

THE  
MEMOIRS

OF

GEN. JOSEPH GARDNER SWIFT, LL. D., U. S. A.,

FIRST GRADUATE OF THE

UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY, WEST POINT,

CHIEF ENGINEER U. S. A. FROM 1812 TO 1818.

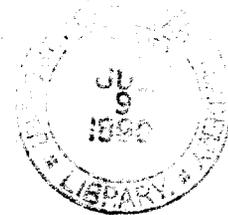
1800—1865.

*To which is added a Genealogy of the Family of*

THOMAS SWIFT OF DORCHESTER, MASS., 1634,

BY HARRISON ELLERY,

*Member of the New England Historic Genealogical Society.*



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PRIVATELY PRINTED.

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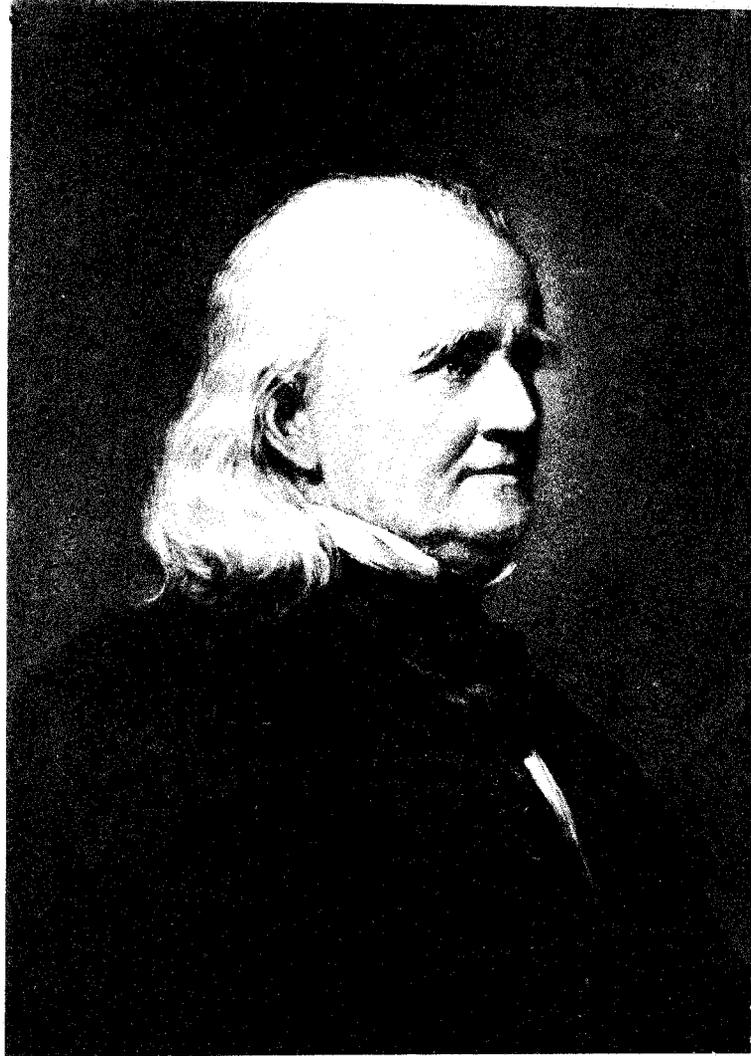
## ILLUSTRATIONS.

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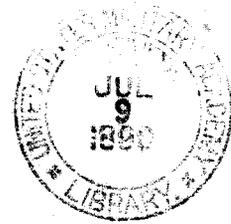
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GEN'L JOSEPH GARDNER SWIFT, LL. D.









# INTRODUCTORY.

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The genealogy of the descendants of Thomas Swift of Dorchester, Massachusetts, which is added to these Memoirs, was written a few years ago, during leisure moments, with the intention of confining it to the first four generations of the family, and contributing the same to the pages of the *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*. It was to have been one of a series of genealogies of those families with which I am connected by marriage, and which I hoped from time to time to complete. But the temptation to all who engage in genealogical work to expand has been yielded to, and what was intended to be simply the history of the early generations of the family has become what this book contains.

While corresponding with various members of the family on the subject of its history, I found in possession of the sons of the late General Swift, of the United States Army, his journal. At my solicitation they permitted me to examine it. It proved a very interesting document, and it seemed to me that it would be a valuable contribution to history if printed. I suggested to them that it be embodied in one book with the genealogy, provided I could obtain enough subscribers to warrant it. They expressed their willingness, and also from their family pictures contributed the illustrations which adorn the book.

General Swift was much interested in his family history, having made considerable effort to collect facts concerning his ancestry; and it seems

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particularly appropriate that what is herein printed on the subject should appear in connection with his Memoirs.

While the descendants of Thomas Swift who bear the name have been few, those of his contemporary, William Swift of Sandwich, Mass., with whom no relationship has as yet been established, have been very numerous. They may be found in all parts of the United States. But not all who bear the name of Swift in this country are descended from these two primitive settlers, for among the immigrants to this country during the past half-century will be found those who bear this respectable patronymic.

It is but justice to myself to say, that this genealogy was printed before the History of Milton, and that the use of my advance sheets was made by my permission, in writing the article on the Swift family which appears in that work.

HARRISON ELLERY.

# MEMOIRS.

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*FROM THE DIARIES OF J. G. SWIFT.*

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WEST POINT, July, 1807.

From very early life I have been in the habit of making memoranda of events, and in reference to persons who have in any wise interested me. This habit was induced by the example of my father, who left me often in care of his office, and with permission to peruse his diary. My earliest essays in this imitation were puerile, but they were kindly received by my mother, who taught me early to read, and who, pleased with my essays, encouraged my progress. As may be the case with most young people, a diary of their time, however impressive to them may have been the event when recorded, could afford but little to amuse, and less to interest, grown-up folks. I therefore set me down at my *alma mater* to review the records of my boyhood. A first impression is to obliterate all that precedes my entrance into the army—while indeed there can be but a morsel to glean in the seven years of cadet and subalternship in times of peace. I find myself at this time commandant of a post that had occupied some of the pages of our revolutionary history,—a housekeeper also at the head of a family of a wife and one son—so to amuse my leisure, and may be gratify my son, and may be to gratify a common feeling that “Every man’s world is important to himself,” I conclude to overhaul my files of diaries and to collate what might seem useful to show the influences that give a cast to a young man’s pursuits.

Of the origin of my family: They were husbandmen from England, who migrated to Massachusetts Bay soon after the first colony landed at Plymouth.

Tradition lands them at Squantum, in Boston Bay. They were the family of Thomas Swift (son of Robert) from Rotherham in Yorkshire, which Thomas became a "freeman" 6th May, Anno 1635; the year his first son, Thomas, was born. He purchased fourteen hundred acres of land in Milton, then Dorchester, the eastern part of which tract is elevated and overlooks the whole of Boston Harbor, and is situate eight miles from Faneuil Hall, that cradle of American independence. This tract became subdivided among the descendants of the said Thomas. His oldest son, Thomas, my ancestor, was also the ancestor of the Swifts of Sandwich, and of Colonel Hermon Swift of the Revolutionary Army, of Chief Justice Zepheniah Swift, both of Connecticut, and also of the Swifts, Senator Swift of Vermont and Generals John and Philetus, of New York and other States of the Union.\* He, the second Thomas, was also the father of Rev. John Swift of Framingham, and of Colonel Samuel Swift, a lawyer of Milton, whose oldest son, Samuel, was my grandfather, Samuel Swift, a graduate of Cambridge College, 1735, and who died in Boston 1775. Colonel Samuel Swift of Milton was also a judge of the court, and a member of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery of Boston, of which company also his son, my grandfather, Samuel, was a member. The oldest son of this Samuel was my father, Foster Swift, who studied medicine in Boston with Dr. Joseph Gardner; in February, 1783, married my mother, Deborah Delano, the daughter of Captain Thomas Delano, at Nantucket, where I was born the last day of the year 1783, during the absence of my father in Virginia. He had gone thither with letters to General Washington from General Lincoln, for the purpose of settling as a physician in the vicinity of his only brother, Jonathan Swift, a merchant of Alexandria. My maternal grandfather was a direct descendant from Philip de la Noye, a Huguenot or Protestant emigrant from Leyden to Plymouth. The variation in spelling the name is of record in the Plymouth annals, omitting the two final letters.

As was usual at Nantucket dwellings, my grandfather had constructed upon his house-top a "walk," with a staff and vane thereon, to indicate the

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\* NOTE.—General Swift is certainly in error here. Genealogical research does not connect, on this side of the Atlantic, the Swifts of Sandwich, who descend from William, with the Dorchester family.—*H. E.*

course of the wind, and also a mariner's compass and spy glass to observe the vessels going and coming upon whaling voyages. In this lucrative business Captain Delano had an interest. He had been an early and successful voyager to the Brazil Banks, and also a shipmaster in the London trade, which latter had enabled him to educate his sons in England. His daughter Deborah wrote a fair hand, and kept her father's accounts and correspondence. Her father was of a gentle nature and kind to children. He often gratified me with views from the "walk," and gave me ideas of the use of a spy glass and compass. He was also a sportsman, and occasionally took me with him to his farm at "Aaaise" [Quaise?] and "Siasconset," near the sea side, from whence he brought returns in the "calash" of shoal duck and sea bass. He was also one of the proprietors of the sheep folds, and with him I have been to the Nantucket sheep washings and shearings, a period of much rejoicing in cakes and ale on that island of "primitive people." I was too young while residing with my grandparents to 1792, to note the peculiarities of the people, but my mother used to say that the simple and free visitings among Nantucket families was very unlike any association of other places of her residence. It was a confiding intimacy and unrestrained hospitality. Their tables were abundant in simple fare. Bread formed by baking green corn and from flour made of parched corn, and soup from the dried green corn, formed characteristic dishes at their unpretending tea drinkings, the prominent hour for sociability at Nantucket. My mother said that dinner gatherings were unusual, although it was not deemed good Nantucket fellowship to evade or decline to participate in a meal that might be suitable to the time of day that found a neighbor at their houses. Those days of simplicity have given place to fashion and less sincerity—and we may say, less happiness.

My father returning in bad health from Virginia, had determined to remove his family to Apponagansett, near New Bedford, and he there practiced medicine. I have a recollection hereabouts in time, 1789, of being tied to the pump on board a packet, to prevent my falling overboard. The occasion was one of a visit to my father's relations in Boston. It was the period of Washington's tour to New England, when, with many other children of

larger growth, I was on Boston Common "beholding the hero." I have retained in memory the real or ideal features of Washington, as then seen, to which my mind refers whenever I see his portrait.

Near my father's residence there were mills on the Apponagansett River, and William Russel, the miller, was a "friend of the boys." He once sprang into the river and rescued me. I had fallen in from the bridge and cut my head against a stone in the bed of the stream, the scar from which is visible at this time, 1807. In 1792 my father removed his family to Taunton, a beautiful village on a river of that name, situate half way between Boston and Newport and Providence, R. I., and New Bedford. Upon the spot where my father built his house was the tomb of Elizabeth Pool, which, with its monumental stone, was removed to the public cemetery. This woman was a bold adventuress from Taunton in England. She had purchased the township of Taunton from the Indians, and the town was incorporated by the General Court in 1630.

I was placed at Mr. Abner Alden's school. He was a good teacher and the author of some useful books. My last teacher had been "Master Hart," for the benefit of whose school I had been placed near him at a friend of my father's, John Smith, Esq., at the head of the Pasquemonset River. While my father was on a visit to me there occurred a scene which remains vivid in my memory. A negro had run away from Rhode Island, 1791. A rumor had reached "the head of the river" that William Anthony had apprehended the negro and would pass "the bridge" that night. The people were anxious to rescue the negro, and the boys of our school were employed in collecting stones at the bridge to intercept Anthony. The crowd of men, women and boys remained up until late in the night, when a horse's step was heard approaching rapidly. In spite of the missiles, Anthony plunged his horse into the crowd, and riding with ability he escaped, leaving the negro at the bridge. This instance is a strong indication of the feeling upon slavery. These people were worthy Quakers.

In the fall of this year, 1792, the small pox being rife in Boston, my father sent me thither to the care of his sister Lovering, and I passed lightly through that disease by the aid of my father's friend, Dr. L. Hayward. In

Boston I enjoyed the friendly attention of John Gardner, Esq., the author of "Helvetius" and other political essays in favor of Jay's treaty with England. He was the nephew and heir of Dr. Joseph Gardner, of Boston, with whom my father studied medicine, and who had promised my father a legacy to me, his namesake. The legacy was never received, but Mr. John Gardner was my friend, and much contributed to my enjoyments at the public exhibitions in Boston.

In September of the following year, 1793, Miss Sally Cady, a very well educated and handsome young lady from Plainfield in Connecticut, opened a school on Taunton Green, a beautiful area of sward around which the village was situate. At this school, among other branches of instruction was taught drawing and declamation. I was a pupil, and proprietor of a nice writing desk and chair, a present from my father; it was quite an attractive novelty in the school, and I had the pleasure of having the pretty girls of the school exchanging their usual bench for a seat at my desk; which desk soon set the fashion that was followed by both girls and boys. Miss Cady introduced recitations from Noah Webster's "Third Part," and also dialogues between the girls and boys, taken from the works of Hannah More and other authors.

In the year 1794 I had become useful to my father by transcribing justice's papers. He was of the quorum, and I was also useful in his drug and medicine store, pending his professional rides in the adjacent country. Sometimes I accompanied my father in his rides on horseback. It was in this year that I commenced my boyish journal in imitation of my father's habit, and whose diary I was permitted to read and make extracts from, at his writing table. Among my father's books a Dictionary of Arts attracted my attention; a recipe therein to make fireworks induced me to experiment with gun powder. It took fire from heedlessness and burned me badly, from the effects of which I was unable to use my eyes for several weeks. A near neighbor, Mr. Cobb, hearing the concussion, ran to my father's office, and covered my blistered face with ink. In this plight I was taken to my mother, greatly to her dismay and alarm, in my father's absence; a scene of distress still vivid in my memory.

When my father's family removed from Dartmouth to Taunton, 1792, the Révolution of France was an absorbing theme of discourse, and a song among the boys. The village barber shop, Mr. Sider's, was ornamented with prints of the battle scene and overthrow of the Bastile, and with portraits of warriors and scenes of tumult in Paris. My father's diary had several aspirations against the influence that this revolution was exciting upon the minds of our countrymen, and especially on those who had a share in Shay's Rebellion, with the details of which insurrection he was familiar. He described to me the skirmish at Springfield in which General Shepard had a narrow escape from death by a shot from one of David Shay's followers. My father was also familiar with the scenes of our war of the Revolution, in which his father's family had suffered, and to which his father had fallen a victim, and died under the confinement inflicted upon him, and other prominent citizens of Boston. Among our family friends in Taunton was General David Cobb, who had been an *aid-de-camp* of Washington. I have heard him describe scenes of the war and of suffering at Valley Forge, but particularly of his agency in quelling the rebellion of Shay's, and of his having dispersed a band that had in 1786 assembled on Taunton Green to prevent the session of the courts of law in Bristol County. The band was commanded by one of Shay's lieutenants, one Valentine, of Freetown. General Cobb harangued the rebels, and being a judge also of the court of pleas, he told the rebels that he would that day sit a judge or die a general, and then ordered a field piece to be unlimbered and pointed at the rebels with the match lighted. They became panic-struck, and fled in dismay at the report of the piece that sent a ball over their heads. This Valentine was a noisy babbler to the mechanics and boys who assembled in pleasant evenings upon Taunton Green, to whom myself and others used to listen. His theme was the French Revolution, urging that our country should return the favor of the aid that France had given us in our late war, by joining our force to theirs to dethrone tyrants. This eloquence was popular with the boys until the rumor reached them of Genet's insulting Washington. This touched the patriotic feeling, and affection for the hero. The boys even began to question the propriety of the civic feasts given in

1793 in honor of French liberty. These feasting had become common in the country. When I was nearly ten years of age I was placed on the festive board to sing the translated French songs then common among the boys. I had a fair voice and my love for music was cultivated by a friend of my mother's, Mrs. Olive Leonard, who sang sweetly and played also on the guitar. Perhaps I owed some of my taste to a strolling Portuguese, Emanuel Cuidozo, who habitually visited our village and sung the plaintive airs of his native land, accompanying himself with the lute strung to his shoulder. This was a frequent entertainment in summer evenings on the Green, for which the boys contributed many "a copper." Emanuel had the tact to apply his Portuguese airs to American ballads, describing the battles of St. Clair with the Indians in 1791. A young officer, Lieutenant Cobb, had been killed in one of these battles. He was a Taunton boy and son of the general; the general was also our member in Congress at Philadelphia. He sent my father "Poulson's Daily Advertiser" and documents of Congress. These I used to read to my mother, by which means I had some vague ideas of the Constitution, and plied my mother with many a question about Congress. I remember an expression of force in my father's diary for 1791, that "Rhode Island had escaped damnation by adopting the Constitution." In his diary for 1794 he noted the resignation of Senator Jefferson as a treason to Washington's administration, after having served therein as Secretary of State. My father's diary also commented on the prominent conduct of Albert Gallatin in the Pennsylvania Rebellion, the whiskey boys' treason. He called the movement a leading act to aid in "overthrowing the system and policy of Washington to advance his country's glory and peace," etc.

In the following year, 1795, his diary notices the treachery of Secretary Randolph as an event of sad import to the character of American statesmen—the chief minister in the Cabinet betraying his trust. This notice was soon succeeded by remarks on the vileness of the assault on the integrity of Washington, made by a "Calm Observer" in the "Philadelphia Aurora." Early in the year 1796 his diary commends Jay's treaty with England, and scouts the idea of anti-Federalists who oppose the treaty on an assumption

that it was virtually a breach of our alliance with France. My father denounced the assumption a Jacobinic emanation, and deemed the treaty the best that could be obtained while the United States had no navy to sustain its rights on the ocean. He rejoiced, therefore, that the Senate had adopted the treaty.

About these days the French cruisers began to capture our merchant ships. This, and the impressment of our seamen by the British cruisers, placed the country in a double dilemma—our treasury small, our means of defence in no condition to go to war with either power.

These items in my father's diary, and my newspaper readings to my mother, had furnished abundant themes for my comments and patriotic effusions that occupy several pages in my diary. They may as well be omitted here; they would not aid my son's reflections as well as the few extracts from his grandfather's journal.

1796. Very early in the history of Massachusetts, provision was made by law for schools, one to every fifty families. Nay, it was made a penal offence to omit their establishment. The same State at a later period endowed many academies with lands in Maine. Among the number was one incorporated, 1792, in Taunton. The construction of this academy was begun in 1795 and completed in 1796, in July of which year the building was dedicated to the care of Rev. Simeon Dogget, an highly educated graduate of Rhode Island College, and of Miss Sally Cady, whom I have previously mentioned. In this institution I commenced Latin, Greek and Geometry, with the then purpose of entering Harvard University. Among the scholars of the academy of whom I retain friendly and respectful remembrance were John Mason Williams, since a judge on the Massachusetts bench; Francis Baylis, a member of Congress and *Chargé* to Buenos Ayres; Nicholas Tillinghast; Edward Mitchell of South Carolina, a distinguished physician; Thomas Paine, an officer in the U. S. Navy; Charles B. King, an artist of City Washington; Henry and Charles Cobb; Jona. Ingalls; John Presbury; Charles Richmond, a manufacturer of great enterprise and energy; Appolos Cushman; Philo H. Washburn, a distinguished lawyer in Maine, etc. These halcyon days of '96-'97-'98 were of the most delightful character. On

one occasion John Presbury was in default in composition. I sold him mine for cakes, and wrote another for myself; he won the prize and of course I was obliged to be mum. On another day my map was not ready, and Presbury put in his own for me. Such intercourse it is that makes the bonds of school-days strong.

In the year 1797 I lost a schoolmate and friend, Joseph Leonard, of the family that had been iron masters from the first days of the colony. His grave was for some time a rendezvous for several of his mates. He possessed fine generous qualities and was an excellent scholar.

In the year 1798 my cousin, William Roberdeau Swift, from Alexandria in Virginia, became a member of my father's family. He introduced the game of fine, at our school recesses, and he had a fine graphic talent.

It was in the same year that political parties became high in their disputes, and the respective sides taken by the parents were visible among their sons, and the boys had their discussion on the merits of Mr. Adams, Mr. Jefferson and Governor Pinkney, and English or French became the appellatives of men and boys. Among the laws of Congress was a "Stamp Act" which disturbed the people, more from the fact that the name recalled to mind one of the causes of the war of 1776 than from any inherent defect in the principle upon which the tax was based. My father was an inspector of the revenue and collector of the tax under this law. Occasionally it became my duty, in my father's absence, to deliver these "stamps" for notes, bonds, &c., from which the boys called me an aristocrat.

At this time there resided in Taunton an Eaton scholar, Mr. Charles Leonard, the son of the Chief Justice of the island of Bermuda, and of the same family that I have before mentioned as iron masters in Raynham and Taunton. This gentleman took the fancy to give me lessons in drawing, and also upon the German flute; and he made me the present of a box of Reeves' water colors. To these he was prompted by observing me at work upon a camera obscura, to finish which he had furnished a suitable lens, and by which some sketches of Taunton Green and River were made. Soon after this my mother's brother, Captain Henry Delano, came from England and made us a visit. He had a fine voice, and taught me several

of Dibden's sea songs. He brought with him his "freedom suit of clothes," a common perquisite in England, being made of fine scarlet cloth. He gave this suit to me, from which myself, and years after, my brother William and my own sons wore several garments. My uncle Henry was of a cheerful temper, a sailor and ship-master who had seen many vicissitudes. In a cruise to the Levant he had been captured by Algerines, and retained in slavery several years, and finally ransomed by his adopted country, England, where he had been educated and apprenticed to a London merchant. He married a lady of the family of Osborne, and resided near the "Bell in Edmondton." In the ensuing winter of 1798, I had an escape from drowning. While skating upon the river at the margin of my father's garden, in company with my cousin, Wm. R. Swift, and in presence of my parents and uncle Henry, I broke through the ice and disappeared, while my cousin had turned to another direction. Providentially I rose to the surface through the broken ice, and was drawn to the shore by a pole extended to me by Mr. Sherman, a Quaker, who, with several others of his sect, were near the river side "on the prison limits." They were confined by process of law for conscience sake—the Quakers refusing to perform militia duty.

There was at this time residing in Taunton Mr. Benjamin Dearborn, a very ingenious machinist and much respected citizen. He had established in that town a factory of steel-yard balances. His factory was a very interesting place to me, and he not only indulged my visits but he also taught me the use of a theodolite, invented by himself, and aided me in the construction of a wooden circumferentor, with which I made a survey of Taunton Green—the plot and diagram of which is now among my files.

In these days we became familiar with the name of Talleyrand and the French Directory, and of his offering our ambassadors money to form a treaty. These, and the accounts of French cruisers capturing our merchant ships, tended to encourage the building ships of war, the "Constitution," etc. Several of our youths were ripe for becoming midshipmen, and General Cobb had many applications to procure warrants for them. Some of these applicants succeeded. My mother's views were of a peaceful nature. Her

family were of the sect of Quakers, or Friends, and her preference was that I should become a physician; my own inclinations were to become a traveler. Readings to my mother had furnished excitement to this purpose. The appointment of General Washington to the command-in-chief of the army had given a serious aspect to the times, and consequently there was an increasing amount of subjects for discussion among men, and by similar consequence the interest spread among the boys. I listened to the conversation between General Cobb and my father on the prospects of anti-Federalism—a party that opposed a war. The building of two frigates was deemed an untimely threat to France, and the Federalists were accused of a purpose to aid England in arresting the march of liberty among our allies. The boys generally were disposed to favor both army and navy, and we began to form companies in the “Manual Exercise,” etc.

By the summer of 1799 I was prepared to enter Cambridge College. It was at this period that there marched into town, and encamped on a beautiful site near the margin of Taunton River, the 14th United States regiment of infantry, commanded by Colonel Nathan Rice, composed of two incomplete battalions of the Provisional Army. My father became the temporary surgeon of this regiment, whereby, as his messenger, I became a familiar in the tents of the officers. In a few weeks thereafter Captain Amos Stoddard marched a company of United States Artillerists and Engineers into camp, on its route to garrison Rhode Island Harbor. This officer was an intimate friend of my father's, and had been a student of law in our neighbor, Judge Padelford's office, on Taunton Green. It was very pleasant to me to find that this officer recognized me as an acquaintance. Lieutenants Williams and Steel were his subalterns. In their visits to my father's family they indulged me with accounts of the artillery service, and asked me if I would like to be a cadet in their corps. Here was a charm for a boy. Under its influence I urged my parents to request the aid of General Cobb to procure a cadet's warrant. Mr. John Gardner of Boston, whose country residence was near that of President Adams, interested himself in this matter. He gave Mr. Adams a sketch of Taunton Green, a

specimen of my crude pencilling. These gentlemen procured from Mr. Adams the promise that the Secretary of War should send me the warrant in the ensuing spring of 1800.

My whole time was now devoted to reading whatever I could find on military subjects. My preceptor, Mr. Dogget, permitted me the use of his library, and from the encyclopædia I transcribed the articles "Gunnery," "Fortification," "War" and "Pyrotechnics," and copied all the plans, including the implements of Sappers and Miners. Lieutenant Steel had loaned me the military works of Muller, which I found, in several articles, too profound for me.

At the close of this year of 1799, the death of Washington spread dismay throughout the country.

In Taunton, as in most other towns throughout the Union, there was much gathering of the people at the funeral obsequies. The boys of our village were permitted to join the procession, and it was my province to draw devices for the truncheons of the Marshals, and for the banner borne by the scholars of the academy.

Anno 1800. With the anxiety of a boy I waited upon the post office from an early day in the spring of this year, for the result of the promise of President Adams. Late in the month of May my eyes were gladdened by the sight of the frank of Secretary "McHenry," containing my warrant of cadet, dated 12th May, 1800, with orders to report myself for duty with Colonel Lewis Tousard, the commandant of engineers in the harbor of Newport, R. I. My excellent mother soon filled my trunk, and also, giving my schoolmates an evening party for my leave-taking, dispatched me in less than three weeks, so that on 12th June I presented myself to Major Daniel Jackson of the Artillery, at Newport, who commended me to Lieutenant-Colonel Lewis Tousard, the engineer of the harbor. This veteran gentleman received me with courtesy, invited me to dine, and introduced me to Mrs. Tousard, and a handsome Philadelphia lady, Miss Gillespie, who appeared young enough to be the daughter of the colonel. I was attached to the company of Captain Stoddard, at Fort Wolcott, and

received as a member of the officers' mess, renewing my acquaintance with Lieutenant Steel, and returning to him the works of Muller previously mentioned. Colonel Tousard had been a Captain in Count Rochambeau's army; was at the battle of Quaker Hill, 1778, where he lost an arm in a very gallant action. This want of a limb, and his fine military aspect gave the veteran an heroic appearance; and although one-armed he was a good draughtsman, and favored me with some lessons in military plan-drawing, and he also bestowed upon me a case of Paris drawing instruments. The colonel sent me, in the capacity of aid, in his barge to look after and bring him account of the works on the forts at the Dumpling Rocks, and at Rose Island, Fort Adams and Fort Wolcott. These works were then closing under the immediate care of Lieutenant Droasy—in fact suspending for want of appropriations—leaving, among other exposed walls, those of an extensive barrack at Fort Hamilton, on Rose Island, in an unfinished condition. Fort Wolcott was one of the designs of Colonel Rochefontaine, a very small redout of a Cross-Moline form, enclosing a stone magazine, upon which is engraved the name of that officer, and Mr. Boss, the United States agent, to commemorate the event of its erection, 1794; and on the key-stone of the gateway arch at Fort Adams, the names of Colonel Tousard and John Adams, the President of the United States, were inscribed, for similar information, 1798. A "South Wing Battery," as it was called, was constructing at Fort Wolcott, and of earth, and it was my duty to superintend the laborers in forming this parapet, upon which were mounted six thirty-two pound cannon; in which operation I received my first lesson in the use of the "French Gin," in proving some brass howitzers that had recently been received from the foundry of Mr. Paul Revere, of Boston.

The change of scene from quiet Taunton Green to military duty upon the fortifications of Rhode Island was a charm, and it was some time before the novelty wore off, and before the reveillé found me in bed. The circles of Newport were rendered fashionable by the summer residence there of several Carolina families, and, though young, I was favored by

the attentions of some of them, and by those of the resident families, the Gibb's, Champlain, Auchmety, Hunter, Whitehouse, and Mr. Gold S. Silliman.

The period had arrived for the disbandment of the Provisional Army, a part of which, with its ranks not half filled, was cantoned at Oxford, Massachusetts, including the 14th Regiment before mentioned; the military stores from whence were re-stored in the garrison of Newport Harbor, in the making returns of which I had my share of employment. In this summer arrived General Hamilton, with his suite, Colonel Aaron Ogden and Captain Abraham R. Ellery, to inspect the fortifications and the troops in the harbor. It was my good fortune to be charged with the salute of cannon at Fort Wolcott, and on resuming my position on parade was introduced to the general, who, may be in consideration of my youth, complimented me on the accuracy of time in the salute, and invited me to join the other officers at dinner at "Thomas Townsend's," in town. The deportment of the general was a very easy and pleasant dignity, and I listened with all my ears to his remarks. Among the guests at the general's dinner were Captain Perry, United States Navy, and his son, Oliver H., who had entered the service as midshipman a few months before my becoming a cadet, and with whom a pleasant intimacy was formed, and indulged at my own quarters and in the steerage on board the frigate General Green. Before and after dinner comments were made upon the fact that President Adams had not promoted General Hamilton on the death of Washington—some of them not flattering to the justice of the President—but the pretensions of other generals, and the settlement of prominent difficulties with France, were deemed to be sufficient reasons for the omission.

In the fall of the year I visited my mother at Taunton, and instead of finding her in the new house, had to witness its destruction by fire on the 16th of September, during my father's absence at Nantucket, whither he had gone to receive some aid to pay for this building from the estate of my grandfather, who had died in November, 1799, at the age of 68. This scene was very sad, but my mother bore it with an equanimity that distin-

guished her among those who knew her best. As is common in house-burnings, suspicions were in this case attached to an incendiary; but it was ludicrous to hear a superstitious cant that the fire was a divine retribution for disturbing the ashes of Elizabeth Pool — before alluded to as the first proprietor of the town, and whose tomb had become the site of my father's house. In the month of October I returned to my post at Fort Wolcott. The company drill had become an old story, but we were amused with some experiments in throwing thirty-two pounder shot, some of which, at a small elevation, reached the Dumpling Rocks. At this place Colonel Tousard had commenced an oval tower, to form a cross-fire with the other forts. Its unfinished caserns were left by Congress exposed to decay in common with other masonry at the three other forts. In our recreations at the mess table politics, as a topic, were not tolerated, although the officers held decided opinions, and were generally Federalists. During the past seasons of 1800 there had been much irritation through the country on the coming elections. President Adams, it was said, had abandoned the Federalists, by whom he had been elected, and his conduct to his Cabinet was said to be disrespectful to the memory of Washington, whose Cabinet Mr. Adams had retained. But Mr. Adams was not quiescent under the insults of France, and this course was deemed by the Jacobins an offence to gratitude. We had letters of marque and some frigates at sea, and the "Insurgent," forty-four, had been captured by Commodore Truxton in the "Constellation," thirty-six, while a third embassy to France had been instituted. This endangered the election of Mr. Adams or General Pinkney, at the same time that the urgency of M. Talleyrand, to come to terms so suddenly after insulting our embassy, was deemed to promote the elevation of Mr. Jefferson. The convention, in the finale, had secured nothing but promises to adjudicate at some undefined period for the spoliations committed on the seas. These were prolific subjects in all societies, and their discussion created much personal animosity. My friend, Captain Stoddard, to whose mind I was wont to defer, said that these relations with France were risking the permanence of Federal measures, while other Federalists held that Mr. Adams'

course was wise and peaceful. At any rate, these discrepancies were confusing the action of the Federal party, and advancing the influence of Mr. Jefferson.

There were portions of the work at Fort Adams, upon the magazine and wharf, that were incomplete, and which the artificers of the companies of Stoddard and Henry had been detailed to execute. I was placed on duty there under the direction of Lieutenant Droasy, and attached to the artillery company of Captain Henry, and became messmate of Lieutenant John Knight and Lieutenant John W. Livingston, a native of New York, and a gentleman of prudent and systematic habits. Lieutenant Knight was of a more errant character. He was from the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and married Miss Sally Malbone of Newport, by whose introduction I became acquainted with her brother, Edward Malbone, the artist, and also Mr. Washington Allston, the intimate associate of Mr. Malbone, and a recent graduate of Cambridge College—both of them very interesting gentlemen. I found Captain John Henry an Irishman of many pretensions, but his wife a pleasant acquaintance. She was a daughter of the family of Ruché, or Duché, of Philadelphia. The lady was a Swedenborgian, and she observed some peculiar rites of that sect.

1801. It was not until the lapse of some half dozen of years that the essay of Mr. Adams to commend appropriations for defensive works on the coast and Niagara frontier was revived. The appropriations for the army for the year 1801 were two millions, and for the *fabrication of arms*, and for *repairs* of fortifications, six hundred and thirty thousand dollars.

Early in the winter of this year Major William McRea, of the 2d Artillery, had relieved Major Jackson in the command of Newport Harbor. Our new commandant was from Virginia. He had been a captain in the 3d Sub Legion, under Generals Wayne and Wilkinson. He married in Newport a belle, Miss Mary Champlain. The major established his quarters at Fort Adams, and received me into his mess. The winter was very boisterous, and my chief employment was reading.

At this time the change of the national administration to the presidency of Mr. Jefferson had not evinced any material change of measures. Much

disturbance was exhibited in the newspapers as proceeding from office-bidders and office-seekers. Mr. Jefferson was, in the opinion of the *latter*, too tardy in displacements, a measure of doubtful utility generally; and as ejecting subordinates, it is undoubtedly a vicious policy, the office being intended for public, and not for personal benefit, save by its incidental effects. The official experience of clerks is a species of national property, and changing them, save for incapacity, vice, or old age, must produce delays and errors in official transactions.

The 4th of July was this year celebrated at the forts in Newport Harbor with a display suitable to the day, and also with some show in town, where William Hunter, Esq., was the orator; a gentleman who had been educated in England—a Federalist. His oration was deemed by our officers to be too florid, but to my apprehension, it was learned and beautiful. Mr. Hunter had a small collection of fine paintings at his residence, the work of Rosa de Tivoli. These pictures had been presented, in Italy, to the father of Mr. Hunter, who had been a surgeon in the British army, and “who had rendered important professional aid to some gentlemen of distinction near Florence,” who had bestowed these pictures on the doctor. These specimens of art were placed in the Academy of Fine Arts in the Bowling Green, New York.

In the ensuing month of August I had leave of absence to visit my father's family at Taunton, and was accompanied by my brother cadet, Lewis Lowdais, the brother of Lieutenant Philip of the 1st Artillery. I found that since I had been home a brother had been born, who was named for two of my mother's brothers, William and Henry. While in Taunton I apprehended a deserter from the army, one Seth Robbins, and marched him and myself to Newport—thirty-six miles, in twelve hours—and for which service the Secretary of War, General Dearborn, had directed the reward of ten dollars, to be sent to me by Mr. William Simmons. Robbins made an unsuccessful essay to leave me on the road, which made it needful to bind both his hands.

During this summer of 1801 General Dearborn, the Secretary of War, had given notice to our little army that President Jefferson had directed the

establishment of a military school at West Point, for the instruction of cadets, under the law of 1794 and subsequent acts of Congress that authorized the appointment of professors of the arts and sciences, and for the purchase of apparatus and instruments necessary for the instruction of the artillerists and engineers. General Washington had uniformly, and to the close of his life, urged the necessity of this school, and had made an effort in 1794 to open such a school at West Point, but the officers did not relish the discipline of a school—at least it was so said of the younger by several of the older officers of the army.

On the first of October I received a letter from General Dearborn directing me to repair to this school. The order found me in the act of closing a survey of the forts in Newport Harbor, and in making a schedule of the armament, by the order of Major McRea. As soon as this duty was accomplished, to wit, on the 7th October, I took my passage on board a New York packet “up the Sound” and arrived at the city on the 10th. This was my first voyage so far from home. The next morning I took a “Whitehall boat” to Governor’s Island and presented my letter of introduction from Lieutenant Knight to Dr. James Scanlan, the surgeon of Fort Jay on that island, who presented me to Captain Cochrane and the other officers of the garrison. The doctor proposed an excursion to the various points in the beautiful bay, and in the garrison barge the following day accompanied me to the old military works on Brooklyn and Gowanus Heights, the scene of the first discomfiture of Washington, Anno 1776. The doctor was a great admirer of military history, and quite familiar with the scenes before us. The courtesy of this gentleman made a strong impression on my memory. He was from the eastern shore of Maryland, and a relation of Lieutenant Knight of Fort Adams. On the 14th October in a Newburg packet I was sailing before a fine breeze up the Hudson. The day was clear and the palisades and precipitous walls were a novelty in height, as they have been to multitudes of other travelers. From failure of wind and tide the vessel came to anchor in Haverstraw Bay, near Stony Point, and the master permitted me the use of his boat and an oarsman to visit the ground where Wayne and Gibbons had won laurels in the storm of

that point. The entrance into the highlands was at sunset—an impressive scene to one who had never before seen a mountain like the “Dunderberg.” We reached West Point at dusk. The name of this place had raised many pictures to my imagination of Revolutionary history—the treason of Arnold; the fate of André. It was a calm October evening; the only sound was that of the cow bell. This sound at West Point has no doubt left a pleasant remembrance with many a cadet. To this day the sound of the cow bell revives the evening of my first landing at West Point. I reported myself to the commandant, Lieutenant Osborn, and to Professor Baron. Was received by Lieutenant William Wilson and Lieutenant Lewis Howard as a member of their “artillery mess.” Professor Baron furnished me with Dr. Hutton’s Mathematics, and gave me a specimen of his mode of teaching at the blackboard in the academy. The academic hours were four in each morning, from eight o’clock. There were twelve cadets that formed, as yet, one class. The lesson to be given was accompanied with a lecture from Mr. Baron upon its application. The afternoons of the day were variously occupied in some brief military exercises, but much more in field sports. Our professor, George Baron, was a north of England man from Berwick-on-Tweed, or South Shields. He had been a fellow teacher with Charles Hutton of the military academy at Woolwich. Mr. Baron was of rude manner but he was an able teacher. He deemed Lieutenant Wilson’s hospitality to me as too exclusive, and wished me to join a small mess of cadets who were not comfortably lodged; and moreover there was as yet no regular cadet mess at the Point. Soon after my stating this objection to Mr. Baron, he sent his servant with a verbal order to me on this subject of mess. I declined receiving any order from the mouth of a servant. In an hour after Mr. Baron appeared at the fence of the yard called the old artillery quarters, in which I was conversing with Lieutenant Wilson. He said to me, “Do you refuse to obey my orders?” My reply was, “No, sir, but I refuse to receive a verbal order by any servant.” Mr. Baron replied, “You are a mutinous young rascal.” I sprang over the fence to assault Baron. He fled to the academy, and thither I followed him. He bolted the door in my face, and from the window of the upper

story, the "long room," he applied coarse epithets, and to which I retorted. At this time Mr. Bradock Havens, the master of the Butter-Milk Falls packet "Ranger" was passing, and Mr. Baron desired him to witness my language. In less than an hour after Cadet S. Gates called on me with a written order to consider myself in arrest. The whole of these things I faithfully reported to the Secretary of War. By some influence unknown to me General Dearborn condescended to write to me in reply, advising me to make some apology to Mr. Baron and avoid dismissal from the army. To this considerate attention Lieutenant Wilson counseled my rejoinder, stating that the officers of the post deemed Mr. Baron's conduct to me so ungentlemanly and irritating that an apology could not be made to him. At this juncture a circumstance occurred that suspended action against me, and an official report was made to the Secretary of War by the commandant, Lieutenant Osborn, that Mr. Baron had been guilty of a crime. Mr. Baron was placed in arrest in the month of November, therefore the academic course was suspended, and I was at leisure, and my arrest of no further restraint than it held me in readiness for trial. A portion of my leisure was employed in exploring the Point more minutely than I had done and the hills and redouts in the vicinity.

West Point Plain is one hundred and ninety feet above the level of the Hudson, and forms an area of seventy acres bounded by the margin of the plain overlooking the river on the east and north. The buildings which I found on my first arrival at the Point were, at the dock a stone house; on the brow of the hill above the first dwelling is the "White quarters," the residence then of the commandant, Lieutenant Osborn, and his beautiful wife; and then the artillery mess of Lieutenants Wilson and Howard. The academy is situated on the western margin of the plain, near the base of rocks on whose summit, four hundred feet above, stands Fort Putnam. Near the academy was an office on the edge of a small hollow, in which depression were the remains of a mound that had been formed at the close of the Revolution, to celebrate the birth of a Dauphin of France, our great ally in those days. To the south of this relic were the headquarters that had been the residence of General Knox and the scene of many an

humble meal partaken by Washington and his companions in arms, at this time the residence of Major George Fleming, the military store-keeper. Farther south the quarters of Lieutenant J. Wilson and A. Macomb, and a small building afterwards used for a laboratory. In front of these was the model yard, containing a miniature fortress in wood, used in the lectures on fortification, the handiwork of Colonel Rochefontaine and Major Rivardi. Around this yard Cadet Armistead and myself planted twelve elm trees. To the south and at the base of Fort Putnam Hill also were Rochefontaine's quarters, now the residence of the family of Lieutenant Colonel Williams; diagonally from the garden gate of these quarters Rochefontaine had constructed a paved foot walk to the barrack on the northeast side of the plain, now the cadet's quarters. They are two hundred and forty feet in length and were constructed by Major Rivardi, whose quarters were in a building at the northern base of the Fort Putnam Hill, by the road leading to the German Flats and Washington's Valley. Below the plain at the northwest, near the river, were the military stores, two long yellow buildings, containing the arms and accoutrements of the army of Burgoyne and also numerous brass ordnance surrendered at Saratoga, and especially a couple of brass "grasshoppers" taken by General Green in South Carolina, and by resolve of Congress presented to that very distinguished commander—all under the care of Major Fleming, who seemed to view them as almost his own property, he having served in the conquest at Berries Heights and Saratoga. To the east of these stores was the armory, and also the residence of Zebina Kingsley, the armorer, and his exemplary wife. To the east was the hospital, under the charge of Dr. Nicholas Jones, our surgeon, and brother of Mrs. Lieutenant Osborn. At the northeast angle of the plain was Fort Clinton, a dilapidated work of Generals <sup>Van Cortlandt</sup> Drefortail and Kosciusko, engineers in the Revolutionary War. This work was garnished with four twenty-four-pounder cannon, on sea coast carriages. The fort also enclosed a long stone magazine filled with powder "many years of age." The gloomy portals of these walls might remind one of Dante's Inferno. To the west, overlooking the plain and five hundred feet of elevation, is Fort Putnam, a stone casemated castle, having

on its platform a couple of twenty-four-pounder field pieces of artillery. This work was commenced in 1777, and had been repaired at various periods and never completed. The tradition was that Arnold had purposed to admit British troops from the rear of this castle to overawe the plain and works below. A surer plan for the purpose of the traitor could not have been devised. On the eastern margin of the plain and sixty feet below, there are stone steps leading to a small area whose outward edge is of rock, sloping almost vertically to the Hudson. In this area is a small basin in which had played a fountain, the whole having been constructed by Kosciusko, and was his retreat and called after him, "Kosciusko's Garden." Lieutenant Macomb and myself had repaired this garden, and it is a favorite resort.

Some ninety yards south of Rivardi's barracks is a circular depression in the plain, on the west margin of which are the ruins of the "old provost." Nearly a mile northwest of the Point a ravine leads to a cascade over a rock, the water from which winds to the Hudson at the "red house," the occasional resting place of Washington, called Washington's Valley, and is at the termination of the slope of the Crow's Nest, a mountain of fifteen hundred feet in altitude that overlooks the point and river and many miles around. Adjoining the south boundary of the plain a road leads down the bank of the Hudson to Butter-Milk Falls and to Fort Montgomery. The last named is the scene of the defeat of General Clinton, October, 1777. The road previously mentioned passed through the farm of Esquire North, whose house stood near the south boundary of the plain, a tavern that much annoyed the command at West Point by selling rum to the soldiers, because of an illegal act of Captain Stelle of the army, who in 1794 had levelled a field piece at North's house and suffered a severe penalty therefor in a law suit. Mr. North's victory proved him to be a bad citizen, and his success an evidence of the law's supremacy.

In the fall of this year, 1801, Lieutenant-Colonel Tousard had established his family in the Rochefontaine quarters as "inspector of artillery," and on his departure to this duty at various points, Niagara, etc., he requested me to escort Madame Tousard to the city, New York, a very pleasant excursion

—and in the city, with the families of William Denning, Esq., of Beverly, near West Point, and that of his son-in-law, Mr. William Henderson, my time was very agreeably passed. To the family of Mr. Denning I had been introduced by Lieutenant William Wilson, and generally dined there on Sundays. This place, Beverly, was the headquarters of General Arnold and the scene of his first open act of treason, when he escaped in his barge to the *Vulture*. My lodging room at Beverly had been the chamber of Arnold. It was at Mr. Denning's that I first met Aaron Burr, who was then a guest at Beverly. The place had been the property of Beverly Robinson, who with his family had fled to Nova Scotia in the Revolution, and the property had been confiscated under the laws of New York, and purchased by Mr. Denning.

In December I returned to West Point and reported myself to Major Jonathan Williams, the inspector of fortifications. Mr. Jefferson had required of this gentleman "to repair to West Point and make himself thoroughly acquainted with the military school recently there established, and to assume the superintendence of the same." Major Williams received the cadets at his hospitable board in the "Rivardi quarters," and stated to us the course of instruction that he proposed to pursue. Mr. Baron's case had first to be examined by a board of officers; improprieties were proved, and by order of the President, Mr. Baron was dismissed with unusual marks of disgrace, *i. e.*, his name was set upon the public buildings as a disgraced officer. The court found me "guilty of using disrespectful words to my superior officer," but I was released and ordered to duty.

Mr. Jefferson had now been in office nearly a year, and though it was said that he was opposed to the existence of the army, still there had been in this year, 1801, \$230,000 appropriated to repair and keep in order the fortifications that had been commenced in 1794 and 1798, and \$400,000 for the fabrication of arms; nevertheless I had left the works of Rhode Island nearly suspended.

Politics were not generally discoursed upon at the Point, although the political opinion of every person there was well known, and newspapers of both parties were taken. My paper was Major Ben Russel's *Columbian Centinel*, of Boston.

In the ensuing spring the new military law of Congress, of 16th March, had remodeled the army, and discharged many a worthy. Among the number was the veteran Tousard and Lieutenant Droasy, my instructors upon the public works in Newport Harbor. The case of Lieutenant-Colonel Tousard occasioned much sorrow at West Point. He was aged, and had been crippled in the service of the country; an industrious officer, well educated at the military school of La Fere in France. By the operation of the law some promotions had been made in the new corps of engineers.

In April the Academy was opened under the Professorate of Captain William Amhurst Barron, formerly a captain of artillerists and engineers, and transferred to the new corps. He had been a tutor in mathematics in the University of Cambridge, of which he was a graduate and classmate of John Quincy Adams. He was the son of a surgeon in the army of England, who belonged to the medical staff of Lord Amhurst in Canada, and for whom Captain Barron was named. He was of a social temper and kind nature, and these qualities did not impair his ability as a teacher; he had a facility in teaching. In a few weeks thereafter Captain Jared Mansfield, of the engineers, became the acting professor of Natural and Experimental Philosophy at the academy. This gentleman had a high reputation for learning, and was the author of an erudite essay on the Motion of Bodies in Free Space. He had been a teacher in Yale College, and was an intimate of Mr. Jefferson's. The course of study was Hutton's Mathematics, Enfield's Philosophy and Vaubau's Fortification, with practical exercises in the field in Surveying.

In the month of May a letter from Major McRea, the commandant at Newport, R. I., requested me to report the survey of the fortifications in Newport Harbor that had been made by me under his orders, to Major Williams, the inspector, and which I did my best to accomplish. This was my first essay, and it was favorably received by the inspector. This report occasioned me to examine what had been done by the government. I found that the inspectorship of fortifications and employment of two engineers had been authorized by Congress in the year 1799, implying a new purpose on the part of the government, to improve upon the system commenced in 1794, and somewhat enlarged in 1798. In the first years of

the government under the new Constitution—1789 and '90—the whole expenditure of the War Department had been \$137,000. In the two following years the Western Indians, instigated by our own rapacity for land, and by the policy of England to retard the progress of the Union, had brought on a war in the North-West Territory that resulted at first in the defeat of General St. Clair, but ultimately in the overthrow of the Indian power by General Wayne, by the battle of the Maumee, in 1796. The expenditures on these wars from 1791 to 1794, including the purchase of arms, had been \$923,000. In the year 1794 Congress appropriated \$76,000 for maritime fortifications, and \$96,000 for armament, and \$131,000 for Western defences. This maritime system of defence on the Atlantic border embraced the harbors of Portland, Portsmouth, Gloucester, Salem, Marblehead, Boston, Newport, New London, New York, Philadelphia, Wilmington, Del., Norfolk, Alexandria, Ocracock and Cape Fear, Georgetown, Charleston, Savannah and St. Mary's. In selecting sites for these works, those where defences had been constructed in the Revolutionary War indicated the suitable points. Colonel Rochefontaine, Major Rivardi and other officers of the regiment of artillerists and engineers were employed in the construction of small redouts. None of sufficient area could have been attempted under a fund of \$76,000, nor prosecuted usefully in the three following years; during which period \$94,000 had been appropriated among these works, including \$20,000 for West Point, appropriated in 1796. But early in the year 1798 the aspect of war with France had induced Congress to appropriate \$310,000 for fortifying the Atlantic harbors.

In the month of June I became security for the payment of a debt of \$119 by Lieutenant Strong of the army, son of Colonel David Strong, 4th Infantry. This affair gave me extreme trouble, my income being meagre. Strong left West Point with promise of early payment, but he got into bad company, became an inebriate, and soon after committed suicide in prison.

In July, by transfer, I became a cadet of engineers. The corps, as organized by the law of 16th of March, 1802, consisted of Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Williams, a gentleman of much learning and devoted to

science. He was born in Boston, and had been brought up in his father's vocation, a merchant. He had been a man of business in London, married the daughter of William Alexander, of the Scottish family of Sterling. Mr. Williams had also been the agent of the United States at Paris and Nantz under the auspices of Dr. Franklin, his kinsman, and who bequeathed to Mr. Williams a part of his library. Mr. Jefferson had said that Mr. Williams resembled Dr. Franklin in character and pursuits of science. It was at the instance of Mr. Jefferson that Colonel Williams was placed at the head of the corps of engineers. The next officer in that corps was Major Decius Wadsworth, a graduate of Yale, a good mathematician. He had been a captain of the artillerists and engineers. Then followed Captain William A. Barron and J. Mansfield, previously mentioned, and Lieutenant James Wilson, a highly educated gentleman, the son of the Judge of the United States Supreme Court, who had distinguished himself in the Constitutional Convention of Pennsylvania, and Lieutenant Alexander Macomb, late a cornet of dragoons and aid-de-camp to General William North, the adjutant-general of the late Provisional Army. Neither Wilson nor Macomb had been cadets. The number of cadets at the academy was twelve. Among them were Simon Magruder Levy, from a respectable Jew family of Baltimore, and formerly a sergeant in Captain Lockwood's company of infantry, and thence promoted to cadet for his merit and mathematic attainments. He was now twenty-five years of age. Walker Keith Armistead, from Virginia, a very amiable young gentleman of eighteen years of age, and to whom I was much attached; Henry B. Jackson, son of the major of artillery, and John Livingston, a merchant of Norfolk, Va.; then Ambrose Porter, a man of six feet height and abounding in story-telling talent; Joseph Proveaux, from Charleston, S. C., a youth of seventeen, of generous spirit but passionate, addicted to duelling and much opposed to study; two brothers, Samuel and William Gates, the sons of Captain Lemuel Gates of the army—the former a good scholar and very taciturn—the latter was the youngest cadet at the Point, very active, a sportsman and a general favorite among the cadets; Hannibal Montresor Allen, a

wild youth of seventeen years, the son of Ethan of Ticonderoga memory; Julius Frederick Heileman, a handsome youth of sixteen years, the son of a surgeon in our army at Fort Jay, who had belonged to the corps of Colonel Baum of the Hessian corps of England, at the battle of Bennington.

During the summer I was attached to the company of artillery of Captain George Izard, as acting lieutenant. In some infantry exercises a private soldier, Wm. Goodwin, on the left flank of the company, had lodged several cartridges in his musket before it gave fire. The piece burst, wounded Goodwin severely and prostrated me upon the ground, from which I was confined to the hospital for several days. My captain was the son of Ralph Izard, the United States Senator from South Carolina. Captain Izard had been educated at the Military School of Metz, in France; and at the Experimental School of Metz, he was esteemed to be an accomplished officer. He had a fine collection of books and charts, and very kindly permitted me to look into them. He was at this time suffering from a wound received in a duel with Mr. Pierre of Philadelphia. The cause was the captain's declining to fulfill an engagement with the sister of Mr. Pierre, but without the least injury to the honor of the lady.

During this year there was no new fort commenced in our maritime harbors, and the appropriation of \$70,500 was not sufficient to keep the redouts in repair.

Early in this summer of 1802 Lieutenant Macomb and myself repaired the dilapidated garden of Kosciusko, relaid the stone stairway to the dell, and opened the little fountain at the base of "Kosciusko's Rock" in the garden; planted flowers and vines and constructed several seats, which made the spot a pleasant resort for a reading party. In the exercises in the field, Colonel Williams commenced with the cadets a survey of the country about the Point by a series of triangles, to determine the position and altitude of the adjacent mountains. It was found that Crow's Nest summit was one thousand four hundred and eighty feet above West Point Plain; the Break Neck, one thousand five hundred; Anthony's Nose, below the Point, nine hundred; the Sugar Loaf, seven hundred; Fort Putnam, four hundred; and the plain itself one hundred and ninety feet above the Hudson.

On the first of September commenced the first public examination at the Military Academy, conducted by Colonel Williams and Professors Barron and Mansfield. The text books were Hutton's Mathematics, Enfield's Philosophy, Vaubaû's Fortification and Scheet's Artillery; using the model front of a fort that had been long at the Point, constructed, as the tradition ran, by Rivardi and Rochefontaine.

Cadets J. G. Swift and S. M. Levy were the graduates, and they were both commissioned to rank in the order just named from 12th October, 1802. On the 18th of October Colonel Williams invited me to accompany him to Albany, the object being to identify certain estate documents that were to be sent to England; and thither we proceeded on board an Albany sloop, (and found our fellow passengers to be Judge Leonard Gansvoort and his beautiful niece, Miss Storm of New York). We had a long passage, and arrived at Albany on *fifth* day. At this time the trial between Gouverneur and Kemble and a French mercantile house was in progress, and we listened to the eloquent arguments of Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr. General Hamilton recognized his acquaintance of Newport two years previously, and he invited me to dine with him at his father-in-law's—General Philip Schuyler's. After dinner, among the subjects of conversation was the canal and improved navigation of the Mohawk, to connect with Lake Ontario at Oswego. It was graphically described by General Schuyler, who, though suffering with gout, was eloquent on this subject. He regretted that the locks were too small, and the Mohawk unmanageable. He spoke of the object of the tour of Washington in 1789 to be, among other enquiries, to learn what improvements could be made to connect the Hudson and the lakes. He also mentioned Mr. Western, an English engineer, who had been over the Mohawk route and was deemed a skillful engineer, etc. The conversation of General Schuyler on the Revolution was very instructive. General Hamilton spoke of Washington visiting General Webb at Fort Lee, and that General Webb was not there, at which it was said that General Washington threw his sword to the earth in a passion at the absence of Webb, and swore: General Hamilton said it was not so; General Washington was much displeased, and expressed himself in strong terms

of disapprobation. In the evening an amusing scene occurred at Rannie's Exhibition. He placed a card in the hand of General Hamilton, promising to turn it into a bank bill. The General joined heartily in the general laugh and joke at the failure of the mountebank to redeem his pledge. The following day General Hamilton, Colonel Williams and General Schuyler discussed the subject of the Military Academy, the colonel giving his ideas and purposes to encourage an enlargement of the present plan; General Hamilton approved, and he regretted that the Book of Instruments that had been collected at West Point during the administration of Washington had been lost, by the burning of the "Old Provost" at the Point, in 1794. He said that the fire was by some deemed a design of such officers as had been sent to the Point for instruction in the arts and sciences, as provided for by law. This building had been of stone, and was situate at the edge of a hollow south of the barrack before mentioned; and the story ran, at the Point, that behind the Provost had been the scene of a duel between Colonel Rochefontaine and my friend Lieutenant William Wilson; in fact Wilson said so to me, and that but for an accident in backing the pistol cock it had been a fatal affair to the colonel—Anno 1795. Colonel Williams and myself examined the old octagonal Dutch church, that stood at the junction of Market and State Streets, and the old Hall where, in 1754, a congress had been held, which had been described to him by his friend and relative, Dr. Franklin. After purchasing Neetat's General History and the Works of Hogarth, from Leavenworth and Whiting, the colonel and myself returned to West Point by an Albany sloop; and being becalmed at Newburg, walked over Butter Hill and the Crow's Nest, and arrived at the Point the first of November.

On the 12th of this month a meeting was assembled, in the "long room" of the Academy, consisting of Lieutenant-Colonel Williams, Major Wadsworth, Professors Barron and Mansfield, Lieutenants Wilson, Macomb, Swift and Levy, and Cadet Armistead, for the purpose of forming a Military Philosophical Society, to promote military science and history. This society soon embraced as members nearly every distinguished gentleman in the navy and Union, and several in Europe. Its funds were invested in New York city stock.

The academy was closed in December, and I visited my parents in Taunton, and accompanied my mother to visit her mother at New Bedford. This visit had several objects. One of them was to receive from my grandmother something left me by her husband, Thomas Delano, who had ever distinguished me with marked affection, and who had now been three years deceased. I found the estate still unsettled, and returned with hope deferred. Among my mother's friends was an elderly lady, Ma'am Wilbur, the sister of Dr. Gideon Williams, who had the fancy to teach children to read. I had been her pupil. The mode of Mrs. Wilbur was a species of musical cadence, spelling each syllable and sounding the same in time, with open and clear voice, in the due order, until the whole word and sentence was spelled and sounded simultaneously by the whole class—one of the best modes of acquiring distinct pronunciation. We all loved her heartily, and I presume none of her pupils ever visited Taunton during her life without paying their respects to Ma'am Wilbur.

While at New Bedford my grandmother Delano gave me an account of her ancestors, the Swains of Nantucket, who came thither from Newburyport when the island was purchased. Her father married Eleanor Folger, the sister of Abiah, the mother of Dr. Franklin. Her "father was a ship-master, and commanded a whaling vessel in the South Seas."

1803. In the month of January I made a jaunt to Milton Hill and Boston, and, with my cousin John Swift of the former place, visited the graves of our ancestors in the "old burying ground of Milton," and thence to the former residence of Thomas Swift, our immediate ancestor, as before mentioned in this diary; where, suspended over the mantel is an emblazonry of the arms\* of the Swifts of Yorkshire, that had been brought over by our ancestor Thomas. In Boston I met my friend Mr. Gardner and Colonel Samuel Bradford. To the latter I had a letter of introduction from his brother-in-law, Colonel Williams. I also met Colonel Joseph May of Boston, who gave me many particulars of the "Mohawk Indians," who had destroyed the tea in Boston Harbor—the precursor of the Revolution. Colonel May had been a friend of my grandfather, Samuel Swift, who he said had been active in promoting that event of destroying the tea.

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\* The same from which the coat-of-arms in this work is taken. — *H. E.*

In the month of February I returned to my father's in Taunton. My sister Nancy was now "in company," and one of the most beautiful women I ever saw; my brother William Henry, an active and noisy boy not yet in jacket and trowsers. My father's house, that had been rebuilt on the ruins of the one lost by fire, was a very commodious and pleasant residence. The acquaintances of my boyhood received me with much kindness, and my father's friends with hospitality. My leave expiring in March, I took a packet from "the Ware," the head of navigation on Taunton River, and by Newport through Long Island Sound, in which we encountered a north-west gale and snow storm, and caught a glimpse of Huntington Light at the moment when the main sail split by the wind and weight of snow, in which plight the packet was driven ashore upon the beach of Long Island. The next day the crew succeeded in floating the vessel and we had a quick run to New York, and arrived at West Point the day after, just in time to answer to my name at the muster roll-call at the close of the month.

In the month of April by order of the Secretary of War, Colonel Williams, as chief engineer, left West Point for Wilmington, North Carolina, and Charleston, South Carolina; Major Wadsworth to New London and Newport. The repairs of the fortifications had heretofore been conducted under the direction of officers of the artillerists and engineers, and this movement of the War Department was to commence the action of the new corps of engineers. Lieutenant James Wilson had orders to repair Forts Mifflin and Norfolk, and Lieutenant Macomb the works in New York Harbor and Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Congress authorized the enlistment of twenty-one men as artificers and aids to the engineer service, and also a teacher of French and drawing was authorized at the Military Academy, and \$109,000 appropriated to repair the forts, the arsenals, and the armories of the United States.

The excitement in reference to the cession of Louisiana, and consequent prospects of war with Spain, had caused an appropriation of a million and a half, and also of \$80,000 for the calling out of the militia, and \$25,000 for western arsenals; looking to Baton Rouge as a point for that purpose in case of trouble at New Orleans.

This spring George Bomford was appointed a cadet. My acquaintance with this young gentleman commenced at a country store opposite to West Point, in Warren's Valley, where I had gone to kill trout, and where Bomford had established himself as a dealer, and from the proximity of the marsh he had taken the ague and fever. I invited him to my quarters at the Point, where he regained his health; and on the strength of my acquaintance with General Dearborn, in the Baron affair, I wrote an application to him for a cadet's warrant for Bomford, and in a short period the warrant was received. Bomford was well informed on many subjects, ingenious and musical. Soon after his appointment he made good progress at his books, and became our principal in the laboratory, in which place Bomford and myself had a narrow escape. A rocket had taken fire while in the mould and driving, the flame from which reached the floor above, upon which, on cartridge paper, was a mass of gun powder. Both of us sprang to the window and became jammed for want of space for both, and there struggled until the rocket was exhausted. Bomford was born on Long Island, the reputed son of a British officer.

In this month of May Captain George Izard marched his company of artillery to Norfolk. There had been some refusal on his part to obey a requisition of Colonel Williams for a detachment from his company. To avoid future collision this order to march had been given. Soon after this event Colonel Williams returned to West Point from North Carolina, accompanied by Cadet William McRee from Wilmington. The colonel informed the corps of engineers that in consequence of a difference between himself and the Secretary of War on the subject of the rights of rank and command, he, the colonel, had resigned his commission. This intelligence was a grief to every one at the Point. The cause of it was the unmilitary and needless obscurity in the terms of the law of 16th March, 1802, in reference to rank and command.

In the month of June Francis De Masson was appointed teacher of the French Language and Topographical Drawing at the academy, and Lieutenant Levy and myself became his pupils in both branches.

At the celebration of Independence this year, while superintending the

salute at Fort Clinton, the concussion produced by a twenty-four pounder brought blood from my left ear, and injured permanently my hearing. This was occasioned by negligence in position.

On the 21st of this month of July, the family of our worthy chief left the Point, breaking up our principal social circle, and depriving the cadets of an important source of instruction. Colonel Williams had been the friend and adviser of every one of us.

In the following month I was summoned as a member of a court martial, on the trial of Lieutenant Van Rensselaer of the army, at Fort Jay; at the termination of which, on leave, I visited Colonel Williams at Perth Amboy, where, with Lieutenant A. Macomb, was presented our views of an appeal to Mr. Jefferson to commend to Congress a modification of the law of March, and thus restore the colonel to the corps of engineers. The colonel declined any action, but we wrote a suitable letter to the President and took our leave of our retired chief, and proceeded to Belleville, N. J., the pleasant residence of Macomb's family on the Passaic, and with them made an excursion to the falls of that river. On returning to West Point in September, we found the academic affairs much deranged by the resignation of Professor Mansfield, upon whom Mr. Jefferson had conferred the surveyor-generalship of Ohio, upon which service Mr. Mansfield entered in the fall of this year. His nephew, Cadet J. G. Totten, became an assistant in this service. The departure of this family was a serious loss to our society. Mrs. Mansfield was a very intelligent lady, and her conversation not only agreeable but instructive to the young gentlemen who found a welcome at her residence.

In the month of November a general court martial was convened at Frederick Town, in Maryland, and on the 12th of the month with Lieutenant Charles Wolstoncroft of our army (a native of England, and brother of the notorious Mary Wolstoncroft Godwin,) and Lieutenant W. R. Boot, also a native of England, and Lieutenant R. W. Osborne, a native of St. Croix, and Lieutenant William Hossack (the brother of the doctor of that name) and myself, also under orders to attend this court, took the stage at Paulus Hook, and, passing a day in Philadelphia at Frances' hotel in

Furth street, we arrived in Baltimore at the Indian Queen, and on the 18th found ourselves at the celebrated tavern of Mr. Kimball, in Frederick.

This court was convened for the trial of Colonel Thomas Butler of the army, charged with disobedience of the orders of General Wilkinson, which order was for the army to crop the hair of the head, and the whiskers to be no lower than the line from the ear to the mouth. The colonel denied the power of the general so to deprive a citizen of the United States of that which nature had conferred for use and ornament, and the colonel appeared at the court with a long queue of hair. The court was also to investigate the case of Major George Ingersoll, charged with selling milk in the garrison of Fort Jay while commandant of that post; an accusation made by Lieut. Wolstoncroft, who was himself charged with shooting the ducks of Major Ingersoll while in arrest at the said Fort Jay. For such objects — though connected with points of military discipline — officers were summoned from the extremities of the Union. While these trials were in progress, and pending the recesses of the court, the thirteen members and other attending officers enjoyed the hospitality of the Marylanders, especially those of Roger B. Taney, Esq., a counsellor of distinction, and John Hanson Thomas and his father, Dr. Philip Thomas, George Murdock, Capt. William Campbell of Monocacy, Richard Pitts, Baker Johnson and Col. McPherson, all gentlemen of note and distinguished Federalists. Such an association was the occasion of some slander at Washington City. Among the Democrats there it was said that these officers were too familiar with the opponents of the Government. The truth was, that every officer in attendance and of the court were Federalists, save Major James Bruff and Lieut. Wolstoncroft, an English gentleman. The president of the court was Colonel Henry Burbeck. He had been a pupil of Colonel Gridley, the engineer of the American army at Boston in 1776, who said that Washington was his model in politics. Lieutenant Colonel Constant Freeman, an officer of merit who had been employed on the boundary line between the Spanish Possessions and the United States, and his brother, Captain N. Freeman, a man of letters, were members, as also was Colonel Jacob Kingsbury, a veteran of the Revolutionary War. He had been a sergeant in the Con-

necticut line at the seige of Yorktown—a fine sample of modest integrity and common sense. At our mess table he recounted the scenes before “York.” He was at the storming of the redout on the right, under Colonel Hamilton, October, 1781. Colonel Kingsbury remarked, “I was leading my squad through a small gap in the abbatis, and was coming over the parapet when something struck me a blow on the head, and my first consciousness was in finding myself extended upon the platform inside the redout.” My former commander, Major William McRea of Virginia, who used to amuse us with accounts of General Knox, the then Secretary of War, his orders and notions for equipping and training the “sub legions” of General Wayne’s army; also Captain Stelle of the artillery, formerly commanding at West Point—he was from New Jersey; Captain McClelland from Maryland, and Captain John Saunders, an eccentric gentleman from Virginia; Lieutenant James House from Baltimore, a native of Connecticut, a gentleman of much taste and an artist; also my friend Lieutenant Alexander Macomb, full of frolic and fun, an accomplished gentleman, and Lieutenant E. Beebee of New York. There was also Major Thomas H. Cushing, the adjutant and inspector of the army, a gentleman of high intelligence and who, under the orders of General Wilkinson prosecuted the trial of Colonel Butler. In December the court terminated its proceedings. No other consequence of an historic character has followed this trial save the perpetual knot hole in the coffin that we see in Washington Irving’s Knickerbocker’s History of New York, through which hole still protrudes the queue of Colonel Tom Butler as he there lays in his shroud. The officers reciprocated the courtesy of Frederick by a ball and supper given at Mrs. Kimball’s, arranged with much and peculiar taste by the advice of Lieutenant Macomb.

On 23d December the members of the court and all the other officers proceeded to Georgetown and to the war office in Washington, and paid their respects to General Dearborn, the Secretary of War. The general invited me to dine at his residence in Georgetown, where I thanked him for the trouble he had taken in my affair with Baron at West Point in 1801. The secretary said that no injury had resulted to me, although he could not

approve of the disrespect that I had been excited to show to Mr. Baron. On my taking leave, after being presented to Mr. Jefferson, the secretary said that he should require my services in the ensuing spring to repair the fort on Cape Fear, North Carolina, and also said that such work had not been previously given to the graduates (three) of the military academy because of their youthfulness and inexperience.

The subject that had mostly engrossed conversation in the past year, of a public nature, was Mr. Jefferson's purchase of Louisiana. The general idea among thinking men was that the United States, already large enough, would be injured by extension, but the people will hardly be restrained from migrating beyond the Mississippi. It was therefore wise in Mr. Jefferson to settle as far as possible future questions by peaceable purchase, trusting to the country to remedy any constitutional defect in what the Federalists deemed to be a dangerous precedent. The alteration in the Constitution in the mode of electing a President was by the Federalists deemed anything but an improvement, nay, that it was a breach in the unity of that almost sacred instrument, moreover there must ever be more than two men in the country at least equally qualified for the presidential office. The change was deemed a strong measure to sustain the power of party that had already become proscriptive.

1804. By leave from the Secretary of War the remainder of the winter was passed with my father's only brother, Jonathan Swift, at Alexandria, who had there married the daughter Ann of General Daniel Roberdeau of the army of the Revolution and of the Congress of 1778 that formed the Confederation. He related to me incidents of his travels in England and Ireland in the years 1786-7 and of his visit to the country of our ancestors at Rotheram in Yorkshire, and to some distant relatives in Dublin. These friends presented him a portrait of Dean Swift and some relics of that personage. In Alexandria, by the introduction of my uncle, I was received courteously by Mr. William Fitzhugh of Chatham, Mr. William Herbert, Mr. John Potts and his beautiful daughter Sophia, and also by the Rosins of Notley Hall, and Addisons of Oxen Hill in the vicinity. In February my first visit to Congress was made. The prominent topics of discussion

were the surplus revenue, as to what could be done with it; and here came up incidentally or accidentally, views of improving the country by roads and canals. The troubles with the Barbary powers had its share in debate, and also a scheme to widen the privileges of naturalization, also the contemplated impeachment of Samuel Chase, a sound judge and honest, though of violent temper, and which was deemed more an assault upon the permanency of the judiciary than from any belief in the malversation of that judge. In exploring the unfinished capitol I found the portraits of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette, that had been presented by that king to Congress in 1779. They were fine specimens of art, though not respectfully treated, for they were suspended in a committee-room of the capitol. I made in Washington the acquaintance of my fellow boarder, Luther Martin, Esquire, and heard from him some of the scenes that occurred in the Maryland Convention, of which he was a member at the time of the adoption of the Constitution; and also with General William Eaton, the hero of Derne, in Africa, who gave a recital of his efforts in that useless expedition. With the other gentlemen of our mess we partook in the celebration of the birth of Washington, at Georgetown. Had also the honor to dine with Mr. Jefferson, and to converse with the Secretary of War upon his purpose to send me to North Carolina, as before mentioned. Early in March, in company with Thomas Cadwallader of Philadelphia, proceeded to Frederick Town and passed a day, and thence to Lancaster, in Pennsylvania, where Mr. Cadwallader introduced me to the speaker, and we listened to some debates in the halls of the state, and then we departed for Philadelphia, where we arrived on the 9th. The next day made a jaunt to Germantown to see my father's friend, Isaac Roberdeau, the son of General Roberdeau before mentioned. Found him and his young family at his father-in-law's, Rev. Samuel Blair. Mr. Roberdeau had been employed with Andrew Ellicott in laying out the city of Washington. He mentioned the interest that General Washington took in this work, and of his frequent visits from Mount Vernon on horseback to look at the progress of the work, and also at the plans of Major L'Enfant, who had designed a very extensive elevation for the capitol. It was his purpose to give the building a front of six hundred

feet, enclosed in a collonade of the Corinthian order, the columns to be one hundred and ten feet in altitude. On my return to the city with Lièutenant William Wilson, formerly of West Point, paid our respects to the disbanded veteran Tousard, and also to his lady.

From Philadelphia on my way to West Point, at Elizabeth Town on the 14th of March, had the pleasure to visit my friend Colonel Williams, who resided in that place. He introduced me to Count Reimsowitz, the poet, and also the friend of Kosciusko, and found him a very interesting narrator of the wrongs of Poland. I also met here James Ricketts, Esq., a Jamaica planter. His residence here was a very pleasant and hospitable mansion. I also saw Mr. Bellasis (Viscount Bolinbroke,) in retirement from England for some scandalous cause. He seemed a morose man. I was much better pleased with the Rev. Mr. Kellock, to whom the colonel introduced me, and who is an able Presbyterian preacher. From the residence of Colonel Williams, and in company with Lieutenant Macomb, rode to Belleville, and repeated our visit to Passaic Falls, and also to his father, Alexander Macomb, in Broadway, New York. This gentleman had been a very extensive merchant in Detroit. He mentioned seeing the noted Daniel Boone a prisoner in Detroit, captured by some mistake. The governor then was a Colonel Hamilton, who treated Mr. Boone with much kindness, and gave him an order on Mr. Macomb for any merchandise that Mr. Boone chose to take home to his family in Kentucky. Mr. Boone was thankful for the favor, but would only take a *paper* of pins and a *pound* of tea for his wife—a characteristic evidence of the self respect of Boone. The last of the month, with six hundred and ninety-two dollars received from Lieutenant Charles Wolstoncroft, paymaster, to pay the cadets at the academy, arrived at the Point in season to be reported present on the monthly rolls. The academy was opened on the first of April, under the auspices of Professors Barron and Francis De Masson. The latter gentleman was an emigrant from France and St. Domingo; he was of the Royal School, an highly educated man. His father had been president of a provincial parliament; had suffered by the Revolution, and also by the insurrection of the slaves of St. Domingo.

Congress had appropriated one hundred and nine thousand dollars for the reparation of the forts in the current year, including armories and arsenals.

At the close of the month of April I received orders from the War Department to repair to North Carolina and examine the harbor of Cape Fear, and to report a plan of defence therefor, and also to direct the execution of a contract with General Benjamin Smith of Belvidere, to construct a battery at the site of old Fort Johnson, in Smithville, of a material called "tapia." Macomb was sent to Rocky Mount in South Carolina, Levy to Fort Jackson, in Georgia, and W. Amistead to Fort Nelson, at Norfolk.

In taking leave of my *alma mater*, Major Wadsworth being the superintendent, I was much annoyed by my liability for the debt of Lieutenant Strong. The paymaster had been authorized to advance me two months' pay, which, with the sale of books and my watch, enabled me to discharge the debt and relieve my endorser, Major George Fleming—and also to retain enough to defray my expenses to Wilmington. The veteran major had been very kind to stand between the law and myself. He had been an officer of artillery, and was at the surrender of Burgoyne in 1777; at the present, and for a long time he had been the military store-keeper at West Point, and he abounded in reminiscences of the war of '76, and especially of Saratoga and Yorktown—at both of which surrenders he had been present, a conductor of ordnance. He had been selected by General Knox when, Secretary of War, for his present office and station.

Among my associates left at West Point was Cadet William Gates. He was recovering from a wound recently received in the hand by a wooden ramrod discharged from a fowling piece. In the absence of our post surgeon I had in vain rowed to Peekskill to seek the aid of Doctor Strang. He declined the trouble, may be from a fear that he might not easily recover his fee from the United States, or from the slender means of a cadet. By the time of my return Gates' hand had become extremely swollen. He bore well my essay and successful cutting out of numerous splinters, filling the cavity with lint and laudanum from the hospital. The hand was saved, and was considered a fortunate result, though it was

disfigured for want of a more judicious and early surgical treatment.

On my route to the South had appointed to visit my former chief, Colonel Williams, to learn what had been his views of the works needed in the harbor of Cape Fear. I found him at his country seat, Mount Pleasant, near Philadelphia, on the Schuylkill, in the month of May. The colonel introduced me to the family of Mr. Clement Biddle, formerly quartermaster-general of Washington's army; the family an intellectual group living in enviable harmony. And I also renewed my acquaintance with Colonel Cadwallader. Colonel Williams gave me letters of introduction to Joshua Grainger Wright, Esq., General Benjamin Smith and Mr. John Lord—gentlemen of Wilmington, North Carolina. The remembrance of the disinterested friendship of Colonel Williams forms one of the brightest reminiscences of my life.

I made a visit on my way south at the Indian Queen, in Baltimore, to pass a little time with my cousin William Roberdeau Swift, son of Jonathan. He was in the counting-house of William Taylor, for whom this cousin, as supercargo of the Orozimbo ("India-man,") made a large amount of money. William and myself revived the bygone days on Taunton Green, and among our schoolmates there. His memory was very minute and redundant. At the Indian Queen I was the fellow boarder of General Arthur St. Clair, who honored me with his acquaintance, and gave me the story of his unfortunate battle with the Indians in Ohio, 1791. An impressive dignity distinguished the deportment of this soldier, and once president of the congress of the United States. I accompanied the veteran to Washington, whither he went to revive a claim for money expended by him in the war of the Revolution, to meet the now pressing necessities of age and poverty.

The last of May I reported myself to General Dearborn, at the war office in Washington, who again presented me to Mr. Jefferson, and I met at his table the Secretary of State, Mr. Madison, and other public officers. The President is remarkable for his urbanity to young men. An observation of his is that "Young and not old men are the most instructive associates." True, no doubt, in reference to political future purposes. At this (1806)

dinner, among the subjects of conversation was that of gun boats. The President complacently gave me an opportunity to express my thoughts thereon, and with, it may be, the vanity and candour of youth, my notions were given adversely to the system. This uncourtly opposition to a favorite project was received by Mr. Jefferson in a kind manner, and he replied: "My young friend, your opinion may be popular, but remember that in time our navy may cause us to become as arrogant upon the ocean as ever Britain has been. True, the commercial necessities of a maritime people make a navy popular, but its success will encourage us to depart from the simplicity of our institutions." Mr. Jefferson jocosely asked me, "To which of the political creeds do you adhere?" My reply was, that as yet I had done no political act, but that my family were Federalists. Mr. Jefferson rejoined: "There are many men of high talent and integrity in that party, but it is not the rising power": a hint that was lost on me, though General Dearborn reminded me of it in a short period thereafter. The style of Mr. Jefferson's dinners is truly tasteful, and the conversation as free as is consistent with the respect due to a chief magistrate.

By leave of General Dearborn I sojourned a few days on my route at Alexandria, where, meeting Mrs. Lewis at Mr. Potts', I was invited by that lady to make a pilgrimage to the tomb of her deceased connection, General Washington. Mrs. Lewis presented me a relic of the general, and gave me many anecdotes of his life, and presented me a button from the coat that he wore in "Braddock's defeat" in 1755. It was embossed yellow metal marked "56th Reg<sup>t</sup>." I long used this as a letter seal. The Mediterranean squadron, consisting of the frigates Congress, Essex, and other vessels, was at this time at anchor in the Potomac opposite Alexandria, under orders to coerce Tripoli to justice. The officers of the squadron enjoyed the hospitable courtesy of the Alexandrians, and at the adjacent seats of Notley Hall and Oxen Hill. On this occasion I made the acquaintance of Mr. Tunis Craven at these parties—a remarkably handsome man. He was an agent in the navy department. I also met here Captain John Heth of Richmond, and of the United States army. On the 12th June proceeded with him to that capital of Virginia,

where he introduced me to his relative, Chief Justice Marshall, commonly called General Marshall in Richmond. His manner is among the most bland, unaffected, and conciliating of any that I have met. Knowing that he had been a captain in the Virginia line at the battle of Monmouth, I asked him of the conduct of General Charles Lee on that day. General Marshall replied that Lee's conduct on that oppressively hot day was not failing in intrepidity, nor in external personal respect to General Washington. His vanity had led him into error, and he was too proud to acknowledge it. I inquired of the rumor of profane language used on that occasion. General Marshall said the rumor was not true, though severe language was used—not disrespectful. General Marshall said he was an accomplice of Mifflin, Gates, Lovell, Rust, Conway and others in the celebrated conspiracy, but was not a secret but open foe. Gates left a record of his infamy which, with Washington's original scathing letter to Gates, I saw in the hands of the worthy John Pintard, secretary of an insurance company in Wall Street, New York—who had a view of all the MSS. left by Gates.

In prosecuting my journey to North Carolina I had the pleasure to accompany General Marshall to Raleigh, where the United States Supreme Court was to hold a session. The chief justice is sometimes an "absent man." As an instance, he came on this occasion from home in a dark blue silk dress without an overcoat. It gave me pleasure to take from my trunk and lend him a new blue cloth cloak, that my father had given me, the stage ride being on a chilly morning. On our arrival at High Towers Tavern, near the borders of the State, the general made a mint julep for our refreshment, the first of those drams that I ever saw. The jaunt to Raleigh was to me agreeable and instructive, the affability of the general favoring me with many items of the close of Mr. Adams' administration, of whom the general spoke in high personal respect; but he disapproved of the rupture in the Cabinet to which Mr. Adams had assented, debilitating the power of those who had elected him and strengthening the influence of Mr. Jefferson's partisans. In taking leave of this gentleman he gave me a warm invitation to visit him in Richmond, and which I hope to do.

Arriving in the middle of June at Fayetteville, I met there Nicholas Tillinghast of Taunton Green, my schoolmate. He had come from the manufactories in Pawtucket, R. I., as their agent, and we revived the memory of our school days. Proceeding by the right bank of the Cape Fear River to Negro Head Point ferry, opposite Wilmington, I arrived at Mrs. Meek's boarding house in that town on the anniversary of the battle of Bunker Hill, and on that day reported myself by letter to my chief, Major Wadsworth at West Point, using the day and 1775 as the figurative date of my letter by way of friendly memento. After presenting my letter of introduction I took the packet for Fort Johnston, and there paid my respects to the commandant of the post, Lieutenant John Fergus, an uncle of Cadet McRee, and commenced a happy acquaintance with the surgeon of the post, John Lightfoot Griffin, and with whom established our quarters at Mrs. Ann McDonald's. Here I also met General Benjamin Smith, and to the last of the month had conferences with him as to the best mode of executing his contract with the war department in the construction of a battery on the site of the old Fort Johnston, Smithville.

Early in July I employed Mr. Wilson Davis, one of the most intelligent of the pilots, and with his aid I sounded the entrance over the main bar of shifting sand into the harbor of Cape Fear, and also the entrance at the new inlet, and then viewed the capacity of the anchorage within, together with the relative position of the several points of land near the entrances, of which I made a plot, and upon which I based my report of 26th July to the Secretary of War. The substance of this report was that the main objects to be secured were those that had been set forth by my late chief, Colonel Williams, to wit: to cover an anchorage in the harbor and to command its entrance by a small enclosed work on Oak Island, and an enclosed battery at Federal Point, at the new inlet, and also to complete the battery of tapia at the site of old Fort Johnston, the last being contracted for by General B. Smith. Pending the decision of the war department upon this report, much of the summer was a leisure among agreeable families from Wilmington, that passed the warm season in slight frame houses at "The Fort," as the village of Smithville is called. Among these was the family

of Captain James Walker, to whose daughter Louisa and her cousin Eliza Younger, I was introduced at a dinner given to Dr. Griffin and myself by Captain Walker. There were the families of Mr. John Lord and of the founder of the place, Mr. John Potts, and of General Benjamin Smith, who was to construct the public work under a contract, and of Captain Callender, the surveyor of the port, who had been an officer of the army in the war of the Revolution, etc. General Smith became the governor of the State. He owned a large extent of property on Cape Fear River, and was of the family of Landgrave Thomas Smith, the colonial governor of South Carolina in the preceding century. He had become security for the collector of the port of Wilmington; who was a defaulter to the government, and it was to discharge this liability that General Smith had contracted to build the "tapia" work at "The Fort." His lady, Mrs. Sarah Dry Smith, was highly accomplished, and was an hospitable friend to Dr. Griffin and myself, and one of the finest characters in the country. She was the daughter and heiress of Colonel William Dry, the former collector in the colonial time, and was also of the king's council. This lady was also a direct descendant from Cromwell's admiral, Robert Blake. There was also residing at "The Fort" the family of Benjamin Blaney. A native he was of Roxbury, near Boston. He had migrated to Carolina as a carpenter, and had by industry acquired a competence to enable him to dispense aid to the sick and needy and other charities, in the performance of which he was an example of usefulness and charity, and unostentation. Most of the families at the fort were Federalists, and though all deplored the event, they were the more sensibly impressed with the news of the death of Alexander Hamilton, who in this month of July had been slain in a duel with Colonel Burr, the account of which had been written to me by Colonel Williams. The whole Union was in a measure moved to grief by this sad event. Colonel Hamilton occupied a large space in the public mind. He had been the able leader of Federalism—a class of men who may in truth be said to have been actuated by far higher motives than those of mere party.

My advices from West Point were that Major Wadsworth, Captain W. A.

Barron and Mr. De Masson formed the academic corps; that Lieutenant Wilson was on duty at Fort Mifflin, Lieutenant Macomb in South Carolina, and Lieutenant Armistead in New York.

In my excursions on the waters of Cape Fear I was aided by Captain Walker, Dr. Griffin and Mr. Blaney, who as sportsmen were familiar with the numerous shoals and channels and anchorages thereof, so that the returns were not only in game, but also in giving me knowledge of the capacity of this harbor, situate as it is on one of the most shallow and troublesome coasts to navigators. The anchorage, covered from the ocean by Bald Head, or Smith's Island, extending from the main bar to the new inlet, and upon which island there is a growth of live oak and palmetto, and abounding with fallow deer.

Intimacy with Mr. Walker furnished me with many items of the war in Carolina, with which he was familiar, although not partaking of the battles, for he had been a moderate Tory, adverse to taking arms against the mother country, in which his friend and brother-in-law, Louis De Rosset, had influenced him. Mr. De Rosset was of the king's council. Mr. Walker had been the executor of General James Moor, the planner and director of the American force at the battle of Moor's Creek, fought by Lillington and Shingsley. From the papers of that officer he had gathered many an anecdote of the march of Cornwallis. Mr. Walker had been in the regulating war of 1770, and then commanded a company in the battle of Allamance, in the western part of the state. He was cured of much of his Toryism by the tyrannical conduct of Major J. H. Craig, the British governor at Wilmington, afterwards governor-general of Canada. The conduct of this man had been oppressive and needlessly cruel to the people of Wilmington, and Capt. Walker had been able to influence some relief to those who were in arrest, etc. He with his brother-in-law, John Du Bois, had been appointed commissioners to arrange the cartel of prisoners, and to negotiate for the families who were to leave Wilmington therein when Cornwallis marched to Virginia, thus showing the confidence that both Whig and Tory had reposed in those gentlemen. Mr. Walker's family were of the settlers called "Retainers," coming from Ireland under the auspices

of Colonel Sampson, and of his father, Robert Walker. Among the families of these "Retainers" were those of the Holmes, Owens, and Kernans, etc., now become independent planters and distinguished citizens. The father of Capt. Walker, the above Robert, was of the same family with that of the Protestant hero, the Rev. George Walker of Londonderry. The mother of Capt. Walker was Ann, of the family of Montgomery, of Mount Alexander in Ireland, and had made a runaway match with Robert Walker. Capt. James Walker married Magdalen M. Du Bois, the daughter of John Du Bois and Gabriella De Rosset, his wife.

In the month of September, in reply to my report of 26th July, I received orders from the war department to proceed with so much of the work therein contemplated as was embraced by General Smith's contract upon the tapia work at the site of old Fort Johnston, that had been there constructed by the then colonial Governor Johnston from South Carolina, Anno 1740. In clearing away the sand I found much of the tapia walls then erected finer in their whole length, on a front of the ordinary half bastian flanks and curtain of two hundred and forty feet extent, far superior to our contemplated plan for the battery of tapia.

Soon after this the slaves of General Smith commenced the burning of lime in pens, called kilns, formed of sapling pines formed in squares containing from one thousand to one thousand two hundred bushels of oyster shells (alive) collected in scows from the shoals in the harbor—there abundant. These pens were filled with alternate layers of shells and "light wood" from pitch pine, and thus were burned in about one day—very much to the annoyance of the neighborhood by the smoke and vapor of burning shellfish, when the wind was strong enough to spread the fumes of the kilns. In the succeeding month of November I commenced the battery by constructing boxes of the dimensions of the parapet, six feet high by seven in thickness, into which boxes was poured the tapia composition, consisting of equal parts of lime, raw shells and sand, and water sufficient to form a species of paste, or batter, as the negroes term it.

At the close of this month of November a large Spanish ship called the "Bilboa" was cast away on Cape Fear in a storm. It was alleged by the

crew, who were brought by pilot Davis to my quarters, that the ship was laden with sugar, and that there was much specie in "the run;" that the captain and mate had died at sea, and that having no navigator on board they had put the ship before the wind and run her on shore near the Cape. There were twenty-one in this crew, a villainous looking set of rascals, that I had no doubt they were. Lieutenant Fergus detained them in the block-house at the fort until the collector sent inspectors to conduct the crew to Charleston, where the ship was known to some merchant. These men all had more or less of dollars in their red woolen sashes tied around their waists. On their arrival in Charleston they were detained some time, but no proof could be found against them, and they went free. The pilots and others were for some time after this exploring the remains of the wreck, but there was no valuable found among the drift save spars and rigging.

In the previous month of September Alexander Calizance Miller was introduced to Mrs. General Smith, Dr. Griffin and myself and others by John Bradley, Esquire, of Wilmington. Mr. Miller was an accomplished gentleman—especially so in music and drawing. He interested us much in his history. He stated to us that he had escaped from France in the year 1797; was a cadet in the family of De la Marche; had been a mere boy in the corps of Condé at the battle of Dusseldorf; made his escape to America from Rotterdam by the aid of the master of the ship, Captain Miller, whose name he bore, and arrived in Philadelphia, where he earned his bread by teaching the piano and violin, and drawing. He is of remarkable personal beauty and elegance of manner, and Dr. Griffin and myself became very intimate with him. This friend of mine, Dr. Griffin, was from Virginia, near Yorktown. His mother was of the Lightfoot family, and his uncle was Cyrus Griffin, the United States district judge. His father and mother both died in his infancy, and his cousin Thomas, a member of Congress, had procured for him the appointment of surgeon in the army, the duties of which office he was now discharging at Fort Johnston.

1805. In January, by order of General Wilkinson, I relieved Lieutenant Fergus in the command of Fort Johnston. There having been a contrariety in opinion at the war department whether the commander of the army

had authority to place an engineer officer in command of a post and troops, except by the especial order of the president. This act of General Wilkinson's was as well a convenience to the service as a test to decide, so far, the question of his authority under the law of March, 1802. To which arrangement the Secretary of War consented, and the function of my command, with a detachment of a company of artillery, remained until the following year, when, by my request I was relieved from that command. A memorial in reference to this question was presented to the President of the United States, and a request to have the opinion settled by law in December, 1804, by the officers of engineers then for the time at West Point, viz.: Major Wadsworth, Captain Barron, Lieutenants Wilson, Macomb and Armistead, of which Macomb sent me a transcript. The question was so far settled in the following year, 1805, and Colonel Williams was recommissioned then, and resumed command of the corps of engineers.

This winter I became engaged to Miss Walker. The season ran by charmingly at "The Barn," Mr. Walker's residence in Wilmington, and at Belvidere, the residence of General and Mrs. Smith, and at Fort Johnston. This engagement gave, of course, new prospects of life, and as is usual, my wishes gave them many agreeable hues. I had stated to Mr. and Mrs. Walker that my chief dependence was my profession. Mr. Walker said he could not subdivide his property during his life; that he approved of the marriage, and should do all he could to promote the interests of his children.

In the month of March Colonel Tathem, of Virginia, arrived at the fort, bringing a collection of surveying and levelling instruments, and an highly finished sextant, to commence by determining the longitude of the fort. He presented himself to me, and described his services in Virginia as a partizan officer in the Revolutionary war. His demeanor evinced an erratic mind; I, however, promoted his wishes, and he commenced to establish the elevation of the block-house above the level of tide water, and extended a line of levels toward the ponds near Brunswick. At this juncture Captain Coles and party arrived to prosecute a survey of the coast of North Carolina by order of the United States navy department, and commenced

observations to determine the longitude of the light-house on Bald Head. This operation disturbed Colonel Tatham, who "boxed his instruments" and departed. Probably the colonel had learned at Washington City of the purposes of the navy department, and had come to the coast with some vague ambition for precedence of knowledge.

A recent law of Congress having reference to the interdicting the ports on our coast to any vessels that had been sailed with predatory purposes, had awakened some inquiry about the condition of the fortifications. Congress added twenty-four thousand dollars to the previous appropriation of one hundred and nine thousand, and also sixty thousand dollars for Mr. Jefferson's gun boat project. Little, however, was attempted beyond the ordinary duty of "garrison fatigues" to dress the parapets of the decaying works of defense in the harbors along the coast of the Atlantic. On the 20th of March I received a package of books that I had left with Lieutenant Wolstoncroft at Fort Jay, N. Y. They came through J. S. Bee, Esquire, of Charleston, S. C. Wolstoncroft had, however, returned my Works of Hogarth, contrary to my request.

In April the Secretary of War sent me a modified contract that had been proposed to him by General Smith, for his more convenient discharge of the bond of Colonel Reed, to which my reply was that it would delay the construction of the tapia walls, and so it proved, for there was a suspension of the collection of shells and lime-burning, and the workmen departed with their implements, leaving me to await the conclusion of the negotiation between the War Department and the contractor.

On 5th May, to test the capacity of the channel-way into the harbor, I went to sea over the main bar in the Swedish ship "Louisa," Captain Asmus, loaded with ton timber, and drawing eighteen and one-third feet of water; thus establishing the facts set forth in my report of 26th July in the preceding year to the Secretary of War on that subject—returning to the Fort in the revenue cutter that had, at my request, accompanied the ship to sea.

On 3d June Dr. Griffin, Mr. Miller and myself went to Wilmington in the revenue cutter, and on Thursday, 6th June, 1805, Miss Walker and myself

were married at her father's residence, "The Barn," by the Hon. John Hill, he using the Episcopal service, and was selected by me for that office because of his friendly relations to my father—they having been classmates at Master Lovel's school in Boston in 1775. This resort to a magistrate was made in consequence of the low estimate by Mr. Walker of the character of the then Rector of St. James, in Wilmington. The bride's attendants on this occasion were Eliza Younger, Cecilia Osborne, and Maria Swann; mine were Dr. Griffin, Mr. Miller, George Burgwin, in lieu of his brother, John Fanning, accidentally absent.

In the following week Mrs. General Smith gave an entertainment in honor of the marriage, at the town residence of the general. The hilarity of this party was temporarily intercepted by a letter and challenge from Captain Maurice Moor to General Smith, who called me to his office to arrange the affair with the friend of Mr. Moor—Captain Grange. On 22d of the month John Fanning Burgwin, Esquire, gave us a wedding fête at the Hermitage, in a party of about one hundred persons, that continued for two days. On that same day I received my notice of promotion to the rank of first lieutenant of engineers, and also advices from Colonel Williams of the promotion of others of my brother officers, and of the appointment of several cadets at the Military Academy, and that there was some prospect of his return to the corps.

On the anniversary of the battle of Fort Moultrie, in South Carolina, 28th June, the meeting of General Smith and Captain Moor took place in South Carolina, not far from the sea side, where stands the Boundary House of the two states, the line running through the centre of the hall of entrance, where was held a parley with some North Carolina officers sent in pursuit—our party occupying the south side of the line in the hall, and thus beyond their jurisdiction. Captain Moor was attended now by his cousin, Major Duncan Moor; General Smith by myself and Dr. Andrew Scott, the surgeon of both. At the second fire General Smith received his antagonist's ball in his side and fell. The surgeons, Drs. Scott and Griffin, conveyed the general to Smithville by water, while I hastened to Belvidere, and, in a chair conveyed Mrs. Smith in the night to the Fort, through one of those storms

of lightning and rain that often rage in Carolina summers. On this occasion the lightning destroyed two trees, one on either side of the road, apparently at one flash, and for a moment blinding us; but the anxiety of the wife was superior to the alarm, and the lady found her husband quite cheerful at the Fort, with the ball lodged near the left shoulder blade. The party proceeded to Wilmington, where the General recovered after a few weeks' confinement. Family rancour between these *cousins* was the cause of the duel.

The 4th of July was celebrated this year at "The Barn" by Mr. Walker's inviting my friends to a dinner given by him for the occasion, and where I formed the acquaintance of William Gaston, Esquire, of Newbern, and John Hayward of Raleigh. In the following week, on 8th, the family moved to the summer residence at the Fort, and renewed our fishing and other sports of the season. On 12th of the month I was summoned to the death-bed of our surgeon, Dr. Griffin, at Wilmington, where he had been attending the wound of General Smith. The doctor died of yellow fever, and in the act of repeating the death scene of Shakspeare's Julius Cæsar. In his lucid moments he pronounced his case mortal, and asked to be buried in Mrs. General Smith's flower garden at Smithville. This lady had been as kindly attentive to both the doctor and myself as if she had been our parent. To Mrs. Smith the doctor bequeathed his portrait that had been drawn by our friend Mr. Miller. Mrs. Smith adopted a daughter of the doctor's, and educated the child until its early death—a daughter named Mary Ann. Her remains were placed beside those of her father in Mrs. Smith's garden at Smithville. The doctor left me his horse, sword, pistols, watch and library. He was a young man of genius and a faithful friend. In a few days after this mournful scene in Wilmington I was assailed by the same type of fever, and by the care of Dr. De Rosset was conveyed to sea air at the Fort, but did not regain my health until the following September, when, by authority of the Secretary of War, I employed Doctor R. Everett as surgeon for the port at Fort Johnston, and by the same authority a hospital was commenced there, which not only served for the garrison but also received many a sailor from the European

ships that carried the ton timber of North Carolina to the dock yards of England.

Before leaving West Point in 1804 I had in casual conversation with my brother officers, mentioned my having seen Colonel Burr at Mr. Denning's, at Beverly, in 1803, and of his conversation with Mr. Denning about the American provinces of Spain—Mexico, Florida, etc.—and that probably Mr. Jefferson's purchase of Louisiana might be extended over these provinces. By some means, unknown to me, this occasioned a query to be put to me from Washington, whether Colonel Burr had at any time remarked to me anything in reference to colonizing or other movement to the West. My reply was that he had not; and I said that at my only interview with him at Beverly, in 1803, the only remark made *to me* was of the season and weather. In the current summer and fall it was common to hear speculations about Colonel Burr and his friends having objects in the West—that were known to Mr. Jefferson—reminding me of the foregoing facts.

In November moved from my post quarters to the Bay Street house of Captain Walker—that had been prepared for his family residence at the Fort—for my winter quarters. In December I received a request from the Secretary of War to examine the live oak and other growths on Bald Head Island, to ascertain the expense of delivering the timber to the government, by contract. Lieutenant Botts of the revenue cutter and myself explored the whole Island, east and west of "Flora's Bluff," and estimated that there were then standing at least twenty thousand live oak, sixteen thousand cedar and twelve thousand palmetto trees; and we found that the expense for furnishing live oak by contract would be one dollar per cubic foot delivered on board of a United States vessel in Cape Fear River, and reported the same to the Secretary of War: palmetto and cedar at half that price.

1806. This winter, at the Fort, we received much company from Wilmington and Charleston, S. C., by the packet of Captain McYlhenny, a favorite ship-master of that name. We were sometimes obliged to borrow bedding from my friend Benjamin Blaney, and sometimes borrowed sheepskins from the public stores, for the gentlemen's beds, while venison and

wild turkeys were abundant from the woods in the vicinity, and my waiter, Riley, was an expert gatherer of oysters from the shoals, and we had abundance of sweet potatoes and corn bread from the plantations.

As the spring approached I began to conclude that the tapia contract to build the battery would not be fulfilled; indeed I had letters from Washington informing me that General Smith had extended his negotiations with the Secretary of War to the Treasury Department, and to secure the "Reed bond" had mortgaged rice lands on the Cape Fear river. Thus I was left with but slight duty in my small command of troops at the post. I wrote the Secretary of War for such leave as would allow me to look after some domestic affairs up the river a few miles, that might be done consistently with my responsibility as commandant at the post of the fort. The request was granted in a three months' leave under the conditions proposed, and thus I left Sergeant Fowler in charge of the troops and public stores, Dr. Everett in charge of the hospital, and moved my family to Barnard's Creek, on the Cape Fear, four miles below Wilmington, in the month of February, 1806. The one-half of this place, including a tract of pine land of four thousand acres, Mr. Walker had given to Mrs. Swift. My object was to essay in planting and milling. The plan was commenced by widening and deepening a canal from the mill pond to a rice mill, and by constructing a set of conduits at the tail of the mill-race to run the water used on the wheel into the rice field below the mill, extending to the margin of the river—for the water-culture of rice. I also constructed several of Evan's elevators, and brought the rice machine into useful and profitable service.

On 15th May my first child, James Foster, was born at the residence of his grandfather Walker, and in walking to see the mother and son, from the mills, overheated and injured myself. By the middle of June the unhealthy residence at the mills had convinced me that rice planting and milling were not suitable pursuits for me in that climate. My good servant Erickson, a Swede, had died of the fever, and I buried him under the live oaks at the margin of the creek. The honest man gave me his silver sleeve-buttons as a memento of his regard. This exposure to ill health caused me to return

to the fort in May, and to move my family thither the last of June, 1806; and with the usual monthly report to the War Department I sent an application to be sent to any northern port that might be deemed proper for me, and was replied to, that such should be done as soon as the good of the service might indicate a station.

Congress had this year remodeled the Articles of War, and in the 63d article provided for the service of engineers in an incongruous and invidious form of comparison. The aspect of our affairs with Spain had caused a law to call out one hundred thousand of the militia in case of need, and appropriated for fortifications one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and two hundred and eighteen thousand dollars for arsenals, arms, etc. From the commencement of the government the harbor defences had ever been tolerated only by some vague ideas that England—ever hoping for some fatal mistake on our part to give them foothold in some part of the Union—might come suddenly from Halifax or Bermuda and seize on Rhode Island, or some point in Chesapeake Bay, etc., to prevent which, the wisdom of Congress had imagined that some one hundred thousand dollars a year, expended on these harbors, would “keep the foe at bay.” This pittance, however, was not found sufficient to afford the nation one single fort in complete order for defence, even on the smallest scale.

On 14th July Lieutenant William Cox, of the United States artillery, arrived at Fort Johnston, to relieve me from that command, but found me too ill of fever to proceed to make up the returns and receipts of and for public property, and so continued until 26th of August, at which time a storm swept all the craft in the harbor into the marshes, save the revenue cutter. On 28th I received the account of the destruction of my rice crop, mill dam and flood gates at Barnard’s, from what source I cannot say, but from that day I began to recover my health, and by 8th September was able to travel to Wilmington, and, with my family, to sojourn at Mr. James W. Walker’s place at the Sound. On 15th October returned to the fort, and took receipts from Lieutenant Cox for all the public property at the fort, and transmitted the one part of the duplicates to the war department.

First of November proceeded to Raleigh, and passed a few days of my

convalescence there in company with the Governor of the State, Evan Alexander, Esq., and the Secretary of State, Mr. John Guion. By 10th of the month had arrived at my uncle Jonathan Swift's, in Alexandria, and on 13th at the War office in Washington, where I received from the Secretary my commission as captain of engineers. Had the honor to dine with President Jefferson. Among the guests were Mr. Madison the Secretary of State, and General Tureau the ambassador from France, who, in the conversation after dinner gave an interesting account of Bonaparte passing the Alps into Italy and overwhelming the Austrians, and was warm in an eulogium of the venerable Wurmsur. The Secretary of War said that arrangements would be made by Colonel Williams (my beloved chief) for giving me a northern station in the ensuing spring. On my return to Carolina I passed a few days among my friends in Alexandria, and was there assailed by ague and fever, and after the kind nursing of my good aunt Swift was enabled to renew my journey on 20th November, and reached my family in Wilmington, North Carolina, on 12th December, resting on my way at the Bowling Green, Richmond, Fayetteville, and by Christmas reported myself to Colonel Williams by letter, that I was fit for duty. During my absence Major Bruff, of the army, had written a sarcastic letter to his connection in Wilmington, upon such a youth as myself having been selected to relieve his brother-in-law, Captain John Fergus, in the command of Fort Johnston. I asked the major to explain this impertinence. He apologized for the error that he had committed, as he called it, and we were restored to as much good humor with each other as need be, or, as seemed to me, could be, with his unfortunate temper. He was a fault-finder with everybody and everything not influenced by his complacency; he was, however, a gentleman of some ability, and esteemed to be a good administrative officer.

1807. The holidays and January were passed among my acquaintances in and near Wilmington and Fort Johnston, and with an association at the head of which was Archibald F. McNeill, Esq., the object of which was to raise means to aid the poor of Wilmington. The mode was by representing some of the plays of Shakspeare and others of the English drama. The

price of the tickets was a dollar, and a considerable fund was realized, and Mr. McNeill was esteemed (and in reality was) a good Hamlet. Mr. McNeill was an accomplished gentleman of the same family as Dr. Daniel McNeill of the Scottish emigrants, after the battle of Culloden, among whom was Flora McDonald, the friend of Charles Eduard "the Pretender." Mr. McNeill's mother was a daughter of Sir James Wright, the colonial Governor of Georgia, and he married Miss Quince, an heiress of Wilmington and cousin of Mrs. Swift. Dr. Daniel McNeill is an intimate friend of mine. His wife, the beautiful Miss Martha Kingsley, is one of the most interesting persons of Wilmington. Among my other intimates is our family physician and friend, and cousin of Mrs. Swift, Dr. Armand J. De Rosset. He is of an old Huguenot family expelled from France. The brothers Louis and John had been early settlers in Carolina, and officers of the royal government, and steady supporters of the Episcopal church. Mr. George Hooper was also a friend of mine. His family came from Boston with his brother William, the member of Congress from North Carolina in 1776. Mr. George Hooper settled as a merchant in Wilmington and married the daughter of the distinguished counsellor, Archibald MacLean, and is a gentleman of inborn hospitality and of fine literary taste, and writes well and with facility on various subjects. The Hon. John Hill, whose family came also from Boston. He was among the prosperous rice planters of Cape Fear. His brother William was a member of Congress. The family of Swann (formerly Jones) of Virginia, were among the oldest and most respectable families of the neighborhood of Wilmington. The ancient family of Moor, descended from Governor James Moor of South Carolina, were residing on the banks of the Cape Fear. Alfred, recently a judge in the United States Supreme Court, and his sons Alfred and Captain Maurice, informed me that this family was of that of Drogheda in Ireland, and that the rebel, Roger Moor, celebrated as the defender of Irish independence in the century before the last, was of the same family.\* The family of Ashe was also living here. Colonel Samuel, an accomplished

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\*Major Alexander Duncan Moor, the son of the Revolutionary general, James Moor, was of the same family.

gentleman and son of the governor of that name. They had given several officers to the army of the Revolution, such as John Baptist and Captain Samuel.

My groomsmen, John Fanning and George Burgwin, were the sons of an opulent merchant of Wilmington. The family came from Bristol in England, where these sons were educated. They introduced at their residence, the Hermitage, the modern social habits of the English gentry, and which the elder people of Wilmington said was not an improvement upon the days when the Tories (Dr. Robert Tucker, Francis Cobham and Colonel John Fanning) had given the gentry of Cape Fear a sample of English manners, as practiced in New York when that was a British garrison in the Revolution. Be that as it may, the Hermitage was a delightful visiting place. The sister of the Burgwins was a beautiful woman, and had also been educated in England, and had married Dr. Cletherall of South Carolina.

I had now been nearly three years a resident of North Carolina, and had experienced the kindness and hospitality of many of its good citizens, and become attached to them, and had also in a measure become identified with their institutions; was a master of a few slaves, and had a little experience of their ways and knowledge of their condition. The relation of master and slave in that part of North Carolina is of a kindly character in general on the part of the masters. But with my essays to operate with this class of laborers I could not be reconciled to their perpetual retention in a condition forbidding their mental improvement; and as far as my observation extended a sentiment similar to this was entertained by most of the educated gentlemen. That which seemed to me the worst consequence of slavery was its influence upon the minds and habits of the white children. The natural disposition to rule, that is inherent in the human mind, is nourished in the "young master" and mistress. They become impatient and domineering, and vent their angry passions upon the negro children. These passions grow and strengthen with the years of both white and negro child until both approach their "teens." It is of the nature of human qualities that it should be so with both parties.

[Boston Harbor, 1809. At West Point two years ago I had collated and transcribed from my diary to the period of my approaching departure from North Carolina, and at the present time—as my public works are drawing to a close, and having sent my family by packet to Wilmington under the escort of my friend Benjamin Blaney, who had been visiting his relations at Roxbury, preparatory to my own return to Fort Johnston on official duty—I proceed to occupy leisure moments in a further collation of my journals.].

1807. In the month of February I received orders from Colonel Williams, who was then at the war office in Washington, to repair to West Point early in the ensuing April, and receive the command of that post from Captain William A. Barron.

I negotiated a loan at the Bank of Cape Fear for four hundred dollars, and received one hundred and fifty dollars from the United States, and on 20th March was on board the packet *Venus*, Captain Oliver, with Mrs. Swift's mother and niece Margaret as our companions, and, with Mrs. Swift and our son James and servant Nancy, proceeded before a fair wind by the New Inlet to sea, and on 28th arrived at Mrs. Tilford's boarding house in Courtlandt street, city of New York. The next day gave Mr. George Gibbs two hundred dollars that I had received for him from Carleton Walker, Esq., of Wilmington, and on 6th April arrived by a Newburgh packet at old West Point, and received the command of the same from Captain Barron, who went to the city. Mrs. Swift, mother, and niece, took the barge and made a visit to her uncle and Aunt Du Bois at Newburgh, where I joined them in a few days thereafter, and found Mr. Du Bois (John) an intelligent old gentleman, full of reminiscences of the scenes of the war of 1781 in Carolina, and of the iron rule of Major Craig, Governor at Wilmington in those days, and familiar with the events of the De Rosset and Du Bois families, then prominent people in North Carolina. The former he described as refugees to Holland after the St. Bartholomew's massacre, and the latter as refugees to the colonies after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

On 14th April received orders from Colonel Williams (he then being, with Major Macomb, on duty in Charleston, S. C.,) to serve an arrest on

Captain Barron, who had recently returned from New York, and who with readiness obeyed the order.

The academy was opened under my superintendence, Professor F. R. Hassler being at the head of the mathematical department, and F. De Masson the teacher of French and drawing.

Among the cadets who joined the academy this spring were Sylvanus Thayer and Alpheus Roberts, graduates from Dartmouth College, and Miles Mason and James Gibson, who were among the most prominent in Mr. Hassler's classes.

By the approbation of the Secretary of War, through Colonel Williams, I commenced the formation of a library for the Academy, and employed Samuel Campbell, of New York, to import the books, and sent Lieutenant George Bumford to New York to aid in this business. In June, while in New York, I was enabled to transmit to my friend John Bradley, Esq., of Wilmington, two hundred dollars, the one-half of my debt to the bank at that place. In this month the family of Colonel Williams arrived at the Point, the colonel being employed on the fortifications in New York harbor, while, by order of the War Department he was held responsible for the superintendence of the Academy, and consequently made, in his visits to his family, frequent inspections at the Academy. The colonel had become pleased with the perpendicular system of defence of Montalembert, and was permitted by the President to apply so much thereof as could be in round towers on Governor's Island, etc.

On 13th June Lieutenant E. D. Wood and myself proceeded to Fort Jay as members of a court martial there, for the trial of Professor William A. Barron. The court adjourned on 19th in consequence of the resignation of the major, and Lieutenant Wood and myself returned to West Point on 24th, where I had the pleasure to find my father, who in my absence had arrived on a visit to us. He became amused in walks among the highlands and redouts of the Revolution, and in the public stores where were the trophies of the war, and also the ponderous chain that had been extended from the rocks of the Point to the opposite shore at Constitution Island, to impede the passage of Sir Henry Clinton's expedition. In these explorations I was

his companion, and was inquisitive about the early life of my father, and his marriage and travels. Among his details he said that the death of his father had occurred under the tyranny of General Gage when he was in his sixteenth year, and had been prepared at Mother Lovel's school to enter Cambridge College, but being the oldest child it was necessary for him to remain with his mother, sisters and brother. His father had been an active Whig, and his moderate property in Boston had suffered injury while the town was a garrison; that in returning to Boston with the family after the evacuation by the British troops they found their residence sadly dilapidated, as was also the similar case of many a neighbor; that the residence in town and a small country place on Dorchester Point formed nearly all the means of support to the family, aided by the needles of his mother and sisters; that his brother Jonathan was apprenticed to Mr. May, a merchant, and that himself commenced in 1779 the study of medicine with Doctor Joseph Gardner, after the completion of which he had the appointment of surgeon in the navy, and in the squadron sent in 1781 to Holland, on board the *Portsmouth*, commanded by that "dare devil" Daniel McNeill, when that sloop of war was captured by the *Culloden*—seventy-four guns—commanded by Lord Robert Manners of Rodney's fleet; that he had difficulty in dissuading Captain McNeill from firing into the *Culloden* for, as he said, "the honor of the American flag." They were carried to the Island of St. Lucia as prisoners of war, where, from having been professionally serviceable to Captain Manners he was permitted to practice on shore on parole, and there received fees that enabled him to assist his fellow prisoners, and where he declined the kind offer of Captain Manners to rate him a surgeon in the English navy. Such of his fellow-prisoners as could swim executed a daring project long contemplated, in a night attempt to get silently into the water and swim and capture a brig laying at anchor, and which was effected by twelve of them, expert swimmers, who boarded the brig by the cable, and cutting the same, and fastening down the hatches on the small crew (their number being eight,) they brought that vessel into Chatham Harbor on Cape Cod, with Captain Daniel McNeill as their leader, and sold the brig, and all reached their

homes in safety; that from Boston my father went to Nantucket, with an introduction from Dr. Gardner, and then made an essay to establish himself in Virginia, where he received the friendly aid of General Washington, to whom he had carried a package and introduction from General Benjamin Lincoln, and also his business references of General Roberdeau and Colonel Hove of Alexandria, but that health failing him he had abandoned the project and returned to Nantucket, etc.

In this month of June the Secretary of War sent me the appointment of military agent for the post of West Point. On 10th of the following month of July I accompanied my father to the city on his return home to Taunton. While descending the river we witnessed the fish hawk's surrender of his prey to the eagle, in company with John Garnet, Esquire, the distinguished mathematician and philosopher of New Brunswick in New Jersey, who had been to West Point on a visit to the family of Colonel Williams and to Mr. Hassler. The latter gentleman had been sent to West Point by Mr. Jefferson, at the instance of Mr. Hassler's countryman and friend, Mr. Gallatin. Mr. Hassler was established in the former Rivardi quarters. Mr. Hassler had an high repute for scientific attainments, and he had brought to West Point an extensive library. He was from the Canton of Berne in Switzerland, and had been the attorney-general of that canton, and had also been at the head of the great survey of Switzerland. The cause that he stated to me of his coming to the United States was the conduct of his countrymen in submitting to the interference of France in the affairs of Switzerland. He exhibited a curious union of love of science and politics; his standard of excellence in the latter being the republican views that he entertained for the government of his native land. One of the prominent tones of his mind was a hatred of England. He had been unfortunate in his first investments of property in the United States, and therefore the professorate at West Point was convenient to him. He was an excellent teacher.

On the arrival of my father and myself at the City Hotel, in New York, we found there collections of people in excited conversation about the outrage committed on 22d ultimo on the United States frigate Chesapeake.

Commodore Barron, by the British frigate *Leopard*, Captain Humphrey; an act that added contemptuous insult to injuries of impressment of our seamen under an arbitrary rule of 1756. This event excited a war feeling, but Mr. Jefferson's wisdom was of a peaceful nature, and he assuaged the public fever. Congress sustained his views, and looked to placing our harbors in a better condition to resist attack. Appropriations of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars for fortifications from Maine to Georgia—not enough for any one of the larger harbors; the law also providing two hundred and eighteen thousand dollars for armament and arsenals, and five hundred thousand dollars to call out volunteers in case of need; also, fifty thousand dollars for the survey of the coast, including the publication of Thomas Cole's and Jonathan Price's survey of the coast of North Carolina; the latter gentleman having published an interesting map of the whole of that State, one of the best specimens of maps yet published in the Union, fully equal to Mr. Madison's map of Virginia, though both have many errors in them.

The general feeling of resentment through the country, that made the prospect of war with England popular, may have been induced to a sedative condition by a double excitement, one of the consequences of the efforts of Mr. Jefferson to bring Colonel Burr to trial for treason. The zeal exhibited in this effort, and the rigor pursued toward two of Colonel Burr's friends—Bollman and Swartwont—began to give a taste of personal and party rancor against Burr. Although the general impression was adverse to Burr, his intriguing character was feared, and perhaps a greater importance was attached to this propensity than it deserved, for, though Colonel Burr may have been full of designs, he executed none of them, save to destroy General Hamilton—and this an accident of the duel. It was the great position occupied by Hamilton that made Burr the object of public odium. The merits of the duel are to be measured by those of giving and accepting a challenge.

I returned to West Point, taking with me by the request of the paymaster, Lieutenant N. Pinckney, three thousand five hundred and fifty-seven dollars due to the officers, etc., at the Point.

On the last evening of July a meeting of the United States Military Philosophical Society was convened at West Point, in the Academy, at which a member, the traveler Lewis Simond, and also Count Mimeenitz were present—visitors of Colonel Williams. They made some pertinent remarks on military biography, the object before the meeting being some MSS. of the life and acts of Kosciusko, Pulaski and De Kalb. Colonel Williams also presented a MS. on the Field Exercises of Artillery, and Professor Hassler read a paper on his views of forming a general map of the United States, and stated some points of his correspondence with Mr. Gallatin on the subject of a survey of the coast of the United States. Mr. Hassler's mind was of a desultory cast, in fact it seemed to be crowded with ideas. At the black-board he would occasionally branch off into notions of extending the use of the lecture then giving to surveys of the mountains of the country, and referring to the map of the United States would point out the geographical form that nature had made of its mountains and valleys, and water courses, in a sort of opposition to the artificial boundaries of the states. In experiments in the field he gave the cadets clear ideas of the use of instruments for measuring angles and lines, and from the summit of the Crow's Nest measured angles of depression of objects on the plain and river bank by the excess above ninety degrees, using a basin of mercury and the *reflected image* of the pupil of the eye, that being the vertex, etc. During the month of September a comet gave him occasion to measure its angular relation to Lyra and others of the stars, to determine the orbit of the comet, while Mr. Garnet, of New Jersey, was making there similar measurements for the same object.

On 26th October I accompanied Mrs. Swift's mother and niece to New York, and saw them well accommodated on board the packet, and under way for Wilmington, N. C. On the last day of the month received from the paymaster, Lieutenant Pinckney, two thousand one hundred and ninety-four dollars, which, with a former amount received from him, I fully disbursed in paying the garrison at West Point, and closed accounts with that officer. I also received from Peter Gainsevort, at Albany, one thousand four hundred and ninety-one dollars, which sum was also fully

disbursed in my military agency at the Point, and accounts closed with him.

On 18th of November went with Mr. Hassler over the Highlands on foot to Newburgh in a very dry and boisterous day. On reaching New Windsor we discovered the dwelling of Mr. Thos. Ellison to be on fire, and a remarkable apathy on the part of the people in efforts to extinguish the flames, that were in the roof; the ladies of the family in great dismay, and at work bringing large quantities of plate and other valuables into the street. Mr. Hassler and myself carried water to the roof, and, not without scorching ourselves, succeeded in quenching the fire, and also succeeded in aiding the ladies to secure and restore their valuables to the house without loss to them. The father, Mr. Ellison, seemed an unconcerned spectator of the scene.

On 23d of this month closed the Academy, and on leave embarked my family on board a packet that had come to the dock by appointment, and, with an early acquaintance from Taunton, Mr. Ingalls, proceeded to New York, leaving the command of West Point with Lieutenant E. D. Wood of the engineers. The next day we arrived at the city, and visited our Beverly friends, the Dennings, and those of the family of George Gibbs, Brooklyn Heights. Found that the family of Dr. McNeill had departed for Wilmington, in Carolina. Our packet sailed on 5th December, and passing through Long Island Sound and Newport Harbor we ascended Taunton River, and arrived at my father's house in that town with Louisa and my son James, and our servant. This was the first interview between my father's and my own family. I had not been at home since 20th March, 1803; found a sad vacancy in the family circle which the death of my sister Nancy had made, and with pain observed its effects upon the countenance of my mother, though my sister had been now two years dead; my brother William Henry absent at school.

My father's neighbors, who had known me from boyhood, received my family with kind attentions, and some half dozen of them, with my early friend, Charles Leonard, Esq., and my teacher, the Rev. Simeon Dogget, honored my twenty-fourth birthday at a party given by my father, a very gratifying scene to me, and which was increased by an invitation from

Mr. Doggett to partake in an examination of the pupils of the academy, where he had prepared me to enter Harvard College, and where I had undergone a similar ordeal to that now visited upon the younger brothers of my then class mates.

1808. In the spring of the year past Congress had commenced in earnest to unfold its views, and a general improvement of the means of intercourse between the widespread States of the Union. Members from those parts thereof, which by nature did not admit of many improvements beyond those of the rivers in the interior, took objections to any action by the United States, on the ground that useful action would be unconstitutional, while those members from the more easily improved parts of the Union were as earnestly in favor of entering upon a general system of improvements, under the clause of the constitution that contemplates the promotion of commerce between the States. The Cumberland Road was so palpably of this tendency that its construction by the United States was authorized.

The early assembling of Congress in October was in accordance with the feeling of the country, that had become more and more hostile to the exclusive and arrogant maritime pretensions of England. This feeling was embittered by the gross act of the naval commander of England, in assaulting a national ship, the defenceless condition of which (whether justifiable on our part or not,) was well known to the British commander; the insult, therefore, of "pouring in a broadside" into the Chesapeake frigate, thus circumstanced, was an act of weak policy in England, and also an act of perfidy made while pretending to desire peace, and while enjoying our hospitality. Yet, although the feeling of the country was warlike, and the treasury of the nation overflowing, Mr. Jefferson preferred non-intercourse to war, for France had also become as arrogant as England. The grasping power of Napoleon contemplated to make us subservient to his views, and what with orders in the British council and the decrees of Bonaparte our commerce with Europe was nearly extinguished. Under these pressures, the influence of Mr. Jefferson with Congress was able to induce the interdict by a general embargo, an act that lost sight of the predominant habits of the North, and by consequence putting a stop to the carrying

trade from the South. The measure was deemed by Congress to be of a peaceful tendency, while in January that body appropriated a million for fortifying the harbors, and making promotions in the corps of engineers to the extent of the law, in order to construct the requisite works in those harbors; also granting two hundred and eighteen thousand dollars for magazines of ammunition, three hundred thousand dollars for arms, two hundred thousand dollars annually thereafter to arm the militia, and also provided for adding five regiments of infantry, one of riflemen, one of light artillery and one of dragoons, to the existing army.

This winter we received the sad account of the sudden illness and death of Mrs. Swift's father, Captain Walker, in Wilmington, North Carolina, on 18th January, at the age of sixty-six years. He sent me a message through Dr. De Rosset of his hopes that I would approve of his will. I did not, however, see the justice by which his son James received the greater portion of the estate. This will diminished my prospects of settling my family, as was contemplated to be done, near Boston, in accordance with arrangements to be made under the orders of my official chief, with whom I was exchanging thoughts in reference to his purpose to assign me to duty in that quarter. The Secretary of War had directed Colonel Williams to divide the Atlantic coast into departments, and to assign the officers of engineers to the various harbors where defensive works were to be constructed. On 10th March, with my new commission, as major of engineers, came the orders of Colonel Williams that assigned me to the Eastern Department, comprised of the states of Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Maine, with Lieutenants S. Thayer, P. Willard, and J. G. Totten as my assistants, and with orders to correspond directly with the Secretary of War on the subject of plans of forts, etc. Without surveys it seemed to me impracticable to commence the duty assigned to me, beyond repairing the already existing redouts. I knew nothing of the capabilities of Boston Harbor. Of Newport Harbor I had some clear ideas from my services there upon the fortifications in 1801. Upon inquiry at the War Department I learned that there had not been any surveys made by the Department since the projections in General Washington's time, made by Rochefontaine

and Rivardi, and in Mr. Adams' time by Tousard, which last embraced repairs upon Castle Williams (thereafter called Fort Independence,) and upon an ill-contrived redout at Fort Constitution at the mouth of the Piscataqua, New Hampshire, and upon the block-houses and magazines at Portland and some minor points, as at Marblehead, etc.

These works had been commenced by Colonel Rochefontaine, of the pontoon train in the Army of France in the Revolution, and at Newport by Colonel Tousard, an officer of distinction in the same army.

The plans of Bureau de Pazy for the harbors of New York and Boston, that had been devised in President Adams' time, were deemed to be far too extensive, and *expensive*, to be embraced by the appropriations. In this view the main error may have been in omitting to adopt such of the views as were contemplated by those plans that were in fact appropriate to the proper sites, and within our means to accomplish.

It is to be admitted, that whatever may have been the talents of Colonel Rochefontaine, he had occupied many good positions with his narrow redouts, and also that such works were more commensurate with the views of Congress at the time than in accordance with those of the Colonel. My replies from the War Department also informed me that plans for "new positions" were then maturing at Washington, while my idea was that they should be designed on the spot where they were required.

On 16th March, 1808, I proceeded to my duties at Boston, and with boats and other instruments explored the harbor, and reported to the Secretary of War that George's Island and Long Island Head commanded the entrance to the main channels, and that whatever might be determined upon, those points should be embraced by the works of defence for the harbor, knowing that Governor's Island had become the most important point in the estimate of the advisers of the Department at Washington.

In the ensuing month of April made an excursion to the east, and selected Naugus Head at Salem, Black Point on the Merrimack, Kittery opposite Fort Constitution, New Hampshire, Spring Point and House Island at Portland, for new positions for defensive works. I did not proceed further east, being advised by the Secretary of War that Colonel

Moses Porter had been charged with the defenses further east in Maine, Henry A. S. Dearborn, Esq., of Portland, Captain Walbach and D. Langdon of Portsmouth, Mr. Hartshorn of Salem, Mr. Kittredge at Gloucester, Mr. Eustis at Boston, and Captain Lloyd Beale at Newport, R. I., had been appointed the agents of fortifications, to all of whom I gave requisition for materials to be collected at the respective points. It was determined to repair the Rochefontaine work at Marblehead, and at Gloucester Point. On commencing the latter I found the salt marsh sod firm and compact as it had been laid in the parapets in 1775.

On my return to Boston made a flying visit to my father's, in Taunton, where I found a son born 30th March, both his mother and self doing well. I named him Jonathan Williams, in honor of my patron, the chief of the corps of engineers. Early in May moved my family from Taunton to Fort Independence (Castle Williams,) where my aunt Mary Swift joined my family.

On 10th May Lieutenant S. Thayer reported himself for duty at Fort Independence. On the same day I received from the War Department several plans of a species of Star Fort, contrived at Washington, too small for any flank defense, and too complicated for a mere battery, unsuited to the position for which they had been devised. The only resort left to me was to turn these plans on their centre until they might suit the sites as best they might, in Boston, Portland, and other harbors.

I have now (1809) been nearly two years conducting the constructions of these works, and presume these plans to have emanated from some Revolutionary worthy near the War Department—probably Col. Burbeck. Evidently they were adopted in preference to the plans of us young officers who had given our opinion in favor of a more appropriate form and extent. We were indeed very young and inexperienced, save our chief and Major Wadsworth, whose opinion in the matter was avoided in consequence of the Secretary of War not approving the round towers in New York Harbor. It was not unreasonable to doubt the “constructing ability” of young men, though they knew far more of the theory of defense than any of those who were advisers at the War Department; and it seemed to be forgotten that

the experience now to be attained by these young men was the only way by which they could be improved.

In the month of June Dr. Eustis, of Boston, was requested by the Secretary of War to counsel with me on the subject of a plan to enforce the embargo law of December last. At the rooms of the doctor I met Mr. Benjamin Austin, and other warm supporters of Mr. Jefferson's views, but it was evident that embargo was a severe test of their party views. I stated to them that there would be no difficulty in planting a battery that would ensure an obedience to the law, and that they would find that political sentiment would have no influence with any officer in the harbor. There had been meetings of the citizens, and much talk of resisting this embargo law, but the battery was constructed under my direction, and vessels were brought to anchor under its guns, and no other disagreeable consequence than an interruption to some social intercourse in Boston. It was not until the middle of the month of June that I was enabled to proceed to New Bedford and Plymouth to apply the "Washington Stars," to suit the commanding points in those harbors. On my return to Boston Governor Sullivan requested me to meet the Council of the State at his rooms, (he was ill and lame,) to consult in reference to any calling out of the militia to occupy, in case of need, the works that were in progress of construction on the coast of the State. This meeting was held on 23d June, and I presented to it the maritime condition of the coast, and found Governor Sullivan full of intelligence on the subject. On 18th of the following month of July the Secretary of War arrived in Boston upon an inspecting tour. He consented to examine Long Island Head and George's Island, in which excursion I gave him my thoughts upon the inutility of expending money upon Governor's Island and the Upper Harbor. His reply was that the appropriations did not allow of any change of plan at this time, and that an impartial distribution of the amount must be made on the whole frontier of the Atlantic. The Secretary directed me to meet him at Portsmouth in September, and also at Portland, to which places he would return from a visit to his farm, and other private concerns at Kennebeck, that had been long neglected.

On 26th July proceeded by Taunton to Newport, to examine the points of defense in that harbor, and recommended to the War Department that an enclosed work on the Dumplin Rocks and at Coasters' Harbor would be a better expenditure of money than to repair the masonry of Forts Wolcott and Adams, and then returned to Boston Harbor to await the decision of the Secretary.

In the first week of August, General Brooks and General David Cobb, Governor Gore and J. C. Jones, George Cabot, H. G. Otis, William Tudor, Josiah Quincy and James Lloyd, Esquires, and Rev. Jno. T. Kirkland made a visit of inspection to the various points in Boston Harbor, by my invitation. Received them under a marquee on Governor's Island, and on 25th of the same month these gentlemen, and others of my Boston friends, dined with me under the same marquee pitched on the rampart of Fort Independence; the chief object being to witness some experiments in throwing shot and shells, to indicate the range and extent of the fire, etc.

On 8th September met the Secretary of War on the works at Portland, and proceeded thence with him to Portsmouth, and in company with Governor Langdon and Captain J. B. Walbach, agent of fortifications, laid off a battery at Kittery, to coöperate with the fire of Fort Constitution. On 20th September returned with the Secretary to Boston on his way to Washington, and mine to New Bedford, with Lieutenant S. Thayer, to the fort there.

Early in October the Secretary of War, in reply to my report on the subject of occupying Connanicut and Coasters' Harbor in Narragansett Bay, made in July, directed that the repairs on the old works must first be finished, which of course was obeyed, and Captain Lloyd Beale, the commandant of the harbor, the agent of fortifications, was instructed accordingly.

On 10th of this month of October, with a view to arming the new forts, and by orders from the Secretary of War, I proceeded to the furnaces in Taunton, and directed the casting of 24-pounder shot at eighty-two dollars per ton. My early friend, Benjamin Dearborn, made the gauges at his balance factory in Boston, using a copy of the English tower measure for

dimensions. On 1st November, under similar orders established workshops in Boston, for the construction of gun carriages and other military appurtenances for all the forts in my department. These ordnance orders emanated from Colonel Burbeck at Washington, and the gun carriages were the three-wheeled sea coast carriages, using the same standard of measure.

On 19th November made an excursion with Dr. Eustis of Boston, to Portsmouth, on an inspection tour. On our way we discussed a new formation of the army, to include a staff corps instead of detailing company officers to that service, and also an enlargement of the Military Academy, introducing a school of practice by a corps of sappers and miners. The two latter Dr. Eustis did not approve. This gentleman had been a hospital surgeon in the Revolutionary War, and had had much intercourse with all the departments of the army at that period, and at the present time may have had some expectations of going into the War Department under Mr. Madison. The doctor had many reminiscences of the war, and among them of the manner in which the committee was formed at Newburgh that produced the celebrated letters of General Armstrong. It was done by a general meeting of the officers and an open election of three to select a writer. Colonel Timothy Pickering was a member of that committee of three, and they appointed Major John Armstrong to be the composer and writer, etc. In reference to the treason of Arnold, his escape from Beverly, near West Point, was by the energy of the coxswain of his barge, Corporal Levy, who supposed they were going upon an interview with the British; that on their arrival on board the sloop of war Vulture General Arnold offered to make Levy a sergeant-major in the British service, with some remark on the cause of abandoning the American cause. Levy replied that one coat was enough to wear, and said to Dr. Eustis, this reply made Arnold look like a dog with his tail between his legs; that the commander of the Vulture commended Levy for sticking to his country, and treated the barge crew with good fare, and allowed them to return to West Point.

In this fall I commenced, by approval of General Dearborn, a water battery at my request, on the head of Governor's Island, to command,

or rather to secure a raking fire in the channel way in two directions, and completed the work by Christmas, using large blocks of Quincy granite, and without mortar.

On 8th of the previous October I accompanied my father's eldest sister, Elizabeth, to Long Meadow on the Connecticut River, to witness her marriage with Colonel Gideon Burt, the service being read by Rev. R. S. B.

On 28th November removed my family from Fort Independence to No. 3 Leveret Street, West Boston, my father and sister Sarah joining us soon after.

1809. On 2d of January commenced an inspection of the shot at the Taunton foundries. Found the work novel to the founders, who had much difficulty in making the moulds to cast a true sphere, and a solid. The shot were improved in a lathe. Also I inspected and proved the carriages, rammers, sponges, etc., at the Boston workshops.

In this month I commenced a well in Fort Warren, on Governor's Island, and on 20th had attained a depth of one hundred and thirty-three feet — a point forty feet below the level of the sea. Stoned the well sides, and in a short time it had forty feet of water in it, by filtration no doubt.

At the request of J. W. Walker and S. R. Jocelyn of Wilmington, N. C., I examined the salt works at Dorchester, and employed Thomas Mayo of Cape Cod to proceed to the Sound, near Wilmington, where he constructed similar vats for evaporation. The plan was very successful.

February 1st attended, as pall bearer, at the funeral of my friend John Gardner's wife, the daughter of Jonathan Jackson, Esq. Mr. Gardner's health failed rapidly after this event, and he declined to death in a few months. He was of a warm heart, and a true friend. He had been a distinguished Federalist and author of "Helvetius" and other arguments in defence of the Washington system of conducting the government.

In the first week of this month I attended, by invitation, several meetings of the Massachusetts Legislative Committee on Roads and Bridges, to consult on the mode of executing their purpose to build an experimental road from Boston to Salem, on the English model.

March 1st the Secretary of War, General Dearborn, resigned, and

accepted the collectorship of Boston. This was the commencement of breaking up Mr. Jefferson's administration. The officers of the army near Boston paid their respects to this indefatigable public servant, and also gave him a dinner at the New Exchange.

During the first fortnight in March the condition of the public works permitted my serving as president of a general court martial at the Castle, with officers of the newly organized army, and (save Lieutenant-Colonel James Miller) they gave me more trouble than they did service to the United States. Lieutenant Selleck Osborne Judge-Advocate, a much better poet than soldier, very eccentric, and of utter indifference to discipline.

In March Dr. William Eustis was appointed Secretary of War. He invited me to accompany him to the War Office, which I of course accepted, and on 23d of the month arrived with him at Patrick Jeffry's on Milton Hill, formerly Madam Haley's, thence the next day proceeded to Taunton and lodged at my father's, and there met General David Cobb, the former aid-de-camp of General Washington, and camp companion of Dr. Eustis; thence to Newport, R. I., to inspect the forts in that harbor, and by packet to New York; by stress of weather driven into New London Harbor, and there met Colonel David Humphrey of the Revolutionary Army, and also formerly aid to Washington and an ambassador to Spain. The three dined with George Hallam, Esq.; thence by land to New Haven in company with Colonel Humphrey, who gave us an account of the flocks of Merino sheep in Spain, and of his importation of a number with the hope of spreading the breed in the United States and improving the manufactories of the country. He gave many anecdotes of Washington. At New Haven we met Hon. Pierrepont Edwards, and visited the graves of the regicides Goff, Whalley and Dixwell—amusingly emendated account of them by Dr. Styles.

We arrived in New York on the last day of the month, and took lodgings at Mrs. Loring's, (the friend of Sir William Howe, who is immortalized by Trumbull the poet,) a lady of commanding deportment, who said she recognized me from a likeness to her schoolmate in Boston of fifty years gone by—Ann Foster, my grandmother.

The next day, with Colonel Marinus Willett and others inspected Colonel

Williams' tower on Governor's Island ; the colonel absent. Colonel Willet was communicative of the early scenes of the Revolution, and of his own experience ; said that in the expedition on the Mohawk he had never met an Indian who could aim and fire a rifle as quick, or run as fast as he could himself. He is a fine specimen of the men of '76. On 2d April the Secretary of War arrived at Philadelphia, and was waited on by Hon. Pierce Butler of South Carolina, on the subject of some military claims. He is a gentleman of as much personal formality as any one of the house of Ormond can be. We also met the celebrated Dr. Logan—quite a contrast in personal deportment. Here Colonel Williams joined the Secretary, and exchanged some opinion on the inutility of star forts, etc., and with Colonel William Duane, an officer of the new army, inspected Fort Miflin. Thence proceeded to Newcastle and to Gadsby's in Baltimore, on 5th April, and dined with General Samuel Smith, Madam Jerome Bonaparte and Miss Nancy Spear, a female politician and very intelligent lady. On 7th arrived at Washington, after inspecting Fort McHenry early in the day. On the following day to the War Office, to meet the officers and subordinates of that Department, and presented Isaac Roberdeau to the Secretary of War, and recommended him to be employed in the engineer department. Dined that day with Mr. Madison and the Secretary of the Navy, when the conversation turned upon the defences of Chesapeake Bay and of River Potomac, which resulted in my examining the site at Warburton, opposite Mt. Vernon, as a point for defensive works. My report was that it was too far up the Potomac unless the mouth of the Patuxent be fortified. The plan of building at Warburton was pursued, however, and Captain George Bumford the engineer thereof.

Visited my uncle Jonathan Swift and other friends in Alexandria, and on my return to the city of Washington dined at Mr. Madison's, and was presented by Mr. Madison to Mr. Erskine, the British minister, and General Stewart of Maryland. Mr. Madison is a very instructive person in conversation, and fond of story telling. He gave us reminiscences of the progress of the government after the peace of 1783, and especially of scenes in convention in forming the Constitution in 1787. On 19th April

I returned to New York, and with my chief, Colonel Williams, examined his towers, and I gave him my views of the inefficiency of the star defenses of the New England coast, allowing them some moral influence as indicating the occupation of many points, and that therefore I should prefer the colonel's towers as serving an equal purpose and superadding safety from surprise; and a capability to resist attack until the militia of the country could be arrayed. Had pleasant meetings of officers at the colonel's quarters at Mrs. Wilkinson's, No. 40 Broadway, and made the acquaintance there of General Jacob Moreton, distinguished for his hospitality and for general intelligence. Thence through the sound to Newport, and to Taunton at my father's, where I renewed my acquaintance with my early and true friend, Charles Leonard, Esq., of Bermuda, and could but regret that so much talent as he possessed should be wasted in a listless life. On 27th April moved my father's family to School Street Court, Boston, my brother William H. having been sent to school in New Hampshire, at Charleston, the residence of my uncles Delano and Fitch.

Early in May reported all the works in my department in good progress, Lieutenant J. G. Totten at Portsmouth soon to come from New Haven, Lieutenant P. Willard in Rhode Island, and Lieutenant S. Thayer at New Bedford; and on 1st June the gun carriages were ready to be placed on the platforms, and the cannon balls were in process of delivery. The appropriations by Congress were, for new works, four hundred and fifty thousand dollars, to finish those commenced, seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and two hundred and nineteen thousand dollars for arsenals, magazines and ammunition. While I was in Washington the conversation there upon the non-intercourse indicated the continuance of a warlike feeling against England. Mr. Madison's opinion was that no faith could be placed in the pretensions of either England or France, both of whom desired to involve us in the war with their respective antagonists. Thus the appropriations looked to an early finishing of the coast defenses.

The 4th July was quite a distinguished and marked celebration under a canopy at the base of Bunker Hill in Charlestown. Among the guests were ex-President Adams, Robert Treat Paine, Elbridge Gerry, Charles

Gore, Lieutenant-Governor David Cobb, General H. Dearborn and others, of whom several had been in the battle on the hill over us; where were recounted many of the events of that day in 1775 on the neighboring Breed's Hill, especially from General Dearborn, who commanded a company in that battle, and described the manner in which a private in his company had singled out Major Pitcairn as he rode at the head of his battalion, and "brought the major to the earth over the crupper of his saddle" by an aim and shot from a long duck gun, the man remarking: "I wait until that officer reaches a small mound in front," and then gave fire.

On 5th July an express came before day to me from Captain J. B. Walbach, with an account of an explosion of an ammunition chest on the rampart of Fort Constitution, by which eight persons were killed and others wounded, at the salute on 4th. The concussion had shattered the barrack, old magazine, etc., requiring my directions for repair, etc., and wishing my counsel in other matters. Accordingly I proceeded 7th to Portsmouth, and arrived at Fort Constitution in eight hours from Boston. The repairs were completed by Captain Walbach in a few days thereafter. On examination there was no blame to be attached to any one save the poor corporal who was among the killed, and who had permitted a too close proximity of the chest and the slow match.

Captain A. Eustis, of the army, accompanied me to the east on a visit of inspection of the forts on the 7th, I having attended to witness his marriage on 6th to Rebecca Sprague, a beautiful creature, in the Episcopal church at Dedham.

July 10th at Portsmouth, at Governor Langdon's met Mr. Ogilvie, a remarkable elocutionist and improvisator when under the influence of opium; Shakspeare, Dryden, and Massinger his favorite authors.

On 29th July, with my father and Julius H. Walker, and my brother William H. and some others who were desirous to see the works in the harbor of Boston, went on an inspection of the forts, and the next day they and my mother, sisters and other friends attended the baptism of my son Jonathan Williams by Rev. John Thornton Kirkland, named for my

patron, the colonel of that name, and also my father's brother, and The Dean, our cousin of many rumors.

On 5th August the army officers waited on Hon. John Q. Adams, to take leave on his departure on the embassy to St. Petersburg in the ship Horace. He was also saluted by all the forts on his way down the harbor.

August 8th Colonel Burbeck arrived on ordnance duty to inspect the armament of the new forts, especially the three-wheeled carriages that bear his name, and appointed to visit the other works at the East.

Having in contemplation to go to North Carolina after my duties in the eastern department are terminated, Mrs. Swift gave a meeting of leave-taking to our list of friends in Boston, and on 14th of August, with our sons James and Willie, she sailed in brig "Short Staple," Captain Ingersoll, for Wilmington, under the escort of my friend Benjamin Blaney. Accompanied them to George's Island, and there, meeting the frigate Essex, Captain John Smith, coming in, boarded her and sailed up the ship channel by Captain Smith's invitation, to see the bearing that the forts would have to a ship under way, etc.

September 1st, the Secretary of War and Colonel Burbeck on a tour of inspection of the forts in the harbor of Boston; on which occasion I had an opportunity to acknowledge General David Cobb's kindness to me in my early life, by introducing his grandson, David Cobb Hodges to the Secretary of War, and requesting for him an appointment in the army. The Secretary engaged to see that the wishes of his Revolutionary comrade should be accomplished. On this occasion the Secretary handed me a letter to him from the governor of North Carolina, urging that the plan of defense for Oak Island, on Cape Fear River, should be constructed as I had advised in 1804, and I stated to the Secretary that it could be executed for the amount then estimated, seventy-five thousand dollars.

During the summer, in my excursions to the east, and by invitation from Nathaniel Bowditch, Esq., made my resting place at his residence in Salem, at which times I have found him at breakfast time at work upon the translation of La Place's *Mécanique Céleste*. I brought him and Professor F. R.

Hassler to the acquaintance of each other, and interchange of their respective notes and observations.

September 5th, in presence of the Secretary of War and Colonel Burbeck, at the request of the Secretary of the Navy, laid off upon the ground at Charleston Point a magazine for that department, to contain three thousand barrels of gun powder, and gave the masons plans and instructions to construct the same. Arranged with Mr. Penniman to receive my brother-in-law, Julius H. Walker, to complete his preparation to enter Harvard College; have appointed with the president to that effect at the commencement on 30th August, at which time John F. Burgwin and others with me dined with the masters in the old hall—and according to ancient usage.

CAPE FEAR RIVER, FORT JOHNSTON, NORTH CAROLINA, }  
*January, 1812.* }

My last dates were at Boston in the month of September, 1809, soon after which time, with the Secretary of War, I went to the eastern part of my department upon a tour of inspection of the closing work upon the new forts on the coast, and making a call upon the Secretary's army companion of the days of '76, Doctor Clement March, at Greenland, we arrived at Portsmouth. I proceeded to Fort Constitution, leaving Dr. Eustis to pursue his suit with Miss Caroline Langdon, the beautiful and accomplished daughter of Woodbury Langdon, which lady the doctor married.

The Secretary made his examination of the fort with Captain Walbach while I repaired to the works at Portland. The following week he returned with me to Boston. On our route the Secretary renewed the conversation about my contemplated departure for Cape Fear, and he mentioned another petition that he had received from North Carolina for the erection of the works that had been planned for Oak Island by me in 1804 as a subject that would be embraced in the estimates for 1810. While the works were drawing to a close in Boston Harbor both the present Secretary and ex-Secretary Dearborn made excursions to view these forts, and the

magazines for the Navy Department that were in progress at Charlestown ; and with both of these gentlemen, at General Dearborn's residence at Brinley Place in Roxbury, we had several meetings on the prospects of the country, and with a view to defense of the harbors in case of war. By the 1st of October the works in the eastern department were closed, and on 9th reported my engineer's functions in the department to be also terminated, and placed the works in Boston Harbor under the control of Captain N. Freeman.

On 14th October gave orders to Lieutenant S. Thayer to proceed to West Point for the winter. My brother-in-law, Julius H. Walker nearly prepared to enter Cambridge College, and a member of my father's family in School Street Court, in Boston, and in whose charge I left my furniture, when, with my books and baggage on 31st October was on board the brig "Short Staple" at sea on my passage to Carolina, and on 1st November passed near to Nantucket, my native place, not seen before by me in nineteen years. The day was clear and my reflections not easily described. At night we put into Martha's Vineyard, and in the rest of the sail along the coast amused myself by keeping the ship's reckoning, and in observations for time, etc., having with me a circle of Borda's belonging to the United States. . On 6th November we were at the New Inlet of Cape Fear, and landed on Federal Point, the proposed site for a work recommended to the War Department in 1804, in my report made at that time. Thence proceeded to Wilmington and found my family in health at "The Sound," and remained there until 10th November, at which time made a temporary residence at Mrs. Swift's mother's, Mrs. Walker, in Wilmington, preparatory to going to Fort Johnston. After an absence of two-and-a-half years find North Carolina but little changed in aspect of country. The best of North Carolina is constituted of warm hearts and an early flowering spring. My intimacy with the people of North Carolina, and some acquaintance with the interests of the State have grown with me, and attached me to both.

In December, 1809, the Legislature of North Carolina re-ceded the site of Fort Johnston to the United States.

On 11th of the month I received orders from the chief engineer constituting me the engineer for the State coast.

1810. In January, previous to my professional excursion to the Harbor of Cape Fear, I renewed, at Judge Wright's, Mr. John Lord's, the Hills and other families my social relations with increased pleasure. At one of these re-unions, a numerous party, Dr. Caldwell, from the University of Chapel Hill, exhibited the declining condition of that college, and the whole company joined in a subscription to improve the condition of that institution, the *alma mater* of several of the younger persons of the party.

In the course of this month I visited Fort Johnston with Joshua Pitts, General Smith and Mr. John Lord, and examined the boundaries of the public land at that place, and the dilapidated condition of the work, and reported on the same to the War Department. Lieutenant Robert Roberts was in this Board of Examination, and was also the commandant of the post. The reply from the department is that no more would be done at that post than occasional repairs and the construction of permanent barracks. With my friend Blaney visited the grave of our departed companion, Dr. Griffin, in the flower garden of Mrs. General Smith.

In February, at a deer hunt with a party at Major Duncan Moore's, in the forks of the north-west and north-east branches of Cape Fear River, got up some sixteen fine deer. On this occasion Major Moore offered me one hundred acres of rice land on terms so liberal, (if I would settle my family in his neighborhood,) that I could not accept them without incurring too deep an obligation, but the liberality is not forgotten.

March 18th, in company with many gentlemen from Wilmington on a search for the son of our friend, Samuel R. Jocelyn, on the second day the body was found in Holly Shelter Swamp, he having wandered thither in a demented state, and was chilled to death lying in some four inches of water. His name, Samuel, and recently married to a daughter of Counsellor Sampson, of the county of that name.

In April I accompanied John R. London and others to the Sound, on an excursion to see its adaptation to salt-making. I gave these gentlemen the plan of the works on Cape Cod that I had received from Mr. Thayer of

that place. No doubt that the ocean water in this shallow sound, not being freshened by rivers, and constantly receiving the tide from the sea, must afford a good surface for evaporation.

On 15th of the month I received orders from the War Department to construct permanent barracks at Fort Johnston, with funds to defray the expenses thereof, and also orders to relieve Lieutenant Roberts in the command of that post.

The appropriations for the military service of the United States contemplated two hundred and eighty-three thousand dollars for fortifications. The previous construction of forts had been deemed sufficient to meet any maritime aggression. Little, therefore, was to be done beyond some repairs and the construction of permanent barracks at the various posts in the year 1810.

Whatever might be the ultimatum growing out of the relations with England and France, all were satisfied, save Congress, that it would be wise to prepare for the worst. Due preparation cannot be made by such an amount of money. Parties in and out of Congress are more engaged with small distinctions in the merits of the question of war than by a just estimate of the objects that France and England have in reference to the United States. The former can have no maritime views averse to those of the United States that cannot be successfully opposed on the ocean; while England has a powerful navy, and claims the presumptuous and prescriptive right to rule on the seas, that, the United States can never admit "while the stormy winds do blow."

During the past season I had attended the Masonic Lodge in Wilmington, having been admitted to that fraternity while at West Point in the year 1802. Observing an abuse of the test for admission, and considering the objects of the society, as a secret society, not agreeable to the spirit of our political institutions, I ceased to be a member of any Lodge, though having no doubt that the conduct of the society had ever been respectful of law, and with benevolent purposes.

I am now preparing my family to go to my post at the fort, increased in number by a third son, Alexander Joseph, born in the house of his

grandmother Walker, 4th March, 1810; but disappointed in means by the will of Mrs. Swift's father, who, though intending to do justice, had so left his estate that, instead of receiving five thousand dollars, I was glad to compound with the son, James W. Walker, for one thousand two hundred dollars, payable in three years.

April 20th, renewed my official visits to the fort while the commandant is preparing his returns to obey the orders of the War Department; examined at the workshops the gun carriages made on Colonel Burbeck's plans, and condemned them. They are of pitch pine, but not strong enough to resist the concussion of a proof charge of powder. I had reported these facts to the War Department, and also that the works at Beaufort, in my command, required seven cannon and carriages and a barrack magazine, that would call for an expenditure of fifteen thousand dollars.

May 1st, received the command of Fort Johnston from Lieutenant R. Roberts, and gave him receipts for the public stores. The next day, with the collector of the port, examined the beach at Bald Head, and the encroachments of the sea at that place, and advised the placing of facines confined by piles of thirty feet in length, as a protection against the action of the waves.

May 15th, moved my family to the fort, and at housekeeping in the "Blaney Place," near the fort. June 1st, deposited the United States funds in the Bank of Cape Fear, and commenced the collection of materials for barracks, etc.

On 15th June, with the commissioners of the town of Smithville, marked out the lines of the United States land, and set red cedar posts for landmarks.

During this month of June was employed with the collector in arranging to execute the law of the United States in reference to French and English vessels entering our ports. The first armed vessel that came in was the British schooner "Eliza," Captain Bradshaw, who landed his guns at the battery.

June 28th, a riot among the pilots and the sailors of European ships, and was obliged to place some of the most turbulent in the block-house. This

occasioned a legal question as to my authority. The necessity was made apparent, and the court sustained my conduct, having a constable with me whom I had accidentally met on the occasion, and invited to my aid.

From the great mobility of the sand on the coast the storms had produced a variety of changes in the form of the large shoal near the entrance of the harbor, called the "Middle Ground." I employed the pilots early, and at several times, in the month of July, to sound out and buoy the Oak Island channel, and found thereby several changes in the course of the channel that had been made since my survey in the year 1804. During these operations the pilots employed, (two of them, Davis and Cope,) left the survey to board a vessel then coming in. They had some dispute, when Cope struck Davis in the bowels with a knife. The citizens of Smithville requested me to confine Cope until the civil authority could take charge of him. He was thereupon confined in the block-house, which, with all the United States works, is situate in the centre, and extending to the water front of the town. This occasioned some disturbance about the interpolation of military authority, and I was "excused" on the ground that I had done the "service due from a citizen."

The 4th of July this year was celebrated with the usual essays, though on a very limited scale. The town honored me with the appointment of orator of the day.

On 3d of August, in the presence of the collector of the port, Robert Cochran, Esq., and General Smith, the proprietor of the island of Bald Head, and others, Mr. S. Spring, the keeper of the light-house, etc., surveyed and marked with a theodolite, ten (10) acres, including the site of the light-house, and having reference to the abrasion of the shore of the sea, as examined last May, I included a wide sea-beach margin on Bald Head.

August 9th, with a theodolite, above mentioned, received from Jones of London, made observations that proved the magnetic variation at Fort Johnston at this time to be fifty-five minutes west from the true meridian.

The August election of State officers came on this year on 9th of the month. I gave the troops a fishing excursion to Oak Island for that day, with a view to prevent any question of "interference of troops at the polls,"

in reference to which, as an abuse of the franchise, much had been said, but, as far as my experience extended, had never witnessed any such interpolation.

On 12th August the United States brig "Nautilus," Captain Arthur Sinclair, came into port in a storm that had wrecked an English brig on the "Middle Ground" shoal. Received the officers at my quarters.

On 25th September accompanied Captain Sinclair to sea for the purpose of examining the "slew" through the Frying Pan Shoal, which we found, at a distance of thirteen miles south of the lighthouse, a four-fathom channel directly through the Pan, bearing east-by-south. After a cruise of a few days the "Nautilus" returned to anchor off Fort Johnston, and finally resumed the cruise along the coast on 7th October.

During the months of October and November the weather was excellent for labor, and by 1st December had completed the brick barracks and guard-house, and discharged the workmen. Moved the troops into the new barracks, much to their comfort.

December 12th, by order of the Secretary of War, transported the military stores from Wilmington to the block-house at the fort. These appurtenances had been in the use of 12th United States Regiment of Infantry in 1799, and were stored in Wilmington in 1800.

Passed our Christmas at the wedding of our fair cousin, Mary Vance, with Mr. James Orme, and with my friends Alexander C. Miller and General and Mrs. Smith at Belvidere, and at General Brown's seat at Ashwood, on the Cape Fear, and returned to the fort on the last day of 1810.

1811. January 5th, the governor of the State and suite inspected the post of Fort Johnston, and was received with military honors.

Judging from the debates in Congress that a more enlarged plan of defensive works would be constructed on the coast, on 17th of this month, with my reports to the War Department expressed a hope that I should be employed at some other point, as very little could be expected to be done on the Cape Fear, and also wrote my chief, Colonel Williams, and Lieutenant-Colonel Macomb, soon after, on that subject.

In February I employed Dr. Egbert Haywood Bell as surgeon of the

post, which was confirmed by the Secretary of War. The doctor is distinguished in his profession. The family of which he is a member are generally noted for talents; they reside in the upper country of North Carolina. During the winter Mrs. Swift's sister Harriet and husband, Colonel Osborne, had been members of our family, and in the spring they moved to Salisbury, when Mrs. Swift's mother joined our family. Mrs. Osborne is not only amiable but has also an highly cultivated mind, that has contributed much to our enjoyment. With Mrs. Osborne we had the pleasure to receive as guests the father and daughter, Colonel John De Bernier. They were from England; and from Edward Jones, Esquire, I learned that this gentleman, with his brother Henry, had (both) been lieutenant-colonels in the army of England, and in command in Canada, where they had been suddenly relieved from command, and chagrined by the order, they had both sold out their commissions, which act was soon succeeded by orders giving both of them more distinguished commands in India. The mortification resulting from those occurrences may be imagined. In the case of Colonel De B. melancholy was marked on his face. Mr. Jones, who gave me this information, is an Irish gentleman, and has filled the office of attorney-general of North Carolina with high repute. The Colonel Osborne before mentioned is the son of Audly Osborne, Esquire, of Iredell County, North Carolina, reputed to be a son of the family of Leeds, in England. The colonel is a lawyer of much ability, and who, with four of his brothers, had received the first honors of Chapel Hill College.

During the months of February and March flocks of pigeons were daily passing over the fort, with a sound resembling a gust of wind. Several of these flocks were more than a mile in extent, and vast numbers of them were destroyed. Their roost was on Bald Head Island, where they found an abundance of acorns, and from whence sportsmen brought many thousands of these birds.

On 12th May while at Wilmington dining with George Hooper, Esquire, was summoned to the bed of his son-in-law, Mr. James Fleming, who had a few moments previous left us at table, and had been thrown against the

corner of the brick market house in town by an unruly horse. Mr. Fleming's brains were forced through the ears by the concussion, and I found him breathing with some violence, but he was dead within an hour.

The 4th July was passed at the seat of General Brown at Ashwood, with a purpose to attend the marriage of my friend, Alexander C. Miller, and the general's daughter, Miss Mary Brown. The general asked me of the origin, etc., of Mr. Miller; my reply was that all that I knew of him had been received of him, and to judge from his uniform deportment it left me no reason to doubt that he had been highly educated, etc. Before leaving the fort, Lieutenant Roberts and myself had set our watches together and arranged to have the salute at the fort commenced at noon, and to fire at intervals of fifteen seconds. I placed myself alone at the margin of the Cape Fear River at Ashwood, sixty miles distant from the fort, in due season to listen, and heard the sound of distant cannon, but not at precise intervals. The sound was that of a puffing, continuous sort, and I counted only fourteen of them. My ear was not more than three inches above the surface of the water; the day was quiet, and the air from the south-west; my position in a direction a little west of north from the fort. In the banks of the Cape Fear at this place, some seventy feet below the general surface of the country, I found an abundance of shark's teeth and other organic remains in the earth, washed by every successive rise of the river.

I returned to the fort on 6th, and on 10th July, having received the long expected 24-pounder new cannon, carriages, and six hundred round shot, replaced the old guns by mounting the battery with the eight new ones.

The appropriations this year for fortifications are four hundred and seven thousand dollars. These and preceding preparations may show both France and England that our endurance of their decrees and orders may find a limit. Both nations seem, from our own dissensions, or contempt for us and for our form of government, to consider our ability or purpose to sustain a war as of small importance to them. Both parties in our country greatly mistake their policy; the Democrats in their evasive palliations of the cause of France; the Federalists by their efforts to prove that the decrees and orders are equally insulting and therefore deserving equal resistance.

They lose sight of the hope of England that we may make some error to favor her pretensions, and that her superiority on the ocean gives her power to annoy, and they lose sight of the fact that if we ever are to assert our rights on the seas, we must commence to do it while England is practicing her arrogant power of impressment.

A letter from my mother informs me of the death of my grandmother Delano, at the residence of her son in the State of New Hampshire, at Charlestown, on 31st May, at the age of eighty-three years. The letter also informs of the disposition of her property, and of the end of my expectations of receiving something that had been willed to me by my grandfather Delano.

July 11th received at the fort, Treasurer Haywood and other guests from Raleigh, who came to look at the ocean, and to be informed of what plan of defense might secure the entrance to the most important harbor on the coast of North Carolina, in which the Legislature of the State had taken a deep interest, and here were several of her prominent members to prepare themselves to give that body such account of their observations as they could collect. It was very evident that these gentlemen had no respect for the moderate use of naval power of England in case we should have a war with them.

In my memorandum of my visit to Ashwood I omitted to state that there stands a tree whose bark has been marked, indented in the year 1780, with a figure representing the Revolutionary general, Robert Howe. These marks had been spread by the growth of the tree, and now exhibits a gigantic rude figure of a man in military costume. This is a result of a slight engraving on the bark of any tree, especially the beech, but if the indentation be deep the growth of the bark covers the work and so obliterates the design.

July 15th sent to Mr. F. R. Hassler, then in England, or going thither, to direct the construction of instruments for the United States coast survey, to cause a telescope to be made for me with one eye-piece for astronomical use, with a power of one hundred and seventy-five.

July 20th received orders to repair to Fredericktown, Maryland, as a member of a general court marshal to be there assembled in September, for the trial of General Wilkinson.

August 1st delivered the command of Fort Johnston to Lieutenant Roberts, United States Artillery, and reported the same to Lieutenant-Colonel C. Freeman, commanding at Norfolk, Virginia. On 4th August proceeded to Raleigh and Richmond, and passed some days there with Major Gibbon, the hero of Stony Point, 1776, and kept my appointment with General Marshall in accepting an invitation to visit him while I was the guest of the major, and found at the general's a delightful assemblage of talent in Mr. Wickham, Colonel Gamble, Colonel Mayo and others, that was very tempting to prolong my stay among the hospitalities of Richmond. I soon after arrived at my uncle Jonathan Swift's, in Alexandria, and then to call on the Secretary of War in Washington. In company with Colonel Williams, Lieutenant-Colonel Macomb, T. C. Smith and others, arrived at Fredericktown the last of August.

On first day of September the general court marshal assembled. General Wilkinson came into court with his counsel, Mr. Taney and Mr. Thomas, and with eloquent address said to General Gansevoort: "Mr. President, this sword (unclasping it from his side) has been the untarnished companion of my thigh for forty years, with a resolution never to surrender it dishonorably to an enemy, I am now by the order of the government of my country, ordered to place it in your hands, etc.," and stepping forward, handed the sword to General Gansevoort, who with much simplicity and dignity, and uncommon brevity, replied, "General, I receive your sword. These officers are assembled to try you, and will doubtless do you justice. Are you ready, General?" "I am," said Wilkinson. "Mr. Advocate, General Walter Jones of Virginia, please to proceed with the trial."

The charges against General Wilkinson were numerous, and extended from the year 1789 to 1810—treason, conspiracy with Colonel Burr, corruption with the Spanish governor of Louisiana, Manuel Gayozo de Lemos and Baron Carondelet, disobedience of orders, neglect of duty, etc. General Wilkinson waived the act of limitation. The court was several

The Memoirs of Gen. Joseph Gardner Swift, U.S.A. with a Genealogy of his Family. - Link Page

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