OLD KENT

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OLD KENT

COMMUNICATTION No. 4.

BY COL. GEO. A. HANSON, M. A.

Reprinted from issue of The Transcript of April 2, 1875.

The Aborigines of Kent County.

I am unwilling to commence my notes illustrative of the Early Records of Kent, and pass by, unnoticed, the aborigines of our county. I feel deeply interested in all that concerns the ancient denizens of our forests whose names and rites are almost forgotten, though their instruments of war are yet picked up in our fields, and their bones still moulder in our soil.

When I was a little boy, I shook hands and conversed with the great Indian Chief, Ma-Ka-Tai-Me-She-Kia-Kiak, the famous BLACK HAWK, and, child that I was, I noticed that his hands were soft and delicate. A short time afterwards General Andrew Jackson was at my father's house, and I asked him, "if killing so many Indians made his hands hard." The old hero was pleased with the simplicity of the question. He took me up in his arms kissed me. Little was it dreamed then, by the "Great Medicine Man" (Brig. Gen'l. Thomas Lawson, late Surgeon General U. S. A.) who was standing by, that I would one day be united to him, in affinity, and he would recall the incident in the presence of a son of that inquisitive child.

In August, 1869, I was hospitably received and entertained by that venerable Chieftain, THE LAST OF THE HURONS, none of his line remaining, at the beautiful Indian village of Lorette, in Canada. I have seen a great many Indians and am interested in their history.

We are not in doubt as to who were the original occupants of the land we now dwell upon. They were the Susquehanocks, the dominant tribe, the Matapeakes on the Isle of Kent, the Nanticokes who lived upon Chester river and occupied the land within the present limits of Kent county, the Oxinies, who had their principal settlement near the confluence of Corsica creek with Chester river, and the Tochwoghs on the Sassafras.

Captaine John Smith thus describes the Susquehanocks as they appeared to him in 1606, "to proceed 60 of those Susquehanocks came to us, with Skins, Bowes, Arrows, Targets, Beads, Swords, and Tobacco pipes for presents. Such great and well proportioned men are seldome seene, for they seemed like Giants to the English, yea, and to the neighbours, yet seemed of an honest and simple disposition, with much adoe restrained from adoring us as Gods. Those are the strangest people of all those Counties, both in language and attire; for their language it may well beseeme their propertions, sounding from them, as a voyce in a vault. Their attire is the Skinnes of Beares, and Woolues, some have Cassacks made of Bearers heads and skinnes, that a mans head goes through the skinnes neck, and the eares of the Beare fastened to his shoulders, the nose and teeth hanging downe his breast, another Beare face split behind him, and at the end of the nose hung a Pawe, the halfe slews coming to the elbowes, were the neckes of Beares, and the armes through the mouth with pawes hanging at their noses. One had the head of a Wolfe hanging in a chaine for a Iewell, his Tobacco pipe three quarters of a yard long, prettily carved with a Bird, a Deere, or some such devise at the great end, sufficient to beat out ones braines, with Bowes, Arrowes, and clubs suitable to their greatness. They can make more than 600 able men. * * The picture of the greatest of them is signified in the Mappe. The calfe of whose leg was three quarters of a yard about, and all the rest of his limbes so answerable to his proportion, that he seemed the goodliest man we ever beheld. His hayre, the one side was long, the other shore close with a ridge over his crowns like a cocks combe. His arrows were flue quarters long, headed with the splinters of a white chrystal-like stone, in forme of a heart, an inch broad, and an inch and a halfe or more long. These he wore in a Woolues skinne at his backe for his Quiver, his bowe in the one hand and his clubbe in the other, as is described."

"On the East side the Bay is the river Tockwhogh, and upon it a people that can make 100 men, seated some seaven myles within the river: where they have a Fort very well palisadoed and mantelled with barkes of trees. Near them is Oxinies with sixty men." (Vide "The second Book, of The True Travels, Adventures and Observations of Captaine John Smith, etc. About the yeere 1693, and continued to this Present 1629."

The following is the only pertinent passage which occurs in the "Relation of Maryland" printed in London 1635:" It happened this last yeere, that some of the Susquehanacks and the Wicomesses (who are enemies) met at the Iland of Momposon, where Captaine Cleyborne liveth, they all came to trade, and one of the Susquehanocks did an injury to a Wicomesse, whereat some of Cleyborne people, that saw it, did laugh. The Wicomesses seeing themselves thus injured and dispised, (as they thought) went away, and lay in ambush for the returne of the Susquehanocks, and killed five of them, only two escaped; and then they returned, and killed three of Cleyborne People, and some of his Cattle."

Further particulars concerning the Indians who dwelt between the Chesapeake and the Delaware Bay I glean from the careful researches of my friend Mr. FRANCIES VINCENT, who, in his "HISTORY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE FROM ITS SETTLEMENT UNTIL THE PRESENT TIME," now in course of publication, quotes very liberally from Campanius (John Campanius Holm who came over with Governor Printz in 1642 and remained six years) an original authority of distinguished merit and fidelity.

Each tribe of Indians had a ruler, whom they called a Sachem. The office was hereditary, through the mother. When a King died, his mother's descendant, male, succeeded, not his own; for it was thought that the blood came from the mother. Their punishments were chiefly fines. The murder of a man might be atoned for by giving a feast, or something else of the kind, but if a woman was killed, the penalty was doubled, because a woman can bring forth children, and a man cannot. When one was condemned to death, the King, himself, "cast the first stone," shot the first arrow, and then the rest of the company present until death ensued.. If an Indian of one tribe killed an Indian of another tribe the tribe to which the murdered man belonged would retaliate, and thus bloody lenos were engendered and perpetuated and wars enkindled. They were cruel to their prisoners, captured in war; and often cut and slashed them to pieces, while yet alive, and cut off their ears, noses, tongues, lips and other members. Campanius relates that some Indians once invited a Swede to go with them to their habitation, in the woods. They entertained him with boiled, broiled and hashed meat, all of which the Swede ate with them, asking no questions. The food, however, did not agree with the white man's stomach. It was immediately thrown up; and he after wards learned that the meat he had swallowed was the flesh of an Indian prisoner of war.

When the Europeans first came the Indians had no instruments of iron; but they possessed much mechanical ingenuity. They could dress the skins of animals; which they painted and adorned with feathers. They could make neat, light and warm clothing. With the leaves of Indian corn and of reeds, they wrought purses, mats, baskets, and every thing their simple wants required.

The women spun thread and yarn out of nettles, hemp, and plants, unknown to the white man. Governor Printz had a complete suit of clothes, with coat, breeches and belt, made by these barbarians.

Their tobacco pipe stems were made of reed a man's length, and the bowl was of clay. Their boats were fashioned of cedar or birch bark, or else of cedar trees, burnt out and the coals scraped away with stones or shells.

The Religion of the Indians acknowledged a Supreme being, the Creator of the Earth and the Heavens, and also an Evil Spirit. They worshipped the Evil Spirit, and for this reason, as they argued; "The Great Sachem in Heaven," they said, is not bad; he does us neither good nor harm, therefore we cannot worship him. The Evil Spirit is bad, and if we don't do something to please him, he will hurt or kill us, therefore we must worship him."

The Indian did not accept the injunction laid upon our first parents to earn his daily bread by the sweat of his brow, and therefore did not receive the promised blessing. Thriftless, idle, and improvident, he became an outcast and a vagabond in his own native wilds. The Matapeakes were soon driven from the Isle of Kent, the Oxinies did not remain much longer, the Tochwoghs deserted their fragrant hunting grounds on the Sassafras river, and at last the Nanticokes bid a long adieu to the beautiful Chester, and going Southward still lingered on the Eastern Shore until the year 1708, when the remnant of the Nanticoke indians by virtue of Act of Assembly (1768, chap. vii.,) sold their lands, for an ample consideration, and departing, incorporated themselves with the Six Nations. (Vide Laws of Maryland from 1763 to 1784, inclusive, edited by Alexander C. Hanson.) By the same Assembly, (chap. viii.) perhaps on the same day, James Anderson, William Ringgold, William Bordley, Emory Sudler, and James McLlean, were empowered to erect "a chapel of ease" in Chester Parish, Chestertown, and Mr. Thomas Marsh, on account of his pious liberality, was given the choice of a pew. Such is the striking contrast presented to the historian ;—the handmaiden of humanity with one hand gently easing the departure of heathen ignorance and with the other planting with fostering care the seds of civilization and Christianity.

Chester Parish had been erected in the year 1765. Beginning in St. Paul's Parish, at the mouth of a pond by the Bayside, between Marmaduke Tilden's and William Frisby's, and running up the pond side to the head thereof, where it intersects the line between said Marmaduke Tilden's land and George Copper's land, thence with that line to the road leading from said Tilden's to Cootes Griffin's, thence with that road to intersect the main road leading from the head of Worton, by Chester-town, and with that main road to a valley in James McClean's plantation, leading into the head of the branch called Fanning's branch, thence down that valley and branch to a small branch issuing out of the said Fanning's branch, called Bloody-bridge branch, thence up the said Bloody-bridge, to the head thereof, and then with a straight line to the head of Muddy creek, and down the said creek to Chester river; and in Shrewsbury Parish, beginning at the mouth of Turner's creek, on Sassafras river ,and running up the said creek to James Loutitt's point, and thence with the road leading by John Shawhan's into the main county road to Chestertown, thence with the said main county road to Thomas Perkins's, and thence by the cross-road to Isaac Perkins's mill, and then by a due South East line from the said mill to Chester river." (Act of 1735, chap. xxxii) Ibid.

And now, my Reader, I have "grouped the facts," which I thought necessary for a proper foundation to my self-appointed task; that is, I have traced the civil history of Kent County from its first settlement to its erection into a COUNTY, and down to the day of the holding of the first session of its COUNTY COURT, of which we have any knowledge. I have narrated the events, so far as I could, in their natural chronological order, and I have accepted, as true, the dates which are received by our best writers. To avoid confusion I followed the Old Style. Hereafter, when it may appear necessary. I will fully explain the difference between it and our present style, and the mode of computation and reckoning; which may not be familiar to those of my readers whose taste does not lure them to the dusty archives of the past.

It will be my endeavar to illustrate the Early Records of Kent County, and if possible, to connect the present generation with the past, with the FATHERS, who have gone before us, and to whom, under Providence, we are indebted for the blessings of Life, and all that we partake of on Earth and will enjoy in Heaven.

I will approach their graves with all the tender reverance that filial piety or affection can inspire; for their honor, their fair fame, is dear to me, as life itself.

I am sure that the few and simple details of their lives, which we may gather, will only cause us to regret that we are not as good, as true and as brave in the performance of duty as many of them were. We will have but little room for any other feeling, except that just sentiment, which is the one indissoluble tie, "thicker than water," which lands the family together and wihch is the spring of patriotism.

It is a great philosophic truth, demonstrated by all History, that when the citizens lose, individually, their pride in an honest ancestry, the State loses its virtue, and becomes the prey of bold, bad, ambitious mn, or else crumbles away from inherent decay.

Moses, the greatest Lawgiver the world ever saw, or will ever see, appreciated this fully, and was therefore, minutely, careful to preserve memorials of each generation. And it was, only, when the geneaological tables were lost or destroyed that the Israelites forgot their patriotism. The fostering of this sentiment has made England great and free; and the suppression of it has enabled the Czar of Russia to keep his people in apathetic bondage.

Had it not been for this sentiment, it is questionable, whether our Forefathers would have thrown off the yoke of Great Britan; for they took up arms to assert no new rights or principles, but to preserve what, that they had been taught from childhood, their FATHERS had fought for and achieved at the point of the sword.

Unfortunately, perhaps, we obtained at second-hand, borrowed from the manhood of England, the safeguards of our liberties, and therefore, we do not estimate them, at their price. One of these days, it may be, we will have to fight for them, and then our children will value the writ of Habeas Corpus.

It is not to be expected that such a work as this, beyond the publication of some documents which have escaped the knowledge of our Historians, will interest the general reader. It is obvious that the labor required for such an undertaking will be attended with no adequate pecuniary reward.

Therefore the question may be asked, what is my motive for intruding myself before the public, and what my qualifications to demand a hearing.

I confess that I have neither, none except an intense love for Kent county and a burning desire to impart a knowledge of its history to others.

It is the land of my Fathers. For more than two centuries my ancestors have lived happily, died and been buried here. Their ashes are component parts of the soil. How can I help loving it? How can I do otherwise than venerate the land which holds their consecrated dust.

I do not recollect the time when the merest mention of the name of Kent did not cause the blood to flow with a quicker, warmer, movement through my veins. Traditionary tales of the former men and manners of Kent was the food which fed my infant imaginatio; and, indeed, it was a great treat to me to go up into the room of old "Aunt Susan" (a faithful family slave, long since deceased,) and listen to her legendary lore, about Prince Wiggins, an African King, who used ot belong to my Great-Grand-Father, John Wilson, about the old woman who "caught a few cat and hardly dat," and many imaginary (I suspect now) heroes, great, big Red Men, who used to walk the fields of nights, carry their hideous heads under their arms, to the infinite dread of all darkies, fond of nocturnal flittings; and the manifest comfort of their masters.

But, above all, I was taught at my mother's knee to regard the people of Kent as a superior race of men; I believed so then, and I would be pained to think otherwise now.

I have intimated that it is within the scope of my design to trace the descendants of the early settlers to the present genration. This I cannot do, in many instances, unassisted by the representative now living. I can come down, perhaps, with absolute certainly a few generations, but unless I am met a part of the way, I will be liable to lose my way, amid a multiplicity of names or get hung upon a barren stem.

I recall the following names which will soon appear upon the Record, viz: Nicolas Browne, Henry Morgan, Thomas Ringgold, Joseph Wickes, George Croutch, John Ringgold, John Russell, Thomas Hynson, John Coursey, John Erickson, Andrew Hanson, Cornelius Comigys, and William Granger. All these are familiar names today, and their bearers left descendants, some of whom now have other names. Many of them were noble, great-hearted men, and their memory ought to be kept fresh in the hearts of their descendant. I ask therefore their descendants, if any there be animated with filial piety, to give me information, and thus assist me to weave a living garland around the crumbled monuments of the dead. As to my part, I will perform it, with pleasure and fidelity; and be especially careful to state no circumstance, as a fact, that will not bear the test of the rules of legal evidence, or is unsubstantiated by unquestionable documents or susceptible of proof.

GEO. A. HANSON.

Radcliffe Hall, 22d March, 1875.

(continued next week.)

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

NOTICE is hereby given that the undersigned has obtained from the Orphans' Court for Kent County letters Testamentary on the personal estate of

MARY ELIZABETH CAPEL

late of said county, deceased. All persons having claims against said deceased's estate are hereby warned to exhibit the same, with the proper vouchers thereof, to the undersigned on or before the 25th day of August, 1933, otherwise they may by law be excluded from all benefit of said deceased's personal estate.

All persons indebted to this estate must settle at once.

Given under my hand this 21st day of February, 1933.

ELIZABETH TAYLOR, Executrix.

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FURROWS



BY JOSIAH ALLEN WEATHERBY

Easter is always a beautiful time of the year. It ain't always so pretty just as a day, fer it snows or rains a lot of times and disapoints a good many people that wanted a bright sunshiny day. Folks just natcherly want to git out and enjoy the day. But when it rains or snows it spoils all their fun and enjoyment. But them is the superficial kind of folks. They don't see no further than just the day. If the weather is nice they have a good time. If the weather is bad they are miserable and don't git nothin out of the day but a grouch. But Easter wuzn't made fer that kind of folks.

Easter means a lot more to me than that. It is a symbol of things new. In the first place it is the anniversary of the Day when our Lord rose from the grave. And when he rose he entered into a new life. And because he rose from the dead he brought new life and new light to the world; a world that had been in darkness fer thousands of years, gropin fer the truth about life. And when the truth come out they wuzn't ready fer it, and didn't know they had it. And fer over nine hundred years a few people has been tryin to git the rest of the world to understand that truth, that Jesus is the Son of God, and the truth in him gives life and light to the sick at heart and sorrowful of soul, and happiness and joy to all.

And Easter is the symbol of all that to me. And everywhere I look at this time of the year I see evidences of this newness. On the trees out in the woods lot are the new buds ,evidences of new life fer the trees. In the fields I see new shoots springin up, bearin testimoney of new life comin up out of the old sleepy earth. The ribbons has been hoppin around full of new life predictin that a new season is at hand, and makin preparations for a new family. The bees has started out to work fer new supply of honey, and makin ready fer a new swarm. Everything in nature gits busy with this new time of the year, and reminds us that we, too, must begin to work on things new; new plans, new crops, new work, new hopes, and new life.

And even the superficial folks that wants a pretty day wants to come out with new dresses, new hats, new suits. To them the day means only that they can show off their new things to other people. But all unknowingly they are helpin to carry out in the world the spirit of newness that God has put in the world and nature. And I reckon if they could git as much newness in their hearts as they put on their bodies they would be a lot happier, and wouldn't be so put out when it rains or snows on Easter Sunday. All these things has a lesson fer me and when I consider what Easter is the symbol of I try to think how fine it would be if folks could let the dead past bury the dead, and with the Lord of light rise up to walk in newness of life.

On this Easter day (tomorrow) multitudes of people in this country will have new hopes arise in their hearts fer better times, and better conditions of livin. But to a lot of others it will simply mean another new day fer sufferin and hunger. And fer them we ought, in the midst of our worship and plenty, pause to breathe a prayer that their spirits may be renewed in the fight fer life and comfort, that they, too, may see Easter as a symbol of things new, that their hearts may be purged of the old and made to come out new like the lilies of the valley. It ain't easy to be happy and hungry at the same time, but Jesus led the way in sufferin, and folks ought to follow his lead. Down in the depths of sorrow and sufferin he went through faith in God to come up again to walk in newness of life that through his resurrection wemight have life and immortality through the Gospel.

And so we plan to enjoy the blessins of this Eastertide let us all strive to exemplify the true meanin of the day in our lives, seekin them that needs help and comfort, prayin fer them that we can't reach in their physical bodies, doin whatever good we can to all, to our friends, to them that is not our friends, and even to the strangers within our gates. And as we contemplate the great truth that the Lord give us in this beautiful symbolic day, let us remember what He said to us through the great apostle of love: "Behold I make all things new."

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If this bile is not flowing freely, your food doesn't digest. It just decays in the bowels. Gas bloats up your stomach. You have a thick, bad taste and your breath is foul, skin often breaks out in blemishes. Your head aches and you feel down and out. Your whole system is poisoned.

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NOTICE TO CREDITORS

NOTICE is hereby given that the undersigned has obtained from the Orphans' Court for Kent County letters Testamentary on the personal estate of

ETHELINE P. HACKETT

late of said county, deceased. All persons having claims against said deceased's estate are hereby warned to exhibit the same, with the proper vouchrs thereof, to the undersigned on or before the 1st day of October, 1933, otherwise they may by law be excluded from all benefit of said deceased's personal estate.

All persons indebted to this estate must settle at once.

Given under my hand this 28th day of March, 1933.

SARAH H. HACKETT, Executrix.

Subscription to the Transcript $1.50 per annum.

NOTICE TO CITY TAXPAYERS

The time limit for the payment of city taxes will expire on April 1 according to law. All taxpayers who have not yet paid their taxes on their real estate, personalty, and automobiles are urged to do so at their earliest convenience. On all taxes unpaid as of January 1, 1933, interest is due from September 1, 1932. The time is approaching when spring and summer work will begin, and in order to make needed improvements and to meet outstanding obligations promptly, it is necessary that all outstanding taxes be paid on or before April 1. Please give this matter your prompt attention.

By order of

THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL.

Thos. D. Bowers, Clerk mr25-2t.

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