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THE DOVER GREEN.

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When I was invited to prepare an address on "The Dover Green" I little realized the embarrassment I should be forced to meet for lack of proper materials with which to construct such an address. That with which I desired to build is not recorded history, but unwritten tradition, and it did not seem to be at my command. I found, in seeking for it, that much of it had faded from memory with the passing of a former generation, and was lost in the echoless silence of the dead and gone years. Had I been appointed to this task a few years ago, an afternoon with that distinguished and delightful gentleman, Judge George P. Fisher, would have afforded me such a wealth of anecdote and incident as would make this feeble address valuable indeed. As it is, I have been obliged to gather scattered fragments, like the pieces of a shattered mosaic, and to fit them together as best I could. For many suggestions I am indebted to Mr. Daniel Cowgill, of Dover.

The records tell us that on the 11th day of August in the year 1683, William Penn issued a warrant authorizing the surveyor to lay out for the Governor a town in St. Jones, or Kent County, to be called Dover. The warrant reads as follows:

"William Penn, Proprietary and Governor of ye Province of Pennsylvania, & ye territories thereunto belonging.

"I do hereby order thee to lay out, or cause to be layd out, in ye land appointed for ye town of Dover, in ye county of Kent, one high street one hundred and fifty feet wide, and two back streets each sixty feet broad, to run from the water side throughout, and one cross street one hundred and fifty feet broad where ye high road crosseth ye said Town land & to lay out ye Lotts in ye sd Town so as each may contain one and one half acres of land, to grant to any person upon application to thee for a Lott, one Lott in ye sd Town, they building forthwith on ye same & paying unto me as Ground Rent yearly one bushel of good Winter wheat, or four shillings, &c. I do also order yt ye Court House and Prison be built in ye cross street of ye sd town.

Indeed, the history of the "green" is part of the history of the nation. In all the crises through which he colonies and the nation have passed, it has ever been a theatre of intense and powerful action.

In colonial days, it was the hub of the wheel of affairs. From it emanated an influence which pervaded not only the confines of the little county, but which was felt throughout the colony. In a large degree, it directed affairs, instituted customs and manners, made the laws, and directed important issues. No matter of public importance was finally acted upon until the "green" was consulted. And the "green" was fully aware of this, the consciousness of which caused it to assume a manner extremely pompous, and a dignity severely austere. But with all its strength of character, its rigid manners, and its learning, it was not above the popular superstitions of time. When one reflects upon influence wielded upon the people of a century and a-half ago, the superstitions of the age, he is truly amazed. Men of unerring judgment and unquestioned courage surrendered their reason and their strength in the face of it. The "green" believed as firmly in witches and ghosts, as it did in angels and ministers of grace. True, it did not burn its witches, as the Salem folks did, but it sought to get rid of them by a remedy which it deemed quite as effective, if less barbarous,—a remedy in strict harmony with the superstition itself, as the following story will illustrate:

It had been observed, for some time, that one and another of the residents on the "green" had been the victim of a series of annoyances and misfortunes. The leaves on Benjamin Shurmer's apple tree, the pride of his garden, had all withered one night in June, and the tree, upon being examined, was found to be perfectly lifeless. The next night, his kitchen chimney fell down with a crash. A few mornings after that his horse was found lying in the stable, its mane and tail plaited, and the animal bearing every evidence of having been ridden almost to death.

They were picturesque, too, these ancestors of ours. The Quakers had

along, thinking, perhaps, of the good cheer awaiting him at home, but surely with no thought of ghost or goblin, he suddenly felt the presence of something strange and uncanny. Casting his eyes in the direction of the old poplar, he was amazed to behold Samuel Chew standing there. As he gazed for a moment, trembling with fear, the figure beckoned to him, but the miller took to his heels, and could not be persuaded to pass that way again after nightfall.

In those days, there was but one road leading into Dover from the east, and when this ghost story became circulated throughout the neighborhood, not a farmer ventured to come to town, or to travel that road after dark. This very seriously affected trade in the little town of Dover, and the "green" took counsel with itself as to how the trouble might be remedied.

Finally, after a great deal of discussion, it was determined that the only way to get rid of Chew's ghost was to bury it. Accordingly, notice was sent out through the neighborhood that on a certain day, at high noon, the burial of the ghost would take place beneath the poplar tree.

On the day appointed the "green" formed itself into a funeral procession, and proceeded with slow and solemn tread to the old poplar. Arriving here, they stood with uncovered heads, while the minister read the burial service, and with toll of bell, and all the ceremony of a well-appointed funeral, they buried the ghost of Samuel Chew. Tradition tells us that the burial was an effective one. The ghost never was seen again.

But superstition is not a vice; it is only a weakness, and if our own generation has outgrown the belief in witches and ghosts, it were well, perhaps, not to smile too freely at our ancestors, lest a future generation ridicule some weakness of ours.

These dwellers on the "green" during the first half of the eighteenth century were, for the most part, learned and accomplished men. They were proud and aristocratic in their notions, quick to anger, and as swift to resent an insult offered to a friend as to themselves. The taint of that chivalry which their ancestors gloried in remote generations before, lingered in them. They treated women with such charming gallantry and graceful courtesy as would put to blush the beaux of our day, with whom true politeness has become almost a lost art.

They were picturesque, too, these ancestors of ours. The Quakers had

were ultimately to achieve American independence, were so active; and when, at length, the clouds of war that had been hovering so darkly over the colonies, finally burst, the "green" snook off some of its conservatism. They knew Caesar Rodney. He was born right here among them. They admired the courage with which he advocated the American cause, and believed firmly in the justice of the cause. On the other hand, loyalty to the King was a part of their religion. To renounce it seemed little short of sacrilege. The consequence was that at the beginning of the conflict, the "green" was in a state of doubt and uncertainty.

At the beginning of the Revolution, the lower tavern, which stood on the "green" where the Court House now stands, was kept by John Bell, and had for its sign a portrait of George III. John Bell was as true and loyal a subject as King George had, and the attitude of the colonies towards England grieved him sorely. At first, he was outspoken, and denounced all resistance to the crown as rank treason; but, by and by, as the tide of hastening events swept along, his ardor cooled somewhat, and he found himself in an extremely awkward position—going to lean both ways at once.

One July morning in 1776, as he stood in front of his tavern, Dr. Tilton, who had recently graduated from the University of Pennsylvania, and settled down on the "green" to practice his profession, passed along.

"What's the news, doctor?" inquired Bell.

"Well, as you already know," replied the doctor, "independence has been declared, and the cause of liberty is progressing finely."

"Yes," said Bell, with a shrug, "and I fear me some of the signers may one day find themselves on an English gallows."

"Better that," replied the doctor, "than to be ground to death beneath an English heel."

"Ah, it is always best to let well-enough alone," said Bell. "Caesar Rodney had better kept out of this trouble, and remained here quietly on the 'green,' like some of the rest of us."

"Humph!" said the doctor; and pointing up at the sign, he said impressively, "well John, be that as it may, King George will never rule in America again. I would advise you to change that sign of yours."

The doctor went on his way, leaving John Bell standing there in serious thought. The conversation made a

and was graduated in the year 1771. He immediately entered upon the practice of his profession in Dover, and was beginning to achieve a reputation for ability, when the independence of the United States was agitated. True patriot that he was, he at once offered his service in the defense of his country, and was made first lieutenant of a company of light infantry, but after the Declaration of Independence, he was appointed surgeon of the First Delaware Regiment. From that time until the close of the war, he devoted himself to the cause of the colonists, and was the personal friend of Washington. In 1781, he was elected a professor in the University of Pennsylvania, which honor he declined, unwilling to desert his situation in the service of his country. After the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, he returned to Dover, and recommenced the practice of his profession. He was a member of Congress in 1782, and repeatedly served in the legislature of Delaware. Later in life, he removed to Wilmington, where he built up a large practice, and held, at intervals, positions of trust under the government.

Miss Montgomery, in her reminiscences, describes him as "about six feet tall, had dark hair, keen black eyes, very dark, swarthy complexion, loud and quick voice, finished in the art of chewing tobacco, always in a pleasant humor, no misanthrope, an old bachelor of the first order, who always loved the society of ladies."

In attending the levees of President Washington, Dr. Tilton always wore plain, homespun clothes, one of the products of his farm. In 1815, a tumor attacked his knee, which necessitated amputation, and although seventy years old, he bore the operation with surprising fortitude and calmness. He died May 14, 1822, in his seventy-fifth year.

Another of the famous men of the "green" was John Haslett. He was colonel of the Delaware regiment and fell gloriously at the battle of Princeton, January 3, 1777, in the cause of American independence. It was to him that Caesar Rodney despatched a mounted messenger on the night of July 4th, 1776, with the news of the declaration of independence. He lies buried in the Presbyterian churchyard, at Dover.

Another important man of the "green" was Col. John Parke, born about 1750. He entered the army at an early age, and was attached to Washington's division. He was the author of a volume of poems, entitled, "The Lyric Works of Horace trans-

a new generation springing up—a generation free from the galling pressure of the British yoke, a generation of free Americans. Born almost while their fathers were kindling freedom's altar fires, they breathed the spirit of patriotism with their first breath, and inherited the strong manhood and sturdy character which these same fathers had stamped upon the institutions of their country. It seemed as though God had especially endowed them to embellish with their wisdom the Temple of Freedom he had caused their sires to build.

Foremost among these was John M. Clayton. A giant in intellect, with the tender, sympathetic heart of a woman. An orator, finished in all the graces of his art, yet, who could adapt himself to his most rural constituency. A man of surpassing attractiveness socially, in whatever society he chanced to be placed. No man in Delaware ever had such a career as John M. Clayton. He was the idol of the Whigs, who delighted to honor him, yet, such a hold had he upon the whole people, that a Democratic legislature sent him to the United States Senate. Nature and education combined had indeed produced a most extraordinary man, and while he lived, Delaware was virtually John M. Clayton.

In his little law office on the "green," where he studied problems of state, dispensed law, entertained his friends, and amused himself with his violin, a tragedy once occurred, in which James Clayton, his cousin, was one of the principal actors:

James Clayton, an exceptionally brilliant young man, who was vacillating between the bar and the pulpit, was, at the time of the tragedy, a student in the office of John M. Clayton. He was a man of quick temper and chivalrous nature, and had taken exception to some remark that Major Adams was reported to have made about a young lady whom he admired. Meeting Major Adams on the street, Clayton indignantly charged him with making an insulting remark about the lady, and demanded an apology, which Major Adams stoutly refused to make. This resulted in a very serious quarrel, and the two men parted with angry threats towards one another. Clayton proceeded at once to the office, and was standing with his back to the fireplace, telling Judge Houston, who was then a student at law, about the quarrel he had just had, when the door opened, and in walked Major Adams, still flushed with anger.

Philadelphia; David Dudley Field, from New York.

So, too, were large conservative meetings held, composed of a strong element in favor of a peaceful adjustment of difficulties. At these meetings was heard the forcible rhetoric of William G. Whiteley, and the calm and earnest eloquence of Thomas F. Bayard.

But all this has passed like a panorama. The "green" of Colonial days, of the Revolution, and of the Rebellion, is gone; but it will live forever in history and tradition. So, too, has the "green" of yesterday departed. It lives in memory only. I close my eyes, and the yesterday of the past comes back to me.

In the old law office, I see again Nathaniel B. Smithers, now venerable, wise in his statesmanship, profound in his learning. One whose environment denied him the lofty niche he was so grandly fitted for. Now only waiting for the wider horizons of the hereafter.

I see again Joseph P. Comegys, stately, reserved, and every inch the able Judge—he looks to be.

I see again Gove Saurbury, strong, masterful, a man like Richelieu, of iron hand, and indomitable will.

I see again Eli Saulsbury, bending over his desk in the old *Delawarean* office, writing the editorials that for a quarter of a century influenced the politics of Kent.

I see again James L. Wolcott, talented, genial, popular with the people, and the leader of the young Democracy that overthrew the old regime.

I see again George P. Fisher, scholarly, magnetic, the erstwhile friend of Lincoln, and for years the favorite of fortune.

The vision fades. I open my eyes again, and look out upon the "green." Not a suggestion does it give of the story I have told; not a sign of its interesting history.

ye 6th mo. 1683. Wm. Penn."

"To Wm. Clarke
"Surveyor of ye counties of Kent
and Sussex."

This warrant was immediately put into execution, and the commissioners appointed came upon the ground, but owing to some trouble in the affairs of the government, or some controversy concerning the location of the projected town, it was not at once laid out. Indeed, fourteen years elapsed before the Court House was built, and nearly thirty-five years passed before the town with its "green" was laid out.

Delaware seems to have been very slow in its growth. It was originally settled at its extreme ends—beside the beautiful river where New Castle now stands, and at Lewes, where the great bay pours its emerald tide into the restless sea. The middle county, however, remained for years a vast and unexplored wilderness. Yet, a long time prior to the issuing of Penn's warrant, settlements had sprung up, not only along the streams, but in the interior, as well. The settler had at last penetrated this wilderness, and touched it with his magic wand. This area of land which but a few years before was covered by dense forests and wild undergrowth, and was the undisturbed retreat of countless wild animals, and the hardly less wild Indian, now echoed to the tread of the white man, in his onward march of civilization. The virgin forest had felt the keen edge of the woodman's axe. Giant oaks that had bent their rugged forms to the Wintry blasts of the centuries—oaks that were old when Columbus embarked upon his first voyage of discovery; old when England was being torn by the wars of the Roses; old when Richard the Lion Heart waved his battle-axe above the hills of Palestine—had been felled, and prostrate lay on the unbroken soil that had nurtured them, to clear a place for civilized man to dwell. But these clearings made but little progress for fifty years.

Now, let us pass by this period of time. For the purposes of this address it does not further concern us.

The year 1717 had come. Sixteen years had passed since William Penn, returning with his family to England, had passed away from the

in a similar manner, until it was whispered about that there was a witch in the neighborhood. Suspicion seemed to point to Betty Pollen, a forlorn old woman, who lived alone in a little tumble-down cottage close by the creek. Just why it should point to her nobody was quite able to say, but the "green" was positive in its belief that Betty Pollen was the witch that was doing all this mischief. Nothing was done towards punishing her, however, until Absalom Cuff opened his eyes one morning to find his vision deranged. Every object in the room appeared double. Rubbing his eyes vigorously, he raised the window curtain, and looked out on the "green." Every single object that met his gaze looked like two. Absalom Cuff's countenance revealed the fact that he was puzzled. Presently, something seemed to dawn upon him, and the puzzled look vanished from his face in a moment. Stamping his foot indignantly, he exclaimed:

"Conjured—bewitched!"
Hastily dressing himself, he seized his gun, and cutting up a silver coin, with which he loaded it, went out to the barn. On the barn door he drew, with a piece of chalk, as accurately as he could, a picture representing old Betty Pollen. Stepping back a few paces, he raised the gun, and taking the best aim he could with his imperfect sight, he fired. The shot took effect in one of the feet of the picture. Instantly, his eyes became properly adjusted. He set out at once for old Betty's cottage, about half a mile away. Sure enough, he found her nursing her foot—the very same foot he had just shot in the picture. He charged her with being a witch, and warned her that if she cut up any more of her devilish antics he would make his aim higher next time. Nothing more was ever seen of Betty Pollen from that day. She vanished as completely as though the earth had swallowed her, and the "green" was once more free from its annoyances and misfortunes.

It is possible that tradition may have handed down many an interesting ghost story wherein the "green" figured, but if so, they have been lost in the mists of departed years. But I am sure there never was one more strange and unique than the following

of sober color, and the gentlemen of the "green," whether Quaker, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, or Dissenter, all wore wigs. While their ordinary apparel was of homespun, their dress suits were of cloth and camlet, brave with buttons, braid and buckles, silk stockings and embroidered waistcoats, lace ruffles and cravats. The ladies wore high-crowned hats, much-dressed hair, long, stiff corsage, with cambric about neck and bosom, silk or satin petticoats, dainty shoes and stockings.

Social life on the "green" in the good old colonial days was full of hospitality and good cheer. It was somewhat limited in its scope, consisting principally of the exchange of formal visits, and an occasional tea party. On these latter occasions the large mahogany or pine table, fairly groaned under the weight of tempting viands spread out in welcome of the guests. The punch bowl, of course, figured conspicuously, even in the Quakers' house, and it was deemed a breach of etiquette to refuse a social glass. They were great eaters and stout drinkers, our colonial fathers, and frequently, at these social functions, conviviality exceeded the bounds of propriety. The young lady of that period was famous for her taste, grace, kindness, and the art of putting people at their ease; and the ready jest and quick repartee was a part of her accomplished outfit. But she was never permitted to receive company alone. Her mother, judicious, considerate, affectionate, was always at her side. Love making in those days must have been a very tame affair. One can hardly imagine such sentimental things as tender glances, softly-whispered vows and the like, being exchanged between lovers, with the young lady's mother on guard all the time. How such courtship ever led up to a marriage is one of the unrevealed mysteries of that time. But though courtship was obstructed by formalities and restraints, the wedding entertainment was the occasion of easy hospitality and freedom of action.

And old chronicle, which I have frequently heard quoted—probably the private diary of some beau of the period, tells of a wedding entertainment on the "green" about 1750, where the chronicler was one of the guests. It reads as follows:

deep impression on Ben's mind, and some months later he espoused the cause of liberty far enough to have the portrait of Washington painted over that of King George. But the tavern-keeper's troubles did not end there. Tradition tells us that as the fortunes of war were constantly changing back and forth from the British to the Americans, so the portraits on the sign changed. When the British were victorious the portrait of King George was plainly visible; when success attended the colonists, the portrait of Washington stood out boldly. Indeed, the sign was so changeable that it kept poor John Bell in a state of dreadful uncertainty as to which side of the issue he was on.

This old tavern was famous in its day. Here, Marshal Grouchy, who failed to support Napoleon at Waterloo, and was greatly responsible for his defeat, was a guest in 1820, and spent his time hunting.

Here, the Democratic party, for years, made its headquarters, and planned its campaigns.

Here political slates were made, and gubernatorial receptions held. Since 1724, it had been the scene of many a glittering banquet. Its walls had echoed to the tread of fair women and brave men, when revelry and mirth held sway. In its prime, it had seen the struggle of the Revolution; in its old age, it had witnessed the storm of civil strife, and on the 10th day of November 1863, it expired in its own ashes, laden with the memories of nearly a century and a half.

The Declaration of Independence did more to arouse the people, in one moment, than all the tyranny and oppression which they had felt for years, had done. It seemed like an inspiration. It was the expression of their sturdy manhood; the voice of that lofty independence which was the corner-stone of their character. It seemed like incense they had breathed for years, rather than the product of the hour. And so it was. That wonderful document was not born in a day. It was not the offspring of a generation, nor the fruit of the crucible of the ages. Unconscious forces, from the dawn of civilization to the birth of Magna Charta, were the heralds of its coming. The English constitution and

added a number of Original Poems—by a Native of America." These poems are dated from 1769 to 1786, at various places—Valley Forge, Brandywine, New York, and generally in camp at headquarters. They are inscribed to almost all the officers of the army, and prominent men of the country. Col. Parke died at Dover in December, 1789.

Perhaps the most brilliant man of the "green" in those days was John Vining, son of Chief Justice John Vining. He was born December 23, 1758, studied law with George Read, and was admitted to practice February 21, 1782. He at once took a prominent position at the bar, not so much by reason of his solid legal acquirements, as by his brilliant intellectual faculties. He was a man of prepossessing appearance, of magnetic personality and of most convivial disposition. But with all his brilliancy and his magnetism, he was a man of most unthriftly character. He gave himself no concern, whatever, about financial or domestic affairs, and but for Mrs. Vining's careful management, everything would have gone at loose ends. The following story will illustrate this trait of his character far better than I could possibly describe it:

One Saturday afternoon, as Mrs. Vining sat quietly at the front window, looking out on the "green," her husband entered hurriedly, and said:

"Mrs. Vining, I have invited the Judges of the High Court of Errors and Appeals to dine with us to-morrow on lamb and peas."

Having imparted this information to his wife in the most matter-of-fact way, he took his departure in the same hurried manner. Mrs. Vining went to the door and looked out after the retreating form of her husband in perfect dismay. She was not surprised. She knew him too well to be surprised at anything of the kind. But her heart sank within her.

"Oh, John!" she cried. "You know we have neither lamb nor peas, nor money to buy them."

But the invitation for the Sunday dinner had been given, and something had to be done. In her dilemma, she went over to Mrs. John Fisher to beseech her trouble. John

Clayton, his hand moved towards his pistol pocket, which Clayton perceiving, instantly drew his pistol and fired. With the fury of a madman, Adams sprang at his antagonist, who eluded him, and escaping through the door communicating with the dwelling, ran up the stairway. Adams followed him to the foot of the stairway, where he sank down mortally wounded. He was removed to the Capital Hotel, where he died a few hours later. Clayton was arrested, and had a hearing before the magistrate. He pleaded self-defense, and was held to bail for appearance at the next term of court. John M. Clayton was in Washington at the time of this occurrence attending to his senatorial duties. He came home at the spring term to defend his cousin, but the case never reached the grand jury. James Clayton left Dover soon afterwards, and died a few years later, while still a young man.

The year 1861 was born amid gloom, anxiety and dread. Five years had passed since John M. Clayton's death, and the civil war, he had so confidently predicted more than a decade before, now burst upon the country with the wildest fury. The usually quiet old "green" became the scene of excitement, agitation and strife. In no state of the Union was public sentiment more divided, and party feeling more intense and bitter, than in Delaware. The fact that it remained in the Union was, by no means, evidence that it was a Union state in sentiment. It contributed to the national army, without regard to politics, its quota of brave soldiers. Braver men never fought on any battlefield; but the influential men, those who were recognized as leaders, were nearly all Southern sympathizers. The sentiments expressed at the convention held at Montgomery, Alabama, found a responsive echo in the little State House on the "green." South Carolina's act of secession was warmly applauded here, and Delaware only waited for Maryland to take the step that she would have followed in. But she remained, in name, a Union state, torn by the bitterest and most intense hatred on the part of her Southern sympathizers; and the most flagrant abuse of power, on the part of her Union men, who were clothed

province he had created, never to return to it again. Sir William Keith was now Governor of Pennsylvania and the provinces, and that year an act was passed by the Assembly of the three lower counties appointing persons to lay out the land in lots and streets adjoining the Court House in Kent County, and to sell the lots, the survey and laying out of the same to be completed by the 10th day of March next. Accordingly, in 1718 the plot was completed, and on the 7th of August Richard Richardson, one of the commissioners, became the first purchaser of a lot on the "green." Doubtless many other lots were at once sold, but very few deeds were recorded until 1722, when John Lindsay purchased the old Court House lot; Thomas Wells bought the lot where the Capitol Hotel now stands; Samuel Chew bought the lot in the southeast corner of the "green," adjoining the State House, now the property of the State, and William Rodney, grandfather of Cæsar, became a purchaser. And so they were sold and purchased, changing hands often, until, in the course of time, each lot on the "green" contained a comfortable house.

To the casual observer of to-day the "green" is but a plain, unadorned square, margined on either side by a number of substantial, but modest dwelling-houses, a few lawyers' offices, two banking houses, a hotel, and the unpretentious buildings of county and State. In appearance it is not particularly attractive. No statues of Delaware's illustrious sons; no monuments commemorative of heroic deeds, adorn it. Nor has man's hand scarcely moved to beautify it. It is left alone to nature's tender care. The stranger might, indeed, turn away from it without being, in the least, impressed. He would not regard it as an interesting spot. But beneath its quiet repose, if he would but look, there might be found a multitude of comedies and tragedies.

one, which I have succeeded in calling back out of the past. Its deplorable has the heathenish flavor of a Chinese ceremony,—viz:

One of the most prominent men that lived on the "green" in the olden time was Samuel Chew. He had been Chief Justice, and discharged his duties with ability, was public spirited, and though eccentric and haughty in manner, was very greatly respected. He never, in his lifetime, made himself offensive by interfering with other people's affairs, or in any manner trespassing upon their rights. But Samuel Chew had been dead not quite a year when he began to be troublesome. There was no doubt about his being dead. The whole "green," as well as the country people roundabout, had attended his funeral, and sincerely mourned his departure. Besides, the church register, corroborated by a modest tombstone in the burying-ground, fully proved the fact. Nevertheless, Samuel Chew was seen one moonlight night, about a year after his death, standing beneath a large poplar tree near the road, on his estate, apparently in deep meditation. The simple rustic who saw him, fled precipitately to the nearest farm house where, quaking and breathless, he related his strange story. He had been to Dover, and was returning home. As he approached the old poplar, a strange feeling seemed to take possession of him, and upon looking up, he beheld the figure of a man standing there. He was about to pass on, when the figure raised its head, and he recognized Chew. The farmer and his family were disposed to treat the story lightly, and indeed, accused the fellow of having comforted himself too much at the tavern before setting out for home.

Just at dark, one evening, a miller trudging along towards home, somewhat belated, took a short cut across the field that led by the old poplar. Whistling softly to himself as he went

"On Tuesday attended the wedding of Polly —, a young lady of amiable disposition, rare accomplishments, and agreeable manners. A most enjoyable affair. Not a bachelor present, but envied the young benedict. Downstairs we all gathered round the punch bowl, and drank the health of the groom; then we ascended to the second floor, where we found the bride surrounded by her bridesmaids, and each of us kissed her. Afterwards, there was rum and brandy with the older folks, bounce and liqueurs with the ladies, and wine and spirits *ad libitum* until bed time."

Undoubtedly, this was the custom of the time. Even the Quakers accepted it with good grace, until the evil consequences of free drinking on those occasions compelled them to counsel more moderation. These entertainments must have been more of a nuisance than a pleasure to the bride's parents, as they usually continued for two days following the wedding day, during which time punch was dealt out freely to all comers.

Prior to the Revolution, the people in this part of Delaware may be said to have been a people without a history. The peaceful current of their lives flowed on unbroken by events deemed worthy of record, and not even the journals of the legislature, previous to the year 1762, were preserved.

The dawn of the Revolution did not awaken them as rudely as it did the people of the other colonies. They were an isolated people, living remote from the routes of travel, having little to do with commerce, or with any industry outside of agriculture, consequently, the imposition of the stamp act, the tax on tea, and the like, did not affect them. They had little use for stamps, and the root of the sassafras furnished the tea they drank.

It was impossible, however, to remain passive while the forces that

the freedom of the Netherlands, were but the shadows of its approach.

To no people did it come with more hearty welcome, than to the little community that had made its home on Dover "green." At its appearance patriotism burst forth with a bound, and enthusiasm marked their every act and utterance. When the news of it reached the "green" on July 5th a fine turtle feast was given at the upper tavern, where the Capitol Hotel now stands, in honor of the event. A portion of the Delaware regiment was at Dover, at this time, and the election of officers was being held. The Committee of Safety immediately met, upon receiving the news, and proceeded in a body to the Court House, where the President read the Declaration of Congress.

In a back room there hung a picture of King George. They tore it down from the wall, and bade a drummer of the regiment bear it before the President, while they marched two by two, followed by the light infantry, in slow time, with music, round the "green." A large bonfire had already been lighted in honor of the event and forming a circle about the fire, the President cast the picture into the flames, as he pronounced these words: "Compelled by strong necessity, thus we destroy even the shadow of that King who refused to reign over a free people." Three loud huzzas were then given by the crowd; and the friends of liberty gained new courage to support the cause to which they had embarked.

Among the prominent men of the "green," at the Revolutionary period, no one deserves greater mention than Dr. James Tilton, to whom I have already incidentally referred. Dr. Tilton was born in Kent County in 1745, and received a classical education at Nottingham Academy, in Maryland. On leaving Nottingham, he entered the Medical Department of the University of Pennsylvania,

Fisher was one of the Judges whom Vining had invited to the dinner, and knowing full well Vining's thriftlessness, Judge Fisher had, in the meantime, out of his own large garden, had the peas picked, and while Mrs. Vining was at his house pouring out her trouble to Mrs. Fisher, the Judge returned from a visit in the country, there being no butcher in Dover, with an elegant quarter of lamb. The peas and the lamb were sent over to Vining's house, with such other accompaniments as the ladies thought necessary, and the dinner passed off pleasantly; and Vining being ignorant of the provision made for his feast, plumed himself on the good time they had discussing the first lamb-and-pea dinner of the season.

John Vining served in the House of Representatives of the United States, and in 1795 was chosen United States Senator.

In Congress he was a wise counselor, and an able debater. He died at Dover in 1802.

Here, too, dwelt the Loockermans, and the Ridgelys, men of sterling worth, whose descendants still live in the houses where their ancestors died. Nicholas Loockerman, the ancestor, came to Dover, and became a large landholder. Nicholas Ridgely, the first representative of the family in Dover, came from Anne Arundel County, Maryland. He settled on the "green" about 1738, and became one of the Justices of the Supreme Court. Three of his descendants, Henry Ridgely, Walter Morris and Henry R. Johnson, are now living on the "green," the children of whom make the sixth generation of the family to live here. Here, also, dwelt Joshua Fisher, one of the ablest lawyers that ever graced the Delaware bar; and John Barratt, a distinguished lawyer and most influential man, who I am proud to call my great grandfather.

The close of the Revolution found

with a little brief authority.

The old resident, in looking backward, sees bosom friends who differed, quarreled over their differences, and went to their graves hating one another, leaving the old hatred to their children, in many instances, their only legacy. He sees families divided, separated in anger, never to get together again. He sees the best men under suspicion and surveillance, by one faction, or the other; and the worst men blatantly threatening, or secretly plotting. He sees friends snatched from their homes, and robbed of their liberty, on flimsy and trumped-up charges, and left to languish in dingy forts and filthy prisons; and he sees a government officer leaping from a back window of the Capitol Hotel, at night, to escape the merciless hands of men whose friends he had arrested for treasonable utterances. He sees soldiers at the polls, and United States Marshals at men's elbows, as a warning that to have an opinion was a dangerous thing; and he sees a Union man shot down on his way home, by an unknown hand, for no other reason than because he had an opinion, and expressed it too freely. He sees a mob of desperate men attack, in the street, a handful of soldier boys, who were home on a furlough, because they wore the blue; and he hears a timid woman pleading with a band of drunken soldiers, that they might not harm her aged father, whose only crime was that he had a son, whom he loved well, in the rebel army.

Ah, this was a serious drama that was being enacted on this old stage, the "green."

And great political meetings were held on the "green" in those days. Enthusiastic Union meetings, at which Nathaniel B. Smithers and George P. Fisher, both in the prime of life, figured conspicuously. Henry Winter Davis came over from Maryland to assist; James M. Scovel, from New Jersey; Philip S. White, from

Hall's Family Pills are the best.

With numerous barns and outbuildings, were destroyed. The grist mill

Chicago to prepare a bill for an in

not had time to cooperate. He thinks

ing the first victim of the season.

456 has been contributed by friends