising us up hosts of powerful, ardent, and influential friends. These letters, or essays, were signed "A Farmer," and are referred to in the history of our country as "Farmer's Letters." They related principally to the subject of taxation, denying the right of the British government to levy taxes here without our consent. They proclaimed—what afterwards became one of the battle cries of the Revolution—"No taxation without representation." To every student of American history, the powerful effect produced by Farmer's Letters" is well known and appreciated. There are many reasons for believing they *initiated* the American Revolution. Had John Dickinson been a native of Massa-

chusetts instead of Pennsylvania, there would be no end to his glorification by New England historians and orators.

To show the form and manner in which the fishing company of Fort St. Davids transacted its affairs, and also the patriotic character of the men who composed it, I have extracted from the papers of the day, published in Philadelphia, 1768, the following proceedings, viz:—

"Record of the admission of John Dickinson, Fort St. Davids, 16th day of April, 1768.

Which day, in the presence of his Excellency, Governor Vanderspeigel, Esq., commander-in-chief in and over his majesty's colony of Fort St. Davids, and the territories, fisheries, &c., thereon depending, and vice-admiral of the same, in full court. John Dickinson, Esq., of the city of Philadelphia, barrister (the friend of liberty, the second Pitt, the author of the Farmer's Letters), for his patriotic productions in behalf of the rights and privileges of the present, as well as the rising and future generations in America, is hereby admitted one of our members, for good services done by him to the interests of the British Plantations in America, and we do hereby declare that the said John Dickinson, Esq., his admission to be as valid, effectual, and sufficient

to him as if he had paid the whole fees in use to be paid by Freemen. Extract from our book of records in the government of St. Davids by me, Deputy Secretary thereof.

Witness hereunto my subscription, manual, and the seal of the government affixed.

HENRY VANDERSPIEGEL,
Deputy Secretary."

From the Pennsylvania Gazette,
May 12, 1768.

"On Tuesday last, by order of the Governor and Society of Fort St. Davids, Fourteen Gentlemen, members of that Company, waited upon John Dickinson, Esq., and presented the following address in a Box of Heart of Oak.

"When a man of abilities, prompted by love of his country, exerts them in her cause, and renders her the most eminent services, *not to be sensible* of the benefits received, is Stupidity; not to be grateful for them, is Baseness. Influenced by this sentiment, We, the Governor and Company of *Fort St. Davids*, who, among other inhabitants of British America, are indebted to you for your most excellent and generous vindication of liberties dearer to us than our lives, beg leave to return our heartiest thanks, and to offer you the greatest mark of esteem, that, as a body, it is in

our power to bestow, by admitting you, as we hereby do, a member of our society. When that destructive project of taxation, which your integrity and knowledge so signally contributed to baffle about two years ago, was lately renewed under a *disguise so artfully contrived* as to delude millions, you, Sir, WATCHFUL for the interests of your country, *perfectly acquainted* with them, and undaunted in asserting them, ALONE detected the monster concealed from others by an altered appearance, exposed it, stripped it of its invidious coverings, in its own horrid shape, and, we firmly trust by the blessing of GOD on your wisdom and virtue, will again extricate the *British* colonies on this continent from the cruel snares of oppression, for we already perceive these colonies, ROUSED *by your strong and seasonable call*, pursueing the salutary measures advised by you for obtaining redress. Nor is this all that you have performed for your *native land*, *animated by a sacred zeal*, *guided by truth*, and *supported by justice*, you have PENETRATED TO THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION, have *poured* the clearest light on the most important points hitherto involved in darkness, bewildering even the learned, and have *established*, with an amazing force and plainness of argument, THE TRUE DISTINCTIONS and GRAND PRINCIPLES that will fully instruct ages yet unborn, what rights be-

long to them, and the best methods of defending them. To merit far less distinguished, ancient *Greece* or *Rome* would have *decreed* statues and honors without number. But it is *your fortune* and *your glory*, Sir, that you live in such times, and possess *such exalted worth*, that the ENVY of those whose DUTY it is to applaud you, can receive no other consolation than by withholding those praises in Public, which all honest men acknowledge in private, that you have deserved. We present to you, Sir, a small gift of a society not dignified by any legal authority. But when you consider this gift as expressive of the *sincere affection* of many of your fellow-citizens for your person, and of their *unlimited approbation* of the noble principles maintained in your unequalled labors, we hope this testimony of our sentiments will be acceptable to you. May that all-gracious Being, which in kindness to these colonies gave your valuable life existance *at the critical period* when it would be most wanted, grant it a long continuence, filled with every felicity; and when your country sustains its dreadful loss, may you enjoy the happiness of Heaven, and on earth may your memory be cherished, as, we doubt not, it will be, to the latest posterity. Signed by order of the Society,

JOHN BAYARD,

Secretary.

"The Box was finely decorated, and the inscription neatly done in letters of gold. On the top was represented the cap of liberty on a spear resting on a cypher of the letters J. D. Underneath the cypher, in a semicircular label P R O P A T R I A. Around the whole the following words: 'The gift of the Governor and Society of Fort St. Davids. To the author of the F A R M E R'S L E T T E R S. In grateful testimony of the eminent services thereby rendered to this country, 1768.' On the inside of the top

'The Liberty of
The British Colonies in America
Asserted
With Attic Eloquence
And Roman Spirit
By
J—N—D—K—N—S—N, Esq.
Barrister at Law.'

On the inside of the bottom

'I T A C U I Q U E—E V E N I A T
U T, D E, R E P U B L I C A, M E R U I T.'

On the outside of the bottom, a sketch of Fort St. Davids."

Mr. Dickinson replied as follows:—

"I very gratefully receive the favor you have been pleased to bestow on me, in admitting me

a member of your company; and I return you my heartiest thanks for your kindness. The 'Esteem' of worthy fellow-citizens is a treasure of the greatest price, and no man can more highly value it than I do. Your society in 'expressing the affection' of so many respectable persons for me, affords me the sincerest pleasure. Nor will this pleasure be lessened by reflecting, that you may have regarded with a generous *Partiality* my attempts to promote the welfare of our country. For the *warmth* of your *praises* in commending a conduct you *suppose* to deserve them gives worth to these praises, by proving *your* merit while you attribute merit to another.

"Your characters, Gentlemen, did not need this evidence to convince *me* how much I ought to prize *your* esteem, or how much you deserved *mine*.

"I think myself extremely fortunate, in having obtained your favorable opinion, which I shall constantly and carefully endeavor to preserve.

"I most heartily wish you every kind of happiness, and particularly that you may enjoy the comfortable prospect of transmitting to your Posterity those Liberties dearer to you than your Lives, which GOD gave to you, and which *no inferior Power* has a right to take away."

Similar addresses were sent to Mr. Dickinson from many parts of the country. A Town

meeting was held in Boston, resolutions adopted, and the following Gentlemen, who subsequently became so conspicuous, were appointed a committee to forward them, together with an address to *the Author of the Farmers' Letters*, viz., Dr. Benjamin Church, John Hancock, Samuel Adams, Dr. Joseph Warren,* and John Rowe.

I have made some efforts to obtain a view of the box presented to Mr. Dickinson, for the purpose of taking a copy of the Sketch of Fort St. David's Fish-house, as it stood previous to the Revolution, but could not succeed in finding it. I should think so interesting a relic is in existence somewhere.

I remember very well, when the tavern sign hanging in front of the lower tavern at the Falls, had on it a representation of Fort St. David's Fish-house, and the tavern was called "Fort St. David's Hotel." The village was universally known in old times as "Fort St. Davids," and the name officially adopted by the government as a post town, or route. I have lately seen an almanac for so late as the year 1807, in which the name occurs in the list of post routes. My father always dated his letters and other documents "Fort St. Davids," and was a great stickler for the preservation of its

* General Warren, killed at the battle of Bunker Hill.

ancient name. It appears to me that it would be a matter of good taste if the people now residing there would restore and adopt it. As it is at present, the name "Falls of Schuylkill" is a misnomer, there being no falls there, much to the disappointment of many strangers who resort there with the expectation of seeing a water-fall.

After the Revolution, what remained of the society assembled at "Fort St. Davids," and resolved to rebuild their Fort, which they did. Some years after that it caught fire by accident, and was destroyed. Every vestige of this building has disappeared, but the exact locality I can yet point out, having frequently, when a lad, played within the stone foundations that were then left. After the destruction of their *second* building, a portion of the members of the society united with the "Philadelphia Fishing Company," called the "State in Schuylkill," whose house was lower down the river. The "State in Schuylkill," I believe, still keeps up its organization, and there was a history of it published some years since. In Watson's Annals of Philadelphia there is a brief notice of Fort St. Davids, but it is erroneous in several particulars. He says, "The same association still exists, but have transferred their place of meeting to Rambo's Rock, below Gray's Ferry, the former attractions

at the Falls, as a celebrated fishing place, having been ruined by the river obstructions, &c." I have already shown that a portion of the Society of Fort St. Davids was merged into the Philadelphia Fishing Company, which had also existed many years previous, from 1732, and contemporaneously with that of Fort St. Davids; and so far from the river obstructions being the cause of their removal from the Falls, there were no obstructions whatever, so late as the year 1817. Fairmount Dam, the principal obstruction, was not erected until the year 1821, and after I became a resident of Manayunk or Flat Rock, as it was then called. I saw shad caught there in the spring of 1821.

GODFREY SCHRONK.

Mr. Watson goes on to say, "In former times it was quite different. Old Godfrey Schronk, now (1830) about 74 years old, a well-known fisherman near the Falls, in his younger days, has told me he could often catch, with his dip-net, 3000 catfish in one night; often he has sold them at two shillings a hundred; the perch and rock-fish were numerous and large. Often he has caught 30 to 80 pounds of a morning with the hook and line.

He used to catch fish for the Fishing Company of St. Davids, which cooked forty dozen catfish at a time. He described the Company's house as a neat and tasteful structure, 70 feet long and 20 wide, set against the descending hill on a stone foundation, having fourteen ascending steps in front; the sides, consisting entirely of folding or movable doors and windows, were torn off by the Hessians for their huts in 1777–78, and so changed and injured the place that it was never used for its former purposes after the Revolution." In this passage my late and old friend Watson has committed several mistakes. There was nothing extraordinary in Mr. Schronk's catching 3000 catfish in a night; I dare say there are persons still living in the neighborhood who have taken more than that number repeatedly, and that so late as 1817. I have seen men, in one scoop of the dip-net, have it so full of these catfish as to be unable to lift them in the boat, but were obliged to take them out of it with their hands and other contrivances, and I have known as many as seven large shad taken at one scoop of the dip-net. There were a number of persons at the Falls, who, in the fishing season—lasting some three months—made enough by catching shad in a simple hoop or dip-net to support their families for a whole year. They anchored, or fastened to the rocks in the rapids, the small

boats from which they fished; some of the particular stations were more valuable than others, and there was much rivalship in the early spring who should first get possession of the favored spots, which the boat never left during the whole season; if it did, by a rule among themselves, any one else was at liberty to take possession.

The catfish spoken of by Mr. Watson were not the kind that are now found in the river; they were a migrating fish, and came from the sea annually, in immense numbers, so numerous in some instances—I have seen it myself—as to blacken the narrow passages of the river. They were perfectly black on the back, and white on the belly, and were remarkably fine eating—very different from the catfish of these days. They came regularly on or about the 25th of May, the run of them lasting some two or three weeks. They were caught in immense numbers during the season, put in artificial ponds made for the purpose, and taken out as wanted during the summer and fall months. Thousands of people resorted to the hotels at the Falls to eat them with the accompaniment of coffee, and for many years the village was celebrated for its catfish and coffee. The old Mr. Schronk referred to by Mr. Watson, I well remember; knew him well from my childhood up, for many years.

He owned the property, and resided on the Ridge Road, opposite Powers and Weightman's establishment. He was a very successful fisherman, and also cultivated a truck garden. On the river front of his property he had a valuable shad fishery, where I when a lad often went to see them catch shad. On one occasion I saw them, with one sweep of the seine, catch 430 fine shad, and saw, besides, many escape from the seine. He left a numerous family; some of them, or their descendants, still reside in the neighborhood.

My late friend Watson was decidedly mistaken in saying that the society and building of Fort St. Davids had no existence after the Revolution. It was, in fact, not until after the Revolution, that Godfrey Schronk had anything to do with it; a calculation of his age given by Mr. Watson will show that, previous to the Revolution, he must have been a mere lad, and incapable of catching fish for the Company. The fact is, he was employed by the Company, but it was subsequent to the Revolution. He had the care of their house, and resided in it during the winter months, was a resident in it at the time it was destroyed by fire, some flax which his family was spinning catching fire, and communicating to the building.

I recollect an anecdote of Godfrey Schronk,

and a celebrated character who resided at the Falls, Dr. Smith, an eminent divine of the Episcopal Church, and first Provost of the College—afterwards the University of Pennsylvania. He built those three clusters of strange buildings on the hill, nearly opposite the Old Falls Tavern, among which was the octagon building—Smith's folly, as it was called—and vault in which his remains and others of his family were deposited, immediately on the brow of the hill. The doctor, who was celebrated, among other things, for his fondness of good dinners, undertook on a certain occasion to reprimand Godfrey Schronk for fishing on a Sunday. When he replied, "Doctor, if your dinner laid at the bottom of the Schuylkill, you would be very apt to fish for it."

In his Annals, last edition, 1868, vol. i. page 430, Mr. Watson gives a picture of what professes to be a view of the Fort St. Davids Company's house; but it is all a mistake. He gives the dimensions of the house correctly, as it stood after the Revolution, and as related to him by Godfrey Schronk, 70 feet long, by 20 wide. This would be a plain oblong building; but the view referred to is of an octagon building, and no appearance of the high hill immediately behind the Fort St. Davids Company's house. This octagon building I well remember, but it was

located further down the river, on the western side, near where the Columbia Bridge crosses it, and was, I believe, the Philadelphia Fishing Company's house.

The history of the "Schuylkill Fishing Company of the State in Schuylkill," published in 1830, contains the following remarks in reference to the Fort St. Davids Society :—

"At an early era in the eighteenth century an association for similar purposes, called the 'Society of Fort St. Davids,' enrolling on its list a large and respectable number of associates, emphatically termed the 'Nobility of those days,' was established above the Falls of the Schuylkill. They were many of them Welchmen, some of them of the Society of Friends, companions of William Penn, and co-emigrants to the New World. On an elevated and extensive rock contiguous to the eastern bank of the river, and projecting into the rapids, rose the primitive, rude, but convenient and strong structure of *hewn timber*, cut from the opposite forest.

"It was capacious enough for the accommodation of the numerous garrison who were then more celebrated for their deeds of gastronomy, than deeds of arms. Their retirement in the admirable location, at the foot of an elevated and woody hill, and on the rock-bound shore, favored the undisturbed enjoyment of their pis-

catory sports and feasts. No chosen site could have been selected of more picturesque beauty and interest, or equal for angling on the meandering stream.

"In those days, and long since in the present century, no place on the river equalled the Falls for rock and perch fishing, and small blue catfish were taken in abundance by hand-nets, dipped in the eddies of the stream, or in the circular water-worn cavities of the tide deserted rocks. Here was the chief barrier of the rising flood. When the tide was out, the roaring of the turbulent waters, precipitated over the continuous and rugged chain of rocks, extending from shore to shore, was heard on still evenings many miles over the surrounding country, and was often borne on the wings of the wind with distinctness to the city, a measured distance of five miles. * * * * The War of Independence dispersed the garrison of Fort St. Davids, and the peace found their block-house in a heap of ruins, having been consumed by the devastating Hessian corps of the enemy. On the invasion of Pennsylvania, and approach of the foe, the members of the society suspended their pleasurable meetings, and secured all their movables, including a tolerably good museum, in a place of safety.

"On the return of peace and its attending bless-

ings, the reduced Society of Fort St. Davids re-assembled on the old rock of the garrison, and unanimously resolved, with permission of the citizens of the State in Schuylkill, thenceforth to unite their forces and their preserved valuables in prosecution of their favorite amusements and festivities. They were no strangers to each other. In pursuit of a common object, they had often, as neighbors and fellow-sportsmen, kindly interchanged the civilities of hospitality on the highway of waters, and at the feast. * * * *

"Five or six immense pewter dishes, of divers forms, for the display of a barbecue, or a large rock fish at the festive board, which were brought to this country by the proprietary, stamped with the family coat of arms, and presented to the Society of Fort St. Davids, were amongst the treasures added to the common stock."

The author of the history from which the above extract is taken, has fallen into the same error with Mr. Watson, in ignoring the existence of the society and building of Fort St. Davids, after the Revolution. He however correctly describes the Fort as it stood previous to the Revolution, "a strong structure of hewn timber," &c., while Mr. Watson describes it as it was subsequent to the Revolution—"The sides

consisting entirely of folding doors, and windows," &c. There are two persons still living in the vicinity—Samuel Garret, and an old lady, born after the Revolution, who have frequently seen and been in this building. On the approach of the British army, the five or six dishes referred to were sunk in the river, and taken out after that army left. In 1819, they were stolen from the "State in Schuylkill;" three of them, which the thieves had hidden in Maylands Creek, were recovered.

ANDREW GARRET.

On the west side of the Indian Queen Lane, about half a mile from the Ridge Road, there is an ancient one-story log farm-house, about two hundred yards back from the lane. It is now occupied by Samuel Garret.

When I was a lad, there resided in this cottage a very old gentleman, Andrew Garret. He was the son or grandson of one of the Swedes, who were the original pioneers of this part of the country; I often visited this old gentleman. He had hanging in his house (and they with his gun and other relics are there still) horns of deer that he had shot in the vicinity of his house, and he remembered seeing Indians fishing

and prowling about the Falls. This old gentleman met with an untimely fate; some wretches, thinking he had a large amount of money about his house, broke into it, and in order to extort from him a confession of where it was hidden, heated a pair of tongs and straddled them around his neck, forcing the two legs together, which caused his death. They were subsequently apprehended, tried, and convicted. Tradition says, and I have no doubt of the fact, that the Falls of Schuylkill was the last place deserted by the Indians who inhabited this part of the country; it being the head of tide-water, and consequently such fine fishing ground, had, of course, peculiar attractions for them. That it must have been a great resort of theirs, is proved by the fact of the innumerable Indian relics that have been found in the vicinity. I have seen and found myself many stone axes, arrow-heads, and other instruments made of stone, the use of which could not be conjectured, many of which were deposited in the old Philadelphia (Peale's) Museum.

FALLS CREEK.

My father owned the two lower mills on the Falls Creek. When he became possessed of the

one just below the old Falls Tavern, and on the same side of the road, it was and had been for many years a paper mill, one of the oldest in the country. It is now occupied as a dwelling-house, the entrance to it being over a stone arch. The mill on the opposite side, and lower down the road, he built himself. There had been previously an ancient grist-mill on that site. Higher up the creek was a mill owned by Mr. Traquair, who was largely engaged in the stone-cutting business in Philadelphia. This mill had a water-wheel 36 feet in diameter, and drove a large number of saws for sawing marble. They were not the kind now used, but were single saws, similar to those used by hand, but much larger and heavier. Still farther up the creek were the remains of an ancient powder mill. In those days, that stream of water was very different from now; even in my time there was at each of those mills power sufficient to drive, at all times, a pair of five-feet mill-stones, generally two, and sometimes three pair. The mill lowest down the road had two waterwheels. Like all the streams in the vicinity of Philadelphia, it has dwindled down to almost nothing, and I suppose in the course of time will entirely disappear. I can remember when the Globe Mill stream was quite large, now you can hardly find where it or the dam was. The Wissahickon

is small in comparison to what it was, and I am satisfied the Schuylkill River has much diminished in size or quantity of water flowing down it.

About the close of the last century there was much patriotic feeling prevailing on the subject of domestic manufactures, and a universal desire that we should become independent of other nations, especially in the event of war, and to avoid the difficulties our country had labored under in the Revolutionary War. Thomas Jefferson, afterwards President of the United States, was a personal friend of my father, and knowing he had mills at the Falls, early indoctrinated him with the manufacturing fever, and he procured—how or where I never knew—some, what would now be considered very antiquated machinery, for spinning cotton. The farthest back, and all that I can remember of it is, its being used for spinning candle-wick, for which there was great demand in those days. This was the first cotton machinery I ever saw; I think there was some at the Globe Mill at or about the same time, and there may have been some at other places in the vicinity of Philadelphia, but I doubt if there was. About the same time the celebrated Robert Morris, the financier of the Revolution, and his partner in business, Mr. Nicholson, erected on the western side of the river, about opposite

Governor Mifflin's house, a glass house, or establishment for making glassware. The row of stone houses a little lower down the river was built to accommodate the hands working in it. I only remember this glass house as a ruin; it was never worked in my time. About the year 1808, it was occupied by John Thoburn, and altered into a calico printing establishment. It is now a manufactory of some kind, surrounded by other buildings; it may be recognized from the fact of the gable end fronting on the river.

There were a number of beautiful country seats in the vicinity of the Falls, occupied in the summer season by parties from the city. They were remarkably healthy and delightful retreats until the chills and fevers of 1821, after which they were mostly abandoned. On the hill (now (North Laurel Hill Cemetery) was the county seat of Joseph Sims, next below, that of the Willing family, afterwards Peppers. Next below that (now South Laurel Hill) was William Rawle's place. On the upper side of the Ridge Road stood Governor Mifflin's house. On the right of the Indian Queen Lane, a short half mile from the Ridge Road, was the seat of Mr. Nicklin.* Then there were Dr. Smith's houses,

* This house has lately been in a great measure demolished, and another built on the same site.

and adjoining Mr. Carson's. Next my father's residence, about eighty yards back from the Ridge Road, where the Reading Railroad crosses it. Farther down, below Nicetown Lane, was the McCall mansion, and near it the country seat of Robert Ralston. On the western side of the river, on top of the hill, was the residence of Mr. Plumstead, who built that house. About half a mile below the Falls was the residence of Alexander J. Dallas, afterwards Mendenhall's Tavern; near it was a rope ferry. There was also a rope ferry at the Falls Tavern, foot of Indian Queen Lane.

JOSEPH NEEF.

About the year 1809, there came to the Falls a very singular character, Joseph Neef, a pupil of the celebrated Pestalozzi, of Switzerland. He was induced to come to this country for the purpose of introducing Pestalozzi's system of education by William McClure, the philosopher, who endowed the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia. Mr. Neef had a very large school of boys from all parts of the country, and occupied the Smith property; the octagon and connecting building was the school-house; the other buildings were occupied as dwellings.

He was a very learned man, and a perfect child of nature; he would never touch money, or have anything to do with it; his wife, a French lady, managed and controlled all his pecuniary affairs. He never wore a hat, and he and his boys, during play-hours, were always together, swimming, skating, or roaming around the country, and were it not that he was older and larger, you could not tell master from scholar, for it seemed to be a part of his system to make a boy of himself, and place himself on a perfect level with his boys in all their games and amusements, and also in their studies, yet a most rigid disciplinarian. I was often in his school during school hours, and at other times; I never saw a book there, and I believe there was no such thing as a book about his school; slates, blackboards, and other contrivances, were all I ever saw there. The extent to which whole classes of these boys could carry out mental arithmetic and solve mathematical problems, without slate or pencil, was truly wonderful and astonishing. I remember there was publicly exhibited about that time a lad, Zerah Colburn, one of those prodigies supposed to be endowed by nature with the faculty of making great calculations mentally. A gentleman familiar with Mr. Neef's school called to see this lad, and after examining him, told his father or guardian, that

he could take him to a school where there was a score of boys, no older, that could perform all he had done, and much more. A party of gentlemen brought him to Mr. Neef's school, and set him to work asking the scholars questions in mental arithmetic, which were all answered promptly and correctly, after which Mr. Neef proposed that his boys should put some questions to Colburn, which they did, but being out of his usual track, he could answer none of them. Colburn was a pampered and pert boy; he got into a passion, and struck one of Mr. Neef's boys with a cane or switch which he had in his hand, who immediately mounted him, and they had a regular tussle in presence of the whole party, much to the amusement of Mr. Neef, who laughed most heartily. This scholar of Mr. Neef's is, I believe, still living, and if he should ever see this, he will remember the joke. In their play hours the boys were forbid going a greater distance than a half mile from the premises. Mr. Neef had a method of putting his finger in his mouth, and producing a tremendous loud whistle; the boys would be scattered around the neighborhood, and when they heard the whistle, you would see them running from all directions to a common centre.

It was his custom, when roaming around the country with his boys, to encourage them in

hunting for anything singular or curious, in the way of a plant, flower, minerals, &c. When they found anything that excited their curiosity, they would take it to him, and he would, on the spot, with his boys around him, make it the subject of a lecture.

I have a work published by Mr. Neef, "A Sketch of his Plan and Method of Education." It is very curious and interesting. Many of his ideas and much of his plan were subsequently introduced into all our schools, and are now in general use, to great advantage. In the work alluded to he states how he happened to come here; he says, "In the summer of 1805, Mr. William McClure, of Philadelphia, one of Pennsylvania's worthiest and most enlightened sons, happened to visit Helvetia's interesting mountains and valleys. He was accompanied by Mr. Cabell, of Virginia, brother of the then governor. Pestalozzi's school attracted their notice; they repaired thither, and were soon convinced of the solidity, importance, and usefulness of the Pestalozzian system. * * 'On what terms,' said this magnanimous patriot to me, 'would you go to my country, and introduce the system there? * * * My country wants it, and will receive it with enthusiasm. I engage to pay your passage, to secure your livelihood. Go and be your master's apostle in the New World.'"

When we consider the vast improvements in all our schools and systems of education that immediately followed the introduction here of Pestalozzi's system, it would be difficult to estimate the amount of good done by this "magnanimous patriot," as Mr. Neef calls William McClure. Mr. Neef left the Falls, and finally went to the west.

ROBERT KENEDY.

On the 9th day of April, 1807, Mr. Robert Kenedy, an enterprising gentleman, then occupying the Falls Hotel, obtained from the legislature of Pennsylvania an act, vesting in him the right of the water power at the Falls, on the condition of building locks for the accommodation of the boats then plying on the river. These boats were long and narrow, sharp at both ends, and carried from 75 to 150 barrels of flour. They were generally manned with five men, and were only used in freshets or high water. Most of them coming from Reading, they were called Reading, or long boats. They required five men, not for bringing them down—for they drifted down rapidly with the current—but to take them back, which was done by the use of poles shod with iron, and was very hard work;

of course they could take no return cargoes. It was an exciting and beautiful sight to see these boats descending the Falls, which they did with great rapidity. Sometimes they would be almost lost to sight, and the next instant mounted high on the waves; in some instances they were wrecked.

The lads in the neighborhood delighted in going through the Falls in small boats. Many times have I worked hard for an hour in helping to pull a boat up, for the pleasure of going down in it, which was done in less than a minute.

The act procured by Mr. Kenedy was merely a speculation on his part, not intending to erect mills himself, and the right he had obtained was offered for sale, but in consequence of the risk and danger from ice, no one would venture to build mills there. The ice freshets of those days were very different from now. The winters, it seems to me, were longer and colder; and before the present succession of dams were made on the river, the ice came down in immense large fields, with great momentum, and sometimes as much as from two to three feet thick. It seemed to me that nothing could resist its force. I have seen a stone wall three feet thick, against a bank, the earth behind being level with the top, torn to pieces. In conse-

quence of this Mr. Kenedy's speculation seemed likely to prove a failure; but not to be foiled, the following year, April 2, 1808, in company with Conrad Carpenter, of Germantown, he obtained an act of the legislature, incorporating a company to build a bridge across the Schuylkill, and so contrived its location that the eastern abutment should effectually protect his mill-seat, and he finally sold his right to

JOSIAH WHITE.*

Here let me turn aside a moment to say something in reference to this Josiah White. I knew him well, and ever looked upon him as an extraordinary man, the most energetic, far-seeing man I ever knew; he was one of those who are always pushing out ahead of the age in which they live; not much education, but possessing a large amount of sound practical common sense, and enlarged views. I know of no man to whom the citizens of Philadelphia are so much indebted for certain substantial benefits they have long enjoyed. But more of him hereafter.

Shortly after Josiah White had purchased

* This notice of Josiah White, Fairmount Water Works, &c., I furnished to the Philadelphia "Press," and it was published in that paper, August 11, 1857.

Kenedy's privilege, he proceeded to build a mill for rolling iron and making nails, and subsequently took into partnership with him Mr. Erskine Hazard, and added to their other business that of making wire. Their business was very profitable, and they soon discovered that their mill was too small, when they built another much larger and higher along side of it, where they were doing a very profitable business until both caught fire, by accident, and were destroyed. I was present at that fire; we had no engines, but adopted a plan I have often thought of since and by which we saved much property contained in the large mill. The small mill caught fire first and communicated to the roof of the large mill. We divided ourselves into three gangs; the first carried sand and strewed it on the garret-floor; the second carried water and threw it over the sand, while the third gang were employed removing everything movable from the next floor below. We then pursued the same method with that floor, and so on in succession from story to story. By these means we retarded the progress of the fire, giving time to remove much of the contents of the mill. These mills were subsequently rebuilt.

White & Hazard were using in their rolling mill bituminous coal. They knew of the large body of anthracite coal at the head of the Schuyl-

kill, and early commenced making experiments with it; they had some brought down by teams at an expense of one dollar per bushel (twenty-eight dollars per ton.) They expended some three hundred dollars in experiments, but could not succeed in making it burn. The hands in the mill got heartily sick and tired of it, and it was about being abandoned; but, on a certain occasion, after they had been trying for a long time to make it burn without success, they became exasperated, threw a large quantity of the "black stones," as they called them, into the furnace, shut the doors and left the mill; it so happened that one of them had left his jacket in the mill, and in going there for it some time after, he discovered a tremendous fire in the furnace—the doors red with heat. He immediately called all hands, and they ran through the rolls three separate heats of iron with that one fire.

Here was an important discovery, and it was, in my opinion, the first *practically* successful use of our anthracite coal, now so common. This important discovery was the simple fact, that all it wanted to ignite it was time, and to be "let alone." All this may appear strange now, but the hands working in that mill, and every one else who used the bituminous coal, were accustomed to see it blaze up the moment they threw it on the fire, and because the anthracite would

not do so they could not understand it, and the more they scratched and poked at it—an operation necessary with the bituminous coal—the worse it was with the anthracite.

On making this discovery, Josiah White immediately began to make experiments in contriving various kinds of grates to make the anthracite applicable for domestic use, in which he finally succeeded to admiration.

With the knowledge thus obtained, it became a very great desideratum with White and Hazard to obtain a sufficient supply of this coal for their use, for they discovered also that it was much better for their purpose than the bituminous coal in its effect on the iron for making wire. They thought of various plans, one of which was curious; it was to build a number of sheet-iron boats not to draw when loaded more than ten inches of water. These boats were to be made in nests, one within the other, like pill-boxes, and carted up to the coal region. They built a small one, and Mr. Hazard, taking two men with him, started in it for the coal fields. The object Mr. Hazard had in view was to explore the river and make some estimate of the expense at which, by some simple contrivance, there could be insured at all times ten inches depth of water. He arrived at the coal regions, built a kind of ark, and loaded it with coal. Other arks were

subsequently built and came down in the freshets. The iron-boat plan was abandoned, principally for the reason that Josiah White, about that time, started and originated the Schuylkill Navigation Company, which was chartered March 8, 1815. This was another of the beneficial acts of Josiah White, but mark how shabbily he was treated. He was one of the commissioners named in the act of incorporation. He was the father of the whole concern, and if they had hunted Pennsylvania through they could not at that time have found a better man for their purpose; yet, notwithstanding all this, at the first election held at Norristown, they refused to elect him one of the managers on the flimsy ground that he was interested at the Falls of Schuylkill; but we shall see the consequence of this directly.

As an evidence of the utilitarian character of Josiah White in everything he undertook, at the time he was starting the Navigation Company, he drew with chalk on one of the long beams or girders of his mill, a plan of his proposed works along the Schuylkill River, and under it wrote with chalk, "Ten dollars in every man's pocket." Meaning, I suppose, that that amount would be saved to every one in cost of fuel when we could get coal down the river.

At that time wood was the universal fuel, and was annually getting scarcer and higher in price.

Erskine Hazard was the partner of Josiah White in the iron and wire business; in the erection of the locks and mill-seats he had another partner, Joseph Gillingham. They finished the locks and canal on the western side of the river and two mills were built there—one a sawmill, the other for making white lead.

On one of the occasions of the breaking down of the Falls bridge White and Hazard erected a curious temporary bridge across the river by suspending wires from the top windows of their mill, to large trees on the western side, which wires hung in curve and from which were suspended other wires supporting a floor of boards eighteen inches wide. The length of the floor of this bridge was 400 feet, without any intermediate support.*

The bridge building operations at the Falls were peculiarly unfortunate; the first one, a chain bridge, broke down in 1811, with a drove of cattle on it; the second fell from the weight of snow accumulated on it in a snow-storm, in 1818;

* I believe this was the first instance of wire being used in bridge building. It certainly was in this country, and I never heard of its being used for that purpose in any other.

the third floated off the piers in a very high freshet in 1822, and the fourth was destroyed by fire.

The wiremaking business, like all other manufacturing operations, which had been very profitable during the war, when none could be imported, was the very reverse afterwards, and it became a matter of consequence and anxiety to White and Gillingham how they should realize returns for their large investments at the Falls. The course they pursued was ingenious, and resulted finally in giving to the citizens of Philadelphia one of the greatest blessings that ever fell to their lot. They published anonymously in the papers of the day, a series of essays, written by Mr. Hazard, on the subject of supplying the city with water, recommending that the city should purchase the water-power at the Falls, erect waterworks there, making a reservoir on the hill (then owned by my father, now the extreme northern part of Laurel Hill Cemetery) and convey the water through an aqueduct down to the city. There was much opposition to this, and a newspaper war on the subject, but finally the city councils took it up and appointed a committee of inquiry. This committee reported that it was impracticable to bring the water so great a distance through an aqueduct,

and so far the matter ended.* But Mr. White began "De Novo," and started in the same way through the public press, the idea of purchasing the water-power at the Falls and erecting a dam at Fairmount, which, through much opposition, finally prevailed, and I have always considered Josiah White the originator of the present Fairmount dam and waterworks. There had been used, previously, two antiquated steam engines for pumping the water, using wood for fuel.

White and Gillingham received from the city one hundred and fifty thousand dollars for their water-power at the Falls, and now Josiah White, smarting under his treatment by the Schuylkill Navigation Company, and disgusted with the slow progress that Company was making, in company with Mr. Hazard and a German gentleman (George F. A. Hauto†), procured from the Legislature, March 20, 1818, "An Act to

* Iron pipes had not at that time been brought into use, the water being conveyed through the city in log pipes. Had the large iron pipes now used been available, it would, for many reasons, have been much better to have erected the waterworks at the Falls, where there was the same fall and power as at Fairmount, and a solid rock dam of which there could be no apprehensions of its ever giving way.

† Mr. Watson, in his "Annals," calls this gentleman "George Kauts." This is a mistake, I knew Mr. Hauto; was intimately acquainted with him.

improve the River Lehigh," out of which grew the present Lehigh Navigation Company, of which he was one of the active managers until his death, November 14, 1850.

Have I not shown good reasons for saying that I knew of no man to whom the citizens of Philadelphia are so much indebted for substantial benefits they have long enjoyed as they are to Josiah White? First we see him in company with Mr. Hazard making experiments with the anthracite coal, and succeeding in bringing it into practical use in the rolling-mill. Next, in successfully contriving grates to make it applicable for domestic use. Then starting the Schuylkill Navigation Company, to bring down a supply; originating the idea of the Fairmount dam, resulting in giving to the citizens of Philadelphia such a plentiful supply of water as they never dreamed of before, and finally originating the Lehigh Works. The warrior who slays thousands of his fellow-creatures is lauded and glorified; high monuments are erected to his memory, on which are emblazoned his deeds of blood; but the modest, plain, unassuming citizen, who does so much good for his fellow-men, and who neither seeks nor courts notoriety, sleeps his last sleep comparatively unnoticed and unknown.

When White, Hazard, and Hauto procured

their act to improve the river Lehigh, Mr. Hauto had engaged to furnish a certain amount of capital, which he failed to do; under these circumstances White and Hazard became anxious to get rid of him; but by the act of the legislature he had equal rights with them, and all they could do was to buy him off, which they did, by agreeing that he and his heirs forever, should be entitled to receive one-half cent the bushel, fourteen cents per ton, for all the coal that should pass from or through their works. He sold this right in shares to a company for $70,000, and it was, I believe, finally bought up by the Lehigh Company. Had he or his heirs retained it to this day, they would be in possession of a princely income.

As some evidence of how far the coal operations have transcended the wildest anticipations of those days, when White, Hazard, and Hauto procured their act to improve the river Lehigh, they had previously procured a lease for twenty-one years on all the coal lands in the vicinity of Mauch Chunk, a large tract of country for which they agreed to pay annually, if demanded, a rent of one ear of corn, and obligated themselves, after a certain time, to bring down to the city for their own benefit, 40,000 bushels of coal, less than 1500 tons. In the year 1854, according to the report of the Lehigh Company, which I

happen to have for that year, there came through the Lehigh Works 1,246,418 tons.

The Lehigh Company, although commenced some three years after the Schuylkill Company, was the first in bringing coal to the city. When the dam was erected at Fairmount, it of course put an end to the water-power, fisheries and mills at the Falls, and from having been a thriving, bustling little place, it became comparatively a "deserted village" for some years after. From the circumstance of various manufactories since established in the neighborhood, operated by steam, it has again become a thriving, active village.

FLAT ROCK.

The act incorporating the Schuylkill Navigation Company, March 8, 1815, required the Company to commence operations at two points on the river, Philadelphia and Reading, but as no improvements were necessary lower down the river, White and Gillingham making the locks at the Falls, the Company commenced operations at what it called "Flat Rock," now "Manayunk." The name of "Flat Rock" originated from a peculiar flat rock lying on

the lower side of Flat Rock bridge. I presume it is there yet. The Company made a contract with Ariel Cooly, an eastern man, who had some experience in similar works on the Connecticut River. This gentleman subsequently built the Fairmount dam. He was a fat, pursy man, and from gout or something of that kind was most always on crutches. I do not know officially, but my impression is, he was to receive $60,000 for his job at Flat Rock, including the dam, canal and locks, and by his contract, was obliged to have it finished on the 1st day of November, 1818. In those days there had been little experience in that kind of work, and an almost total absence of scientific engineering talent as compared with the present day; in consequence of which the works at Flat Rock were miserably executed, and subsequently, at different times, had nearly all to be rebuilt, some parts two or three times over.

Mr. Cooly completed his job at or about the time he had contracted, and the water was let into the canal immediately after. Before the canal was made there was what was then called by the old inhabitants the "Dead Waters." It was a kind of a natural canal extending from above Flat Rock bridge down to nearly where the main road crosses the canal. In high freshets the water flowed into it from above, but gene-

rally it was a kind of pool or swamp into which ran the little streams from the hills, having its outlet just above the canal bridge; the centre part of this swamp was much wider than the upper or lower part, and on that part of it belonging to Rush's estate there were a number of trees, which were cut down and corded on the lower side of the canal previous to letting in the water. I purchased this wood of Lewis Rush (about 100 cords), procured a scow and took it through the locks down to the Falls; this was the first freight that passed through those locks. About the same time the canal was being constructed, the present main road, or street, was laid out; previous to that there was no road except the one leading from Green Lane to Flat Rock bridge and to the fishery and ford across the island. At the lower end, the road only extended from the Ridge Road, a distance of about 150 yards, to Righter's rope ferry. There was no road from there up to Flat Rock, and the only access to it except from Flat Rock bridge was from Green Lane. In laying out the road it was the intention and desire of the managers of the Navigation Company, who were the fathers of it, to make it straight, from the extreme lower end at Righter's ferry to the Domino Road, near Flat Rock bridge, which would have made it cross Church Street near

where the Episcopal church stands, but the Levering family and others made strenuous opposition to that route, on the ground that it would cut through the middle of their farms, and to accommodate them the angle was made at the point where the street on which the Roman Catholic church is located intersects it; this threw it down nearer to the river. I have mentioned the Domino Road, and may as well tell in passing how it came by that name. At that time and many years previous, nearly all the mills on the Wissahicon were actively employed in making flour, and some of the proprietors were a jolly set, continually out on the roads day and night picking up the grain that came in teams down the Ridge Road in large quantities. One of them had built a small store-house on the Schuylkill shore, above Flat Rock bridge, to take in grain coming down the river in boats. But the access to it was difficult, and they petitioned for a new road; a jury was appointed, who, along with some of these jolly fellows, went over the ground, after which they crossed over Flat Rock bridge to the little tavern on the western side of the river, the "Samson and Goliah," where they made "a night of it;" got hold of a set of dominoes, played nearly all night, and had a regular spree, which I often heard them refer to as the "Domino scrape," and they gave

that name to the road. One of this party is, I believe, still living at Roxborough.

When the Navigation Company commenced operations at Flat Rock there were but eleven houses in the whole distance from Righter's ferry to Flat Rock bridge, as follows: Samuel Levering's farm-house on what is now called Sherr's Lane; next, proceeding upwards, Waldreth's house, half-way up the hill, back of the German Reformed church; two small stone houses between the road and canal, occupied by Benjamin and Michael Tibben, who carried on the shad fishery on the island; Anthony Levering's farm-house on Green Lane; the Stritzel house at the head of Church Street, and their house at the foot of Church Street (torn down when the turnpike road was made); Benjamin Levering's farm-house opposite where the road crosses the canal; a one-story house nearly opposite and below the canal; John Tibben's house at the foot of Hipple's Lane, and the cottage on Rush's estate. The whole population about sixty souls.

It appears strange now to talk about shad fisheries at Manayunk, but that on the island was a valuable one, and large quantities of shad were caught there. Many years back there had been made along the Schuylkill a succession of rude stone dams from one, to three feet high; they

only extended a part way across the river, and were intended merely to force the water into a channel on one side or sometimes in the centre. There was such a dam extending from the island to the western shore, forcing the water into a narrow channel on the eastern side. These dams also prevented the shad from going up the river anywhere but through these channels. It was the custom of the fisherman to station their boat with the seine at the head of the island, and a man at the lower end to watch the schools of shad coming up, and when he saw them he would give a signal to the party in the boat, who immediately ran out, with the seine going downwards.

At first the views of the managers of the Navigation Company were much extended as to the amount of water-power. I remember their advertising 150 mill-powers, sufficient to grind a certain number of bushels of grain, equivalent to about 100 inches of water each, and I believe they were under the impression that there would not be ground sufficient along the bank to locate mills enough to consume the water. They were extremely anxious to sell power, but it hung heavily on their hands, and for three years after the water was let into the canal, up to January, 1822, they had only sold altogether 300 inches. Many persons came to view the place with the

idea of purchasing power and building mills, but were unwilling to run the risk of the freshets, and declined.

The first power sold was to Captain John Towers, 100 inches, April 10th, 1819.* This grant does not appear in his name for the reason that that portion of Anthony Levering's estate below the road or main street extending from the foot of Church Street to the mill built by Captain Towers was for sale. The managers of the Navigation Company were anxious to purchase it, but not thinking that any one else would buy it, wished to get it on their own terms, when Captain Towers came forward and purchased it for $5000. Some years after he sold the strip on the upper side of the canal to the Navigation Company for $2000. The purchase of this land by Captain Towers offended the managers of the company, and they refused to let him have any water. But he was too smart for them; he procured a person of the name of John Parker to purchase power and a mill-seat on land owned by the Navigation Company adjoining the lower end of his land, without appearing in the transaction himself, which

* An inch of water is as much as will pass through an aperture one inch square under a head or pressure of three feet, measured from the surface of the water to the centre of the aperture.

when all completed was transferred over to him. I always thought this was a small business. The land was in the market for sale, and Captain Towers or any one else had as good a right to buy it as the managers of the Navigation Company, and their refusing to let him have any water was fighting against their own interests. It was of great importance to the company that some one should commence to build a mill, and from the enterprising and venturesome character of the captain, such was the fear of ice freshets at the time, that he was perhaps the only one who could be found to run the risk. This was not the only instance in which the managers of the Navigation Company suffered their private piques to interfere with their official acts. My old friend Amos Jones, a most worthy man and a resident of Roxborough, rented of the Robersons the rolling-mill at the mouth of the Wissahickon. On a certain dry time he had not sufficient water to drive his mill. It took some time to heat the iron, and only half an hour to run it through the rolls; and he thought, by horse-power, he could pump into his forebay a sufficient additional supply of water to drive his mill the half hour. He erected the pump, but the Navigation Company, who had litigation and lawsuits with the Robersons, with which Mr. Jones had nothing to do, forbid him

to use the pump, as he had no right to take the water out of the river, although it ran immediately back. Mr. Jones then said he would move his pump further up the Wissahickon, and pump the water there; but this was also forbidden, on the ground that it was one of the tributary streams of the river, and he had no right to divert it. The Company was legally right, certainly, but it was a useless exercise of arbitrary power, a spiteful act, tending to no good whatever, resulting to the injury of a worthy man, and only calculated to render the Company unpopular in the neighborhood. Such foolish acts as these, and, in many cases, utter disregard of private rights, together with the destruction of the fisheries, rendered the Company and its works extremely unpopular along the whole length of the river; and generally, when it was brought before juries in suits for damages, it felt the consequence. Many cases of injuries and damage suffered by individuals along the river were exceedingly hard. John Thoburn owned and occupied the mill at the mouth of Mill Creek, on the west side of the river above Flat Rock dam, where he was spinning cotton. It was a good power, about sixteen or seventeen feet fall. When the dam at Flat Rock was made it completely drowned out his mill, leaving him, if I remember right, only about twenty

inches fall, which made the whole concern utterly useless, and broke up his business. He claimed damages, and instead of its being settled amicably, he was kept in law for years, had several trials, each successive jury increasing the amount of damages. How Mr. Thoburn came out of this long litigation I do not know, but this I do know, that Mr. Kitera, his attorney, afterwards owned the mill and farm attached to it.

When the Navigation Company commenced its works, it had no idea of a tow-path; the method of propelling the boats was intended to be by the use of oars and poles. The tow-path was an after-thought, and the Company was subsequently obliged to obtain the right to make it from the Legislature.

There was a farm, having a river front, where the owner's cattle were daily driven to water. The Company, without asking his consent, made the tow-path along the shore, and on his driving his cattle, as usual, to water them, there came along an official of the Company, and fined him five dollars for driving his cattle on the tow-path, over his own ground, and for which he had never received any compensation.

In justice to the Navigation Company I must say, that there were many parties who prosecuted it for damages who were by no means

justly entitled to any, but, on the contrary, whose property was greatly benefited by the improvements along the river. The strip of land bought by Captain Towers, previous to the improvements, was of no value whatever, a mere collection of rocks and juniper bushes outside of the inclosure of the farm, yet it sold for more than the previous value of the whole farm.

CAPTAIN JOHN TOWERS.

Captain John Towers may justly be considered the pioneer of Manayunk. He was a remarkably active and energetic man, originally a ship carpenter, subsequently a sea captain, an extensive merchant and ship owner, and finally a manufacturer. He was always a daring, venturesome man, and the very one to commence building a mill at Manayunk; for, from the fear of ice freshets so universally prevailing at that time, no other was willing to run the risk—and, indeed, for two years and a half after he built his mill, no one except myself did risk it—and I remember very well the astonishment of every one around the country when they first heard that Captain Towers had bought a narrow strip of rock, gravel, and juniper bushes, that never had any value before, for five thousand dollars,

and was about to build a mill, where they were all sure the first ice freshet would sweep it off. The captain was a very ingenious man in his way, and the plan he adopted in building his mill showed it. One of the first things he did was to build his water-wheel, when he put a man into it to turn it, like squirrels in a cage; and by the use of a rope around the shaft, hoisted the girders and all the heavy timber used in the building.

I could relate many anecdotes illustrative of the ingenuity and enterprising character of Captain Towers, but will confine myself to three or four. When following the sea he would often venture in such rickety old vessels as no one else would think of doing. On a certain occasion, when in a foreign port, the gentleman who related this fact to me was there also, and about to come home. The captain solicited him to take passage in his ship; but he replied that he would not risk his life in such a rotton old vessel. He took his passage in another ship that sailed two days before Captain Towers, who told him, at parting, that he would be home before him; and true enough, the first man to welcome him ashore in Philadelphia was Captain Towers, who had arrived two days previous.

On another occasion, when in a small vessel,

he met at sea an English ship of war of sixty-four guns, in a sinking condition, with a signal of distress flying. He bore along side of her, and went on board. The commander of the ship requested him to take his crew on board of his vessel, but the captain told him it was impossible to put so large a number in his ship without throwing cargo overboard; but that if he would place his ship under his command, he would stick by him, and, in the last resort, take off the crew. The British commander consented to the arrangement, and Captain Towers, by various ingenious contrivances, finally succeeded in getting the ship and crew safe into port, for which he was rewarded by the British government.

One of the largest ships sailing out of Philadelphia, the "Woodrup Sims," got ashore somewhere in the Delaware Bay. Two or three different gangs of hands and riggers were sent down to get her off; but all failed and abandoned the attempt, when Captain Towers hired a sloop, took down some hands, and the third day after had the ship safe at the wharf in Philadelphia, for which Joseph Sims, the owner, paid him eight thousand dollars. He paid his men liberally, and all his expenses amounted to less than five hundred dollars.

During the war of 1812 a number of small

sloops and schooners—I think they called them "block ships"—were got up and armed by the government for the defence of the Delaware River, then blockaded by the British. They were mostly commanded by ordinary merchant sea captains. A son of Captain Towers commanded one of them, the whole being under the command of a United States naval officer. On a certain occasion, when about being attacked by the British vessels, the commodore gave the signal to retreat, which was done. A few days after, young Towers came up to the city, when he was severely reprimanded by his father for running away. He pleaded in vain his orders from the commodore; the captain denounced him, the commodore, and the whole party as a set of cowards, and was very indignant. Shortly after the same thing occurred, when young Towers disregarded the signal, determined to have a brush with the enemy—was very near losing his vessel, and was suspended for disobeying orders; but, on his arrival home, his father received him with great glee, praised him for his conduct, and told him he would sustain and defend him at all hazards. He held a correspondence on the subject with the then Secretary of the Navy, William Jones, of Philadelphia, with whom he had been for many years on terms of intimacy. The final result of this

correspondence was a challenge from Captain Towers to the Secretary of the Navy to fight a duel. This anecdote was related to me by the late Henry Manly, who was at the time a clerk in Captain Towers' counting-house, and privy to all the circumstances.

Some three years before Captain Towers commenced operations at Manayunk, he purchased two mill seats at Rock Hill, on the creek opposite Manayunk, and erected two mills there. Silas Jones, a farmer in the vicinity, told me that on a certain morning he passed there on his way to market, when there was nothing there, and was utterly astonished on his return in the evening at seeing a two-story house, smoke coming out of the chimney, and people living in it. The captain had this house framed in the city, brought out in teams, together with the necessary mechanics, and had it all put together before night. I presume it is there yet. It was located on the top of a high rock just on the edge of a precipice.* A short time pre-

* There were three other mills on this creek. Helmbold's paper-mill, Lloyd Jones' paper-mill, and Levering's grist and saw-mill at the mouth of the creek. Mr. Lloyd Jones told me he was once in possession of more money than any other man in the country. Previous to the removal of the government from Philadelphia to Washington, there was sold in the city an immense lot of old paper money; he bought some tons of it, at the price of old rags, for making paper.

vious to his death, he commenced to build a bridge across the river at the foot of Green lane, and had he lived, I have no doubt he would have persevered and accomplished it. The present bridge was subsequently built there by a company. This risky, daring character of Captain Towers was finally the cause of his death. He had some lawsuit at Norristown, and had chosen me for his arbitrator. He had a sorrel horse and a rickety old vehicle in which we started for Norristown. I soon discovered there was something wrong in the gearing; for whenever we came to descending ground, the carriage would run on the horse's heels, and cause him to kick and run. We stopped at a store, procured a rope, and he patched it up somehow, but it made it very little better. I told him it would not do: he said it would. I concluded that if he was not afraid it would never do for me to show fear, although I acknowledge I felt it. As we were descending the long hill at Barnhill Church, the horse began to kick and run at full speed down the hill, and before we arrived at the foot of it, the vehicle capsized, pitching the captain and myself with great force against a large tree. I struck it with my breast, and must have rebounded back, for I fell clear of him, and he lay at the foot of the tree. I was considerably hurt, but the captain much worse; his arm and two of his ribs

were broken. He never got over it, and died shortly after.

Some three years previous to his death he had a suit in one of the courts of Philadelphia, which was decided against him; he attributed the result entirely to the ingenuity, dexterity, and tact of Col. Page, his opposing counsel, with whom he was so much pleased that he immediately employed him as his counsel, which he continued to be until the death of Captain Towers.

About the same time Captain Towers built his mill, Mr. Silas Levering erected his hotel—the first hotel in Manayunk; and the captain built a small house, in which he resided, on the lower side of the canal adjoining his mill. When he had completed his mill he rented the third story to Isaac Baird, who was the first cotton-spinner of Manayunk. The two lower stories he used himself in the woollen business, and subsequently rented a part to Edward and John Preston. He also built six frame houses on the upper side of the canal, which were subsequently removed into Green Lane. Isaac Baird occupied two of these houses, in one of which he kept a store, the first store in Manayunk, and in one of them was born the first child, a daughter of Isaac Baird.

At the beginning of September, 1820, I pur-

chased the second power sold, and became a resident of Manayunk;* and if I lived there now I suppose I would be that celebrated individual, "the oldest inhabitant," that is, outside of those "to the manor born;" and I believe there is but one such now residing there, Mr. Perry Levering. When I called at the Navigation Company's office to make my purchase, my elder brother was with me, and in the course of conversation with the committee, of whom I think Dr. Preston was the chief, my brother, who had some knowledge of hydraulics and the flow of water, asked the question, if they restricted me to any particular form or shape of the aperture through which the water was to pass. In rather a contemptuous way, as if it appeared to them a silly question, they answered that I might make it in any form or shape I chose. He then asked them if they were aware that the shape and certain appendages made a very great difference. They reiterated that I might make it as I pleased, so that it was of no more capacity or size than I paid for, and when we left the office I remember my brother saying that those men did not understand their business, or know what they were about. *They found it out* some years after, however.

* This does not appear on the records of the Navigation Company as the second power sold, for the reason that I did not procure my title until I purchased an additional fifty inches.

As soon as I made my purchase of fifty inches of water, to which I subsequently added fifty more, I commenced building, and set some laborers to work digging the foundation. In less than an hour after, old Mr. Paul Jones—not the late Paul Jones, but his father—who resided in the farm-house on the hill, immediately opposite where I was at work, where he had lived all his life, and was then, I believe, eighty-two years old, came over to me in a boat. I had known him before, and believe he took some interest in me. He had heard I was going to build a mill, saw me commencing, and came over expressly to dissuade me from it. He appeared quite anxious on the subject. He said to me, "Charles, thee had better stop at once; thee will be ruined; thee can never build anything here to resist the ice freshets." I must confess I had some doubts myself, but I had the winter before watched the effect of the ice going over the dam, and saw that when large cakes came down the river, and projected over the dam a short distance, they broke off with their own weight into small pieces, and came down comparatively harmless. Were it not for this simple effect, and we should have an old-fashion winter, a sudden freshet and breaking up of the ice, I very much doubt if many of the mills at Manayunk could resist it. This old Mr. Paul

Jones was a remarkably sprightly old gentleman for his age. Some two or three years before the time I speak of, during a hard winter a flock of wild turkeys came on the hills opposite Manayunk. The old gentleman mounted a horse, rode through the snow and woods over the hills as fast as any of the party who were in pursuit of them. He once told me that a certain friend (a preacher) from England was in Philadelphia, and he went in a sleigh to bring him up to his house. He drove his sleigh on the Schuylkill at Market Street, and came all the way up on the river. This friend remarked, "What a beautiful valley and meadow this must be in summer!"—never dreaming that he was riding on a river.

I had some twenty hands at work on my building, and such was the state of Manayunk at that time, that the only place where I could board them was the one-story house below the canal, near where I was building. I finished my mill, and commenced making oil and grinding drugs—the purpose for which I built it—and shortly after added a fulling mill, and had made by Alfred Jenks, then of Holmesburg, a number of power-looms for weaving satinets. These were the first power-looms ever used in Pennsylvania for weaving woollen goods.

In verification of the old adage, "Great oaks

from little acorns grow," my humble establishment became the birth-place, if I may so express it, of others much more extensive. For my own purposes I only used the two lower stories; the upper story I rented to others—first to Mark Richards & Co., who built a large cotton-spinning mill higher up the canal; next, in part, to Moses Hey for several years, until he built his mill; then to other parties, and last, though not least, to the late Joseph Ripka.

JOSEPH RIPKA.

My excellent old friend occupied a part of the third story with some machinery for spinning worsted yarn; and this was his first appearance at Manayunk, he having previously operated in the city. He soon after built a large mill, and filled it with power-looms, and subsequently built and bought other mills. He was a remarkably active and enterprising man, for many years the life and soul of Manayunk. Having but recently died, there are so many living in Manayunk familiar with his excellent qualities, that it seems superfluous to mention them. He was public spirited, liberal and generous in everything tending to the improvement and good of the village, universally beloved and respected

by its citizens. The respect paid to his memory on the occasion of his funeral was a beautiful evidence of it, and will not soon be forgotten. All the mills, stores, and shops were closed; the factory bells tolled, and hundreds of the operatives, male and female, lined the street through which the melancholy procession passed. He left a host of friends and admirers to mourn his loss, and the termination of his valuable and useful life.

CHILLS AND FEVER.

For several years from 1821, Manayunk was sorely afflicted with chills and fever, and doubtless the growth of the village was much retarded from this cause, for it made it very unpopular. Previous to the improvements on the river the disease was scarcely known along its shores; I had never heard of a single case; but in 1821 it broke out with great virulence. I have been trying to remember, but cannot call to mind a single man, woman, or child in the village that escaped it. I used to think that the very dogs had the shakes and fever, and near the Falls there was a monkey, which, it was said, had a regular tertian ague. Isaac Baird, who, from the nature of his business, employed more hands than any one else at that time, was obliged to

stop and shut up his mill for some six or eight weeks, himself and all his hands being unable to work. He retreated, with his family, to Germantown, and I fled to the Leverington Hotel on the Ridge Road; not, however, until the disease had taken fast hold of me; and I served a regular apprenticeship to it, off and on, for some three or four years. At that time there was a race of men in existence, employed in the woollen manufactories, who have since become entirely extinct. They came from England. Their business was to shear cloth with an immense pair of shears from three to five feet long. They were shortly after superseded by the invention of the cloth-shearing machines now in use. They were biped animals certainly, but stupidly ignorant. They had been accustomed from youth up to handle these cloth shears, which they did well; beyond that they did not appear to have a single idea, except drinking porter, which they did by wholesale. Those kind of workmen were very much wanted at that time and hard to be got. Captain Towers and the Prestons obtained five or six of them from Yorkshire, England. They arrived here in the extreme warm weather, clothed in the thickest kind of woollen garments, woollen stockings, &c. They were all remarkably large stout men of fine healthy color and appearance,

but one month's residence at Manayunk was quite sufficient to "use them up;" any person who had seen them at the beginning of the month and again at the end of it, would be almost ready to swear they were not the same party. All their fine rosy color had vanished, and they became miserable, cadaverous, melancholy looking objects. From sheer ignorance and stupidity two of them lost their lives. One, when in the hot stage of the disease, to cool himself went into a damp cellar, stripped himself, and lay on his back on the damp ground. There happened to be a jug of buttermilk within his reach, he drank it and was a corpse in a very short time. Another got an idea that it required something powerfully strong to kill the disease; he procured a pint of horseradish and cider which he swallowed at one gulp. It threw him into convulsions and he died. With a few such exceptions as these the disease was rarely fatal; on the contrary, often a subject of mirth. It was quite a common affair to see half a dozen at a time around Silas Levering's stove in the bar-room of his hotel, all shaking at the same time, others looking on quizzing and laughing at them; and more than once have I seen the tables turned, and the merry ones obliged to take their turn at the stove and be laughed at.

SALES OF WATER POWER.

Captain Towers and myself stood alone at Flat Rock for one year after I built. When on the 5th of September, 1821, William J. Brooke purchased the third power, sold 50 inches, and built a small mill adjoining Captain Towers, for making flock of woollen rags; the lower part he rented to William Rowland for grinding saws, and an upper story to Thomas B. Darrach for making hat bodies. He was immediately followed on the 14th of the same month by James Elliot, who purchased the fourth power, 100 inches, and built a mill next below Mr. Brooke's. Elliot's business was grinding oak bark, and he rented the upper stories to Mr. Garside for spinning flax. A short time after these two mills were built they caught fire and were destroyed. There was no fire engine in the village at that time, and the small one from the ridge was brought down; we succeeded in getting it over the canal and placed it on the bank immediately in front of Brooke's mill. It had, however, been neglected for a long time, was out of order, and no use. During the fire an explosion took place in Brooke's mill. It seemed he had part of a keg of powder stowed away in the loft, which exploded with a loud report. It did no

harm; on the contrary, by scattering the roof then in flames, it perhaps assisted in saving Captain Towers' mill, to which we bent all our exertions.

These four powers, amounting together to 300 inches, included all the company had sold up to January, 1822. But after this for a short time it sold rapidly. The fifth power to Mark Richards & Co., 240 inches, January 8th, 1822, the 40 inches granted to them without charge in consideration of having less fall and building higher up the river. It was for a cotton manufactory, and some time after it was in operation there was employed in it an operative who afterwards became a celebrated character, Sam Patch, of jumping notoriety, who at last took one jump too many and was drowned or killed. The sixth power, 100 inches, was sold to Samuel R. Wood, January 9th, 1822, who built the mill afterwards bought by Borie, Lagurene, & Keating. Mr. Wood, with whom my brother was connected, occupied the lower stories of his mill for making white lead, the upper stories he rented to Borie, Lagurene, & Keating for spinning cotton. The seventh power, 150 inches, was sold to Peter Roberson and George Smick, April 11th, 1822. This was for land purchased of them. The eighth power, 65 inches, was bought by William Alexander for a saw-mill,

April 23d, 1822. This was afterward purchased by William Rowland, who built a mill for grinding saws. Previous to Mr. Alexander selling it he erected a frame building for sawing lumber near the shore of the river, where the main road crosses the canal. In a freshet it floated off into the river, but was tied to a tree with a strong rope and swung out in the stream several days. When the water subsided it was replaced on the foundation. It was operated with a small flutter water-wheel, the only one of the kind ever used in Manayunk. The ninth power sold was to Ann Dawson, 150 inches. This was for the cotton mill at the lower end of the canal. It was operated by Morris and Wilson. Mr. Morris was the son of the celebrated Robert Morris, the financier of the Revolution. Some years after he was elected Sheriff of Philadelphia County, and died while in office. That establishment was afterwards purchased and carried on by Messrs. S. & T. Wagner. This made 705 inches sold in a little over four months of the year 1822, which, added to the 300 inches previously sold, made 1005 inches; and now the Navigation Company raised the price 50 per cent., to $4.50 per inch, and with the exception of 50 inches I purchased November 22, 1822, no more was sold for three years, until March 7, 1825, from which time the sales were as follows:—

March	7, 1825,	Borie, Lagurene, & Keating,	100	Inches.
May	6, "	Thos. B. Darrach,	100	"
Aug.	27, "	Smick & Gorgos,	50	"
Sept.	3, "	Wm. J. Brooke,	25	"

Making, together with the fifty inches I purchased November 22, 1822, 325 inches. Total sold up to September 3, 1825, 1330 inches. And now the price was again raised to six dollars per inch. Sales as follows:—

July	15, 1826,	William Rowland,	35	Inches.
Nov.	21, "	Borie & Lagurene,	100	"
Oct.	5, 1827,	William Morrison,	10	"
Nov.	3, "	Mark Richards,	100	"
Dec.	1, "	G. Patterson, transferred to S. Eckstein.	100	"
"	19, "	Charles Shippen,	200	"
Jan.	5, 1828,	Moses Hey,	50	"
"	10, "	Robert Shippen,	100	"
"	15, "	Moses Hey,	25	"
"	25, "	Mark Richards,	100	"
March	13, "	Mark Richards,	200	"
"	20, "	Moses Hey,	25	"
April	24, "	Samuel Eckstein,	40	"
June	6, 1831,	Joseph Ripka,	50	"
Sept.	23, "	William Rowland,	50	"
May	27, 1833,	Dr. Moore,	150	"
			1335	Inches.

Making the total amount sold up to May 27, 1833, as follows:—

1005	inches at	$3 00
325	"	4 50
1325	"	6 00
2665		

I do not know how much has been sold since, as I kept no record of it.

The official report of the Navigation Company, January, 1822, states "that there had been sold 600 inches, and a 150 inches for land, and that this nearly covered half the expense of the works at Flat Rock." I should suppose that the "expense of the works at Flat rock" is not only covered, but principal and interest long since paid, and that entirely from the water rents.

POPULATION.

The growth of Manayunk, its population, &c., of course kept pace with the sale of water-power. The first correct and reliable census taken was by the Rev. C. Vancleaf, March, 1827. Mr. Vancleaf was the Pastor of the German Reformed Church. I have his report in his own handwriting and over his own signature, as fol-

lows: 147 families; 550 males, 548 females; of which 244 were men, 306 women, 282 boys, and 266 girls—total 1098. In November, 1831, a little over four years and a half after Mr. Vancleaf had taken the census, I took it myself very closely and correctly, from the Domino road to Sherr's lane inclusive. There were then 317 dwellings and 2070 inhabitants. More than double the number of dwellings and nearly double the population in that short period. In November, 1836, just five years after I had taken the census, Joseph Gilkinson, the assessor, at my request again took it as follows: number of dwellings 541; white males 1420, females 1729; colored males 16, females 10—total 3175. Showing an increase in these five years of 1105, over 50 per cent.

The deputy marshal who took the census in 1840, furnished me with a statement at that time, but I have mislaid it. It is, however, on record, as also that of 1850 and 1860.*

MANAYUNK.

On May 14, 1824, was held a meeting of the citizens of Manayunk, which was followed by a

* In a statistical account of Manayunk recently published in the Philadelphia *Ledger*, the present population is estimated at eighteen thousand.

number of other meetings, at most of which I was present. Mr. Isaac Baird, William J. Brooke, and others, applied to my brother, who was something of a classical scholar, for an appropriate name for the village, and he suggested "Udoravia," with which a large majority present at one of these meetings seemed much pleased, and adopted it. The next morning the name was printed on a board and elevated on a post in a conspicuous place. A day or two after some of the proprietors of the mills, but not residents, came out from the city and strove hard to have the name altered. They seemed desirous it should have some Indian name, which was a popular idea at that time, and at a subsequent meeting held for the purpose the subject was reconsidered, and some one suggesting the Indian name of the Schuylkill River, it was finally adopted. At the same meeting we took the liberty of establishing the orthography or manner of spelling the name. In all the ancient records it is spelled with an I and sometimes with a J, but nowhere I believe with a Y, until we established that mode of spelling it, and the reason we did so was that it would be more easily acquired and remembered, the spelling of it being in a manner poetical—

M A N A
Y U N K.

All this matter was talked over at the meeting, and was the sole reason for altering the orthography. But previous to this the village had another name given it by Captain Towers, and which he persevered in calling it for some time, placing it at the head of his correspondence, &c. This name was "Bridge Water." I have seen it suggested somewhere that it should have been called "Towerville," in honor of Captain Towers. I can only say that the captain never had such an idea, and the pertinacity with which he adhered to the name he had himself given it is sufficient proof of the fact.

STAGES.

At one of the meetings referred to above it was resolved to make an effort to induce Jacob Shuster, who then ran a miserable old stage on the Ridge Road from the Ship tavern, near the nine mile stone, down to the city, to run it down Green lane and through Manayunk. I had frequently persuaded him to do so, but he would not consent. I finally proposed to him to raise a certain amount by subscription and give it to him on the condition that he would run his stage for three months through Manayunk. He consented, and I reported the fact to some of my neighbors. We raised him $65 and gave it

to him ; he immediately discovered that running his stage through Manayunk was far more profitable than running it on the Ridge Road. He soon had to procure more horses and stages, and his three months had hardly expired before he had an opposition to contend with in Mr. Crawford, who yet runs a stage from the intersection of the railroad up the Ridge Road.

While on the subject of stages, I will state that the first omnibus successfully used in Philadelphia, was originally built for Mr. Reeside, and placed by him on the Manayunk line with four horses. Previous to that there had been for a short time an old fashioned stage running on Chestnut Street to the Schuylkill River. Mr. Reeside's vehicle was the first one in the style of the modern omnibus, with convenient steps and a railing behind. After running it for some time to Manayunk he took it off the line and made a city omnibus of it, where it succeeded admirably, and was immediately followed by others in the same style.

POST OFFICE.

I do not remember the exact date of establishing the post-office at Manayunk, but think it was in 1824 or 1825. This was exclusively my own act, in opposition and contrary to the

wishes of many of my neighbors. We were then in the habit of getting our letters and packages from the city by the stages. It had become a regular system, and was very convenient. By placing a strict construction on the post-office laws, many were of opinion that this arrangement would have to stop, as the law forbids carrying letters on a post route. I, however, applied to the department for the office, and recommended Mr. James Renshaw as postmaster. Mr. Renshaw, with whom I then boarded, kept the hotel built by Silas Levering. The authority and appointment came on promptly, but what may appear strange in these office-hunting days, I had a hard time in persuading Mr. Renshaw to accept it, and he only did so on my promise to assist him in making out his accounts, returns, &c. He held the office three months, and all my eloquence could not prevail on him to keep it longer. It was very troublesome to him, paid him very little, and he resolved to throw it up, but fortunately just at that time there came into the village a young man, Mr. Stott, who was an apothecary, and rented of Mr. Renshaw a small frame building he had erected in his yard for a barber shop. In this building he opened an apothecary store, and I prevailed on him to take the post-office. It being a pet of mine, I kept the run of it for several years, and it was curious

to see how regularly every quarter its income increased with the growth of the village. Mr. Stott held the office for several years until he left Manayunk, and now there was no difficulty in filling the office; on the contrary, there was a regular scramble for it.

TURNPIKE ROAD.

The Manayunk road, or Main Street, was so intolerably bad at times that it became absolutely necessary to do something with it. From Righter's ferry to Manayunk it was sometimes impassable, and often the teams and other vehicles would, on their way to the city, be forced to go up to the Ridge turnpike road, through Green or Sherr's lane. It was finally concluded to make a Macadamized road. An act of incorporation was obtained from the legislature on the 10th day of April, 1826. No one thought it would ever pay any interest, but it was necessary for our business to have a good road. The mill owners were all assessed in proportion to the number of inches of water they held, and generally took their proportion of the stock. I took mine under the full impression of never receiving anything in return except the advantage of having a good road at all times, but, con-

trary to our expectations, it did pay the stockholders a considerable amount of interest.

SCHOOLS.

At some of the meetings of the citizens, held in 1824, exertions were made to have a schoolhouse erected, and finally Peter and Jonathan Roberson gave a lot for the purpose at the lower end of the village. Funds were raised by subscription, and we soon erected the first schoolhouse in Manayunk.

At that time and for several years after, we had no public system of education; on the contrary, a miserable pauper system prevailed. Children whose parents were too poor to educate them, were sent to the common schools, and the teachers paid from the county funds three cents a day for the actual attendance of each pupil. Roxborough township had two directors appointed by the court to dole out this miserable three penny business. Both the directors resided on the Ridge, and were unacquainted with the nature and necessities of the people of Manayunk. There was a universal desire that one of the directors should be a resident of Manayunk, which seemed but fair and just, as its population exceeded that of all the

rest of the township. At the request of a number of persons I called on Judge King, the president of the court, in reference to the matter. He told me that for certain reasons he did not wish to displace either of the directors, and advised that we should apply to the legislature for a law to give Roxborough township an additional director. He offered to procure such a law for us, which he did; and the first I knew of it was the reception of the appointment as director. On the receipt of the appointment I examined all the school laws, and had a consultation with my colleagues on the Ridge. I discovered that the practice was to examine closely into each applicant's case, and if the parents could earn a certain amount per day by their labor, the benefit of the school was refused to their children. There was nothing of this in the law, it was merely the custom, and I determined to disregard it. The whole system of public education was at that time in a transition state, and I was a zealous advocate of the system that finally prevailed and which we now have. I refused to comply with this system of espionage, and notified all the teachers, some six or eight, and all the people in the village, that I was ready to give orders to every applicant. Of course I soon filled up all the schools, and when at the end of the quarter I took my bills as re-

quired to the quarterly meeting of the directors of the sixth section, composed of Germantown, Roxborough, and Bristol, some of them were startled, but there was no getting over it. They were sent along with the rest to the Board of Control. The Board of Control grumbled, but it was of no use, they had to be paid; I knew that well enough. The law made me sole judge of who I should send to the schools, and required the Board of Control to pay the bills duly qualified to by the teachers. Each successive quarter the bills increased in amount, the Board of Control continually expressing dissatisfaction with the Manayunk bills, and finally the directors of the sixth section sent me as their representative to the Board of Control, which at that time consisted of only twelve members. There I had to fight my own battles. In all this I had an object in view. It was to get a large school-house built for the sake of economy if for no other reason. I succeeded in two instances in getting committees of the board to visit Manayunk, and both reported in favor of building a school-house, but I could never succeed in getting an appropriation for it up to the time I left Manayunk.

WILLIAM L. BRETON.

There was an English gentleman who resided many years at the Ridge and Manayunk, Mr. Breton. He was a self-made artist, and told me his first attempt at drawing was on board ship on his passage to this country. He took a large number of views of Manayunk at different periods, and I regret that after his death, some thirteen years since, most of his drawings were sent to England. Some of his views of Manayunk were taken as far back as 1824. In that year, as near as I can remember, there was a fashionable bookstore on the south side of Chestnut Street between Second and Third, kept by Mr. Poole, who was an agent for his father, a large publisher in London. I frequently called there when in the city, and on one occasion there were two gentlemen in the store conversing on a subject that interested me; I listened for a short time and left. The next day I saw a person sitting on a stump at the foot of Church Street taking a sketch of the Stritzel house, subsequently torn down. I went towards him and discovered that it was one of the gentlemen I had seen the day before in Mr. Poole's store. It was Mr. Breton; I introduced myself to him and asked him if he resided in the neighborhood.

He replied in the negative, and said he only intended to stay two or three days. I then asked him where he was located; he mentioned the place, and I told him he could be more comfortably accommodated at the Leverington hotel on the Ridge road, where I then boarded. He came there the next day, intending, as he said, to stay two or three days; he continued there and at Manayunk for many years. There was always a mystery about him that I could never understand. I have learned since his death that he had a wife and a number of children in England. I believe he was over eighty-three years old when he died. Although a man of intelligence and education, he was a thorough John Bull, a constitutional grumbler; in his view there was nothing right in this country—nothing wrong in his own.

LIBRARY.

The Library at Manayunk was originally instituted by Jacob B. Smith, a school teacher on the Ridge, a most excellent and worthy man; he died shortly after, and bequeathed a number of valuable books to it. During his life it flourished and was successful, but for a long period after his death it was in a great measure neglected. It was finally removed to Manayunk,

where it prospered in connection with a Lyceum established there.

ST. DAVID'S CHURCH.

The origin of the Episcopal Church at Manayunk with which I was connected, is due to the late Rev. Robert Davis, generally known among the clergy as "Eusebius Davis," from the circumstance of his having published English translations of some of the Ancient Fathers. He had been rector of a parish in Reading, and from ill-health was obliged to give it up. He made himself useful in seeking new localities for establishing parishes. I remember walking with him on a certain occasion on Market Street west of Broad, when he pointed to an upper story of a house with the observation that, "in that room he organized the first Episcopal Church in Philadelphia west of Broad Street, the Epiphany." On a certain day he called on me, introduced himself, and told me his purpose was to organize an Episcopal congregation; I told him I could see no chance of success; that my own and one other family were all the Episcopalians I knew of in the village. He then exhibited to me a memorandum book containing the names of nearly 300 persons in the village, who, he said, were brought up in and belonged

to the Episcopal Church. He had canvassed every house in the village. I was surprised at this; looked over his book, and finally told him to call on me the following week. In the mean time I called on a number of the persons whose names I had seen in his book, and found them favorably impressed. The next week he called on me again, when we proceeded at once to organize a parish, held a meeting at the school-house December 3, 1831, and elected twelve vestrymen. We procured the school-house, and subsequently the little church near it, where services were regularly held until the church was built; the late Tobias Wagner contributing largely to the fund for building it. From that time until his death in 1855, I kept up my intimacy with Mr. Davis. I have reason to believe he was very much attached to me, as I certainly was to him. He was a great and long sufferer from ill-health, an excellent man, and humble Christian. I visited him in his last sickness, and helped to carry him to his grave.

CHOLERA.

In the summer of 1832 Manayunk was sorely afflicted with the cholera. Previously to its breaking out, we had, as was done everywhere else, organized a Sanitary Committee, of which

they made me President. We went actively to work in having the village thoroughly examined and cleansed. Every house was freely opened to our inspection; all nuisances abated; cellars cleaned and white-washed; and lime freely used in every direction. I doubt if the village ever had such a thorough cleaning before or since. The people were greatly alarmed—readily seconded our efforts—and doubtless these measures must have modified the disease when it reached us; yet it was very severe; there were in all from forty to fifty deaths; but a large majority of them were inebriates, men accustomed to hard drinking. It seemed to me that many persons had slight attacks of it. I had one myself; it passed off harmlessly; but when it got hold of a hard drinking man it appeared to me there was not the slightest chance for his life, and in many cases they were carried off in a frightfully rapid manner. The physicians had a hard time, and we were obliged to get assistance for them. Dr. George McCalmont, then a student, offered his services, and on one occasion when he and myself were attending to a case, one of the physicians came to us and told us there was another man just taken with it in the street. He directed Dr. McCalmont to go along with me and attend to his case; about an hour before, I had met that man in the street hauling stone with a horse

and cart, and spoke to him; nothing seemed to be the matter with him then. He was a very stout, corpulent man, weighed over 200 pounds, and I suppose drank his quart of whiskey every day. I took Dr. McCalmont to his house about ten o'clock in the morning; we found him walking about his room in great agony. He immediately commenced abusing us and ordered us out of his house, saying we should not make any experiments with him, that he knew what was the matter with himself, nothing but a colic that he had often had before. I had seen a number of similar cases—became in a manner familiar with the disease—the remarkable appearance of the eye, &c., and was perfectly convinced, at the first view I had of his face, that it was a bad case. I tried to reason with him, but it was useless. There was a bed in the room; I tried to prevail on him to lie down, but he resisted for a long time; at last, however, he became alarmed and docile, and was willing for the doctor to do what he could for him; but he soon fell into the collapsed state and died, and before six o'clock that afternoon he was in his grave.

This was rapid work, but other cases were equally so. It was by the advice of the physicians in this particular case that he was so speedily buried. We sent to the overseers of

the poor, who resided on the Ridge, to come and bury him and others, but they were alarmed and refused to come near us; we had to do the best we could. Mr. Bumstead, pastor of the German Reformed Church, tendered to us the basement room of his church, where we fitted up a hospital, and had a number of cases in it.

On a certain Sunday, when the disease was at its height, there was a terrible panic prevailing throughout the village, and there was a great cry for physicians; those we had could not attend to all the cases, and I sent an express to the Falls for Dr. Joseph Carson, now a Professor in the University of Pennsylvania. He had a day or two before returned from India, and I knew of his being at the Falls. I was standing in the street below Snyder's hotel, with a crowd around me all in a very excited state, when Dr. Carson drove up. He was immediately surrounded, every one anxious to get possession of him. The doctor of course was surprised at such a reception, and appealed to me to know what he should do. I replied, go to work as quickly as possible. I took him to the nearest house, and went around with him as fast as we could. There was little or nothing the matter with most of them, merely frightened, and they magnified every little pain or ache into cholera. There were two Roman Catholic priests in the

village at that time—the Rev. Mr. Mulholland, and the Rev. Mr. Carter, who is now priest of the Church at Spring Garden and Twelfth Streets. They were remarkably active and useful, day and night, among the sick. On a certain occasion, when going around with one of them, Mr. Mulholland, I observed a man following us, and whenever we came out of a house he would whisper something to the priest. This continued for some time; at last Mr. Mulholland turned to me and asked what I would advise in his case. He told me the man had been drinking to excess, making a beast of himself, and he had forbid him to drink any more liquor; that he now said he was accustomed to drink something daily, and if stopped off suddenly at such a time, it would be attended with a bad effect and cause him to be sick. I replied that I thought there was some probability of that, and advised that he should allow him to take some liquor, but limit him in the quantity; he agreed with me, turned to the man, whispered something to him, and in an instant he was off on a full trot, making a bee line to the nearest rum shop. The last case we had was a boatman who was in a house near the locks. One afternoon I was called on by four physicians, two from the city, the others from Mobile, Alabama, who had been sent on here to study and make themselves acquainted

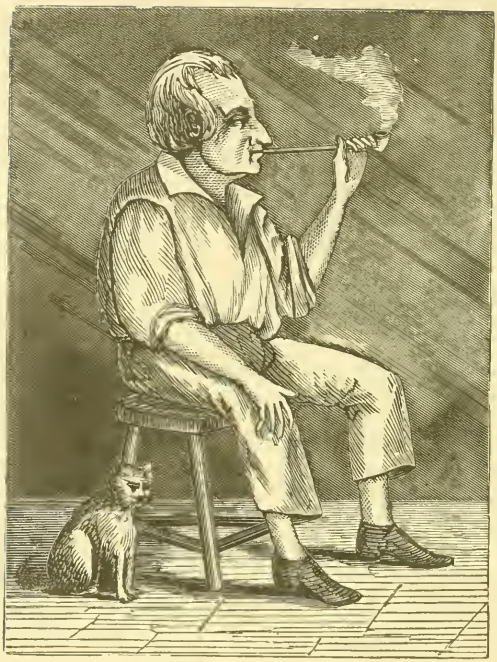
with the disease before it reached their city; there being few cases left in Philadelphia, they came out to Manayunk. I took them to the man at the locks. They examined him closely, made many learned remarks, and finally pronounced him convalescent. I did not presume to give an opinion in opposition to theirs, but I was perfectly satisfied in my own mind that nothing short of a miracle could save that man. He died that night.

In 1833, application was made to the legislature for a borough charter for Manayunk, but failed in consequence of some outside opposition. The citizens of Manayunk were generally in favor of it.

PERSONAL REMINISCENCE.

At the solicitation of a number of my neighbors, who had a certain object in view, Governor Wolf sent me a magistrate's commission. I had no desire for anything of the kind, and it lay in the recorder's office a year before I consented to take it, and only then did so at the urgent request of many persons who were not satisfied with the manner in which justice was dispensed at Manayunk. With but a solitary exception I never retailed justice, and, as that was some-

what of a remarkable case, I will state it. I was quietly sitting in my house one evening, when William Welsh, an old resident of Manayunk, came rushing in and told me not to be alarmed, that a large crowd was coming up to my house with a prisoner. Not wishing them to come into my house, I went out in the road to meet them; they had a poor fellow who apparently had been severely handled. It seemed some children had got to quarrelling and fighting, the women took it up, and finally the men got at it. After hearing all their stories, I gave a hint to Mr. Welsh, and asked him if he would be surety for the man's appearance before me next morning. He replied in the affirmative; this satisfied the crowd and it left; after which I took the man to the back part of my lot, told him Manayunk was no place for him, and advised him to go in a roundabout way to his family, put them and all his effects on board the first canal boat, and go up the river before morning. He followed my advice strictly, and the next morning was among the missing. Shortly after I met Judge King, and told him I had made my first attempt at dispensing justice. "Well," said he, "how did you make out?" "Oh, first rate," said I, and told him the whole story. I never saw a man laugh more heartily. Said he to me, "You are the best magistrate in the county. I only wish we



JOSEPH MONTELIER.

Born in Oxford Street, London, Marylebone Parish, St. Patrick's Day, 17th day of March, 1756, six o'clock in the morning, six inches snow all over London.

had more like you; if a Southwark magistrate had got hold of such a case, he would have made ten dollars out of it, sent it up to court to bother us, and it would have cost the county a hundred dollars; decidedly you are the best magistrate in the county." This was my first, last, and only case.

JOSEPH MONTELIER.

There was a very singular character, an Englishman, who resided many years in the little log-house on the west side of the river, about opposite the water wear of the canal. We used to speak of him as the Hermit; he was known in the neighborhood as Joseph Moore, but that was not his name; his real name was Joseph Montelier. His own account of himself, which he often repeated, was, to use his own words, "Born in Oxford Street, London, Marylebone Parish, St. Patrick's day, 17th day of March, 1756, six o'clock in the morning, six inches snow all over London." He bought the house and some two or three acres of land attached to it, in April, 1800, and resided there alone until his death, March 27, 1836. At the time he came there he could not have selected a more retired and secluded spot, and I remember how much it troubled him when his privacy was broken up

by the improvements at Manayunk, and making a road on the western side of the river in front of his house. When he purchased the property he also purchased with the rest of his means a small annuity; his wants were few, and it was sufficient for his support. In old times, before the existence of Manayunk or any improvements in the neighborhood, he cultivated a very pretty garden, a variety of fruits and flowers, and had considerable taste for horticulture. He had been a business man of some kind, had made a voyage or two to China, and he had in his house some beautiful China ware, which seemed quite out of place in his humble establishment. Annually, on the Fourth of July, it was the custom of John Levering (proprietor of the mills at the mouth of the creek opposite Manayunk) and others, to assemble under a tree near Montelier's house, provided with all the materials for making punch, and the "General," as they called him, would bring out his large China punch bowl, when they would have a merry time. It was on one of these occasions that Mr. Breton, who was present, drew a picture of him. The log-house he occupied was originally on the east side of the river, at the foot of Green lane; it was built there to take in grain for the mill on the opposite side of the river, and was taken over on the ice in the winter of 1793–1794.

STEAMBOATS.

Two attempts were made at different periods to run steamboats from Philadelphia to Norristown. The first was, I think, as far back as the year 1822, by Captain Hewit, an old ship-master, who had previously commanded a ship in the East India trade; he made several trips to Norristown, but soon abandoned the attempt; the detention in the different locks was such as to make the passage tedious. In the year 1829 another attempt was made, but that was also soon abandoned. On another occasion a line of packets was established to run from Philadelphia to Reading with horses on the tow-path, but it too was an up-hill business, and did not last long.

CONCLUSION.

In the year 1839 I sold my mill and dwelling to John Winpeny, left Manayunk, and dissolved my connection with it, and although I have ever since felt much interest in it, I know very little about it from that period. It always was to me, and I know was looked on by many, as an interesting spot. I have ever viewed it as an extensive workshop, its population and water-power, actively employed in production, adding much

to the wealth and comforts of our country. While I resided there, there are those still living who will do me the justice to say, I was always ready to second any effort for its improvement, prosperity, and welfare. In some cases I differed with many of my friends and neighbors as to what were the true interests of Manayunk and its manufactories, but whatever opinions I held they were my honest convictions, the result of long, close observation, and much reflection on the delusive subject of "Protective Tariffs, &c.," which so often hold out "promises to the ear, and break them to the hope." I became thoroughly convinced in my own mind that the true interests of manufactories and all connected with them, lay much deeper than in protective tariffs, and that they who desire their permanent prosperity must look to a vital reform in our currency system. The nearer we approach to a sound, exclusively metallic currency, the better will it be for our manufacturing interests, and all the labor and industry of our country.