

at a short distance below where the present mill stands. By this survey, the place then called Uxbridge, but having long since lost its identity, is clearly defined. It may be said to have been where the Salem road crossed the creek, before the King's highway was laid by law, nearly in its present position. This point was about one-fourth of a mile above the mouth of the run before named, and, no doubt, above the head of the pond as the flow then stood; which pond was a diminutive affair, in comparison to the beautiful sheet of water that now covers the same and much larger premises. The name, however, was not confined to the particular place, but was applied generally to the surrounding neighborhood; yet, as the road was changed and the bridge went to decay, the name, in like manner, was, in the lapse of time, forgotten.

Near the head of the south branch of Cooper's creek in Gloucester township, he purchased several adjoining tracts of land of different persons; part of which was sold to Joseph Thorne in 1706,³⁰ who sold part to Joseph Bates in the same year.³¹ This property adjoined the estate of John Hillman, including several farms around where the White Horse tavern now stands. The deed made by him to Joseph Thorne included the homestead estate on Cooper's creek, and, perhaps, extinguished his title to land in West New Jersey.

At the time of the last sale he had removed to Chester county, Pennsylvania; previously to which he had visited the home of his ancestors in England to look after the interests given to him by his father.³² His residence being beyond the bounds of New Jersey, there is no means of tracing him to the time of his decease. He was probably a bachelor, as his signatures to the various conveyances made by him stand alone, conclusive that, however large his estate, he did not halve his sorrows and double his joys by taking to himself a helpmate in the days of his youth. Alas, for him!

³⁰ Lib. G3, 3.

³¹ Lib. A, 84.

³² Lib. A, 84.

JOHN HUGG.

THERE is no one thing that interferes so much with the connecting of events in the early history of the settlement of New Jersey with the adventurers who originated them, as the loss of the names of the passengers that came over in the first ships. This was one of the difficulties that Samuel Smith sought to overcome in the first history of the State; but the fewness of the names which he secured, and the meagreness of the sketches given in his book, show that he has failed in this particular. In isolated cases a family of emigrants may be traced beyond the sea; but this is the case only when litigated estates find a record among the archives of the Commonwealth, involving the particular family before such emigration took place. It is remarkable that correct and complete records were not kept by the proprietors, in whose interest most of the early settlers came, and from whom the title to their land had to be derived. If such were now in existence, much valuable and interesting information could be obtained. The number and the names of the vessels that arrived here have but a vague and uncertain account rendered of them, while the families and individuals which they brought, in very many instances, have been lost sight of altogether. The first record of Salem colony, in 1675, gives the names of most of the persons that came over with John Fenwick; but there doubtless were many names of heads of families, and of those who afterwards became such, that were left out of these lists; and the connection of such with their settlement at home has thus been entirely destroyed.

The court minutes of Burlington, commenced in 1680—a curious volume in its way, also give the names of most of the freeholders that arrived; but they are silent concerning such as neither held land, nor fell into litigation with their neighbors, constituting a large number, perhaps, a majority of those that made up the community.

Through this kind of neglect, it is impossible to trace the history of persons whose participation in the affairs of the colony rendered them prominent during their day and generation; of whose antecedents as well as those of their ancestors, it would be desirable to know something. The subject of this sketch is in this category.

John Hugg was probably an Irishman, coming from the parish of Castle Ellis, in the county of Wexford, Ireland.¹ Although not a partner in the Newton settlement, he had some dealings with those adventurers, and was acquainted with them in the mother country. He was a Friend, since, in 1669, he was imprisoned for not paying a tax to repair the church at Rosán-ellis, Queens' county, Ireland.² He was a man of considerable estate, but was not a partner in the enterprise that brought his wife's family to New Jersey, neither does his name appear in any of the proceedings in relation to the title of their land. His first residence stood upon the Browning estate, where Little Timber creek falls into Great Timber creek, but a short distance from the river Delaware, commanding a view of both streams, as well as of much of the river before his house. For the purposes of a landing, and for the accommodation of the immediate neighborhood, none better could be procured; this made it a public place for many years after the death of the first owner, as a wharf for wood and lumber to be taken away, and for hay brought thither from the river islands, to be consumed among the farmers in that region.

His first location included five hundred acres, which he purchased of Robert Zane in 1683; the property was bounded by both streams, extending more than a mile up the same, and by a line running nearly south from one to the other.³ At this writing,

¹ Lib. EF, 246.

² Friends' Writings.

³ Revel's Book, 55.

it is probable that very little of the old head-line is in existence, as the exchange and division of real estate adjoining the same, since its first running, have destroyed its identity.⁴ For some reason, the owner devised part of said tract of land to his great-grand-son William Hugg, who did not come into possession of the same for nearly a half century,—showing the desire on the part of the donor to keep his estate in the name and family.⁵ During that lapse of time, a bridge was built over the Great Timber Creek, and a highway established between Salem and Burlington, which has also been changed and improved since the first laying out. What was then an unbroken forest, has in these latter years been brought into cultivation, and is now among the most valuable of our real estate.

The place where John Hugg's house stood has much of historic interest about it from the fact of its being claimed as the spot where stood Fort Nassau, which was built by the Dutch in 1623, and was the first attempt at settlement by the Europeans on the shores of the river Delaware. This, for many years, has been a mooted question among historians without any approach to a conclusion, and it may always so be. Of the existence of such fort, called by that name, built by the Hollanders and near that place, there can be no doubt; yet the exact spot where it stood will always remain an open question, and a fruitful subject of controversy among antiquarians. On Vanderdonck's map of 1656, it is placed below the mouth of Great Timber creek. The map found in Campanius's history has the fort in the same place, and Gabriel Thomas marks it upon his map as a Dutch fort above the mouth of Cooper's creek. Upon a map of the Dutch and Swedish settlements along the Delaware, attached to Ferris's history, this point of dispute is placed where the city of Gloucester now stands, and is stated to have been erected twenty years before the fort at Elsinburg was built, or a settlement attempted to be made at that place. Other maps made in the interest of the various claimants, extending in date from 1656 to 1702, put the fort in different places, but always within a few miles of the mouth of

⁴ Dividend Book, 21, O. S. G.

⁵ Bull's Book, 106, O. S. G.

Timber creek ; but as none of these were published until after it was destroyed by the natives, such authorities may themselves be questionable upon this subject.

The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, being much interested in the settlement of this question, in 1852 appointed a committee to institute inquiries touching the location of Fort Nassau, in which Edward Armstrong, of Philadelphia, took an active part, and visited several places near Gloucester for that purpose.⁶ From what was collected, this gentleman prepared and read a paper before that Society, and also before the New Jersey Association ; this paper was exhaustive and interesting, yet he leaves the difficulty about where he found it, to be pursued by some ambitious person determined to accomplish that in which all his predecessors have failed. The attention of Mr. Armstrong was called to the particular spot above named by John Redfield, a gentleman who has for many years resided in the neighborhood, and taken much interest in the discovery of the site of the old fort.

A daughter of this gentleman having upon one occasion brought home a rare flower from the river shore, one which, he suspected, was not indigenous, he visited the spot where it was plucked, and found pieces of Dutch brick and ware near by, and portions of a wall surmounted by a few logs, indicating the remains of a redoubt or building erected for defence. This evidence is certainly very strong, and, in the absence of better, will go far towards settling this much vexed question. The interval of two hundred and forty-six years leaves a wide gap in the history of events ; and a careful preservation of intermediate occurrences must happen, or else the corroding hand of time will destroy every trace.

Whether the house of John Hugg stood upon the site of the old fort, partly built of Dutch brick and surrounded by Dutch flowers, cannot be settled at this writing, but it is certain that he remained there until his death, which occurred in 1706.⁷ His children consisted of four sons: John, who married Priscilla Collins ; Elias, who married Margaret Collins (both daughters of Francis) ; Joseph, who married Sarah ——— ; and Charles,

⁶ Proceedings of N. J. His. Society, Vol. 6, 100, 102, 157, 165.

⁷ Lib. No. 1, 166.

He was probably a middle-aged man when he came to New Jersey, and his children of marriageable age, for they soon settled around him and became prominent citizens. Excepting as a member of the colonial Legislature in 1685, he does not appear to have participated in political affairs, and but little is known of him beyond his buying and selling of real estate in the section where he lived.⁸ Among that which he disposed of, was a lot in Gloucester, sold to Henry Jennings, of Salem, in 1703.⁹

This is probably the individual about whom so much inquiry has been made, as being the connecting link between a large number of descendants scattered through this region, and a fabulous amount of money held in abeyance in the strong government chest in old England, seeking for an owner through his blood. He was a son of William and Mary Jennings, of the parish of Clemond-deane, in the county of Surrey, England. He was born 7th month, 21st, 1642, and married Margaret Busse, of the parish of St. Bartholomew, London, 1st month, 18th, 1666, a daughter of Paul Busse of York city.¹⁰ Their last abode before emigrating was at Kingston-near-on-the-Thames. They came to Salem in the ship Kent, and arrived 6th month, 23d, 1677. By occupation, he was a tailor. He became the owner of considerable estate in Salem and the neighborhood, where he remained several years after his settlement there.¹¹ His name frequently occurs among those of the first settlers; but whether he was the prospective heir to the immense estates which his descendants claim for him, may appear in the future. He removed to Philadelphia, where he deceased in 1705, leaving but a small family and a limited amount of property.¹²

His widow survived him, and in her will made mention of his family, and thus did much to connect her husband with those of that name in these parts, with which, with but little trouble, the relation could be made complete.¹³ In that writing she gave a portion of her real estate to Isaac Jennings and Sarah Jennings, "*reputed son and daughter of my husband, Henry Jennings,*"—a significant expression, and one that may clear up a long continued difficulty.

⁸ Lib. G3, 470.

⁹ Basse's Book, 222.

¹⁰ Salem Records,

¹¹ Salem Records.

¹² Files of Salem Wills.

¹³ Gloucester Files, 2728.

As a starting point, however, his settlement here is material, and, if accepted as a basis, might lead to valuable developments in both directions. If the half be true that is said of the barrels of coin and square miles of land awaiting the lawful claimants, more persistent efforts may be made to secure their distribution among the patient, yet hopeful owners.

John Hugg, Jr., was one of the most active public men of his day. For six years from 1695, he was one of the judges of the several courts of Gloucester county, and, for ten years, was selected by the governor as one of his council, an evidence of his worth as a just and upright man. In 1703, he was appointed one of the commissioners to purchase land of the Indians, and to adopt a plan with that people to collect them together in certain localities in West Jersey,—a duty which required good judgment and much delicacy, so as to avoid the difficulties that generally attend such undertakings, and frequently led to the shedding of blood. The strong attachment of the Indian to the home of his childhood and the graves of his ancestors, has always been a marked feature in him, and the attempt to break in upon these feelings has seldom ended in peace. In the discharge of these duties, however, the commissioners accomplished everything, and, in after years, the last of this people took their departure for other and better hunting grounds, without a word of censure or reproach towards those who, very soon thereafter, occupied their abandoned possessions.

The last public position that he held, was perhaps that of sheriff, to which he was appointed in 1726, and in which he served for four years.¹⁴ Between 1696 and 1710, he made several locations of land between Great and Little Timber creeks, extending nearly to the head of the latter and across to the former, including what is now known as the Crispin farm, which, taken in connection with the surveys made by his father, brought all that territory within the one family, from whom the title can be traced.¹⁵ He also made surveys on Mantua and Raccoon creeks in Gloucester county, and on Alloway's creek in Salem county.

¹⁴ Lib. AAA, 193.

¹⁵ Lib. A, 19 to 110, O, S, G.

In 1703, he conveyed to the church wardens of the Swedish church at Raccoon, in Gloucester county, one lot of land "where the church was late erected," and also another tract on Raccoon creek.¹⁶ The church wardens were Wollo Dalbo, William Cobb, Wollo Peterson and Frederick Hoffman. This church is one of the connecting links of the present with the early history of the settlements of West New Jersey, the history of which deserves preservation.¹⁷ His wife, as the daughter of Francis Collins, had received from her father part of one of his surveys, which John Hugg and wife, in connection with parts of his own land, conveyed to John Hinchman in 1699.¹⁸ This grant extended to the north side of the south branch of Newton creek, including about one thousand acres of land; the remainder of his estate reached southwardly to Great Timber creek, showing his landed property to have been large and, even at that early day, very valuable. The residence of this man was probably near the last named stream, on that part now known as the Crispin estate, which he called "Plain Hope;" where a great breadth of meadow land was secured, and the advantage of navigation enjoyed. He was noted for the great number of slaves in his possession, the descendants of whom now constitute a large part of the colored population among us.

John Hugg deceased in 1730, his death being noticed by Smith in his history of New Jersey, in which reference is made to his services as a public man and a trust-worthy public servant.¹⁹ He was found on the ground near his house, speechless; he died the same day, respected by all who knew him. His second wife (Elizabeth Newbie, whom he married in 1714), and the following named children, survived him: Mary, who married Thomas Lippincott; Hannah, Sarah, Priscilla, Joseph, Gabriel, John, Elias and Jacob. John died under age, and Elias without children.

The old homestead fell to the share of Elias Hugg, who lived in the domicile occupied by his father, where he doubtless kept a store to supply watermen and lumber dealers with such provisions as they found necessary. The occupation and character

¹⁶ Lib. EF, 126.

¹⁷ Lib. A, 183.

¹⁸ Lib. G3, 217.

¹⁹ Smith's History of N. J., 424.

of his customers made whiskey and tobacco large items in his sales, and his premises furnished the scene of many carousals among them when detained by wind or tide.

The land that Francis Collins conveyed to Margaret, the wife of Elias Hugg,²⁰ they sold before the death of her father; part of this was purchased by Simeon Ellis, being bounded on the south side by the north branch of Cooper's creek. It included the town of Ellisburg, and several surrounding farms. Other tracts they disposed of to various persons, and, at her death, none of her estate remained in their possession.²¹

Joseph Hugg settled at Gloucester Point, as known in 1722, and kept the ferry for several years after that time. The establishment and maintenance of the ferry from Gloucester to Wickaco can be traced through the records with much accuracy, showing that, although the distance was greater than ordinary, yet the demand for transportation was sufficient to make it remunerative. This, like others of its day, consisted of an open flat-boat, worked with long sweeps and small sails, but controlled very much by the movement of the tide. The first license for a ferry between the points above named, was granted by the county courts to William Royden, in 1688, one year before the town was laid out by Thomas Sharp.²² Wickaco had also been put in shape by the surveyor sent out by William Penn; and what had been the residence of a few Swedes and Finns, was now the embryo city of Philadelphia, with straight and rectangular streets, meeting-houses and markets. In 1695, John Reading became the owner, and was licensed by the same authority.²³ In 1707, John Spey (whose term of office as sheriff had just expired,) became the proprietor, and so continued until 1722, when Joseph Hugg succeeded him.²⁴ He maintained it for eight years, and disposed of the same to Richard Wildon, who was followed by John Ladd in 1735. As roads were straightened and improved, bridges built and the country more thickly settled, Cooper's ferries had the preference among travelers, since the distance across the river was much shortened, with less risk and much greater speed. These advantages had

²⁰ Lib. G3, 71.

²¹ Lib. S, No. 6, 338, O. S. G.

²² Gloucester Records.

²³ Lib. AAA, 80.

²⁴ Lib. AAA, 182.

their effect, which the public were prompt in discovering, and the Gloucester ferry, with varying fortunes, maintained but a secondary importance, until the introduction of steam and other various improvements on both shores of the river. It need hardly be said here that Gloucester was the county town for many years, where the courts were held and the records kept. In the progress of improvement, it gradually lost its central position and became less desirable for such purposes; it was ultimately abandoned, and soon forgotten as the political and judicial nucleus of the old balliwick. In the early days of the colony, the records were not considered of much value, and were kept in the dwelling of the clerk, in constant danger of loss by fire or miscarriage. An affidavit of John Reading, made in 1711, in which year he was clerk, has been entered among the books at Burlington, showing that his house was burned in that year, and that many deeds and other valuable papers were destroyed.²⁵ This accounts for the absence of many title papers often inquired for, but never found, as well as for a break in the records of Old Gloucester, that has led to much trouble among land owners and claimants.

Joseph Hugg deceased in 1757, leaving but two children, Samuel and Joseph.²⁶ The family at this day is limited, and a continued decrease, for the next half century, may leave none of the name, where, for nearly one hundred years, it was as numerous as any other. The large landed estate once in possession of the second generation has long since passed away from the blood, only to be remembered among the blurred deeds and musty records of the past. Although the collateral branches of the family maintained through the female line, are numerous, yet a fatality seems to have attended the other sex and to have well nigh extirpated it from among us.

²⁵ Lib. BBB, 93.

²⁶ Lib. No. 9, 66.