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# NEW JERSEY

AS A COLONY AND AS A STATE

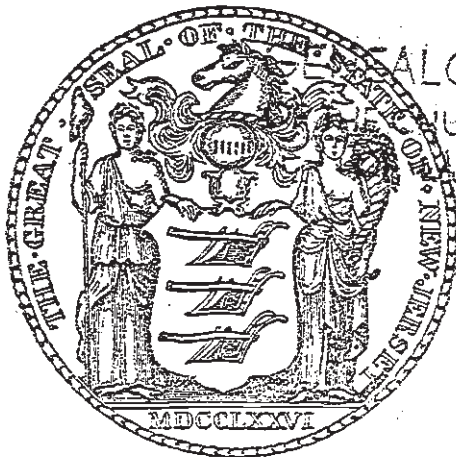
*One of the Original Thirteen*

BY  
FRANCIS BAZLEY LEE

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## CHAPTER III

### OLD HOMES AND OLD NAMES

Mullica Hill, and Woodbury had been long settled by the Quakers.

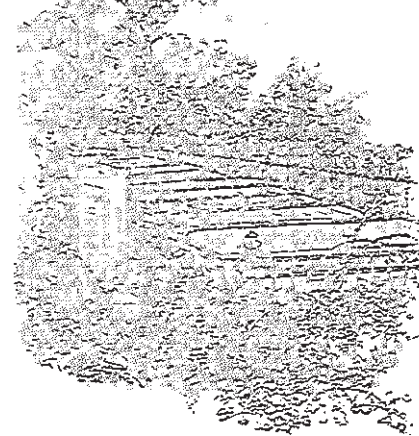
The great and wealthy County of Burlington lost but little of its colonial conditions. Burlington, the ancient capital of West Jersey, in spite of the fact that the seat of the county's political government had been moved to Mount Holly, was still a center of social and particularly of intellectual life. From the press of the Allinsons had gone out many a book and pamphlet. Here had come Elias Boudinot to write his "Star of the West," while in old Saint Mary's yard lay the bones of William Bradford, first attorney-general of the United States. On Green Bank was the home of the Binneys, here had been the mansion of Governor William Franklin, here had resided the Smiths, the Sterlings, the Morrises, and the Schuylers, famed in divers walks of life. Nor had Mount Holly been lacking as a place of prominence. Here Stephen Girard had laid the foundations of his fortune and married a beautiful wife, while tradition had it that William IV, King of England, had once resided in one of the small streets, and, driven from Philadelphia by the yellow fever and from San Domingo by uprisings, a French element had been infused into the local population. Near by dwelt the Woolmans, at Rancocas; the Eayres, plantation and millowners, of Eayrestown; the Burrs, of Vincent-

town; while at Quaxon and at Edgepelick Brainerd had preached to the last of the Lenni-Lenapés. New Mills, the home of Colonel Reynolds, of the Revolution, and the Budds, had not yet received the name of Pemberton, while through the rich lands of Chesterfield and Springfield, the Blacks, Newbolds, and Bishops held social sway. Still farther to the east Arneystown, Wrightstown, and Sykesville commemorate the names of plantation-owning families.

At Bordentown the Bordens and the Hopkinsons were awaiting the coming of a deposed King of Spain, who was soon to establish a court—almost regal—in the white mansion of Point Breeze.

It was but natural that around the then new state capital of Trenton, the home of the governors and men of political prominence in New Jersey, much of the social life of the section should be drawn. In the city itself there were the families of the settlers—descendants of Mahlon Stacy, the founder; of Chief Justice William Trent, for whom the town was named; as well as of such pioneer folk as Howell, Lanning, Ely, Reeder, Reed, Hutchinson, Potts, Scudder, and Chambers. In nearby Hopewell were the Stouts, Houghs, Burroughs, Harts, Mershons, Tituses, Phillipses, Wellings, and the homes of Colonel Joab Houghton, a Revolutionary hero, and Wilson P. Hunt, leader of the first commercial expedition sent by John

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SOME OF THE GRAVES OF THE PRES-  
IDENTS OF PRINCETON COLLEGE.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE EARLY RAILROADS

**O**F THE many contests, industrial, religious, and political, of which New Jersey has been the scene no one struggle for supremacy was waged with greater bitterness than the fight for existence between the advocates of a railroad connecting New York and Philadelphia and the proprietors of the stage-coach lines, who then controlled the transportation of freight and passengers across the State.

With the advancement of the plan for a railroad there was a vigorous cry of "monopoly," a cry by no means unusual, in view of the fact that no greater monopoly ever existed than that exercised by the stage-coach proprietors. As late as 1834 the rate of stage-coach fare between Philadelphia and New York was six dollars, the time occupied in the journey being an entire day. By control of the inns and taverns on the route, and a system of practically compulsory "tips" for employés, to which must be added many discomforts, the travelling public was at the mercy of the stage lines, except the few voyagers who "snubbed" across New Jersey by way of the canal.

Under these conditions the Camden and Amboy Railroad came into being.

In the contention that the Camden and Amboy Railroad was a "monopoly" there was nothing new. As early as 1707 the Assembly complained

“that patents had been granted to one Dellman to transport goods on the road from Amboy to Burlington for a number of years to the exclusion of others,” and that such executive action was “destructive to that freedom which trade and commerce ought to have.” To this Governor Cornbury replied that, by reason of the monopoly, goods could be sent across New Jersey once during a fortnight “without danger of imposition,” for that alone by means of Dellman’s stage wagon a trade had been carried on between Philadelphia, Burlington, Amboy, and New York “which was never known before, and which, in all probability, never would have been.” When came the later stage-boat lines, those under the management of the Bordens, Richardson, and O’Byrant, the ferries of the Inians, Billops, and Redfords in East Jersey, there was still the complaint of monopoly, excessive rates, and poor service.

By the opening of the nineteenth century the roads of New Jersey between Philadelphia and New York were but little improved beyond the deplorable condition which Governor Franklin criticised in 1768, when he said that these highways were “seldom passable without danger and difficulty.” But with the agitation concerning internal improvements which marked the advent of Jefferson’s administration no less than nine turnpikes were chartered by the Legislature on the

## CHAPTER XIV

### A KING WHO LIVED IN NEW JERSEY



covering the tract, laid flat. This offer Stephen Girard would accept solely upon the condition that the half-dollars be set on edge.

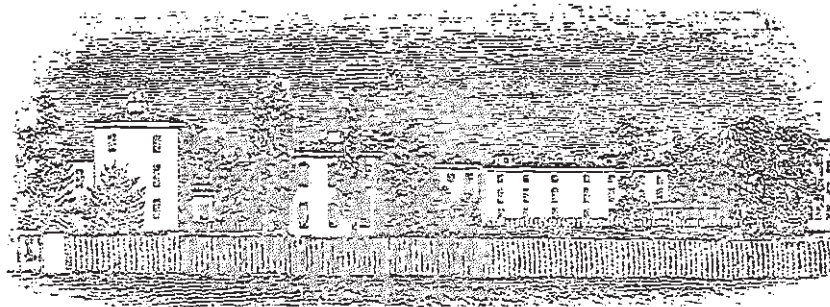
Two motives probably influenced Joseph Bonaparte to settle in New Jersey. One was the sentiment of his brother Napoleon, who had once said in the presence of Joseph that in case of failure of his plans and the need of flight he would locate his home somewhere between Philadelphia and New York, where, said Napoleon, pointing to a map, "I can receive the earliest intelligence from France by ships arriving at either port." The other was the evident willingness of the Legislature of New Jersey to pass an enabling statute permitting an alien to hold land in fee simple. Unquestionably Joseph Bonaparte had selected Trenton as his future home, he having negotiated for a house in that city. The greed of the landowners, and the fact that Commodore Charles Stewart urged the claims of Bordentown, influenced Joseph Bonaparte in favor of the latter place. During the autumn of 1816 and the spring of 1817 the ex-King of Spain, through agents, acquired title to about one thousand acres of land lying on the bank of Crosswicks Creek, between its former mouth and the village of Groveville. This estate, known as "Point Breeze" and "Bonaparte's Park," had in part been located by Thomas Farnsworth in 1681, had been purchased from

the Farnsworths by Joseph Borden, thence had passed to his son-in-law, Joseph Douglass, who devised it to his son, George Douglass. In 1792 George Douglass made an assignment to Trenton's most famous merchant of Revolutionary times, Abraham Hunt, from whom the land passed into the control of Stephen Sayre, once private secretary to Benjamin Franklin and former high sheriff of the City of London. Although having experienced reverses, Sayre had been most instrumental in securing foreign aid and money for the cause of independence. The Sayre interests, together with a race track as a part of the realty, were transferred to Joseph Bonaparte in 1816, when Stephen Sayre ceased to occupy the property, subsequently dying at the home of his son, Samuel Wilson Sayre, of Brandon, Virginia. Thus before "Point Breeze" became the home of a King the property was historic.

With characteristic energy and the love of the beautiful that so marked the æsthetic rather than the military nature of Joseph Bonaparte he immediately adorned his new estate. Gardeners planted trees, laborers laid out several miles of carriage drives, while a frame house, in which Bonaparte—now known as the Count de Survilliers—resided, was removed and a substantial mansion, partially of brick and wood, was erected. From the cellar of this house an underground pas-

sageway, according to Major E. M. Woodward's "Bonaparte's Park and the Murats," was constructed, leading some fifty feet away to the bluff facing the creek. Many are the fanciful traditions told concerning this passageway, of its use in case ships of European powers should come up the Delaware in search of the ex-King of Spain, who roamed at will about the streets of New York and Philadelphia, and of the possibility of dark deeds being committed by those witty, agreeable, peace-loving gentlemen who brought to Quaker Bordentown so much French verve, spontaneity, and sunshine! The tunnel had its use—a ready means of conveying to the mansion the pipes of wine, casks of liquor, and such provisions as came from Philadelphia or later were brought by canal from New York.

But upon the 3d of January, 1820, an accidental fire destroyed a portion of the "elegant mansion of Joseph Bonaparte" while its owner was in Trenton. Fighting the flames by means of the primitive bucket brigade, in which the women of the village assisted, the citizens of Bordentown were enabled to save much of the articles of furniture, ornaments, paintings, plate, jewels, linen, books, and money, of which there was a great store in the mansion, and all of which was returned to the Count de Survilliers intact. For these services the distinguished Frenchman highly compli-



THE OLD HOUSE OF JOSEPH BONAPARTE.