

The Atlantic County Historical Society

1947



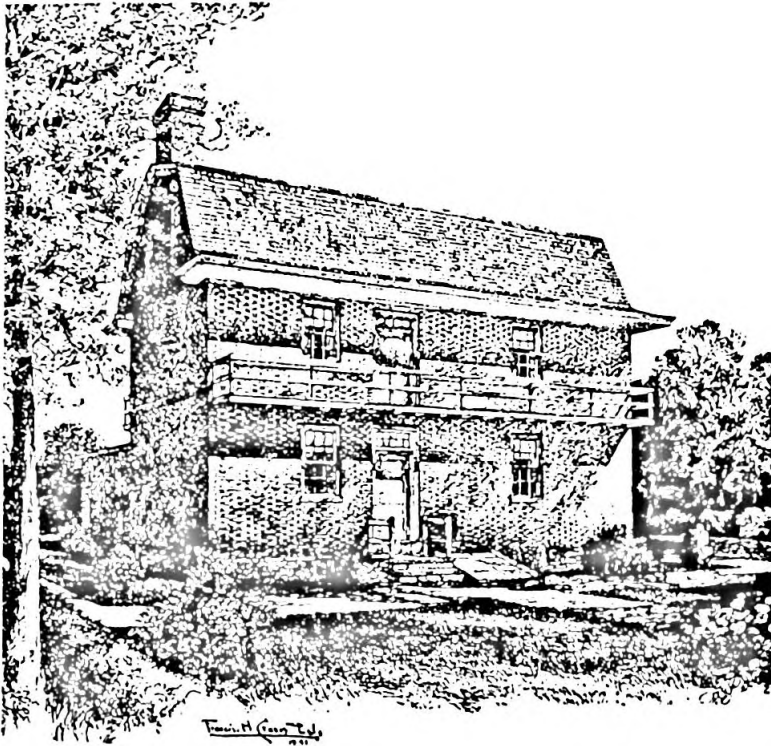
1948

YEARBOOK

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 1

OCTOBER, 1948

Library, Museum and Headquarters
Somers Mansion, Somers Point, N. J.



Somers Mansion, Somers Point, N. J.

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Library, Museum and Headquarters
of the
Atlantic County Historical Society

Second Printing - October, 1967

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Somers Mansion, Somers Point, N. J.

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1947 - 1948

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FOREWORD

The Atlantic County Historical Society presents its first Yearbook. The aim is not financial gain, but rather to make available facts concerning the development of Atlantic County.

This society was organized in 1914 and incorporated in 1915. A vast amount of historical and genealogical material has been collected over the years. The time seems ripe for them to emulate their sister society in Cape May County by publishing an annual Yearbook, to be sold at a nominal sum, but free to members. Thus may be permanently preserved the outstanding historical and genealogical data of Atlantic County.

In the beginning, the Province of West New Jersey contained two counties, Salem and Burlington. Salem included the present counties of Gloucester, Cape May, Cumberland, Salem, Camden, and Atlantic. Burlington included Burlington and parts of Mercer, Hunterdon, and Warren counties.

When we go back to the very beginning of Atlantic County, we must think of Great Egg Harbor Township, referred to in the early papers as Great Egg Harbor, or just as Egg Harbor. Its boundaries were practically the same as present Atlantic County.

Just who our earliest settlers were, we do not know. John Clement tells us that among those who met at Arwamics (Gloucester) and formed old Gloucester County ("The only county in the state that can deduce its existence from a direct and positive compact between its inhabitants") on May 26, 1686, were *people living in Egg Harbor*. There is no way for us to learn the identity of these people, for our first deeds are dated 1695. However, we know that they must have been intelligent and civic minded men.

Thomas Budd arrived in Burlington from England in 1678. He owned a Propriety and early made extensive surveys in Egg Harbor. Our earliest deeds were conveyed by Thomas Budd, Merchant of Philadelphia, or by one of his family. He had three brothers, and after his death, his widow, Susannah, and his son John gave many deeds.

You will note that in all of these 1695 deeds, the lands were adjoining, and along the Great Egg Harbor river or Patconk Creek. This was probably the earliest settlement, if it can be called a settlement, that Atlantic County can claim. They did not live near together in a village, for mutual protection and companionship. Each seems to have taken up large tracts of land, selected his home site, built his cabin, and later a substantial home. Settlements of family and others grew around them, and they became towns: Somers Point, Scullville, Steelmanville, etc. Each Pioneer seems to have left each of his sons a plantation, the eldest, according to English custom, having the home plantation. James Steelman is said to have been here as early as 1693. He and his wife were members of Old Swedes Church in Philadelphia, and the births of his children are recorded there. The others of these 1695 pioneers were members of the Society of Friends.

Cape May County appears to have had jurisdiction over Great Egg Harbor for a time, for in 1693, the Court sitting in Coxe Hall, Cape May, appointed John Somers Supervisor of Roads, and Constable for Great Egg Harbor. Therefore, there were in 1693, roads here to be supervised. Also (we are not too proud of this), there was need of a constable.

An Act passed by the Legislature in 1693 is of interest:

"Whereas, There has been a Complaint made to the House for want of a ferry at Egg Harbor, in order to redress which grievance he it hereby enacted by the Governor, Council and Representatives in this present Assembly met and assembled, and by the authority of the same that the Justices of the County of Cape May are hereby impowered to erect and set up a ferry at the said Egg Harbor, which person or persons appointed by them for the purpose aforesaid, shall and may exact for the passage of every single person twelve pence, and for horses and cattle twelve pence per head, and for sheep and hogs four pence per head, and for all manner of grain two pence per bushel." Therefore there were a sufficient number of persons living in Great Egg Harbor in 1693 to need transportation for themselves, their horses, cattle, sheep hogs and grain.

John Somers was appointed to have charge of this ferry. It left the Egg Harbor side from what is now known as Job's Point (so named because Job Somers lived there), and the Beesley's Point Boulevard passes directly over the landing place on the Cape May County side.

An act of the Legislature passed in 1694 made Great Egg Harbor definitely a part of Gloucester County; also it anticipated the fact that Great Egg Harbor should later become a separate county: "Be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the inhabitants of the said Egg Harbor shall be and belong to the jurisdiction of Gloucester County to all intents and purposes, till such time as they shall be capable by a competent number of inhabitants to be erected into a county, any former acts to the contrary notwithstanding." It so remained until 1837.

Daniel Leeds came to Burlington from England in 1678. He, also, was a Friend. He was the first Surveyor General for the Province of West New Jersey. The Daniel Leeds Book of Surveys (1679 to 1709) is the earliest on file in the office of the Surveyor General in Burlington. He was very active in the affairs of the Province. He commenced publishing his almanac in Philadelphia in 1687 and continued until 1716, when he placed his sons Felix and Titan in charge. He made many early surveys in Egg Harbor. The earliest this society has, is an abstract copy dated 1693. He is said to have come to Egg Harbor to live as early as 1698, though he continued his activities in the affairs of the Province long after he lived in Egg Harbor. His Home site became present Leeds Point.

These 1695 land owners all increased their land holdings by taking up more land farther up along the shore. We have one survey that locates a corner by "Jonathan Adams' Thoroughfare that flows into Lake's Bay." Driving to Atlantic City over the Albany Ave. Boulevard,

we pass over a small bridged-over stream marked "Jonathan's Thoroughfare" that flows into Lake's Bay. That was Jonathan Adams' Thoroughfare because Jonathan Adams owned the adjoining land. Lake's Bay was literally William Lake's Bay, because he owned the adjoining property.

Eric Mullica, a Swede, who had first settled along the Delaware, came to present Lower Bank, on the Burlington County side of the Little Egg Harbor river, between 1693 and 1698.* The Little Egg Harbor river became "Mullica's" river. He later moved to Mullica Hill, giving his name to that town and also to the township.

The Somers Mansion, the headquarters of the Atlantic County Historical Society, was the homestead of the Somers family. It stands on land purchased by John Somers in 1695. It was deeded to the society in 1937 by Mrs. Florence Hayday Brooks and her husband, Mr. Walter Brooks, and by the heirs of her deceased sister. They had inherited the property from their mother, Hannah Somers Hayday. They wished the old home to be preserved as a memorial to their mother and the family. The society deeded it to the state, through the Commission on Historic Sites, for restoration. New Jersey at that time was interested in preserving its colonial architecture. After restoration, the old mansion was placed in the custody of the Historical Society, with the understanding that a suitable Historical and Genealogical Library and Museum should be maintained by the society.

It is to be noted that these pioneers selected beautiful locations for their homes. It is said that the site of the Daniel Leeds home at Leeds Point, was one of the most beautiful on the New Jersey shore. It could not have been more beautiful than was the site of the Somers Mansion, and still is, despite man-made blemishes on the present landscape.

Another item of note in the pioneer homes, was the balcony—see the Somers Mansion. On most, however, it was just the first floor porch extended to the second floor. One example, still standing, is the Johnson-Bell house at Chestnut Neck, the only house the British did not burn at the time of the Battle of Chestnut Neck in 1778. The widow of Joseph Johnson Sr. and her daughter, Michal, lived there at that time, and, it is said, fed the British officers, so their home was spared in return. James Bell from Maryland, a member of Pulaski's Legion, which arrived at Chestnut Neck too late to take part in the Battle, fell in love with, and after the War, came back and married, the beautiful and brilliant Michal. They lived in this house. Several of their descendants have become members of General Lafayette chapter, D.A.R.

These balconies, always on the side of the house facing the shore line, commanded a view of the long, level stretches of marsh lands, bays, inlets, and thoroughfares, to way out beyond, where each morning the sun came up out of the ocean. It was indeed lovely, and it still is, where man has not spoiled it.

Later came the cupola, as seen on the Dr. Jonathan Pitney home, still standing, in Absecon; also on the Captain John Price home in

*"Eric Mullica" by Charles Werner, p. 55.

Northfield. These homes are privately owned, and *not* open to the public.

There is a tradition that during the Revolutionary War, there was a bricked tunnel leading from the cellar of the Johnson-Bell house to Nacote Creek. There is this same tradition of other houses on the shore having tunnels leading to tidewater. We do not know for what purpose they would have been used during the War; neither can we prove that they existed. It is just a tradition, and as such we accept it.

One of the objectives of this society has been to trace each of the pioneer families back to the original pioneer in America. This has been done in many families. The records can be found on our shelves. We plan to give the story of one of these families in each Yearbook. Our Headquarters being in the Somers Mansion, it seems suitable that we should select the Somers Family for this first Yearbook.

In this first Yearbook, we are giving just the beginnings of Atlantic County. We hope you may find it helpful and interesting. We invite all interested historically or genealogically in Atlantic County, to visit our Headquarters and consult our books and records. They are on our shelves for your use and information. But bear in mind that much of our treasured material is not seen by the casual visitor, but is securely put away until called for by the student or researcher. Those in charge of our Headquarters are most kindly efficient and helpful, and will, if we have them, take from the shelves such books, envelopes or folders as are needed for the required information.

The general public is interested in mementoes of the county's past, both in war and peace. We endeavor to keep our cases filled with historical articles from the county. Our committees solicit *things* of early Atlantic County to display; Also they solicit records, Family Bibles, genealogies, family papers and documents, to be placed permanently in our custody for permanent preservation. We cannot accept loans. Our Headquarters being state owned, insures this permanent preservation.

GEORGIANA COLLINS BLAKE,
(Mrs. Charles Wesley Blake),
President.



ABSTRACTS OF EARLY DEEDS AND SURVEYS

by

OLIVE CONOVER RUNDSTROM

This Indenture made this 30th day of November Anno Domini 1695 Between *Thomas Budd* Merchant of Philadelphia Province of Pennsylvania of ye first part and *John Somers* of ye Province of West New Jersey of ye other part Witnesseth that the said *Thomas Budd* for and in consideration of (torn and faded) lawful money—sells to *John Somers* land situate in Great Egg Harbour in ye Province of West New Jersey etc., (worn and faded)—Being bounded on the north east side by the line of *James Steelman* and on the north west by Patconk Creek On the south west by the bay of Great Egg Harbour and on the south east with the Sound within which bounds contains 1500 acres and allowances for roads.

Witnesses

Jeremiah Price

Pat Robinson

(This original deed is in the possession of the Atlantic County Society.

Two other deeds bring John Somers' land holdings to 3000 acres.)

This Indenture made this 29th day of November Anno Domini 1695 Between *Thomas Budd* Merchant of Philadelphia Province of Pennsylvania of ye one part and *Peter Cowanover* late of Long Island in ye Province of New York of ye other part Witnesseth that ye said *Thomas Budd* for ye sum of thirty pounds——sells 250 acres of land in Great Egg Harbour——Beginning at a stake in ye Sound and ye Marsh being ye bound stake for *John Gilbert's* land——thence unto ye woods joining on Patconk Creek——to *John Skull's* land——to have and to hold ye said 250 acres of land——etc., under ye yearly quit rent of one ear of Indian Corn to be paid ye said *Thomas Budd* or his heirs if lawfully demanded.

Witnesses

Thomas Gardiner

Recorded in Book 3 pp 59-60 Gloucester deeds.

Andr. Robeson

John Somers

Note:

Peter Cowanover was a grandson of Wolfert Garretse Van Couwenhoven, who left Holland for Niew Amsterdam in 1624. There is an active Conover Family Association, which publishes an Annual Yearbook, giving valuable family data. These Yearbooks are in the files of the Atlantic County Historical Society. Also there are three typewritten bound volumes of Conover Genealogical Records on the shelves of the society.

O. C. R.

This Indenture made this 29th day of November Anno Domini 1695 Between *Thomas Budd* Merchant of Philadelphia Province of Pennsylvania of ye one part and *John Skull* late of Long Island in ye Province of New York of ye other part Witnesseth that ye said *Thomas Budd*

for thirty pounds—— sells land Situate lying and being at Great Egg Harbour in ye Province of West New Jersey Beginning at a stake standing in ye Marsh next to ye Sound being ye Bound stake of *Peter Cowanover's* Land thence extends into ye woods——at a bound stake of *Jonas Valentine's* Land——to a stake standing by Patconk Creek——containing two hundred and fifty acres——under ye yearly Quit Rent of one ear of Indian Corn to be paid ye said Thomas Budd or his heirs if lawfully demanded.

Signed Sealed and Delivered
in ye presence of us who also
saw ye same acknowledged and
therefore allowed to be recorded

Thomas Gardiner
John Somers
John Rambo

Feb. ye 4th Anno Domini 1695

Recorded Book 3 p 56 Gloucester Deeds

This Indenture made this 29th day of November Anno Domini 1695 Between *Thomas Budd* Merchant of Philadelphia Province of Pennsylvania of ye one part and *John Gilbert Sr.* of ye County of Bucks Province of Pennsylvania Yeo. of ye other part Witnesseth that ye said *Thomas Budd* for and in consideration of ye sum of twelve pounds to him in hand paid by ye said *John Gilbert Senior*——sells 100 acres of land in Great Egg Harbour Province of West New Jersey Beginning at a stake being the bound stake of *Peter Cowanover's* land——on Patconk Creek and then to the land of *James Steelman*, etc. etc.——for ye yearly quit rent of one ear of Indian Corn to be paid to said Thomas Budd or his heirs if lawfully demanded.

Witnesses

Andr. Robeson
John Somers

Recorded Book 3 p 60 Gloucester Deeds.

This Indenture made this 29th day of November Anno Domini 1695 Between *Thomas Budd* Merchant of Philadelphia Province of Pennsylvania of ye one part and *Jonas Valentine* of Long Island in ye Province of New York of ye other part Witnesseth: that the said *Thomas Budd* for ye sum of twelve pounds lawfully money——sells to ye said *Jonas Valentine* land in Great Egg Harbour Province of West New Jersey Beginning at a stake in ye marsh next ye Sound being ye bound stake of *Jonathan Adams'* land from whence into ye woods bounding said Adams' land to Patconk Creek containing 100 acres etc.,——for ye yearly quit rent of one ear of Indian Corn to be paid to said *Thomas Budd* or his heirs if lawfully demanded.

Witnesses

Tho. Gardiner
John Somers
John Rambo

This Indenture made this 30th day of November Anno Domini 1695 Between *Thomas Budd* Merchant of Philadelphia Province of Pennsylvania of ye one part and *Jonathan Adams* of Long Island in ye Province of New York Yeo. of ye other part Witnesseth: that ye said *Thomas Budd* for ye sum of 24 pounds lawful money——sells 200 acres of land in Great Egg Harbor to ye said *Jonathan Adams*——Beginning at a stake standing in ye Marsh by ye Sound being ye bound stake of *John Skul's* land——along Patconk Creek, etc.——for ye yearly quit rent of one ear of Indian Corn to be paid to said *Thomas Budd* or his heirs if lawfully demanded.

Witnesses

Tho. Gardiner

John Somers

John Rambo.

Note:

Jonathan Adams was a grandson of Jeremy Adams who came to Massachusetts with Rev. Mr. Hooker's company in 1632. He became one of the founders of Hartford, Conn., in 1636. Jonathan's father died early in life. His widow married a John Betts, and the family moved to Huntington, Long Island. Jonathan's two brothers, John and Jeremiah, followed him to Egg Harbor. Dr. Arthur Adams says they were here as early as 1710.

An excellent paper on Jeremy Adams compiled by Dr. Arthur Adams for the Connecticut Historical Society, and later read before the Atlantic County Historical Society, will be found in the files of this society. It gives interesting data on Jeremy Adams' life, also his early descendants. All of our Atlantic County Adams families are his descendants, through these three grandsons.

G. C. B.

This Indenture made the 25th day of June in ye year of our Lord 1715 Between *George White* Eldest son and heir of *John White* late of New Bristol In ye County of Bucks and Province of Pennsylvania deceased of ye one part and *Peter White* of ye county of Philadelphia in ye said Province yeoman of the other part Whereas there is a certain piece or parcel of Land situate Lying and being on ye Sound at Egg Harbor and on ye South West side of Absecon Creek in ye County of Gloucester in ye Province of West New Jersey Beginning at ye mouth of said Absecon Creek then South Westerly along ye Sound side to a stake——Laid out for one thousand acres besides fifty acres for allowances for roads Surveyed and laid out the fifteenth day of ye eleventh month Anno Domini 1695 By a warrant signed by *John Reading* Commissioner dated the 2nd day of December 1695 unto *Thomas Budd* who being thereby lawfully seized——did by his last will and Testament in writing dated 9th day of February Anno Domini 1697/8 did make Susannah his wife and John Budd his son Executors——they granted on 20 (?) of August Anno Domini 1702 the 1000 acres to said John White to hold to him and his heirs forever——said *John White* being lawfully seized of ye said premises did make his

last Will and Testament dated 16th day of December Anno Domini 1703 constituting John Rowland and John Baldwin his Executors——soon after John White dyed seized of said premises the said Rowland married Elizabeth ye daughter of John White which said Elizabeth is since deceased without issue the said John Rowland quit claimed said premises to said George White——Now this Indenture further Witnesseth that *George White* for and in consideration of 150 pounds to him in hand paid by the said *Peter White* hath granted bargained and sold the aforesaid 1000 acres to the said *Peter White* his heirs and assigns forever.

Signed sealed and delivered in presence of us
John Price, George Coates, John Cadwalader. June 5, 1716.

Daniel Leeds 200 acres Surveyed Feb'y 3, 1693

Beginning at a pine tree for a corner by the meadow side sixty chains from the Cape or Point of a tract of Land South West side of Little Egg Harbor River and runs thence (1) W.N.W. 64 chains to a pine marked for a corner by the next Brook fifteen chains above the *Indian Cabin* thence (2) down the said Brook about N.N.E. to the Meadow and into the Meadow the same course to the end of 70 chains to a stake for a corner——etc.

Recorded in Revel's Book of Surveys.

Bounds of a Resurvey made to *Hugh McCollum* Oct. 25, 1774, but not perfected owing to a dispute concerning lines by persons claiming adjoining lands. After said *Hugh McCollum's* death his two sons *Cornelius* and *Patrick McCollum* and *Jonathan Johnson* his son-in-law had the same appropriated to them which agreeable to the settlement is bounded as follows: Beginning at the mouth of the first small branch that empties into Nacote Creek below the Mill Tail Race thence running up said Nacote Creek——to the mouth of another small branch of said Creek——to a large leaning pine at the head of the Branch by the side of the Road that leads from said *Hugh McCollums House* to *Thomas* and *David Clark's Mill*——to a survey to *John Morrow* for 202 acres——to *John Garrish's* 150 acres survey——South side *Evi Smith's* cedar swamp——line of *Joseph Sooy's Survey*——to dead pine in Clay Hollow——to pine sapling at head of first mentioned Branch etc. 587 acres. Recorded in F. 211 &c.

Note:

Cornelius McCollum served as an Ensign and *Patrick* as a Sergeant in the Revolutionary War.

G. C. B.

Bounds of 46 acres 2 roods and 10 perches surveyed to *Richard Westcoat* and *Hugh McCollum* on the head of a small Branch that puts into *Nacote Creek* and near the *Meeting House* by *Thomas* and *David Clark's Saw Mill* and by said Return bounded as follows: Beginning at a pine being the third corner of 38 acres surveyed to *Thomas* and *David Clark* thence (1) by their line——to a post in *Hugh McCollum's* line——thence (2) along his line——to a corner 27½ acres surveyed to *William Burnett*

thence (3)——to the beginning corner of Burnett's survey aforesaid——
——also the beginning corner of *David Clark's* 32½ acres survey——
thence (4) by his line——to place of beginning.

Certified by Robert Smith Surveyor General April 28 1775.

Recorder in his office in Liber Q folio 244-245.

Note:

Thomas and David Clark were brothers, sons of Thomas Clark 1st, who came to Clarks Landing from Connecticut. The Meeting House was "Clarks' Mills Meeting House." The site is marked by the old Burying Ground or Churchyard, at what was known as Clark's Mills, now a part of Port Republic.

Three of Thomas' sons served in the Revolutionary War: Adrial, grandfather of the late Hon. Champ Clark; Parker, the grandfather of the late Miss Sarah N. Doughty, Organizing Regent of General Lafayette chapter D.A.R., and Reuben. David and three of his sons, Thomas, Benjamin and Joseph, also were Revolutionary Soldiers. Thomas (David's son) lived and died on the homestead plantation at Clarke Landing; Benjamin, Joseph, and a younger brother, Abner, after the War, went to Ohio, where they have many descendants.

General Lafayette Chapter D.A.R., in 1934, placed the official D.A.R. bronze Revolutionary Soldier Grave Markers on the graves of Adrial, Parker and Thomas Clark. No doubt David and Reuben also are buried in this old burying ground, but are among those with headstones of native stone, from which time and weather have obliterated all lettering.

G. C. B.

Bounds of the land that was conveyed from Elizabeth Budd, widow, and Thomas Budd, son, of William Budd, deceased, to *Jeremiah Adams Jr., son of John Adams* of Great Egg Harbor, lying in Great Egg Harbor, County of Gloucester, in two tracts, and bounded as follows: Beginning at a stake by *Naked Creek* near Little Egg Harbor river——to a white oak——in the line of *John Adams'* land——by his land——to a stake by said *Naked Creek*——by courses thereof to first mentioned stake, containing 186 acres. The other tract: Beginning at a pine by said *Naked Creek*——up said creek to a pine——etc., etc. contains 118 acres with the first tract makes 302 acres.

Deed bears date of July 30, 1730. Recorded in Trenton B. 109.

Bounds of 60 acres resurveyed to *Jeremiah Adams* February 10, 1775 on the north side of Nacott Creek at or near a place called *Wrangleborough* Beginning at a pine——corner of 50 acres formerly surveyed to *Jeremiah Adams* standing near the road that leads from *Nacott Creek Landing* to

Chestnut Neck——to corner near the *New Mill Road*——to a Cripple
swamp——to a pine near *Connelly's house*——through the Cripple near
the Creek——then along Adams' other lines etc.

Recorded in Q 223.

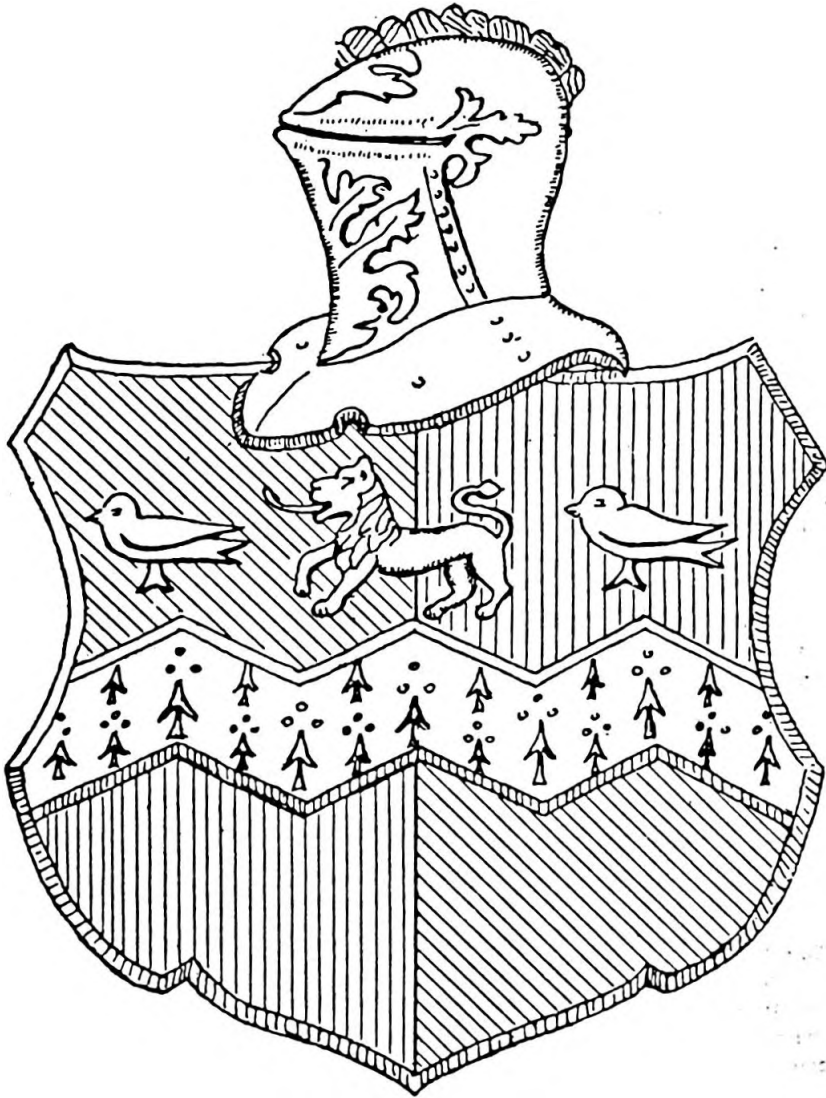
Note:

John Adams, father of Jeremiah Jr., was a brother of Jonathan, whose deed is dated 1695. Other surveys gave Jeremiah extensive land holdings. In 1775, he had all of his land resurveyed, and divided between his four sons. Their deeds are recorded in Woodbury. The son William served as a soldier in the Revolutionary War. Several of his descendants have been members of General Lafayette Chapter, D.A.R.

(From the records of the late Miss Laura Adams of Absecon, and of Dr. Arthur Adams of Hartford, Connecticut.)

G. C. B.





COAT OF ARMS
SOMERS FAMILY

Courtesy of Hubert Somers

THE SOMERS FAMILY OF SOMERS POINT

by

FLORENCE SOMERS SCULL
(Mrs. Martin V. B. Scull)

1934

There are in America two distinct families by the name of Somers. One is of English and the other of German origin. The latter are not so numerous as the former, and the tradition exists among them that they too were of English parentage; that the progenitor of their family, sojourning in Germany, married and hence settled in the fatherland.

In support of this, we find some history dating back to the middle of the sixteenth century. Strange to say, religious sentiments were the occasion of each branch separating from the original stock.

During the middle period of the sixteenth century, Transylvania was an independent principality under the rule of that ardent Protestant, Sigamund. We learn from Robinson in his "Ecclesiastical Researches" that, in 1563, his Highness invited learned foreigners to come to Transylvania, for the purpose of helping forward the Reformation. Among them was one John Somers, who was Master of the Academy of Clausenberg.

In England, the name of Somers is an old and honored one, furnishing a Chancellor, and a man of letters. Of the same family was the famous Admiral, Sir George Somers, the discoverer of the Bermuda or Somers Islands.

In the earlier times, it was no uncommon thing for a difference to exist in the orthography of proper names. Of Lord John Somers, says Campbell, in the "Lives of the Lord Chancellors" "In all the entries respecting Lord Somers in the books of the middle Temple, till he was called to the Bench in 1689, his name is spelt Somer, and then Somers. He himself afterwards sometimes spelt his name Somers, and Somers with a circumflex."

We find the same variation existing both in Germany and in America. In the deed of conveyance for the lands at Somers Point to the emigrant John Somers, from Thomas Budd, we find the name spelled five times Somers (with the circumflex), three times Sommers, and only twice Somers. And yet the latter method has been unanimously accepted.

John Somers, the emigrant to this country, was born in the city of Worcester, England in about 1640. This was also the home of the Chancellor, with whom he was a contemporary. If tradition be true, that they were of one common stock, and there is much to corroborate it, our minds revert involuntarily to the scenes where their boyhood days were spent. The Somers family "had long been owners of a small estate in the parish of Severn Stoke, in the county of Gloucester. They likewise, says Campbell, had another possession, the site of a dissolved Nun-

nery called White Ladies. It was situated a short distance beyond the city of Worcester. After the expulsion of the nuns, the dormitory remained entire, and the old hall and refectory had been fitted up into a modern mansion. The property had been granted to the Somers family at the Reformation and here they received Queen Elizabeth in 1585. The bed in which she slept, and the cup from which she drank being preserved as precious relics, even when they took to the Republican side."

Their daily life, as to how they lived in this vast dwelling, is thus described by Cooksey, a kinsman: "The labors of the day over, they repaired for refreshment to one common table in the great hall of the old nunnery, where seldom fewer than twenty or thirty relations and friends of the families assembled daily, and spent their evenings in the utmost cheerfulness and conviviality. The products of the farm, the supplies of fish and game, and the viands of every kind received constantly from their country connections, furnished their table with abundant plenty, and entitled such contributors to a place at it without ceremony or reserve. The annual slaughter of two brawns marked the festivity of Christmas."

As before said, religious sentiments developed the offshoots from English stock. John Somers felt that neither religion nor birthplace of his fathers must weigh aught against that monitor within that bade him leave all for conscience sake and cast his fortunes with the settlers of the land of Penn. Accordingly, in 1681-82 he embarked for America, fully persuaded of the truth of the principles of George Fox.

He is said to have married a woman of Irish extraction who, on her passage to this country, gave birth to her first born, but mother and child died and were buried in midocean. Upon his arrival he became a resident of what was then called Upper Dublin, Pa., now called Somerton. Here he married Hannah Hodgkins. She was a native of the city of Worcester and a member of the Society of Friends. Their first child was born in 1685 and duly recorded in the books of the Meeting. This is important, as it shows the probable period of the immigrant's arrival, about which nothing definite is known. We are told by one authority that "in 1681 two ships sailed from London and one from Bristol for the river Delaware, in which were many Friends." The probabilities are that one of these bore the progenitor of the Somers family to our shores.

At what period John Somers located at Somerset Plantation, (Somers Point) is not definitely known; the earliest record being that "at the first court held at Portsmouth, Cape May Co., March 20, 1693, John Somers was appointed Supervisor of Roads and Constable for Great Egg Harbor."

He remained a member of Dublin Meeting long after his settlement at Egg Harbor. In journeying to and from, the Indian Trails and bridle paths were followed from the seashore to the Delaware River, the distance being increased by circuitous windings around the heads of rivers and streams. There was considerable danger, as the woods abounded with wolves, panthers and bears. The times, however, had their compensations,

since deer roamed the forests, wild fowl were abundant, whilst the streams and bays were teeming with fish, oysters and clams.

John Somers was the son of John Somers of England, who died intestate, and the mother administered the estate in 1661. John Somers purchased from Thomas Budd in 1695, three thousand acres of land in Great Egg Harbor for the sum of two hundred and forty pounds. He was a Representative to the fourth Assembly for the Province of Nova Caesarea held at Perth Amboy in March of 1708.

The Quaker records name both John and Hannah as preachers of the Society of Friends; also their son Edmund and their daughter Millicent preached the World of Life.

In 1716 a Friends Meeting House was built at Seaville. John Somers and one Scull from Gloucester County (probably John Scull) were among the principal contributors.

John Somers died in 1723 and was buried on the plantation. Later Hannah built a Meeting House which was located on the S. W. corner of what is now New York Ave., Somers Point. The Meeting House was a one and one-half story affair, with a central door, and windows on either side. At one end toward the west, was a large chimney from the ground to the peak of the roof. It had cedar shingles on the roof, and weather boards on the sides and ends. It was used for a school house from 1818 to 1822, then later as a dwelling house. There is a tradition that during the War of 1812, a bullet fired from the enemies' guns passed through the building during meeting. Hannah died in 1738.

John and Hannah had six sons and three daughters: Richard; James; Samuel; Job; Isaac; Edmund; Bridget; Hannah and Millicent. Hannah married an Ingersol; Millicent married a Townsend of Cape May County; Job settled at Job's Point, which still bears his name, on the west side of the mouth of Cedar Swamp Creek, known in those days as Patconk Creek; Samuel settled on the river, and was the great-grandfather of Chattin Somers; Isaac settled at Tanners Brook below Leeds Point; James and Edmund married and left descendants.

By his will made in 1720 John Somers gives his eldest son Richard "all my land and Plantation" providing "he pay his mother ten pounds per annum and that she have sufficient room in which to dwell, to provide her with firewood and fodder for six cows and six sheep as long as she remains my widow."

According to a member of the family, Richard burnt the bricks, and built the mansion. John Somers' mother died in 1694. Dr. Daniel Somers of Brooklyn, N. Y., who made a thorough study of the English end of the family, felt that with the legacy received from his mother's estate, that John built the mansion.

Thomas Chalkley, in his Journal 2nd month, 1726, says: "From Cape May we traveled along the seacoast to the Egg Harbor river, swam our horses across and went ourselves in canoes. Afterward had a meeting at

Richard Somers', which was as large as could be expected considering the people live at such distances from each other."

The first Monthly Meeting of Friends for Egg Harbor and Cape May was held at the home of Richard Somers on the first 2nd day of 9 mo., 1726.

On the 5th day of 10th mo., 1726, Richard Somers and Judith Letart published their intentions of marriage with each other. Judith Letart was the adopted daughter of Peter White. Her mother was the widow of Sir James Letart, a native of Arcadia. She came to reside in Philadelphia. She had several children and Peter White adopted Judith. Later he removed to Absecon. There she met Richard Somers and married him at the early age of fifteen.

In addition to her youth and beauty, it is said she brought to the common fund 1700 pounds sterling. She was given to hospitality and exhibited a commendable zeal for the cause of religion. Her home was ever open in which to hold Friends Meetings whenever ministers of that faith felt burdened to come.

The result of this union was ten children. The eldest was John, the sixth, Richard. John was the head of the family. As the head of the family he maintained an authority that was more usual in the last century than it is today. He is described as an austere man and was held in great awe by his relatives, and accustomed to meet with the greatest deference amongst his kindred, not only for his commands, but for most of his opinions. He inherited the homestead property upon his father's death in 1760. He served as Captain in the Revolutionary War, and was wounded at the Battle of Red Bank.

Richard settled about a mile from the homestead, on the Shore Road. He was a man of extraordinary parts. He was a Surveyor, a Colonel of the Militia in the Revolutionary War, and a Judge of the County Court. He was a member of the Provincial Congress for the year 1775, though it does not seem that he took his seat. He was an active Whig, and was employed in the field and otherwise during the first years of the great struggle for National existence. His influence was such that he was particularly obnoxious to the Tories, and was induced to remove to Philadelphia.

He married Sophia Stillwell of Cape May County, by whom he had three children: Constant, Sarah, and Capt. Richard Somers, our local and National Hero, who perished with the Ketch Intrepid, in the harbor of Tripoli on the 4th of September, 1804.

Constant was the first Collector for the district and Port of Great Egg Harbor. He was a man of sterling integrity and personal worth. He died at the early age of 37 years, leaving a son and daughter, the former killed at Cornstadt, Russia, while a youth of 17, by falling into the hold of a ship. His daughter married 1st William Leaming, 2nd Nicholas Corson. The Hon. J. F. Leaming was a son of the 1st marriage. Dr. Leaming had in his possession a very valuable souvenir—one of the three

locks of the hair of General Washington, now known to exist. One is at Richmond Lodge No. Four, F. and A. M. Another is owned by the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, and the third is in a ring that was presented by Washington to Capt. Richard Somers. It must have been passed to Vice-Chancellor Leaming. Sarah, the daughter of Colonel Richard, married Capt. Jones Keen of Philadelphia.

The home of Colonel Richard, the house where Capt. Richard Somers first saw the light of day, (1778) is still standing, and until recently the door lintels bore dates and names of persons who carved them, upward of a century ago. Richard Anderson, a member of the family now occupies it.

The Society of the Children of the American Revolution named their chapter the Captain Richard Somers Chapter, and placed a bronze marker on a boulder set in the grounds of his birthplace. A fresh American Flag is kept always beside the boulder.

At John's death in 1799, his son Jesse Sr., inherited the Brick Mansion. He bought also the Colonel Richard Somers' property. He was a man of affairs, Collector of the Port and Postmaster. He died in 1858, aged 94.

His son, Richard L. (my grandfather) now became the possessor of the old homestead property. He remodeled and repaired it and lived there until his death in 1871. His widow occupied it until her death; following her death, their daughter, Hannah Somers Hayday, became the owner. At her death, it passed to her daughters.

James Somers, son of John 2nd, resided at Hickory Point, one mile west of the Brick Mansion. He died in 1850, almost 90 years of age. He was married three times and left four sons and seven daughters. Hannah Somers Davis was among the first wife's children. She married Elijah Davis, a merchant of Philadelphia. After her marriage she affiliated with old St. George's Methodist church in Philadelphia. In 1878 she furnished the means for a church to be erected at Clarke, Nebraska, and to be known as Somers Chapel. In 1884, then 89 years of age, she traveled to Nebraska for the purpose of visiting it. She died in 1898, almost 104 years old. She was a Real Daughter member of General Lafayette Chapter, D.A.R.

Harriet was the youngest daughter of James Somers. She married for her 2nd husband, Simon Lake, grandfather of the Hon. Simon Lake, the inventor of the Lake Submarine, and lived in Ocean City until her death. She and her brother Constantine compiled a pamphlet on the Somers Family. She describes "the house our father occupied," and says "it was built by his father when a young man, from logs sawed into shape by a hand saw, and put together with other parts in the style of those days, and still stands as it was built, is frequently visited by strangers to view the relics of olden times." It was burned in 1900. Harriet, likewise, was a Real Daughter member of General Lafayette Chapter, D.A.R.

CAPTAIN RICHARD SOMERS

by

ALFRED M. HESTON

1902

(Condensed)

Beneath the escarpments of Tripoli, lulled in their everlasting sleep by the song of the sea, are the bones of Richard Somers, American patriot and hero. Within the grounds of the Naval Academy at Annapolis is a monument which perpetuates his name, and in the old family burial ground near Somers Point, enclosed by a brick wall, is a cenotaph, whereon is chiseled:

In memory of

R I C H A R D S O M E R S ,
son of Richard and Sophia Somers,
Master Commandant
in the Navy of the United States,

Born September 15, 1778.

He perished in the 25th year of his age, in the ketch *Intrepid*, in the memorable attempt to destroy the Turkish flotilla, in the harbor of Tripoli, on the night of the 4th of September, 1804.

Distinguished for his energy,
his courage and his manly sense of honor
ProPatria non timidus mori.

But the valor and the virtue of Captain Somers cannot be told by sculptured urn or storied monument. These are but symbols of national or family pride—memorials for the living rather than the dead.

Richard Somers, "Master Commandant in the Navy of the United States," was the son of Colonel Richard Somers, a Revolutionary soldier, grandson of Richard Somers (born March 1, 1693) and great grandson of John Somers the immigrant. Commander Richard Somers was therefore the third of the name in the family, and was born at Somers' Point, as stated. He went to sea when quite a youth, after an academic education at Burlington. He joined the American Navy in its infancy, receiving his warrant as a midshipman in the spring of 1798, and soon became distinguished for great courage. He was intimately associated with Charles Stewart and James Lawrence, both Jerseyman, one a resident of Bordentown and the other of Burlington, who were also conspicuously identified with the American Navy early in the last century.

Stewart earned for himself, as commander of the *Constitution*, the soubriquet of "Old Ironsides," and Lawrence, while wounded and dying off Boston, in 1813, gave the order, "Don't give up the ship," which has since become the watchword of the American Navy.

Of sterner stuff, perhaps, than any of these was Richard Somers, whose exploit in the harbor of Tripoli demanded equal courage and greater sacrifice than that of Decatur, which Nelson pronounced the "most daring act of the age." Between Somers and Decatur there was a singularly loving friendship. The character of Somers was also admired by Washington, and, as a special token of his admiration, he presented Somers with a ring containing a lock of his hair. This ring is now in the possession of the Leaming family of Cape May, descendants of Constant Somers, brother of the Naval hero.

Somers was promoted to a lieutenantcy in the spring of 1799, and was subsequently placed in command of the Nautilus. This was in the spring of 1803. The Mediterranean Squadron, which sailed in the summer and autumn of 1803, was that which became so celebrated under the orders of Commodore Preble. It consisted of the Constitution, the Philadelphia, the Argus, the Vixen, the Enterprise and the Nautilus. These vessels did not proceed to their station in squadron, but sailed away for the Mediterranean as they were ready, being ordered to the Mediterranean to subdue the Tripolitans, who persisted in exacting tribute of the American merchant marine. After settling a similar difficulty with Morocco, without any waste of powder, Commodore Preble, in command of the squadron, declared the blockade of Tripoli, before which he believed the Philadelphia and Vixen were then cruising, though unknown to him, the former had run upon the rocks and had been captured by the enemy, Commodore Bainbridge and crew being then prisoners of War. Somers, Lawrence and Bainbridge were all Jerseyman by birth and education, Decatur by education, and Stewart by adoption.

On Sept. 3, 1804, a fourth and last attack was made on Tripoli. Preble sent Decatur and Somers, with gunboats, covered with brigs and schooners, into the harbor's mouth, while the ketches bombarded more leeward. On this occasion Somers was desperately engaged for more than an hour, pressing the enemy into his own part. Somers' gunboat was smaller than any one of those of the enemy, but so true was his fire that not one of them succeeded in getting alongside of him to board.

They were bearing straight down upon the rocks, and Somers could not spare enough men from the guns to man the sweeps. Preble, on the Constitution, saw his danger and, coming up in time, sent a broadside of grape among the pirates, who got out their sweeps and retreated, when one united attack would have made the victory theirs. As they drew off, instead of returning to the Constitution, as Preble wished, Somers pursued them until with a cable's length of a twelve inch battery, which had not fired for fear of damaging the fleeing Tripolitans. When she opened fire at this close range the destruction of Somers' valiant little vessel seemed inevitable; but, by a lucky chance, a bomb exploded in the battery, blew up the platform, and drove the Tripolitans to cover.

The arrival of reinforcements had been expected in vain several weeks. Somers finally conceived a plan for destroying the enemy's flotilla as it lay at anchor in the harbor. A ketch that had been captured from the Tripolitans

by Decatur was in the squadron, and had been rechristened the *Intrepid*, for the brilliant occasion on which she had been used, when Decatur recaptured and destroyed the *Philadelphia*. Somers proposed to fit up the ketch in the dual capacity of fire ship and infernal, take her into the harbor of Tripoli, and there explode her in the midst of the Tripolitan vessels. The panic created by such an assault, in the dead of night it was hoped would produce peace and the liberation of Bainbridge and his crew. Somers, after some difficulty, secured the permission of Preble to engage in this hazardous undertaking.

On the deck of the ketch, around the mast and over the magazine was piled a quantity of shells of different sizes, and in the hold was placed 1500 pounds of powder. Notwithstanding the desperate character of the service, so great was their devotion to Somers that every man aboard the *Nautilus* offered to engage in it. This compelled him to make a selection and, after consultation with Preble, he selected four men from the *Nautilus* and six from the *Constitution*, which with Lieutenant Henry Wadsworth of the *Constitution*, an uncle of the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and Somers himself, made up the complement of twelve men who were permitted to engage in an undertaking which was likely to cost them their lives. Midshipman Joseph Israel, familiarly known as Pickle Israel, and recently promoted to a lieutenantcy, with the assistance of Quartermaster Daniel Dixon, as he afterwards confessed, eluded the eye of his superior and was found on board one of the lifeboats accompanying the Ketch, under a tarpaulin, after Somers had started on his errand of destruction.

On the afternoon of September 4th Somers was ready to take the ketch into the harbor. He pointed out the desperate character of the service to his men, and said he wished no man to go who would not prefer being blown up to being taken by the enemy; that such was his own determination and he wished all who were with him to be of the same mind. It was said by those who witnessed the scene, that in reply each man asked the privilege of applying the fuse. Stewart and Decatur visited Somers before he got away. The latter took a ring from his finger and broke it in three parts, giving each of his friends a piece and retaining one himself. He also handed Decatur a sealed envelope wherein was his will, and a personal note to Decatur, which read as follows:

"Herein is my will, which I charge you to see executed, if I should never come back. For yourself, dear Decatur, I have no words that I can write. To other men I may express my affection, and ask their forgiveness or any injury I have done them: between you and me, there is nothing to forgive—only the remembrance of a brotherhood since we were boys."

Shortly after dark that night all was ready and the *Intrepid* was started for the harbor in tow of the two lifeboats manned by ten seamen with muffled oars. Stewart and Decatur, in their vessels, followed the ketch as far in the offing as was prudent. Midshipman Ridgely, on the *Nautilus*, by the aid of a powerful night-glass aloft, managed to follow her until she got well within the harbor, then she vanished. The suspense soon became

almost unbearable, for not a shot had been fired, and not a sound came from the direction in which she had gone. About nine o'clock a half dozen cannon shots could be plainly heard, and even the knowledge that she had been discovered and fired upon was a relief from the awful silence. About ten o'clock Stewart was standing at the gangway of the Siren with Lieut. Carrol, when the latter, craning his neck out into the night, suddenly exclaimed, "Look! See the light!"

Away up the harbor Stewart saw a speck of light, as if from a lantern which moved rapidly as though it were being carried by someone running along a deck. Then it paused and disappeared from view. In a second a tremendous flame shot up hundreds of feet in the air, and the glare of it was so intense that it seemed close aboard. The flash and shock were so stupendous that the guardships, though far out at sea, trembled and shivered.

The officers and men looked at one another in mute horror. Could anything have lived in the area of that dreadful explosion? The tension upon the men of the little fleet was almost at the breaking point.

The vessels beat to and fro between the harbor entrances, firing rockets and guns for the guidance of possible fugitives. All night the fleet kept vigil, but not a shot nor a voice nor even a splash came out of the harbor.

With the first streaks of dawn the Americans were aloft with their glasses. On the rocks at the northern entrance which the Intrepid had passed they saw a mast and fragments of vessels. One of the enemy's largest gunboats had disappeared, and two others were so badly shattered that they lay upon the shore.

The details of the occurrence were never actually known. Somers was a man capable of any sacrifice for the honor and welfare of his country. Being discovered and in danger of capture, he may have ordered the match applied to the magazine, and thus sacrificed his own life and the lives of his men, to keep from the enemy the means of prolonging the war. The whole was over in less than a minute—the flame, the quaking of towers, the reeling of ships and the bursting of shells. No one ever came back from the ill-fated Intrepid to tell the story of the explosion.

Two bodies, those of officers, were found in the bottom of the ketch. The six-oared boat drifted on the beach and one body was in this. Six more bodies were found on the shore southward of the city, and the remaining four were discovered floating in the harbor. Captain Bainbridge, at that time a prisoner in Tripoli, saw two bodies found in the ketch and the four floating in the harbor, and he described them as being "so disfigured that it was impossible to recognize any human feature." Surgeon's mate Cowdery, another prisoner, however, selected three of these as officers, being guided by some fragments of clothing remaining on the bodies, and by the delicate appearance of their hands. The ten seamen were buried on the beach, outside the town, while the three officers were interred in the same grave "about a cable's length to the southward and eastward of the castle." Small stones were placed at the corners of this last grave to mark

its site, but they were removed by the Tripolitans, who objected to the disfigurement of their land by a Christian monument.

Congress passed a resolution of condolence and erected a monument at the Navy yard in Washington in honor of these heroes. At the burning of that city in 1814, this monument was much defaced. Subsequently it was restored and removed to the west front of the capitol. It was transferred in 1860 to the grounds of the Naval Academy at Annapolis.

Note:

A vessel named "Somers" is always kept in the United States Navy honoring the memory of Captain Richard Somers.

G. C. B.



THE FRIENDS AT LEEDS POINT

by

ANNA C. COLLINS

1892

A history of the Friends' Society of Leeds' Point takes us back to the early days of the settlement of "The Province of West New Jersey." In 1676 this tract of land passed under the exclusive control of William Penn and his associates, who completed and published a body of laws for the province. Goodrich says: "This simple code enacted by the Friends in America rivaled the charter of Connecticut in the liberality and purity of its principles." Before the end of the year over four hundred families of Friends had arrived from England and found homes in West New Jersey.

For nearly a generation the Friends, as a Society, have ceased to exist at Leeds Point, but a few of our oldest inhabitants can remember the generous hospitality, sturdy integrity, quaint, gentle manners of some of these families of seventy years ago, when the society was in a prosperous condition. Its most influential members at that time probably were Japhet, Barzillai and Samuel Leeds, Richard Risley, Jeremiah Higbee, and John Shourds; others of the Leeds, Higbee, Smith, Scull, and Collins families were members.

The date of their first meeting is not known, but the Hon. John Clement of Haddonfield, an authority upon local history says: "Daniel Leeds was an important man in the early history of West New Jersey. He was the first Surveyor General. He early made several surveys in Egg Harbor, and in 1698 he removed there, about which time, I suppose, the Friends' Meeting at Leeds' Point was established." It is probable that he was among the first to choose this lovely spot for a settlement. It is beautiful for situation, being the highest point of land on the coast, from the Highlands to the capes of Virginia. The two villages of Smithville and Leeds Point seem to have been known under one name. In the Minutes of the Methodist Conference it was called Leeds, till 1844.

We gather from the Minutes of the Haddonfield Quarterly Meeting that as early as 1726 there were three places for holding Friends' Meetings in Atlantic County, namely: Japhet Leeds', Peter White's, and John Scull's. Japhet Leeds' was at Leeds Point, John Scull's near Somers Point, and Peter White's at or near Absecon.

In 1726 the Friends of Great Egg Harbor and Cape May, having for some time been under considerable inconvenience for want of a monthly meeting among them for the well-management of the business affairs of the church, addressed an expostulatory letter to the quarterly meeting of Gloucester and Salem, which convened in Haddonfield, 7th mo., 16th, asking that such a monthly meeting be established. Their request was granted, and it was ordered to meet alternately at Richard Somers', on the Egg Harbor side, and Rebecca Garretson's, on the Cape May side. The union

of Great Egg Harbor and Cape May in their monthly meeting for business of the church continued until 1804, when Cape May was joined to Maurice River and became a branch of Salem Quarterly Meeting. After 1806 the Friends on the Egg Harbor side held their monthly meeting alternately at Egg Harbor and Galloway, and were a branch of the Haddonfield Quarterly Meeting.

The first monthly meeting for Egg Harbor and Cape May met at Richard Somers' on the first Second Day of the 9th mo., 1726. Richard Townsend was appointed clerk. Jonathan Adams and Peter White were appointed overseers of the meetings held at Japhet Leeds', Peter White's and John Scull's.

At a monthly meeting for Egg Harbor and Cape May held at Richard Somers' 3rd mo., 6th, 1728, Deborah Leeds asked that a week-day meeting be established at Upper Egg Harbor, but her request was not granted. All we know of Deborah Leeds is that she was a widow and lived at Leeds Point.

We have no other item of interest till 1740, when the meeting which had been kept at Japhet Leeds' was removed to Robert Smith's.

In 1744 Friends at upper end of the shore made request to build a meeting house. This probably was the first house for public worship in this section. It stood directly west of the present Methodist church. The lot for the burial of their dead, adjoining the meeting house, is still used for that purpose and goes by the name of the Quaker Burying Ground.

We do not know the names of the earliest ministers, but doubtless preachers from distant places used sometimes to visit the settlements on the coast. In 1758 testimonies were issued concerning the following named ministers or elders of this monthly meeting: John Somers, Rem. Garetson, Hannah Somers, Ruth Ireland, Elizabeth Smith and Edmund Somers. In 1784 William Murphy was recorded a minister: Vincent Leeds, also, was a minister belonging to this meeting. He was a great-grandson of Daniel Leeds the first. His father, John Leeds, was a Public Friend, and made ministerial journeys to various places. Vincent also was a Public Friend and traveled extensively. Marjorie Leeds was appointed an elder in 1801. In 1797 Hannah Andrews and Catherine Leeds were appointed ministers. Hannah Andrews was probably the wife of Peter Andrews of Leedsville.

True to the instincts of the founders of American liberty, the Friends espoused the cause of education. As recent a date as the first quarter of the century, the only schoolhouse in the vicinity adjoined the meeting house, and was under the control of the Friends. Their preacher at this time, Samuel Leeds, was the school teacher part of the time. He kept a store at Leeds Point near the present residence of John Anderson. He was universally respected and honored for his character, intelligence, and Christian zeal. He was far in advance of his time in temperance principles, for his was the only store in the neighborhood which did not sell intoxicating liquor.

He was a brother of Japhet and Barzillia Leeds. Japhet was for many years prominent in Galloway township affairs.

The point called "Swimming Over" on the Mullica river, was so designated because in those primitive days the devout and sturdy Friends used to swim their horses across the stream, here about an eighth of a mile wide, when on their way to and from Yearly Meeting at Tuckerton. Leah Blackman in her History of Little Egg Harbor says: "Friends followed crossing the Mullica river in this way until some of them were drowned during their watery journey, after which they relinquished that dangerous mode of going to meeting. Many of the men from Little Egg Harbor used to go on courting expeditions to Atlantic County, and Atlantic County boys came to Little Egg Harbor on the same errand, both swimming their horses across the river. Several wedding parties crossed the river in the same inconvenient way, when they had been to or were returning from the "Old Meeting House," whither they had gone to be married according to Friends' ceremony. When travelers reached "Swimming Over Point," they came across the salt marsh to the "Oliphant Farm" and then pursued their way along "Old Meeting House Road" to Tuckerton.

The grant of King George III, defining the boundaries of Galloway township, bears the date of April 4th, 1774, and in a few years all records in the minutes of the Friends' meeting here are designated as being at Galloway. From 1806 to 1840 the monthly meeting was held alternately at Egg Harbor and Galloway, but after the last date, on account of the removal of part of their number and the number remaining being very small, the monthly meeting was discontinued at Egg Harbor, and met in future at Galloway. An indulged meeting was held at Egg Harbor (Somers Point) on First Day mornings. After 1825 no new names appear on the minutes as officers of this meeting.

In 1843 the monthly meeting at Galloway was discontinued and the members were attached to Haddonfield monthly meeting, but the meeting for worship on First and Fifth days was continued as heretofore. This continued until 1865, when Galloway preparative meeting was laid down, and an indulged meeting on First and Fifth days was kept up for a little time longer.

After the first meeting house had served its day, a new one was built about a mile east of the old site on a wooded eminence overlooking the bay. When it was no longer needed for a house of worship it was rebuilt into a dwelling house and is now owned and occupied by Absalom Higbee. Thus after an honorable history of over one hundred and fifty years, the last of the Friends' meetings in Atlantic County was closed. One has since been established in Atlantic City.

We cannot but regret that this worthy division of the church should have ceased to be numbered among us. Perhaps some of the causes are not too difficult to find. While Friends were among the first inhabitants, they were not the only settlers. Some Presbyterians from the eastern states early found homes in Galloway township. Rev. John Brainerd in his

Journal of 1761 speaks of preaching at John English's, and William Reed's on the seashore; at Chestnut Neck and Elijah Clark's. Besides these, no doubt many pioneers with no special religious preferences or opinions, came to this land. The Friends were not aggressive, and their order of service not being attractive to the worldly minded, they failed to reach this outside class, and made few accessions from this source. The old members died, and many of their descendants moved away, and some joined other denominations. Samuel Leeds, their last important preacher, was silenced by the church, because he was too noisy and earnest in his sermons; he afterward moved away. It is possible that the heresy of Elias Hicks, which caused a division of the Quaker Church in 1827, might have helped in the dissolution of this meeting, as I have been told that the Hicksite doctrine was much discussed for some time; but the weight of opinion is that the members of this meeting remained orthodox.



Letter from
DR. CARLOS E. GODFREY
regarding
Naming of Galloway Township

State of New Jersey
PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

Dr. Carlos E. Godfrey
Director

June 22, 1929

Mrs. Charles W. Blake,
Atlantic County Historical Society
Pleasantville, New Jersey.

My dear Mrs. Blake:

In response to your letter of the 20th instant, received this morning, I regret to say that I cannot tell you positively for whom GALLOWAY TOWNSHIP was named, but I rather suspect it was named after Joseph Galloway, who was a leading lawyer in Philadelphia for many years before the Revolution, and who also became a prominent Loyalist in Philadelphia while that city was occupied by the British in 1777-1778.

In examining the Royal Patent given for the creation of Galloway Township on April 4, 1774, of record in the Office of the Secretary of State, in Volume A-B of Commissions at page 153, I find that part of it to which you make reference, is in the following script:

"to be and to remain a perpetual Township and Community in word and in Deed to be called and known by the name of the Township of Galloway." **

It will be seen from this that Hall in his History of Atlantic County is mistaken with regard to the letter "O" preceding the name Galloway.

I am always glad to furnish you with any advice that it is possible to do.

Very truly yours,

(signed) C. E. Godfrey.
Director.

BIRTHS AND DEATHS
of the
EGG HARBOR — CAPE MAY MONTHLY MEETING
of
FRIENDS

Copied from the original Record Book, deposited in the Friends
Record Department, 302 Arch St., Philadelphia, Pa.
Copied by their Secretary

- Richard Somers Sr Born ye 1st day of 3d Month 1693.
Judith Somers Sr horn ye 26 day of 3 Month 1712.
John Somers the son of Richard & Judith Somers born ye 14th day of
ye 10 Month 1727.
Sarah Somers the daughter of Richard & Judith Somers born ye 21 day
of ye 7 Month 1729.
Judith Somers the daughter of Richard & Judith Somers born ye 5th day
of ye 6th Month 1731.
Elizabeth Somers the daughter of Richard & Judith Somers born ye 4th
day of ye 7 Month 1733.
Hannah Somers the daughter of Richard & Judith Somers born ye 22nd
day of ye 12th Month 1735/6.
Richard Somers the son of Richard & Judith Somers Born ye 24th day
of 11 Month 1737.
Richard Somers departed this Life the 27 of was buried ye 29 day of 11
Month 1760.
Judith Somers ye Widow of Richard Somers Deceased ye 9th and was
buried ye 10th of ye 7th month 1761.
John Somers son of Richard & Judith Somers deceased the 29th of the
8th month 1799.
James Somers the son of Richard & Judith Somers born ye 7th day of
ye 2nd Month 1739.
Millisent Somers the daughter of Richard & Judith Somers Born ye 12th
of ye 4th Month 1741.
Joseph Somers the son of Richard & Judith Somers born ye 4th day
of ye 5th Month 1743.
Edmund Somers the son of Richard & Judith Somers born ye 20th day
of ye 5th month 1745.
James Somers son of John Somers from England was born the 15 of 1st
month 1695 & deceased the 22 day of ye 2nd month 1761.
Abigail Somers wife of James Somers was born the 21 of 7 month 1695
& deceased 5 of ye 9 mo 1772.
Sarah Somers daughter of James Somers was born 1 of ye 11 mo 1720
Sarah Steelman deceased 3 day of 12 mo 1809 upwards of 89 years.
Hannah Somers daughter of James Somers was born the 9th of 7th
month 1722.

John Somers son of James Somers was born ye 30 of 2nd mo 1723.

Judith Somers daughter of James Somers was born the 8 of 12 mo 1725.

Abigail Somers daughter of James Somers was born the 25 of 10 mo 1726.

James Somers Junr. was born the 25 of 3 mo 1728.

Rebecca Somers daughter of James Somers was born the 5th of 3 mo 1730.

Mary Somers daughter of James Somers was born the 7 of 2nd month 1732.

Rachel Somers daughter of James Somers was born the 27 of 1st mo 1734.

Isaac Somers son of James Somers was born the 15 of 2nd mo 1736.

Millisent Somers daughter of James Somers was born the 25 of 1st month 1738 & deceased the 8 of 7 month 1743.

Hannah Somers daughter of Edmund Somers was born ye 2 of 11 mo 1733/4.

Judith Somers daughter of Edmund Somers was born ye 9 of 3 mo 1740.

Mary Somers daughter of Edmund Somers was born ye 28 of ye 12 mo 1742.

Edmund Somers son of John and Hannah Somers was born in ye 7 mo & deceased in ye 7th mo 1743.

Edmund Somers son of ye sd Edmund Somers was born the 17 of ye 7 mo 1737 & deceased in 6 mo 1743.

Japhet Leeds Junr was born the 18 of ye 3 mo 1710 & departed this Life in the 4 month 1781 in 72 year of his age an Elder.

Rebeckah Leeds wife of Japhet Leeds was born ye 16 of 1st mo 1722 daughter of Henry Woodward deceased ye 25 of 5 mo 1760.

Japhet Leeds son of Japhet Leeds was born ye 12 of the 3d month 1739 & deceased the 13th day of 4th mo 1805 aged 66 years.

Henry Leeds son of Japhet Leeds was born ye 2 of 4 month in the year 1741 & deceased the 4 day of the 6 month 1760.

Anne Leeds daughter of Japhet Leeds was born the 30 of the 11 mo 1748.

Hannah Leeds daughter of Japhet Leeds was born the 3d of 9th mo 1746.

Josiah Leeds son of Japhet Leeds was born the 11 of 9th mo 1749 & departed this life the 29 day of the 3 mo 1797 and was buried the 31 aged 47 years & 4 months.

Rebeckah Leeds daughter of Japhet Leeds was born the 18 of 3 month 1752 N. S. & departed this life the 8th of the 1 mo 1825 In the 73 year of her age An Elder.

Samuel Leeds son of Japhet Leeds was born ye 31 of 8 mo 1754 & departed this Life the 17 day of the 4 mo 1817 in the 63 year of his age An Elder.

Daniel Leeds son of Japhet Leeds was born the 28th of 5 mo 1757 & departed this life the 18 day of the 11th month 1829 in the 73 year of his age An Elder.

Sarah Badcock daughter of John Badcock was born the 13 of 2nd mo 1751.
Millisent Badcock daughter of John Badcock was born the 28 of 7 mo
1752.

John Badcock son of John Badcock was born the 29th of 9th mo 1754.
Rebeckah Badcock daughter of John Badcock was born the 9 of 12 mo
1756.

Daniel Ireland was born in the year 1688 & departed ye 24 & was buried
ye 25 of 1st month 1762.

Ruth Ireland his wife was born in the year 1699 & deceased the 25th of
2nd month 1757.

Marcy Ireland daughter of Daniel Ireland was born in ye 10th month
1711.

Elizabeth Ireland daughter of Daniel Ireland was born in ye 8 month
1713 Elizabeth Ireland deceased.

Daniel Ireland eldest son of Daniel Ireland was born the 13 of ye 5
month 1715 Daniel Ireland deceased.

Mary Ireland daughter of Daniel Ireland was born the 27 of 11 mo
1716/17.

Reuben Ireland son of Daniel Ireland was born the 1st of 6 mo 1718.

Thomas Ireland son of Daniel Ireland was born the 1st of 5 mo 1721.

John Ireland son of Daniel Ireland was born the 26 of 8 mo 1723.

Job Ireland son of Daniel Ireland was born ye 3 of 9 month 1725.

Ruth Ireland daughter of Daniel Ireland was born the 28 of 11 month
1728 Ruth Woodward deceased ye 15 of ye 6 month & was buried
ye 17th 1761.

James Ireland son of Daniel Ireland was born the 10th of the 1st month
1730/1.

Silas Ireland son of Daniel Ireland was born the 14th of 8 mo 1733.

Daniel Ireland son of Daniel Ireland was born ye 22 of 5 mo 1738.

Kazekiah Ireland son of Daniel Ireland was born the 15 of 5 mo 1741.

To be continued.

